

**The Walls of the Confessions:
Neo-Romanesque Architecture, Nationalism, and Religious Identity in the Kaiserreich**

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Scholars traditionally understand neo-Romanesque architecture as a stylistic manifestation of the homogenizing and nationalizing impulse of the Kaiserreich. Images of fortress-like office buildings and public halls with imposing facades of rusticated stone dominate our view of neo-Romanesque architecture from the Kaiserreich (1871-1918). The three religious buildings at the core of this study - Edwin Oppler's New Synagogue in Breslau (1866-1872), Christoph Hehl's Catholic Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz (1899-1900), and Friedrich Adler's Protestant Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem (1893-1898) – offer compelling counter-examples of the ways in which religious groups, especially those that were local minorities, adapted the dominant neo-Romanesque style to their own particular quest towards distinctive assimilation in an increasingly complex, national, modern society. This synagogue and these churches belong to an important sub-section of German neo-Romanesque architecture that calls into question our standard narrative of the Wilhelmine neo-Romanesque style as a universalizing and secularizing aesthetic. This synagogue, Catholic parish church, and Protestant church forged a new alliance of religion and politics in the service of two often conflicting masters: the religious community and the nation-state. By reinventing neo-Romanesque forms for a modern, yet still religious context, Edwin Oppler, Christoph Hehl, and Friedrich Adler provide the crucial

link necessary to incorporate medievalist architecture into the larger narrative of Germany's modernization.

While these sacred structures are prime exemplars of many social and architectural themes, my aim is to present them neither as isolated case studies nor as highlights in a comprehensive survey of Wilhelmine religious architecture. I treat these three sacred structures as central case studies while considering their architecture, decorative programs, and mediated presentation in photography and print publications. The core themes of this work – the struggle between religion and national secular society, a longing for an imagine past as inspiration to create new styles for a new configuration of community – are not only the essential components of our definition of modernity but also what continues to frame our experiences today. Ultimately, these buildings serve as models to understand the challenges of diversity and multicultural society that continue to define our world.

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I would like to think my interest in neo-Romanesque architecture began with my first college course, Freshman Studies, which took place in a looming, round-arch neo-Romanesque academic building on the campus of Lawrence University. My teacher for that course, Michael Orr, and his fellow art historian, Carol Lawton, instilled in me a fascination for the visual cultures of the past during my time as a student at Lawrence. They have continued to support my professional development and gave me a wonderful opportunity to return to Lawrence to teach while finishing my dissertation.

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1.0 BETWEEN THE SECULAR AND THE SACRED: THE NEO-ROMANESQUE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In 1907, Protestant theologian Adolf Harnack saw a problem in German society. He declared,

In numerous and important questions of life and of the common weal, our nation is at the outset divided into two camps, and this state of affairs, starting from the center, works its way into the periphery of our existence, deep into the smallest and most everyday aspects of our lives. Everywhere one confronts confessional prejudice; everywhere one encounters the fences, indeed the walls of the confessions.¹

It is tempting to understand the “two camps” to which Harnack refers as those of religious and secular interests in German society. Indeed, the widening chasm between religion and secularism is one of the key struggles we perceive today as paramount in the history of the modernizing European nation-state. Noting the encroachment of a division into all aspects of life, Harnack’s tone is defensive, as if he is attempting to uphold his Protestant faith against a rising tide of secularism that threatened to limit his realm of influence. However, our

¹ “In zahlreichen und tiefen Fragen des Lebens und der öffentlichen Wohlfahrt ist unser Volk von vornherein in zwei Lager gespalten, und dieser Zustand wirkt aus dem Mittelpunkt überall in die Peripherie unsres Daseins bis hinab in die Sphäre des Kleinsten und Alltäglichen. Ueberall begegnet man den konfessionellen Vorurteil; überall stößt man auf die Zäune, ja die Mauern der Konfessionen.” Adolf Harnack, *Protestantismus und Katholizismus in Deutschland* (Berlin: Verlag von Georg Stilke, 1907), 4-5.

contemporary perspective easily erases the specific dimension of Harnack's quote, preventing us from fully understanding the implications of his statement. His words were not arrayed against secularists, and much less against Jews, but rather against Catholics and their growing presence in German public life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is, in fact, the Christian world which forms the reference of his allusion. This divide between Protestants and Catholics historically defined Germany in a more profound way than debates between religious Germans and the small fraction of their peers who were not affiliated with any religion.² Jews, moreover, were rapidly gaining social presence during the Kaiserreich, a group Harnack does not even include in his "two camps." For them, the "walls of the confessions" had long been a literal physical barrier, namely, the ghettos erected in many German cities beginning with Breslau in 1267. Harnack's evocative statement offers us a glimpse into these religious divisions and contentions in Wilhelmine Germany. It reminds us that despite massive social upheavals resulting from urbanization and industrialization, religious identity remained a powerful and increasingly complex force in modern imperial Germany.

By the latter half of the nineteenth century a new and more material concept of confessional walls had emerged as Protestants, Catholics, and Jews alike now competed to stake their architectural claim in the urban landscape. Harnack spoke more about the metaphorical walls of discrimination and religious intolerance than actual ecclesiastic architecture. Yet by the time of his writing in 1907, he had witnessed a huge German religious building boom not only in his Berlin home, but all over the world, from German missionary construction in Africa and western Asia to state-sponsored Protestant churches in Windhoeck, Alexandria, and Jerusalem.

² For the purpose of this study, I translate the German term "*Konfession*" as confession, religion, or religious group, depending on the context. This is a broader interpretation of the term, as it is typically associated with different groups within Protestantism.

In Berlin alone, the founding of the Evangelical Church Aid Association in 1888 (after 1900, the Evangelical Church Building Association) led to the construction of over 65 Protestant churches in and around Berlin between 1889 and 1904.³ Between 1780 and 1933, approximately 2,100 synagogues or prayer rooms were built in Germany.⁴ Even the Catholics, crippled by the repressive legislation of Chancellor Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* in the 1870s, rallied via clubs and associations to build new churches for their rapidly growing parishes in Berlin and other Prussian metropolises. A theologian of Harnack's stature could not have overlooked the theological and liturgical, as well as the social, economic and political effects on German society as a whole that the building of these churches and synagogues represented.

These walls of confession were laid and mortared in a period of immense upheaval that gave birth to the first German nation-state. New political parties and social organizations competed for the membership of the religiously devout. Meanwhile, aggressive industrialization forcibly reordered the lives of many Germans. While historians tend to focus on the secular aspects of these processes of modernization, they do so at the cost of neglecting the religious mobilization these forces spawned. One exception to this tendency is historian Olaf Blaschke, whose research has explored the nineteenth century as a second confessional age.⁵ Blaschke is precise in his choice of period label, drawing a connection to the first confessional age of the Reformation and subsequent Counter-Reformation in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The relative de-confessionalization of the second half of the eighteenth century and

³ Paul Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst* (Berlin: Schall, 1907), 74-6.

⁴ Harold Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland: Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert (1780-1933)* (Hamburg: Hans Christians Verlag, 1981), 14.

⁵ Olaf Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert: Ein Zweites Konfessionelles Zeitalter?," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 26 (2000): 38-75.

Enlightenment secularization separates in his account these two periods of heightened religious activity.

Blaschke's work stands apart from mainstream histories of nineteenth-century Europe that continue to describe religious practice of the era as a vestige of an old order on the wane in the "bourgeois age," the "age of liberalism," or the "age of secularization."⁶ These models privilege bourgeois life as the quintessential modern experience, although only 5-6% of the population in 1900 belonged to that class. Blaschke turns this secular, economic-driven paradigm around. The overwhelming majority of Germans (99.97% of the population according to his findings) labeled themselves as part of a confession or an officially recognized religious group in 1900. As a way to understand the age from the standpoint of those who lived it, Blaschke upholds religious identity as the defining element of Wilhelmine society. With his work and the investigations of other more recent scholars, the complex religious situation of the German Kaiserreich has become less history's afterthought. The formation of secular, national governments has also become less our navigational star in our attempts to unravel the complexity of Germany's modernization. As the tumultuous international events of the first decade of the twenty-first century have shown us, the relationship between religion, secularism, and the state is ongoing and it also remains neither peaceful nor stable.

⁶ See Franz Schnabel, *Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert* (1929-37; reprint, Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987); Wolfram Siemann, "Politik, Staat und Verfassung Deutschlands im Zeitalter des Liberalismus" *Neue politische Literatur* 40 (1995): 365-380; Wolfgang J. Mommsen *Bürgerliche Kultur und künstlerische Avantgarde. Kultur und Politik im deutschen Kaiserreich 1870-1918* (Frankfurt: Ullstein, 1994); Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866. Bürgerwelt und starker Staat* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1983). Other scholars, in addition to Blaschke, have begun to recast the nineteenth century as an era defined to a large extent by religious conflict and restructuring. Just a few prominent examples are: Margaret Lavinia Anderson, "The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic Revival in 19th Century Germany," *Historical Journal* 38, no. 3 (1995): 647-670; Thomas Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch: Deutschland 1870-1918* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1988); Helmut Walser Smith, ed., *Protestants, Catholics and Jews in Germany 1800-1914* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2001).

Indeed, religion has been and continues to be an inherent part of the modern experience both in and beyond Germany. We are compelled to view religion not as a static retrograde identity but rather as a part of a modern self-consciousness. Benedict Anderson originally developed the notion of a modern self-consciousness in his groundbreaking study of the roots and evolution of nationalism.⁷ However, he does not include the religious experience as an axis of identity that engages with and influences the ideology of nationalism. I introduce this key religious facet to Anderson's notion of a modern self-consciousness to enable a dynamic connection between different axes of modern identity – religious, national, regional, and socio-economic – as a relationship of ebb and flow that pulsed through the very fabric of every religious community in the Kaiserreich.

The paths to modernization of the three major religions in the Kaiserreich were often disjointed and fragmentary. Different confessional allegiances formed to face different challenges and legislation was slow and incomplete in rising to meet social changes.⁸ Key transformative moments in nineteenth-century Germany – French occupation of German territories beginning in 1795 on the west bank of the Rhine, the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, the 1848 revolution and the resulting Frankfurt Assembly – achieved little in terms of Jewish emancipation. Their full citizenship came in the constitution of the North German Confederation in 1866, later adopted by the Second Empire in 1871. For Catholics, their relationship with the Protestant Church was more complex, as they held considerable power in the kingdom of Bavaria and other southern German lands. However, in Prussia they shared

⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London and New York: Verso, 1991).

⁸ This section serves as a general overview of the state of the three major religions in Wilhelmine Germany. Each chapter contains a more detailed history of the individual religious groups, their emancipation, and their religious practice in the modern era.

similar hindrances as the Jews, facing severe discrimination in the university, the military and the diplomatic and bureaucratic corps. With the introduction of Bismarck's oppressive *Kulturkampf* immediately after the declaration of the empire in 1871, Catholics endured further religious, social and economic oppression. They formed the Center Party in 1871 to mobilize politically against Bismarck, which proved to be an effective front against the Iron Chancellor and his supporters. In the 1870s, Jews also formed different clubs, or *Vereine*, devoted to different political interests, sports and gymnastics (*Turnvereine*), and social causes. In this period of the politicization of religion, Zionism became a viable response to rising anti-Semitism in Germany. Protestants answered with social and cultural associations of their own – most importantly, the Pan-German League (*Alldeutscher Verband*, founded 1886) and the Protestant League to Defend German-Protestant Interests (*Evangelischer Bund zur Wahrung der deutsch-protestantischen Interessen*, also founded 1886).

As Germany's state religion, Protestantism did not face the same political and economic barriers as Catholicism and Judaism, but it did undergo, as did the other confessions, penetrating reform in liturgy and practice. As the religions lost their all-encompassing grip on their flocks in the midst of social upheaval brought on by urbanization and industrialization, leaders needed to devise ways in which their confessions could modernize alongside civil society. For the Jews this phenomenon led to the creation of an entirely separate sub-strain of Judaism – the Reform Movement. Started in Breslau by a rabbi who sought religious expression that better aligned with the modern world beyond the synagogue doors, Reform Judaism embraced prayers and sermons in the vernacular, instrumental music, and a more organized worship service that emphasized communal values. Similarly, the liturgical movement in the Catholic and Protestant churches emphasized sermons and a congregation-centered service which strove to keep

members connected in an era of increasing uprootedness. For Catholic authorities this also meant greater toleration for popular forms of piety, including pilgrimages and local saint cults.⁹ In the Protestant Church religious organizations like the Order of St. John or the Templar Society, as well as social clubs and associations, sought to promote a heightened sense of community through wider political and social engagement. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews alike, moreover, sought visible expression of their presence in Germany's emergent nation-state.

1.1 BUILDING AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITY IN BRESLAU, BERLIN, AND JERUSALEM

Gothic pointed arches were slowly falling out of favor and some Romanesque churches and fortresses were already crumbling during the first confessional era of the sixteenth century. The renewed religious fervor of the nineteenth century, however, drew on this earlier medieval architecture as source material for its visual culture. For the purpose of this study I define medievalism as the modern appropriation and manipulation of artistic and architectural forms or the reinstigation of particular institutions (the notion of the cathedral building guild, for example) from the fourth to the fifteenth centuries. This modern medievalism, which found many supporters, was neither a straightforward imitation of past styles nor a purely preservationist effort. Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV (ruled 1840-1861), Bavarian King Ludwig I (ruled 1825-1848), writers like Goethe, artists like the Nazarenes, and architects like Karl Friedrich Schinkel all pondered a place for medieval religious visual forms in the modern era. And by the

⁹ There are some late medieval precedents for modernizing developments in the church such as preaching in the vernacular. See Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

mid-nineteenth century, these visual forms -- as applied specifically to architecture -- fed into the revival of the Romanesque.

Scholars have long recognized neo-Romanesque architecture as a stylistic manifestation of the homogenizing and secularizing impulse of the Kaiserreich. Images of fortress-like office buildings and public halls with imposing facades of rusticated stone came to dominate many cities and towns throughout Germany during this period. By 1900, the neo-Romanesque indeed had become something of a “state” style. Against this backdrop, however, architects and their religious patrons turned towards the neo-Romanesque as a style which could not only stake their place in the regime, but also encapsulate the different axes of their multi-layered, secularizing as well as sacred, identities.

I present three buildings at the core of this study - Edwin Oppler’s New Synagogue in Breslau (1866-1872), Christoph Hehl’s Catholic Rosary Basilica in Berlin-Steglitz (1899-1900), and Friedrich Adler’s Protestant Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem (1893-1898). This synagogue and these two churches offer compelling examples of the adaptation of the dominant neo-Romanesque style to particular quests as these groups situated themselves in an increasingly complex, national, modern society. Each is in an urban multicultural setting in which the religion under consideration is a social minority: Jews in Breslau, Catholics in Berlin, and German Protestants in Jerusalem. This situation gives the buildings added cultural and social significance as they quite literally helped to build these religious communities and give them physical expression in their environment. While Oppler, Hehl, and Adler each belonged to the respective confession for which they built the New Synagogue, Rosary Church and Church of the Redeemer, they also completed a wide range of work during their careers and had important

contacts in the international community of medievalist architects and theorists. This wider context is imperative when considering the architects' particular works at the center of my study.

The New Synagogue, Rosary Church and Church of the Redeemer are not part of the mainstream architectural canon. They belong, however, to an important sub-section of German neo-Romanesque architecture that calls into question our standard narrative of Wilhelmine neo-Romanesque building as a universalizing and secularizing aesthetic. This synagogue, Catholic parish church, and Protestant church forged a new alliance of religion and politics in the service of two often conflicting masters: the religious community and the nation-state. By reinventing neo-Romanesque forms for a modern, yet still religious context, Oppler, Hehl, and Adler provide a crucial link between medievalist architecture and the larger narrative of Germany's modernization.

The New Synagogue in Breslau tells the story of a rabbi and congregation at the forefront of Jewish modernization. They collaborated with Oppler, a well-known, cosmopolitan architect, to create a striking balance between their German and Jewish Reform identities by means of the iconic forms of the German Transitional Style, the period of hybrid forms between the Romanesque and Gothic eras in Germany. The late Romanesque/early Gothic cathedral of Worms, specifically its west choir from 1181, inspired Oppler in his synagogue design for Breslau. This stylistic precedent for Oppler's synagogue has been well-grounded in the literature. Previous scholars have described Oppler's work as characteristic of a particular – and narrowly defined – brand of medievalist building taught and practiced at the Hannover Polytechnic where Oppler trained. My research, however, puts greater emphasis on Oppler's place in a broader, even international, architectural movement. His openness to innovations inside and outside of the Hannover School account, I argue, for his ability to adapt to the specific

challenge posed by the Breslau commission and his development of a “modernizing” solution to the Jewish tradition his building was to represent. I also strive to close the gap between the vast body of scholarship on the Jewish Reform movement and the architectural history of synagogues by firmly situating Oppler in the Jewish theological and liturgical debates raging around him as he worked in Breslau. My chapter on Breslau concludes with an account of the continuing impact of his work and its role in the changing socio-political status of Judaism in the Kaiserreich well beyond his death in 1880.

Nineteenth-century German synagogue architecture, in general, has received relatively little attention in the scholarly literature to date. Similarly, Catholic cultural production has tended to be regarded as stagnant, retrograde, and marginally important to architectural histories of this period. The Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz reveals, however, how a Catholic diaspora congregation capitalized on regional medieval history, architectural style and building materials to assert its contribution to German national character. My investigation of the Rosary Church reveals a more dynamic, forward-looking picture of Prussian Catholicism. I explore Hehl’s Rosary Church as a proto-modern sacred structure that functions as a point of departure to understand the radically stripped-down monumental neo-Romanesque churches (Protestant as well as Catholic) of the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Just as Oppler developed his own religious neo-Romanesque style far beyond the formal confines of the Hannover School, so, too, did Hehl create a distinct Catholic variant of a northern German neo-Romanesque. Architectural historian Andreas Tacke has already noted the importance of the Cistercian monastic brick architecture at Lehnin and Chorin in the Mark Brandenburg as formal models for Hehl.¹⁰ I build on Tacke’s

¹⁰ By Andreas Tacke, see: *Kirchen für die Diaspora: Christoph Hehls Berliner Bauten und Hochschultätigkeit (1894-1911)* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1993); “‘jung wie ein Parvenü’: Auswirkungen der Reformation auf die Baugeschichte Preußens,” in “*Es thun iher viel Fragen . . .*”: *Kunstgeschichte in Mitteldeutschland* (Petersberg:

architectural analyses by situating their stylistic development within concurrent liturgical, demographic and political changes in the Catholic Church. My analysis of the Rosary Church, thus, rejoins these two modernizing strands – in architectural and in confessional politics – left divorced from each other by previous scholarship.

Finally, the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem expands the scope of my analysis of the neo-Romanesque's role in modern confessional identity formation to the international stage, where imperial aspirations, evangelical reform, and Crusader imagery merge in one church. Recent years have brought a revived interest in Germany's colonial history.¹¹ Yet the issue of the sponsored construction of churches abroad remains largely unexplored. Art and architectural historians are just beginning to engage seriously with the colonial past of the Kaiserreich and my investigation of the Church of the Redeemer is part of this effort. Although the Church of the Redeemer has garnered scholarly attention in the past two decades, it remains rooted in a notion of Hohenzollern involvement in Palestine as a mere family religious project rather than an important precedent to Germany's colonizing agenda in Africa and Asia. By contrast, I reinsert the Church of the Redeemer into the history of the Wilhelmine colonial agenda to gain a fuller understanding of the structure, its accompanying visual culture and its role in the formation of a Protestant and imperial German identity abroad. This identity was also important at home, and for the Church of the Redeemer, the transmission of imagery to the German public via

Michael Imhof Verlag, 2001), 239-244; "Von der mittelalterlichen Klosterkirche zum national-dynastischen Denkmal im 19. Jahrhundert," in *Von Berlin nach Weimar: Kunstgeschichte und Museum*, eds. Michael Bollé and Thomas Föhl (Munich and Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2003), 62-83; "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel: Überlegungen zur Ikonographie und Ikonologie der Berliner Architektur und bildenden Kunst des späten Historismus," *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1995): 141-159.

¹¹ See Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz and Lora Wildenthal, eds., *Germany's Colonial Pasts* (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); Sara Friedrichsmeyer, Sara Lennox and Susanne Zantop, eds., *The Imperialist Imagination: German Colonialism and its Legacy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998); George Steinmetz, *The Devil's Handwriting: Precoloniality and the German Colonial States in Qingdao, Samoa and Southwest Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

photography and mass media, as my research uncovers, also became crucial. Indeed, government and religious officials appeared less concerned, in the end, with the impact of the Church of the Redeemer on the Jerusalem community. It was in fact Germans back in Europe, my work asserts, who served as the primary audience for the building. As a small German Protestant enclave largely divorced from its surrounding environment, a church of this level of grandeur was not intended simply for local worship, but rather functioned as a symbol of the wide reach of German culture, giving a religious face to the German imperial project.

In each of the three cases treated in my study, Oppler, Hehl and Adler developed particular brands of neo-Romanesque to suit their clients and to configure for themselves styles that were both new and historically reverential, both national and sacred. While these sacred structures are prime exemplars of many social and architectural themes, my aim is to present this synagogue and these churches neither as isolated case studies nor as highlights in a comprehensive survey of Wilhelmine architecture, religious or otherwise. I instead integrate these three houses of worship into a frame of reference that considers their architecture, decorative programs, and subsequent visual documentations within their larger urban, regional and national contexts. Thus, style and its expression in specific buildings become indicative of larger social themes and not merely ends in themselves. Such an analysis demands a wholly interdisciplinary approach, one that can account for contemporary style debates, the importance of specific regional and city contexts, and changes in liturgy. Therefore, I examine building materials as closely as I do contemporary printed and photographic representations of them, their interior decoration, and their use.

Through such an approach, the group of buildings, architects, and patrons treated in my study become a mirror onto the complex formation of religious communities in the modern era, a

topic often cast aside in both the conventional, secularizing narrative of modernism and historiographies of Germany's emergence as a modern nation-state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

1.2 STYLE AND NATIONALISM IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY GERMANY

A significant part of the imagination of a national community is the visual culture that presents and reflects the values and shared narrative of that community back onto itself.¹² That visual culture consists of flags and monuments, as well as buildings. For Germany, nation and style took on Christian symbolism most dramatically evidenced by the completion of Cologne Cathedral between 1842 and 1880. German engagement with medieval architecture at Cologne and elsewhere during the modern era signaled a deep bond between architecture, nation, and faith. Long before Oppler, Hehl, or Adler ever entered an arts academy, even before Romanesque was labeled "Romanesque," (and not Germanic, Byzantine or Old Christian), German writers and thinkers began to stare in awe at the towering spires of a bygone age left in their cities. Some of the first musings about the modern implications of medieval architecture came from Germany's most celebrated writer - Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Although he later turned to Classicism, Goethe's earlier *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) period led to his 1772 anonymously published essay, "On German Architecture," which celebrated the west façade of

¹² See by George L. Mosse: *Confronting the Nation: Jewish and Western Nationalism* (Hannover and London: Brandeis University Press, 1993) and *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1975).

Strasbourg Cathedral (constructed 1277-1318) and its architect Erwin von Steinbach.¹³ The young Goethe elegantly sang the praises of the Strasbourg architect and connected his building prowess to an unfailing German spirit. “[H]ow often have I gone back to enjoy this heavenly-earthly joy and to embrace the gigantic spirit of our ancient brothers in their works. . . . It is hard on the spirit of man when his brother’s work is so sublime that he can only bow and worship.”¹⁴ From that point forward medieval Gothic architecture unquestionably became imagined as the earliest significant and distinctly German contribution to European culture.

Fanned by the fires of anti-Napoleonic sentiment and burgeoning Romanticism, the soaring Gothic cathedral as organic, spontaneous, and above all Germanic, became one of the most potent images of German nationalism in the nineteenth century. Goethe had shaken the widely-held theory that the Gothic was Saracean in origin.¹⁵ By the first decade of the nineteenth century, supporters of the notion of the German origins of Gothic building included Romantic philosopher Friedrich von Schlegel, idealist thinker Friedrich W. J. Schelling and the looming architectural giant of nineteenth-century German lands – Karl Friedrich Schinkel.¹⁶ Although Prussian neo-Classicism defined his career, Schinkel matured architecturally in this wave of post-Napoleonic German Gothic enthusiasm. For him Gothic architecture represented “a notion of the eternal” that conjured a vision of the unportrayable through which humans are

¹³ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Von deutscher Baukunst*, ed. Lutz Unbehaun (1773; reprint, Rudelstadt: Hain Verlag, 1997). For an abridged translation see, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, from “On German Architecture” (1772), in Harry Francis Mallgrave, ed., *Architectural Theory: An Anthology from Vitruvius to 1870*, vol. 1 (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 367.

¹⁴ Goethe, from “On German Architecture” (1772), in Mallgrave, ed., *Architectural Theory: An Anthology from Vitruvius to 1870*, vol. 1, 367.

¹⁵ Thomas Nipperdey, “Kirchen als Nationaldenkmal: Die Pläne von 1815” in *Festschrift für Otto von Simson zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Lucius Grisebach and Konrad Renger (Frankfurt: Propyläen Verlag, 1977), 418.

¹⁶ See Schlegel’s essays, “Ansichten und Ideen von der christlichen Kunst” and “Grundzüge der gotischen Baukunst” in *Kritische Friedrich Schlegel Ausgabe*, eds. E. Behler, J.J. Anstett and H. Eichner (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1958). F. W. Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, ed. and trans. Douglas W. Stott (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

inextricably intertwined with the otherworldly and God.¹⁷ Although his plans for a national memorial church in the neo-Gothic style never came to fruition, Schinkel's funerary monument for Queen Luise in 1810, the National Memorial to the Wars of Liberation on the Kreuzberg completed in 1818 and other works are the lasting remnants of his fusion of the German nation and Christian faith in the language of the neo-Gothic.

As the titans of German culture presented in text and stone the Germanness of medieval Gothic architecture to a wider audience, research in the new discipline of art history provided the scholarly backing for such cultural projects. J. C. Costenoble published the first book in German exclusively on Gothic architecture in 1812.¹⁸ Eight years later Christian Ludwig Stieglitz completed *Von altdeutscher Baukunst*, a survey of medieval German architecture.¹⁹ The same year also produced Georg Moller's *Denkmäler der deutschen Baukunst*, covering the eighth through sixteenth centuries.²⁰

The looming backdrop to the rise of the German neo-Gothic style and Gothic architectural historiography was the ongoing dilemma of the completion of Cologne Cathedral.²¹ The cathedral foundation had stood since the mid-thirteenth century, but the unfinished south westwork tower with its huge medieval crane became the symbol of the city until the nineteenth century. Napoleonic forces used the cathedral as a warehouse in their march across central Europe. After Napoleon's defeat, writer Johann Joseph von Görres suggested the most fitting memorial to the Battle of Nations at Leipzig would be the completion of the Cologne Cathedral. It would also serve as a sign of greater things to come from the pulling together of the German

¹⁷ Alfred von Wolzogen, *Aus Schinkels Nachlaß: Reisetagebücher, Briefe und Aphorismen*, vol. 3 (Berlin: Verlag der Königlichen Geheimen Ober-Hofbuchdruckerei, 1863), 157; quoted in Nipperdey, "Kirchen als Nationaldenkmal," 419.

¹⁸ J. C. Costenoble, *Über altdeutsche Architektur* (Halle: Hemmerde & Schwetschke, 1812).

¹⁹ Christian Ludwig Stieglitz, *Von altdeutscher Baukunst* (Leipzig: Gerhard Fliescher, 1820).

²⁰ Georg Moller, *Denkmäler der deutschen Baukunst* (Leipzig: Leske, 1821).

²¹ Otto Dann, ed., *Religion, Kunst, Vaterland: Der Kölner Dom im 19. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Bachem, 1983).

polities.²² The final completion of the cathedral in 1880 was not in the end the definitive memorial to the Battle of Leipzig, but rather an exhibition of the acumen of theorist, journalist, and Rhineland politician August Reichensperger and the fundraising prowess of the *Dombauverein*, organized in 1842 to collect funds all over Germany for the project.²³

While emphasis in medieval building in the first decades of the nineteenth century rested on Gothic forms, the development of *Rundbogenstil* (round-arched style) introduced earlier architectural forms into Germany's contemporary building vocabulary. Any study of Wilhelmine neo-Romanesque architecture must treat this turn towards round arches, brick construction, and earlier historical models as the precursor to later round-arched construction found in kaiser-sponsored secular projects and neo-Romanesque churches and synagogues. Just as Wilhelm II looked back to Friedrich Wilhelm IV (1795-1861, King of Prussia 1840-1861) and his passionate support of both *Rundbogenstil* and religious reform, architects and theoreticians of the later decades of the nineteenth century looked to the earlier *Rundbogenstil* movement in their own studies. By then, the Gothic came to be seen as more tainted with foreign influence, as scholars pinpointed the style's origins to Abbot Suger at the abbey of Saint-Denis. Thus, early medieval and Romanesque architecture became subsumed in the German national movements as the universal formal language of the German *Volk*.

Heinrich Hübsch had launched *Rundbogenstil* in 1828 when he asked, "In Which Style Should We Build?" in an essay of the same title.²⁴ Although scholars typically define *Rundbogenstil* in terms of academic theory and scientific positivism, Hübsch imbued his

²² Nipperdey, "Kirchen als Nationaldenkmal," 414; Michael J. Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival: August Reichensperger* (London and Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1993), 30.

²³ See Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival*.

²⁴ Heinrich Hübsch, *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?* (Karlsruhe: Chr. Fr. Müller Hofbuchhandlung und Hofbuchdruckerei, 1828). For the English translation see, *In What Style Should We Build?: The German Debate on Architectural Style*, ed. and trans. Wolfgang Hermann (Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1992), 63-101.

architectural theories with a certain medievalist-inspired religious spirituality. His ideas were no doubt shaped by the Nazarenes in Rome, with whom he lived for a time. An artist group of German Catholic converts, the Nazarenes sought a restoration of early Christian spirituality through art.²⁵

Gathering momentum in Karlsruhe with Hübsch's theoretical treatises and debates, *Rundbogenstil* acquired diverse stylistic patinas in different metropolitan centers from Munich to Hannover. Prussian kings mobilized *Rundbogenstil* in secular and religious commissions after Schinkel's death in 1841 to fill the void in architectural leadership. In the Prussian capital, *Rundbogenstil* became an eclectic mix of Roman, early Christian, and medieval elements, representing the various styles in which the city's famed architect-leader had worked.²⁶

The choice of *Rundbogenstil* was not a mere aesthetic decision on behalf of Friedrich Wilhelm IV. Like his father Friedrich III, Friedrich Wilhelm was interested in religious reform and sought a unified Prussian Church, one that would extend to include both Reformed/Calvinist and Lutheran Protestants and even Catholics.²⁷ Unlike his father, however, he stood against the bureaucratization of the church and wanted the state to remain out of religious affairs. For Friedrich Wilhelm IV, the best model to create a church divorced from state affairs and that unified the confessions emerged in the early decades of Christianity, the Apostolic Age, after the Crucifixion when the Twelve Apostles led the church. Prussian builders emulated these early architectural forms – large open naves and basilican plans - in projects ranging from privately

²⁵ Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival*, 59; Jeanne Halgren Kilde, review of *The Romanesque Revival: Religion, Politics, and Transnational Exchange*, by Kathleen Curran, *Winterthur Portfolio* 39, no. 1 (Spring 2004), 85. For more on the Nazarenes see Mitchell B. Frank, *German Romantic Painting Redefined: Nazarene Tradition and the Narratives of Romanticism* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001) and Cordula Greve, *Painting the Sacred in the Age of Romanticism* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009).

²⁶ Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival*, 60.

²⁷ For more on Friedrich Wilhelm IV see Otto Büsch, ed., *Friedrich Wilhelm IV. in seiner Zeit* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1987) and Walter Bußmann, *Zwischen Preußen und Deutschland: Friedrich Wilhelm IV.: Eine Biographie* (Berlin: Boldmann Verlag, 1990).

financed churches like the Friedenskirche in Potsdam to more modest places of worship for working-class districts in Berlin.²⁸

By the mid-nineteenth century, new contributions to research on the medieval period ushered in a more nuanced and conflicted history of Germany's architectural past. In 1835, Johannes Wetter deduced that Gothic vaulting had first appeared in France and not Germany, signaling more troubling news to come for those who had tirelessly sought to solidify an inherent connection between soaring Gothic spires and the German national spirit.²⁹ Popp and Bülow's contemporaneous study of Gothic geometry in the Regensburg Cathedral rendered an alternative historical narrative.³⁰ Instead of dwelling on the non-Germanic origin of the Gothic style, they sidestepped that inconvenient reality by focusing instead on the mathematical relationships in Gothic architecture. Other scholars shifted focus to the celebration of Gothic monuments in places like Cologne, firmly planted on German soil. Later scholars simply turned to the *Sondergotik*, or later German variant of the Gothic, such as *Backsteingotik*, to uphold the connection between the German nation and Gothic architecture.³¹ Regardless, Gothic could no longer serve as an uncontested Germanic style to unite the nation under a single pointed vault. The national stage was left wide open for Romanesque architecture.

²⁸ See Curran, "Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm III and the Prussian Civil-Servant State" and "Friedrich Wilhelm IV and the Prusso-Christian State" in *The Romanesque Revival: Religion, Politics, and Transnational Exchange* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 94-178.

²⁹ Johannes Wetter, *Geschichte und Beschreibung des Domes zu Mainz* (Mainz: C. G. Kuenze, 1835).

³⁰ Justus Popp and Theodor Bülow, *Die Architektur des Mittelalters in Regensburg*, 9 vols. (Nuremberg: Sebald, 1834-9).

³¹ For example, see the scholarship of August Schmarsow, his students Erich Haenel and Wilhelm Niemeyer, Georg Dehio, and also Karl-Heinz Clasen's work of a later generation.

German art historians and architectural thinkers referred to this new category of building as “*neugriechisch*,” “*byzantinisch*,” “*vorgotisch*,” or finally, “*romanisch*.”³² The neologism “Romanesque” in English and the French counterpart “*architecture romane*,” described the same pre-Gothic round-arch building style, but confusion and debate over terminology was not restricted to German-speaking scholars. In his 1842 address to a meeting of the Cambridge Camden Society on “The Early History of Christian Architecture,” Edmund Sharpe listed the endless variety of nomenclature for the same architecture:

Mr. Gunn called *all* Christian architecture previous to the rise of the Gothick, Romanesque: German writers to this day call it with equal generality Byzantinisch. Professor Whewell, the reviver of the term Romanesque, does not appear to recognize a distinct Byzantine style. M. de Caumont designates the whole period as *Romane*. Mr. Hope used *Byzantine* without sufficient definition; and when contrasting it with *Lombardic*, must be supposed to use the latter term as equivalent to *Romanesque*. Wiebeking proposes to use *Neu Griechisch* instead of *Byzantinisch*. De Lassaulx adopts *Romanisch* as equivalent to the English *Romanesque* and the French *Romane*.³³

The term appeared first in German around 1830 in the writings of Sulpiz Boisseree.³⁴ By the mid-1840s, Germans began to employ the term “*romanisch*” consistently.

³² The development of German terminology for pre-Gothic architecture is complex and only tangentially related to my work here. For a detailed investigation of where nineteenth century German art historians stood in this debate, see Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 17-22.

³³ Edmund Sharpe, “The Early History of Christian Architecture,” *Ecclesiologist*, May 1842, 121. Quoted in Mark Crinson, *Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996) 74-5.

³⁴ Sulpiz Boisseree, *Sulpiz Boisseree: Briefwechsel, Tagebücher* (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1862).

The name may have Anglo-Francophone origins, but it was Germans who continued to refine the historiographical terminology and plunge into the categorization and cataloging of its constructed monuments.³⁵ Philosopher and jurist Karl Schnaase (1798-1875) compiled a seven-volume history of the visual arts, devoting five to the Middle Ages.³⁶ In his writing Schnaase asserted that both Romanesque and Gothic architecture embodied the unique spirit of the Germans. In 1856, architect and Royal Academy professor Franz Kugler decisively declared Romanesque to be the creation of “peoples of a Germanic nationality,” after discovering that Gothic was not German, but rather a French innovation.³⁷ He elaborated, “The Romanesque style appears to be so deeply embossed on the German people that it is difficult for them to depart from its forms.”³⁸ Kugler’s successor Wilhelm Lübke also continued this pattern of scholarship into the 1860s, 70s, and 80s, claiming everything before the Gothic was more German, and, therefore, more worthy of study.³⁹ For Lübke, the Ottonian and early Romanesque churches of St. Cyriacus at Gernrode and St. Servatius in Quedlinburg (both ancient strongholds of the Ottonians) were not only prototypes for later Romanesque monuments, but also acted as instruments of German colonization in the east.⁴⁰

With this growth of scholarship on German Romanesque art and architecture came an upsurge of neo-Romanesque building in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Kaiser

³⁵ William Gunn, *An Inquiry into the Origin and Influence of Gothic Architecture* (London: Richard and Arthur Taylor, 1819), cited in Georg Germann, *The Gothic Revival in Europe and Britain: Sources, Influences, and Ideas*, trans. Gerald Onn (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1972), 44.

³⁶ Karl Julius Ferdinand Schnaase with Wilhelm Lübke, Karl Friedrich Arnold von Lützow, Karl Friedrichs, Johann Rudolf Rahn, Alwin Schultz, Alfred Woltmann, Eduard Dobbert, and Oskar Eisenmann, *Geschichte der bildenden Künste*, 7 vols. (Düsseldorf: Buddeus, 1843-61).

³⁷ Franz Kugler, *Geschichte der Baukunst*, 6 vols. (Stuttgart: Ebner & Seubert, 1856).

³⁸ “[D]er romanische Stil erscheint dem deutschen Volksgeist so nachhaltig eingepägt, dass es ihm wiederum schwerfällt von seinem Formen zu scheiden.” Kugler, *Geschichte der Baukunst*, vol. 2, 303.

³⁹ Wilhelm Lübke, *Geschichte der Architektur von den ältesten Zeiten bis zur Gegenwart*, 6th ed. (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 1884-1886).

⁴⁰ Lübke, *Geschichte der Architektur*, 6th ed., 539-540.

Wilhelm II promoted the preservation of important early medieval churches and fortresses throughout Germany as well as the construction of new neo-Romanesque national monuments. Oftentimes, these new projects explicitly constructed a parallel between the celebrated leadership of the so-called First Empire rulers like Otto the Great (Holy Roman Emperor, ruled 936-973) or Friedrich Barbarossa (Holy Roman Emperor, ruled 1155-1190) and the reawakening of the German Empire under the Hohenzollern kaisers of the nineteenth century. This attempt at establishing dynastic continuity translated well into architectural revival and the harkening back to the more enduring, stable, round-arched forms of the German Romanesque. Monuments like the Kyffhäuser memorial in the hills of Thuringia by Bruno Schmitz (1890-1896) or the renovation and massive painting program of the twelfth-century imperial palace of Goslar (renovations 1868-1879, paintings 1879-1897) are the most striking testament of this type of propagandistic building.

A modern revision of Romanesque architecture easily transformed into the national style with which the kaiser sought to present a Protestant-infused, Prussian-centered version of the German nation. And the sleeker lines and geometric bulk of the neo-Romanesque style lent themselves well to industrial modernity, an equally vital element of the kaiser's imperial agenda. Already in 1842 *Rundbogenstil* proponent Rudolf Wiegmann proclaimed, "With Romanesque one can build modern and era-appropriate."⁴¹ By the end of the nineteenth century, post offices with round arch arcades and stocky piers, sprawling bureaucratic complexes with bulky stonework and towers, hospitals, schools, warehouses, water towers and other modern reincarnations of Romanesque fortresses dotted the German cityscape.

⁴¹ "Mit romanisch kann man modern und 'zeitgemäß' bauen." Rudolf Wiegmann, "Gedanken über die Entwicklung eines zeitgemäßen nationalen Baustils," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1841), 207–214.

The situation in Berlin was quite complex, as waves of new German and Polish Catholic immigration entered the city throughout the nineteenth century in search of jobs in industry and better living conditions. Alongside Orthodox Jews from the east, these new immigrants mingled with not only local Protestants and Reform Jews but also leftist workers' political organizations. Berlin never underwent a completely medievalizing architectural overhaul; the classicism of Schinkel and later eclectic variations of his students remained dominant. Nevertheless, only two years into his reign, Wilhelm II had already instigated the laying of cornerstones for three different Protestant churches in Berlin.⁴² His wife Auguste Victoria spearheaded many of the church building campaigns, aided by her advisor and director of the Evangelical Church Building Association, Ernst Freiherr von Mirbach. The intense phase of church construction that followed included all styles of medievalism – ranging from the strict Hannoverian neo-Gothicism of the Church of the Redeemer in Berlin-Rummelsberg to modernized Romanesque projects in Jerusalem.

Wilhelm's favored architect Franz Schwechten propagated the Romanesque and erected the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church and surrounding Romanesque House and Romanesque Café (1893-99).⁴³ At the church's dedication, von Mirbach emphasized how the new memorial church evoked both the political and architectural grandeur of the past without mentioning any of the modern elements Schwechten had incorporated. Suspicious of the relatively new term "Romanesque" because it did not stress the Germanic quality of the architecture, Mirbach referred to Schwechten's structures as "Germanic" and "old German" to stress their national

⁴² Jürgen Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem: Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), 210.

⁴³ Vera Frowien-Ziroff, *Die Kaiser-Wilhelm-Gedächtniskirche. Entstehung und Bedeutung Die Bauwerke und Kunstdenkmäler von Berlin*, (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1982); Peer Zietz, *Franz Heinrich Schwechten: Ein Architekt zwischen Historismus und Moderne* (Stuttgart/London: Edition Axel Menges, 1999).

character. “The church is built in the Germanic style. In it the authentic old German building style from the heyday of the empire under the Hohenstaufens is revived.”⁴⁴

The rest of Berlin’s neo-Romanesque building was left to churches, such as Hehl’s Rosary Church in the suburb of Steglitz, and synagogues, many of which present a very different version of the Romanesque than that of state-sponsored works.⁴⁵ Less architecturally developed eastern territories provided the kaiser a cleaner slate to create a narrative of cultural superiority and political prowess via the language of the neo-Romanesque. Schwechten’s Imperial Forum (1902) and Palace (1905-11) in the provincial capital of Posen reflect the Reich’s conflation of past and future in stone.⁴⁶ The Palace specifically exhibits rough-cut stonework and a bulky, asymmetrical plan modeled after existent early medieval palaces such as in Goslar and churches like those in Gernrode and Quedlinburg. Just as Charlemagne or Otto the Great had asserted German domination in neighboring lands through the establishment of monasteries, convents, dioceses, and the construction of fortifications, the kaiser sought to emulate their expansionist policy and architectural styles. This was a strategy he had already pursued by coupling the dedication of the hulking neo-Romanesque Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem on October 31, 1898 (Reformation Day) with his trip through the Ottoman-ruled Middle East.

⁴⁴ “Die Kirche ist im germanischen Baustil erbaut. In ihr ist der echte altdeutsche Baustil aus der Glanzzeit des Kaiserreiches unter den Hohenstaufen wieder belebt.” Freiherr von Mirbach, *Die Kaiser-Wilhelm Gedächtniskirche* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler Verlag, 1897), 163.

⁴⁵ For more on synagogues, see Harold Hammer-Schenk, “Berliner Synagogen bis zum Ersten Weltkrieg,” in *Synagogen in Deutschland*. For Berlin churches see Manfred Klinkott, *Die Backsteinbaukunst der Berliner Schule, Die Bauwerke und Kunstdenkmäler von Berlin*, 15 (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1988); Gerhard Langmaack, *Evangelischer Kirchenbau im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Kassel: Johannes Stauda Verlag, 1971); Julius Posener, *Berlin auf dem Weg zu einer neuen Architektur. Das Zeitalter Wilhelm II.* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1979); Architekten-und Ingenieur-Verein zu Berlin, *Berlin und seine Bauten., Teil VI (Sakralbauten)* (Berlin: W. Ernst & Sohn, 1997).

⁴⁶ Konstanty Kalinowski, “Sala Tronowa Rezydencji Cesarskiej w Poznaniu,” in *Materialy Muzeum Wnetrz Zabytkowych W Pszczynie IV* (Pszczyna, 1987), 151-167; Jan Skuratowix, “Zamek Cesarski w Poznaniu,” in *Materialy Muzeum Wnetrz Zabytkowych W Pszczynie, IV* (Pszczyna, 1987), 126-150; Jan Skuratowicz, *Architektura Poznania 1890-1918* (Poznan: Wydawn. Nauk, UAM, 1991); Paul Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*.

1.3 APPROACHES TO MEDIEVALISM IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE

The records of medievalist architects describe the difficulty of balancing the use of historical styles and a quest for architectural innovation in their works. But scholarship in the twentieth century has done much to degrade the story of medievalist architecture to one of uncreative straightforward replication.⁴⁷ This perception is most visibly manifest in discussions that pit notions of nineteenth-century historicism against twentieth-century modernism. As recently as 2007, German architectural historian Holger Brülls noted how historicism acquired a potent stigma almost immediately after its inception and how dismissive criticism stills considers it a regressive cultural misstep.⁴⁸ More recently, in the March 2008 *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Stefan Muthesius began his review of Ralf Mennekes' *Die Renaissance der deutschen Renaissance* by highlighting the lingering misconceptions surrounding historicism and nineteenth century cultural production in general:

To this day German historiography generally characterizes architecture of [the late nineteenth century] in terms of 'historicism,' reflecting a modernist point of view that nineteenth-century designers passively adopted past styles. Old forms are assumed to be just there, an idea that completely ignores the fact that these forms first had to be discovered, 'seen,'

⁴⁷ Architect of the Märkisches Museum in Berlin, Ludwig Hoffmann, described the arduous process of sifting through the centuries of architectural production in order to create something that would speak to the present moment in contrast to the architects of previous periods who "were more reliant upon themselves and therefore more timid and careful in the approach to work." In Ludwig Hoffmann, "Lebenserinnerungen eines Architekten," in *Die Bauwerke und Kunstdenkmäler von Berlin*, ed. Wolfgang Schäche (Berlin: W. Ernst & Sohn, 1983), 87.

⁴⁸ Holger Brülls, "Die Modernität des rückwärtsgewandten Bauens: Selbstlegitimation und Selbstkritik des Historismus in architekturtheoretischen Äußerungen von Johannes Otzen," *kunsttexte.de* 4 (2007): 1-22.

learned and valorized, and only then given contemporary significance, which has varied over time.⁴⁹

In the past forty years, some scholars have begun to reconsider the place of medievalism in German architectural history and European modernism in general. Although they do not call into question larger issues of modern historiography and the treatment of historicism, Michael Bringmann and Albrecht Mann's dissertations from the late 1960s on neo-Romanesque architecture in Germany provided the spadework for later monographs and regional studies in the field.⁵⁰ Michael J. Lewis, Günter Kokkelink, Monika Lemke-Kokkelink, and others have focused on neo-Gothicism and its various regional manifestations.⁵¹

Architectural historian Barbara Miller Lane, however, led the challenge to conventional accounts that downplayed the architectural connections between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Germany.⁵² Working to amend earlier dismissals or misconceptions surrounding medievalist architecture, Lane asserts that the neo-Romanesque architecture of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Germany is the vital missing link between a seemingly regressive historicism and an aesthetically innovative modernism. The centerpiece of her work is *National Romanticism*, which she defines as, "a movement in the fine and applied arts, architecture,

⁴⁹ Stefan Muthesius, review of *Die Renaissance der deutschen Renaissance*, by Ralf Mennekes, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 67, no. 1 (March 2008), 139.

⁵⁰ Michael Bringmann, *Studien zur neoromanischen Architektur in Deutschland* (Ph.D. diss., University of Heidelberg, 1968); Albrecht Mann, *Die Neoromanik: Eine Rheinische Komponente im Historismus des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Greven Verlag, 1966).

⁵¹ Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival*; Günter Kokkelink and Monika Lemke-Kokkelink, *Baukunst in Norddeutschland: Architektur und Kunsthandwerk der Hannoverschen Schule (1850-1900)* (Hannover: Schlütersche GmbH & Co, 1998).

⁵² Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918-1945*, 2nd ed (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985); "National Romanticism in Modern German Architecture," in *Nationalism in the Visual Arts*, ed. Richard Etlin (National Gallery of Art, 1991), 111-147; *National Romanticism in Germany and the Scandinavian Countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

music, literature, and philosophy that took place in Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Finland from about 1885 to about 1920.”⁵³ For Lane, National Romantic architects responded to the new nationalism by turning to the precedents of early medieval and even prehistoric times in order to create new kinds of buildings suitable for new audiences and new uses. By viewing modern architecture through the lens of National Romanticism (instead of the traditional filters of formalism or functionalism), the significance of medievalist building to the history of modern German architecture and the formation of national identity comes into clearer view. Lane contends, “Only after the development of National Romanticism is fully understood will it be possible to return to a broader understanding of the early development of modern architecture.”⁵⁴

Lane’s work concentrates on monumental architecture in national capitals and domestic architecture and design. She deals with religious architecture primarily in terms of state cathedrals or with respect to other churches that overtly served as national monuments in their use of the neo-Romanesque. Her interpretive framework, in general, downplays the contribution of ecclesiastic, and non-state-sponsored, architecture to the built terrain of the neo-Romanesque. Synagogue architecture, moreover, only receives brief mention in her work.⁵⁵

In this sense, Lane follows in the pattern set by previous architectural historians of the modern era who elide or overlook the contested terrain of religious architecture. My work nonetheless builds on her important critical insights with a close investigation of selected religious buildings in order to complicate further previous historiographic notions of the universalizing, secularizing neo-Romanesque. This study of neo-Romanesque architecture used

⁵³ Lane, *National Romanticism in Germany and the Scandinavian Countries*, 1.

⁵⁴ Lane, *National Romanticism in Germany and the Scandinavian Countries*, 17.

⁵⁵ Religious architectural expression only enters into her argument where, “architects celebrated the home itself as a temple, but as a pagan one” or “new buildings of particular national importance, like the Finnish National Museum, often looked like churches.” Lane, “National Romanticism and Modern German Architecture,” 127 and *National Romanticism and Modern Architecture in Germany and the Scandinavian Countries*, 236.

by religious groups who were the minority in their respective locations reveals that the reasons for the use of this style were indeed more complex and revelatory than heretofore acknowledged. Instead of following an established narrative of the homogenizing and nationalizing power of the neo-Romanesque, I focus instead on this architectural style's role in moments of contestation. These moments not only defined important aspects of the modernization process in Germany but were also seen most powerfully, as my work contends, in the country's religious building projects.

My other point of departure is the work of Kathleen James-Chakraborty and her work on the creation of a hybridized sacred-secular architecture for a mass audience in post-World War I Germany.⁵⁶ James-Chakraborty asserts that the fundamental shift in architecture of the modern era, including styles ranging from medievalist to functionalist to reactionary imperialist, is the task of suiting architecture to a mass audience and using architecture to structure and shape large, diverse communities. Architects accomplish this new type of building, she argues, through a total fusion of the sacred and the secular. Instead of limiting her account to analyses of architectural texts and criticism or social history (the function of buildings in a given context), she combines both approaches to reveal how buildings as divergent as Max Berg's Centenary Hall (1913, Breslau) and Dominikus Böhm's St. Engelbert Church (1930-32, Cologne-Riehl) are contextualized both physically and intellectually. Her formulation is key in considering architecture's complex relationship with the modern urban landscape and diverse social groups. I strive to build my own methodology on James-Chakraborty's dual approach to analyzing architecture. And like James-Chakraborty, I also rely heavily on contemporary architectural journals, local and national newspapers and periodicals, and critics' reports of these buildings as

⁵⁶ Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *German Architecture for a Mass Audience* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

a way to focus on the relationship of the buildings considered in my study to their built surroundings and the larger public.

In this study I move the roots of modern mass architecture back to the last third of the nineteenth century, not to claim that these architects and buildings directly influenced the interwar avant-garde, but rather to approach these works outside the historicist-modernist impasse. Architects like Oppler, Hehl and Adler struggled with the same questions as the later generations treated in James-Chakraborty's study, namely, questioning the relationship between the built environment and the community it serves, and questioning what architectural forms might best reflect the ideals of a dynamic religious community with not only a rich past but also a modern outlook. As Despina Stratigakos asserted in her review of *German Architecture for a Mass Audience*, "[James-Chakraborty's] analysis of community-centered ecclesiastic architecture relative to liturgical reforms and the fracturing of congregations by class conflicts brings much-needed attention to the influence of the church, together with ritual and mysticism, on spatial expressions of modernity during the interwar period."⁵⁷ Indeed, when we answer James-Chakraborty's urging to study modern religious architecture as vigorously as its secular counterpart, we are compelled to turn to the Wilhelmine era. This process also opens our research agenda to architects like Hehl once relegated to the sidelines of architectural history.

The core themes of my dissertation – identity negotiation between religion and national secular society, a longing for an imagined past as inspiration to create new styles for a new constellation of community – are not only the essential components of our definition of modernity but also what continues to frame our experiences today. Acknowledging these driving forces behind the construction and reception of the New Synagogue in Breslau, the Rosary

⁵⁷ Despina Stratigakos, review of *German Architecture for a Mass Audience*, by Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 63, no. 2 (June 2004), 238.

Church in Berlin-Steglitz, and the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem shifts our understanding of neo-Romanesque religious architecture from a retrograde anomaly in the history of modern architecture to its place in the beginnings of what later became architectural modernism in Germany. This synagogue and these churches treated in my study thus serve as exemplary models to understand not only the neo-Romanesque in the German consciousness, but also the challenges of diversity and multicultural society that continue to define our world today.

These social issues run throughout the following chapters, each arranged as a case study devoted to one of the sacred structures. Each chapter takes the current state of literature for each building and architect as its starting point. I move to an analysis of these different expressions of neo-Romanesque building that does not smooth over moments of contestation – conflicts and debates not present in the scholarship on German neo-Romanesque architecture. My approach views these religious sites not from the top down, which assumes some type of secularized, homogenized national standard for neo-Romanesque architecture. That standard has previously relegated the New Synagogue, Rosary Church and Church of the Redeemer to second-class status. Rather, I begin from below to restore a voice to these minority groups and their structures.

To a certain extent, the case of the Church of the Redeemer, in which the kaiser directed the commission, provides a comparative example to counter the New Synagogue and Rosary Church. Even the Church of the Redeemer, however, cannot be considered a straightforward imperial commission. In this case, the Church of the Redeemer is a product of the German imperial machine that speaks to the national and secular interests at home in the Kaiserreich. However, it also serves the needs of a minority religious community abroad. German Protestants were a small minority in Ottoman-controlled Palestine. They were one group among many

different European Christian communities trying to stake a claim to the Holy Lands. This situation mirrors the complex political, religious and architectural debates which swirled around the synagogues and churches commissioned by minority religious groups in the German Empire. Thus, these three buildings – the New Synagogue, the Rosary Church, and the Church of the Redeemer - need to be taken seriously as important reminders of the tension between religion and the modern, secular nation-state. The fragile line between them is manifest in each of these case studies.

Chapter one focuses on Edwin Oppler's New Synagogue in Breslau, a building born out of the struggle to modernize Jewish liturgy, and establishes a place for a German national identity in the burgeoning Reform splinter congregation. When it was completed in 1872, the New Synagogue in Breslau redefined the already diverse demographic landscape of this southeastern Prussian metropolis, adding a neo-Romanesque dome to the Gothic and Baroque cityscape. The scholar's link to contemporary sources pertaining to the New Synagogue is often tenuous, as National Socialists destroyed the synagogue and many of the congregation records and building documents when they burned the structure in 1938. The Central Jewish Historical Commission of Poland recovered any archival remnants after the war when the German city Breslau became Polish Wrocław. The city archives in Hannover maintain the collection of Oppler's papers and drawings, the most significant primary source for my work. In the Jewish Museum of Berlin, I examined the writings of Rabbis Abraham Geiger and Manuel Joël, hitherto not brought into connection with Oppler's approach to synagogue architecture in Breslau. I also consulted contemporary Jewish (*Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*) and architectural periodicals (*Centralblatt des Bauwesens*, *Deutsche Bauzeitung*).

Oppler is not the only Hannover School alumnus who defined his career by designing neo-Romanesque buildings that gave voice to a religious minority. Christoph Hehl, a former employee in Oppler's atelier, created the Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz as a structure that looked back to the religion's origins and forward to its place in the modern German nation-state. Although hailed at his death as an architect who forged his own way beyond conservative historicism, Christoph Hehl slipped out of the range of an architectural historiography that emphasized formal innovation and a drive towards abstraction throughout much of the twentieth century. Andreas Tacke revived the memory of Hehl and his work for Berlin Catholics in his scholarship of the past two decades.⁵⁸ Tacke's spadework was hugely influential in my investigation; however, I depart from Tacke's interpretation of Hehl as a purely historicist architect. Tacke's view that Hehl "remained totally committed to historicism, in a time which was defined by the rise of modernism"⁵⁹ reveals an outdated definition of both modernism and historicism that ignores the flexibility and expressiveness of Hehl's medievalism that embraced both early modernist strains and remained committed to historical models.

The archive at the Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz provided a nearly ideal situation for my research. Parish priest Josef Deitmer kept meticulous parish chronicles, including relevant clippings from the local press. Separate files concerning the building and decoration of the church are also extant as well as *Festschripte* from important anniversary celebrations, which detail various aspects of the building and its history. These resources are particularly useful, as the majority of Hehl's personal papers, drawings, and watercolors are now lost. The few remaining plans are located in the collection of the Technical University of Berlin. While these

⁵⁸ See footnote 10 for a complete list of the work of Andreas Tacke.

⁵⁹ "Hehl war in einer Zeit, die vom Aufbruch in die Moderne bestimmt war, ganz und gar dem Historismus verpflichtet geblieben." Tacke, "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel," 145.

documents are not previously unknown sources, my work is the first to use these materials to relate directly to Hehl's penchant for both central plans and strong west entrances to a modernizing impulse, developing connections to later generations of church architects. For designs and drawings, I relied primarily on articles published in contemporary architectural periodicals (*Deutsche Bauzeitung*, *Die christliche Kunst*, *Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung*, *Berliner Architekturwelt*). I was able to visit this building, which was spared any destruction during World War II, and see almost exactly what the first congregation saw over one hundred years ago.

Chapter three presents a different perspective from that of chapters one and two in that the focus of this case study is a Protestant church, commissioned by the kaiser for the dominant religious group of the empire. As indicated earlier, the narrative of neo-Romanesque architecture, as seen from above, is one of imperial homogenization. Religious architecture, especially a building like the Church of the Redeemer completed outside of imperial territory in a multi-cultural urban center, does complicate this standard interpretation and often reveals contestation immediately below the imperial façade between the diverse parties involved in a commission.

Despite the importance to the entire German nation of the Church of the Redeemer and the German religious institutions that sprang up in Palestine, scholars tend to view German involvement in Palestine, beginning with the short-lived joint Anglican-Prussian bishopric of the mid-nineteenth century, as merely a brief precursor to the actual German-owned colonies scattered throughout the world. And art and architectural historians of Kaiserreich Germany have only recently begun to address the lacuna of scholarly attention devoted to German cultural

production abroad.⁶⁰ Even more essential to understanding the Church of the Redeemer are the mediated images of the building widely distributed via imperial photobooks, albums, memoirs and commemorative publications for a German domestic audience.

Since Kaiser Wilhelm II attended the dedication of the church as part of his much heralded Middle East Trip in 1899, access to published trip reports, journals, picture books, and accounts in periodicals in Berlin proved convenient as well.⁶¹ Historians have not examined the formal qualities of these materials or incorporated an analysis of these objects into a larger investigation of the visual culture of the Church of the Redeemer. I approach the architecture of the church, the pageantry associated with its dedication, and the imagery of the related publications as one phenomenon to advance our understanding of the role of visual culture, including the use of neo-Romanesque architecture, in the German imperial project.

To conclude, I expand my scope beyond the Kaiserreich to consider the role of the sacred and medievalism in the Weimar Republic and under National Socialism. In fact, neo-medieval architecture emerges as a crucial link between these periods in German history that are often artificially separated instead of seen in a longer diachronic continuum. Ultimately, my

⁶⁰ See recent conferences and panels: “German Architecture, Design, and the Non-Western World during the Kaiserreich and the Weimar Republic,” Society of Architectural Historians Annual Meeting, Pasadena, April 2009 and “Germany’s Colonialism in International Perspective, International Interdisciplinary Conference on German Colonialism and Post-Colonialism,” San Francisco, September 2007. On German architecture in Palestine, the majority of the meager literature is devoted to Schinkel’s plans for the renovation of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. See Christiane Schütz, *Preussen in Jerusalem (1800-1861): Karl Friedrich Schinkels Entwurf der Grabeskirche und die Jerusalempläne Friedrich Wilhelms IV.* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1988) and Kathleen Curran, *The Romanesque Revival*, 181-190.

⁶¹ Ludwig Schneller, *Die Kaiserfahrt durchs Heilige Lande* (Leipzig: H.G. Wallmann, 1899); Heinrich Niemöller, *Hinauf gen Jerusalem: Gedenkbuch der offiziellen Festfahrt zur Einweihung der Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1899); Ernst Freiherr von Mirbach, ed., *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar im Heiligen Lande im Herbst 1898. Mit Allerhöchster Ermächtigung Seiner Majestät des Kaisers und Königs bearbeitet nach authentischen Berichten und Akten* (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1899); F. Zange, *Die Jerusalemfahrt Kaiser Wilhelms II. Im Lichte der Geschichte* (Berlin: Verlag von Reuther & Reichard, 1899). For contemporary periodicals on German involvement in Palestine, I consulted *Die Warte des Tempels* and *Neuste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande*. In the architectural publications, I focused on reports published in *Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung* and *Zentralblatt für Bauwesen*.

investigation of the struggles of religious minorities to reach a kind of distinctive assimilation in their architecture during the Kaiserreich brings crucial insight to similar debates about the role of religion in secular society and minority religious architectural expression in Europe today.

2.0 “THE GERMAN JEW IN THE GERMAN STATE MUST ALSO BUILD IN THE GERMAN STYLE”: EDWIN OPPLER CONCEPTUALIZES A GERMAN-JEWISH NATIONAL STYLE IN THE NEW SYNAGOGUE OF Breslau

In his autobiography, *Five Germanys I Have Known*, Fritz Stern begins with a Germany he did not personally know, the Kaiserreich.⁶² Stern relies on his research as a historian on Wilhelmine Germany and the memories saved in copious family correspondence to provide the reader with an evocative glimpse into his ancestral Germany: the vibrant and diverse metropolis of Breslau situated on the Oder River in Silesia.⁶³ Stern’s grandparents and parents were middle-class, liberal physicians, living on the southeastern fringes of Prussia. Although their lineage was Jewish, they joined a small group of Breslau’s Jewish intellectuals and professionals who converted to Protestantism in the nineteenth century. His family history serves as a microcosm of German-Jewish social relations in an important urban center often overlooked in historical research.⁶⁴ Breslau, in fact, was the second largest city in Prussia in the late nineteenth century,

⁶² Fritz Stern, *Five Germanys I Have Known* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006).

⁶³ At the end of World War II German territory east of the Oder and Neisse Rivers, including Breslau, became part of the newly recreated Polish nation-state. Breslau underwent an almost complete population transfer and was henceforth known as Wrocław. For the sake of consistency, I will use German nomenclature.

⁶⁴ Interest in Breslau has been spurred in recent years by a host of works. Gregor Thum’s Georg Dehio Prize-winning book, *Die fremde Stadt: Breslau 1945* (Berlin: Siedler, 2003) focuses on the transfer of the city from Germany to the newly defined Polish republic in 1945. Norman Davies and Roger Moorhouse present a broad-sweeping historical survey of the city and its various manifestations as Piast stronghold, Hapsburg trading center, Prussian metropolis, and Polish provincial capital, among others in *Microcosm: Portrait of a Central European City* (London: Jonathon Cape, 2002). In *Juden und andere Breslauer: Die Beziehung zwischen Juden, Protestanten und Katholiken in einer deutschen Großstadt zwischen 1860 und 1925* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000) Till van Rahden analyzes various aspects of social life in Breslau (communal politics, inter-marriage, the school

quadrupling in size between 1860 and 1910 from 128,000 inhabitants to 500,000.⁶⁵ As Stern summarizes,

My great-grandparents and their descendants participated in the prosperity and prominence of Breslau, a dynamically expanding commercial-industrial center with a large agricultural hinterland and rich coal mines to the southeast. . . . The state sustained the university, while the city fathers promoted Breslau's cultural life – as evident in theater and music, in its academy or arts – attracting talent in all fields. Breslau wasn't comparable to Berlin or Munich or Vienna, but it was ambitious and successful.⁶⁶

After Berlin and Hamburg, Breslau had the third largest Jewish population in the German empire, numbering over 20,000 at its zenith.⁶⁷

The synagogue commissioned by this large community in the 1860s encapsulates the challenges of creating a modern German and Jewish architecture. This period in German Jewish history was a time of great liturgical upheaval, as modernizing reform groups splintered off from those Jews who held close to their ancient traditions. Large synagogues like the New Synagogue in Breslau reflected these contemporary debates in the Jewish community. Stylistically, Edwin Oppler conveyed the multi-layered identity of German Jews with a uniform neo-Romanesque exterior announcing the congregation's national allegiance and an eclectic interior which expressed a much more complex affiliation to an audience of the initiated.

system, among others) to reveal a more complex image of German-Jewish relations during the Kaiserreich. Van Rahden has also been translated recently into English: *Jews and Other Germans: Civil Society, Religious Diversity, and Urban Politics in Breslau, 1860-1925*, trans. Marcus Brainard (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2008).

⁶⁵ Stern, 14-15.

⁶⁶ Stern, 15-16.

⁶⁷ Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 213; and Stern, 16.

The destruction of the New Synagogue by the National Socialists, the murder of Breslau's Jews during the Holocaust, and the geo-political realignment of Central Europe after World War II that left Breslau part of the new Polish Republic all contributed to the lack of inquiry into this architectural monument. These events also reflect a general neglect of European synagogues in architectural historical scholarship during the last half century. There is little discussion of synagogues in relation to the Christian and secular architecture that dominates European cityscapes in introductory architectural surveys. The first monographic studies of European synagogue architecture appeared in German in the first decades of the twentieth century.⁶⁸ Rachel Wischnitzer's *The Architecture of the European Synagogue* in 1964 introduced the subject to the Anglophone world, paving the way for other broad overviews such as Carol Herselle Krinsky's *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning*.⁶⁹

In recent decades, a wave of German scholarship has enhanced the earlier phase of introductory work on synagogue architecture. Germany and German-influenced lands may offer the fewest number of surviving synagogues, but the documentation, variety, and socio-political history of those synagogues provides a fertile field for research. Harold Hammer-Schenk's, *Synagogen in Deutschland: Geschichte einer Baugattung im 19. und im 20. Jahrhundert (1780-1933)* ushered in this new scholarship with extensive analysis of German synagogues built in the modern era.⁷⁰ Weaving countless narratives of particular architects, buildings, and congregations into discussions of developments of styles and their meanings, Hammer-Schenk set the standard for German-Jewish architectural research. What Hammer-Schenk's work fails to

⁶⁸ Alfred Grotte, *Deutsche, Böhmische und Polnische Synagogentypen vom XI. bis Anfang XIX. des Jahrhunderts*; Richard Krautheimer, *Mittelalterliche Synagogen*.

⁶⁹ Rachel Wischnitzer, *The Architecture of the European Synagogue*; Carol Herselle Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe*.

⁷⁰ Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*.

include, however, are the larger debates about the role of architecture in the modern nation-state and the intertwined history of multi-confessional urban centers. My conclusions depart from Hammer-Schenk to consider the New Synagogue vis-à-vis religious debates within the Breslau Jewish community and to insert the building into the larger architectural context. My goal is not to provide a comprehensive understanding of neo-Romanesque synagogue architecture but rather to understand what the New Synagogue in Breslau can teach us about inner-Jewish debates and inter-confessional architectural competition and expression in an oft-neglected multi-cultural German metropolis.

Building on Hammer-Schenk's intellectual momentum, the German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt organized a lavish exhibition of synagogue architecture in 1988 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of *Reichskristallnacht* on November 9-10, 1938.⁷¹ The catalogue included essays by editor Hans-Peter Schwarz and other German experts on topics ranging from ancient synagogues and the famed wooden synagogues in eastern Europe to Hammer-Schenk's essay on nineteenth-century German synagogues. In his catalogue introduction, Schwarz asks why the field has been slow to integrate synagogues into architectural history. He grounds his answer in the theological and historical distinctiveness of Askenazi Judaism: the Talmudic proscription of imagery and the private nature of synagogues in Europe. Before the modern era, European synagogues were hidden behind ghetto walls, deep in inner courtyards, or obscured altogether from public view in private residences.⁷² Schwarz also proposes a lack of larger formal innovations or theoretical discussion on choice of style as reasons for the exclusion of synagogues. However, Oppler's New Synagogue in Breslau offers a

⁷¹ Hans-Peter Schwarz, ed., *Die Architektur der Synagoge im deutschsprachigen Raum* (Frankfurt am Main: Deutsches Architekturmuseum and Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1988).

⁷² Schwarz, "Einleitung," in *Die Architektur der Synagoge im deutschsprachigen Raum*, ed. Hans-Peter Schwarz (Frankfurt am Main: Deutsches Architekturmuseum and Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1988), 24-6.

striking counter-example to Schwarz's assertion. Working in a distinctly neo-Romanesque vein decades before the style appears in secular buildings and churches, Oppler and the Breslau New Synagogue offer a rare episode in which the construction of a synagogue pushed stylistic innovation in uncharted directions.

In the past fifteen years, architecture students under the guidance of Professor Manfred Koob and engineer Marc Grellert at the Technical University of Darmstadt undertook a bold new project to establish a different approach to understanding German synagogues.⁷³ Using CAD technology, they have reconstructed dozens of German synagogues destroyed during *Reichskristallnacht*. The publication and internet site provide a historical overview and virtual tours of these lost buildings, meticulously recreating ornamentation and architectural detail. The university has also expanded the project to include an online database of German and Austrian synagogues with historical information, images, contemporary press articles, and an interactive option so users with firsthand experiences of the buildings can share their stories. Oppler's first synagogue (Calenberger-Neustadt, previously Bergstraße 15/16, Hannover), but not his New Synagogue in Breslau, is included as one of the eleven synagogues highlighted on the website and publication. The neglect of Oppler's prestigious synagogue for one of the largest Jewish congregations stems from the artificial construction of nation-state borders that left Breslau's cultural heritage in Polish territory after 1945.

⁷³ Technische Universität Darmstadt, Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Bonn, and Institut für Ausländerbeziehungen, eds., *Synagogen in Deutschland: eine virtuelle Rekonstruktion* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2004). The web address for the virtual synagogues is <http://www.cad.architektur.tu-darmstadt.de/synagogen/inter/menu.html> and the archive of German and Austrian synagogues is <http://cad-cook.architektur.tu-darmstadt.de/synagogen/>. Note this archive does not include synagogues in former German or German-influenced territories now part of countries reformed after World War II. This includes not only Breslau (present day Wrocław, Poland), but also Königsberg (present day Kaliningrad, Russia) and the wealth of medieval and modern synagogues in Strasbourg, Budweis, Poznan, Gdansk, and beyond.

It was not only political or religious divides that cast Oppler to the edges of architectural research. As a medievalist, Oppler was subject to the same disregard as many of his peers by early twentieth-century modernists. Jewish art historian Ernst Cohn-Wiener railed against the “building masquerade” of the historicists in his 1929 book on Jewish art.⁷⁴ Oppler’s choice of neo-medieval styles he found particularly revolting, believing them only acceptable for Christian architecture. On Oppler he admonished, “And nevertheless the medieval hybrid style, which Edwin Oppler invented, became typical for all of his synagogues, with which Germany was downright inundated.”⁷⁵ As late as 1972, Heinrich Strauss bemoaned, “Romanesque synagogues in the style of German imperial grandeur (according to the taste of Kaiser Wilhelm II), . . . an unprincipled conglomeration of all church styles and just as ugly as most of these historicist churches.”⁷⁶

A more recent body of research has exposed the fascinating career of Edwin Oppler. Largely biographical, Peter Eilitz’s dissertation on Edwin Oppler in 1970 was the first to catalogue Oppler’s entire oeuvre, which includes urban office buildings, middle class villas, renovations of country estates, a church, and a half dozen synagogues.⁷⁷ The Breslau synagogue merits a catalogue entry and one illustration, but Eilitz’s lack of firsthand access to surviving buildings and documents in the German Democratic Republic and Poland proved limiting.⁷⁸

Hammer-Schenk was the first to publish Oppler’s series of explanatory reports

⁷⁴ Ernst Cohn-Wiener, *Die jüdische Kunst. Ihre Geschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Berlin: M. Wasservogel, 1929).

⁷⁵ Cohn-Wiener, 239.

⁷⁶ [R]omanische Synagogen im Stile deutscher Kaiserherrlichkeit nach dem Geschmacke des damals regierenden Kaisers Wilhelm II., . . . ein gesinnungsloses Sammelsurium aller Kirchenstile und ebenso häßlich wie die meisten in diesen historisierenden Stilen gebauten Kirchen. Heinrich Strauss, *Die Kunst der Juden im Wandel der Zeit und Umwelt* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1972), 113.

⁷⁷ Peter Eilitz, “Leben und Werk des königlichen hannoverschen Baurats Edwin Oppler” *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter* 25 (1971), 131-310.

⁷⁸ Eilitz notes his attempts to gain access to archives and buildings in East Germany and Poland in his introduction: “Leben und Werk,” 131-132.

(*Erläuterungsberichte*) written to correspond to each of his synagogue commissions and included annotative introductions to each.⁷⁹ Recently, Saskia Rohde looked at the entire career of Oppler to determine the role his Jewishness played in his professional life and the later reception of his work. However, she limited her analysis of his oeuvre to an introspective, biographical analysis that occasionally draws on the work of other German-Jewish architects.⁸⁰

When National Socialists destroyed the New Synagogue in Breslau in 1938 many of the congregation records and building documents were lost as well. After Breslau became Polish Wrocław in 1945, there was little trace of the German-Jewish population, forced into exile or murdered in the Holocaust. I visited Breslau and the site of the synagogue in 2005 and 2006.⁸¹ The Central Jewish Historical Commission, founded in 1944 in Warsaw, recovered their archival remnants after the war. They are housed in the Jewish Historical Institute (*Żydowski Instytut Historyczny*) in Warsaw today and include the files of the board of directors of the Breslau Jewish congregation. However, the files proved to be far from complete, especially concerning the construction of the New Synagogue. The city archives in Hannover maintain the collection of Oppler's papers and drawings, which contains some files from his work in Breslau. In the library of the Jewish Museum of Berlin I consulted the writings of Rabbis Abraham Geiger and Manuel Joël, hitherto not brought into connection with Oppler's approach to synagogue architecture in Breslau. Through state and university libraries in Berlin, I was able to consult contemporary Jewish and architectural periodicals, such as the *Allgemeine Zeitung des*

⁷⁹ Harold Hammer-Schenk, "Edwin Opplers Theorie des Synagogenbaus: Emanzipationsversuche durch Architektur" *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter* 33, 1 (1979), 101-17.

⁸⁰ Saskia Rohde, "Im Zeichen der Hannoverschen Architekturschule: Der Architekt Edwin Oppler (1831-1880) und seine schlesischen Bauten," *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter* 54 (2000), 67-86 and "Synagogendiskussion: Architekten und die Modernisierung des Judentums," in *Juden und Aufklärung: Jüdisches Selbstverständnis in der bürgerlichen Öffentlichkeit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2002), 195-215.

⁸¹ After some difficulty, I located the small memorial plaque that now stands on the site of the former synagogue, obscured by the nearby apartment buildings.

Judentums, Deutsche Bauzeitung, Die illustrierte Zeitung, Die Kunst im Gewerbe, and Zeitschrift für Bauhandwerker.

2.1 THE HISTORY OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS REFORM IN THE BRESLAU JEWISH COMMUNITY

The path of the city's Jewish congregation that led to the completion of the New Synagogue began with early emancipation efforts enacted during French occupation of western German territories during the Napoleonic Wars.⁸² French Jews had garnered full citizenship rights in 1791. The French extended these rights to the left bank of the Rhine, Westphalia, and Baden under French control. Emancipation, albeit in limited form, came to Prussia in 1812. The Edict of Emancipation did not extend as far as the French laws of 1791, however, and delayed judgment on the question of Jews entering government service. These limitations became legislation under Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm III (ruled 1797-1840) when he banned Jews from the officer corps and academic teaching positions. His successor Friedrich Wilhelm IV (ruled 1840-1861) tried to implement further retrograde constraints on Jewish civil rights by attempting to organize Jews into neo-medieval guild-like entities called *Judenschaften*.

During the revolutionary upheavals in 1848, Jewish emancipation was debated in the Frankfurt National Assembly which proclaimed full civil rights to Germans, regardless of religious affiliation. Two years later, Prussian officials affirmed these rights in their constitution. Article 12 designated rights of citizenship as independent of confession. However, the Prussian

⁸² My following discussion draws primarily from Christopher Clark, "German Jews," *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wendehorst (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 121-147.

constitution also included Article 14, a prohibition against Jews seeking state employment. Full-fledged emancipation finally came in 1866-67 in the constitution of the North German Confederation and was transferred fully to all states of the Second Empire in 1871.

Against this background of social upheaval and nation-state formation, members of Breslau's Reform Jewish community commissioned, built and dedicated their New Synagogue. The Reform community, while seeking to align itself with modernization, set itself apart from the small number of Breslau's Jews, such as Stern's ancestors, who sought conversion as the ultimate act of assimilation. The converts took advantage of the more lenient tenets of Lutheranism which had accepted modern progress and capitalism into their worldview. At the same time, Reformers remained distinct from Yiddish or Polish-speaking Orthodox Jews (so-called *Ostjuden*) from farming families or lower class trades in the eastern province who came to Breslau during this period. These immigrants sought employment in Breslau's new factories and constituted a significant proportion of the Breslau Jewish community. The *Ostjuden* left an indelible impression on *völkisch* author and dramatist Gustav Freytag, whose Jewish figures represented the eastern immigrant, not the native German Jew, as they entered his native Breslau from the Polish borderlands.⁸³

Beginning in the 1840s, Breslau's German-speaking Jews led the way toward a modernizing reform in Jewish culture and religious practice. Breslau Rabbi Abraham Geiger championed progressive liberal reform and is known today as the father of Reform Judaism. Other Breslau leaders shared some of the Geiger's modernizing causes, but wanted to retain

⁸³ For a contemporary literary description of *Ostjuden*, see Gustav Freytag's 1855 novel, *Soll und Haben*. Gustav Freytag, *Debit and Credit*, trans. L.C.C. (New York: Howard Fertig, 1990). For a historical overview of the relationship between German Jews and *Ostjuden*, see Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers: The East European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800-1923* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982).

some traditional aspects of Jewish life as well. This group formed the Positive Historical movement within modern Judaism. Jewish philanthropist Jonas Fränkel and Rabbi Manuel Jöel, Geiger's replacement as Breslau's main rabbi in 1863, sought a middle path between strict orthodoxy and liberal reform. The Positive Historical movement they helped to develop between the mid-1840s and mid-1850s ultimately led to the birth of the modern Conservative movement in Judaism and will be discussed more extensively later.

Both of these reform groups were not passive bystanders as the German nationalist movement gained greater political and social momentum in Breslau. The crushing defeats of Germany's neighbors in the Austro-Prussian (1866) and Franco-Prussian Wars (1870-71) swelled nationalist pride, captivating Jews as well as their Christian compatriots in the 1860s and 1870s. Joël referred to France as the "thieves of our national honor and our national freedom and a habitual trouble-maker for the German empire" whose imperial ambitions had led to, "the hour of conception of our own German Volk."⁸⁴ When the construction of the New Synagogue began in 1866, the congregation filed a complaint with city officials that they had not received proper notice, as the Catholics and Protestants had, to hold a prayer in honor of the recent victory over Austria. As reported in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, "The president of the National Veterans Foundation, General Lieutenant von Prittwitz knew, however, that the Prussian Jews would exercise their patriotism without the order."⁸⁵

⁸⁴ "Räuber unserer nationalen Ehre und unserer nationalen Freiheit [. . . und] gewohnheitsmäßigen Störenfried des deutschen Reiches . . . die Geburtsstunde des eigenen deutschen Volkes." Manuel Joël, *Religiöse Vorträge gehalten am Bettage den 27. Juli 1870 und am Geburtstage Sr. Majestät des Kaisers und Königs Wilhelm den 22. März 1871 von Dr. M. Joël, Rabbiner der Synagogen-Gemeinde zu Breslau. Ertrag zum Besten des in Breslau zu errichtenden Kaiser-Denkmal* (Breslau: Schetter'sche Buchhandlung, 1871), 4-6. Quoted in Erik Lindner, *Patriotismus deutscher Juden von der napoleonischen Ära bis zum Kaiserreich: Zwischen korporativem Loyalismus und individueller deutsch-jüdischer Identität* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1996), 328.

⁸⁵ "Der Vorsitzende der National-Invaliden-Stiftung, General-Lieutenant v. Prittwitz, wußte jedoch, daß die preußischen Juden auch ohne Ordre ihren Patriotismus kundgeben würden," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 4 December 1866.

To a large extent, wide-scale reforms in Jewish life and religious practice brought Jews into the German national fold. The Reform and Positive Historical movements encouraged the use of High German in public, in temple and at home. In the eyes of the reformers, physical indicators of a Jewish otherness – tefillin (phylacteries), tzitzit (tassels/fringes), payot (sidelocks), and long beards – became unnecessary and anachronistic symbols of their faith. Sporting modern fashion and cleanly shaven faces, reform Jews stepped into active roles in Breslau civic life. They supported the fiercely liberal city council and were well-represented in the science departments at the university, the medical practices, and the law offices of Breslau. By joining the ranks of the *Bildungsbürgertum* (educated middle class) in disproportionately large numbers, Jews became “one of the chief conveyers of Enlightenment liberal tradition.”⁸⁶

In the more private sphere of worship, Jewish reformers called for service conforming to the Christian notion of order and reverence and more in accord with the Protestant Church liturgy. Instead of individual chanting, praying, and singing of Jewish Orthodoxy, congregational singing, accompanied by an organ and organized choir, became the norm. German liturgy also became standard in reform-minded congregations and prayerbooks included texts in both Hebrew and German. It was the reform-minded faction of the Breslau Jewish community who commissioned the architect Edwin Oppler to build them a new grand synagogue to represent their identity as both modern and bourgeois, Germans and Jewish. His own biography reveals the effects of these reforms in German Jewish life.

⁸⁶ George L. Mosse, *Confronting the Nation*, 158. According to Mosse, it was the unwavering belief in the liberal values that prevented German Jews from realizing the full extent of the terrible danger the National Socialists presented to them.

2.2 EDWIN OPPLER, ABRAHAM GEIGER, AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN Breslau

Oppler experienced emancipation firsthand in his early life. Born to a Jewish merchant and his wife outside of Breslau in the small Silesian town of Oels on June 18, 1831, he was educated at the city's Friedrichsgymnasium at a time when newly emancipated Jews sought acceptance in larger society and widespread reform in their religious community. Social unrest erupted in the 1844 Silesian Weavers' Riots and the 1848 revolution. Although he never referred directly to these failed attempts to end worker exploitation and democratize the government in his writings, these events formed the world which eventually propelled Oppler to fuse architecture, theory, and Jewish civil rights together in his architectural work. Oppler outlived full emancipation of Jews by nine years, dying in 1880. Though anti-Semitism was increasingly rampant in the Kaiserreich at that time, the architectural profession nonetheless regarded Oppler as an architect of the first rank. The professional journal *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, for instance, honored his passing with an impassioned obituary: "However it is nevertheless what is already achieved by him that is so unusually comprehensive and diverse, and at the same time also so significant. He surpasses those already gone to be positioned in a row of the first architects of our Fatherland, especially as he created the most exceptional work in many areas and opened entirely new paths in artistic practice."⁸⁷

Oppler was a young boy when tensions began to mount between reform-oriented and conservative splinter groups within Judaism in the 1830s. The forefront of this conflict was

⁸⁷ "Immerhin ist jedoch das bereits von ihm Geleistete so außerordentlich umfangreich und vielseitig, zugleich aber auch so bedeutend, dass er ausreicht, den Verstorbenen mit in die Reihe der ersten Architekten unseres Vaterlandes zu stellen, zumal er auf nicht wenigen Gebieten überhaupt das hervorragendste geschaffen und der künstlerischen Tätigkeit ganz neue Wege eröffnet hat." *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 9 Oct 1880.

Oppler's Silesian home, centered in Breslau. Tension flared when the well-known liberal Abraham Geiger was called as rabbi to the city in 1838.⁸⁸ In January of 1840, at the age of thirty, he assumed his new duties. Conservatives amongst the 5,413 member Jewish community in Breslau (almost as large as the Jewish community in Berlin at the time) attempted to annul his election and delayed his acquisition of Prussian citizenship by two years. With the help of the liberal faction of the community led by classical philologist Wilhelm Freund, however, Geiger did become the second rabbi of the Breslau community.

After arriving in Breslau, Geiger became entangled in his now famous debates with the conservative Tiktin family of rabbis.⁸⁹ As second rabbi, Geiger shared duties of giving sermons and supervising religious instruction with Solomon Tiktin. Tiktin refused to work cooperatively with the reformer, however, attempting various schemes to have him ousted. Tiktin's unexpected death in 1843 made Geiger the first rabbi. Solomon's son, Gedaliah, assumed the second position. Continual conflicts ultimately led to the official division of the community (*Gemeinde*) in 1849 into two congregations (*Kultusverbände*): one reform and one orthodox. Through these public debates and conflicts, Geiger reinvented the role of the rabbi. He was a worldly rabbi who spoke German and moved beyond theological debates to consider the national standing of his community.⁹⁰ The modern rabbi, Geiger believed, should represent his congregation in the non-Jewish world, as Geiger did during the visit of King Friedrich Wilhelm IV to Breslau in September 1841. At that time, he implored his sovereign to expand the rights given to his religious minority. Geiger also represented the Jewish congregation of Breslau in

⁸⁸ The following discussion of Abraham Geiger relies primarily on Susannah Heschel's groundbreaking study of Geiger's historical and theological works in *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

⁸⁹ Andreas Gotzmann, "Der Geiger-Tiktin-Streit – Treunnungskrise und Publizität," in *In Breslau zu Hause?: Juden in einer mitteleuropäischen Metropole der Neuzeit*, eds. Manfred Hettling, Andreas Reinke, and Norberts Conrads (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 2003), 81-98.

⁹⁰ Heschel, *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus*, 31.

Berlin in 1847 when he lobbied on behalf of its interests. In the following year, he did not shy away from the rising tide of revolution, sermonizing on his support for further democratization.

Geiger continued to move his congregation toward the threshold of Jewish reform as he attended a series of German rabbinical assemblies held through the 1840s.⁹¹ The goal of these meetings centered on the notion of Judaism as a distinct yet equal confessional identity in the modern civil state. To this end, constituents spoke against the exclusive use of Hebrew prayers, circumcision, and liturgical texts that emphasized their chosen status or the eschatological return to Palestine to rebuild a Jewish state. Geiger warned specifically of the overuse of Hebrew in the liturgy: “If the Hebrew language would be exhibited as an essential element of Judaism, this will be presented as a national religion, since a certain language is a characteristic element of a separate people. The necessary association of Judaism as a separate nationality is certainly not claimed by any member of this assembly.”⁹² Geiger and his fellow reformers were sensitive to this linguistic concept of the nation that excluded similarities between German Christians and Jews. The use of Hebrew in Jewish worship cancelled out any shared history or geographic territory that may have incorporated Jews into the German *Volk*. Thus, reform congregations in Breslau and elsewhere throughout German territories began celebrating the Sabbath in German in the 1840s.

⁹¹ Discussion of the rabbinical conferences draws primarily from: Andreas Gotzmann, “Zwischen Nation und Religion: Die deutschen Juden auf der Suche nach einer bürgerlichen Konfessionalität” in *Juden, Bürger, Deutsche: Zur Geschichte von Vielfalt und Differenz 1800-1933*, eds. Andreas Gotzmann, Rainer Liedtke, Till van Rahden (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 241-61.

⁹² “auch würde, wenn die hebr. Sprache als wesentliches Moment des Judenthums aufgestellt würde, dieses als eine national Religion dargestellt werden, da eine besondere Sprache ein charakteristisches Moment eines gesonderten Volkslebens sei, die nothwendige Verknüpfung des Judenthums mit einer gesonderten Nationalität werde aber sicherlich von keinem der Mitglieder deiser Versammlung behauptet.” *Protokolle und Aktenstücke der zweiten Rabbiner-Versammlung. Abgehalten zu Frankfurt am Main vom 15. bis zum 28. Juli 1845* (Frankfurt am Main: E. Ullmann, 1845), 33.

2.3 THE ARCHITECTURAL PRECEDENTS FOR THE NEW SYNAGOGUE:

RUNDBOGENSTIL AND THE HANNOVER SCHOOL

Although Geiger advocated for the inclusion of Jews in the German nation, they still needed, he insisted, a space for worship that fit their specific parameters. Originally, the two separate factions of the Jewish community, the reform and orthodox congregations, shared the same synagogue in a back courtyard in the old city. This temple, the White Stork Synagogue, sat obscured behind the surrounding residential buildings off of a narrow street away from the main square. Its low profile excluded it from the city skyline and the building went largely unnoticed in the bustle of city life around it. Only the eastern and southern exteriors of the temple were exposed in the confines of the small courtyard. The smaller size and hidden location of the White Stork Synagogue are typical of pre-modern European synagogues. The Society of Brothers (*Gesellschaft der Brüder*), an early modernizing Jewish association founded in the eighteenth century, promoted the building of a large-scale worship space to centralize a community divided amongst the dozen synagogues in private residences throughout Breslau.⁹³ A private member of the Society financed the construction of the White Stork Synagogue and then rented the site to the organization after its completion.⁹⁴

Carl Ferdinand Langhans, son of Berlin's Brandenburg Gate designer Carl Gotthard Langhans, built this grand neo-classical temple between 1827 and 1829.⁹⁵ As Breslau's city

⁹³ Andreas Reinke, "Gemeinde und Verein. Formen jüdischer Vergemeinschaftung im Breslau des 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert," in *In Breslau zu Hause?: Juden in einer mitteleuropäischen Metropole der Neuzeit*, eds. Manfred Hettling, Andreas Reinke, and Norberts Conrads (Hamburg: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 2003), 136.

⁹⁴ Reinke, "Gemeinde und Verein," 139.

⁹⁵ Jerzy Krzysztof Kos, *Synagoga „zum Weissen Storch"* (Wrocław: Drukarnia WMM, 2002), 8. Because of its location in the back courtyard, this synagogue miraculously survived the *Reichskristallnacht* and the brutal street battles in Breslau during the waning months of World War II. Sadly, the building fell into terrible disrepair and

building advisor during the 1810s and 1820s, part of Langhans' official duties would have been to draw up plans for this new synagogue.⁹⁶ A native of the city, the younger Langhans was most well-known in Breslau for his completion of the Catholic Church of St. Ursula and 11,000 Virgins in 1823.⁹⁷

The neo-classical, *Rundbogenstil* façade of St. Ursula is still extant today. The nave is organized in a central plan under a cupola. The three large framing arches over the entrance are the only elements transposed to the White Stork Synagogue, which, despite being a newer design than St. Ursula, exhibits a more conservative neo-classical style. On the synagogue façade, a central element divided by Corinthian pilasters protrudes from the eastern wall with a pronounced cornice and pediment crowning the ensemble. These neo-classical forms situate the synagogue in a group of Prussian neo-classical *Rundbogenstil* buildings from the early nineteenth century. In Breslau the most imposing neo-classical/neo-Renaissance structures were the northern and southern wings of the imperial palace along the Oder River canal in the old city designed by August Stüler in 1845. The site of the palace had been the symbolic stronghold of the city, whose political affiliation shifted from the medieval Piast and Bohemian dynasties, to the Hapsburg Empire, and finally to the Prussian Kingdom and the Wilhelmine Empire.

Besides the White Stork Synagogue in Breslau, neo-classicizing *Rundbogenstil* synagogues appeared in the first half of the nineteenth century across Germany, from Kassel and Hamburg to Dresden. The rationale for using *Rundbogenstil* design for Jewish congregations was to assimilate into Germany's highly resistant Christian society. Furthermore, the neo-classical arcades and pediments announced their allegiance to Enlightenment ideals and the

neglect in the following decades. Recent grassroots attempts have successfully saved the building from demolition and are currently in the process of restoring it for use by the fledgling Jewish congregation in Wrocław.

⁹⁶ Kos, 8.

⁹⁷ Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 57.

shared heritage of classical antiquity. To a certain extent, the earlier neo-classical synagogues also paved the way for the round arches of the later generation of neo-Romanesque temples.

Compared to Langhans' earlier innovation in the structural arrangement of the Church of St. Ursula, White Stork's neo-classicism reflected the government's more conservative approach to the Jewish structures. The Prussian government, in reaction to groups like the Society of Brothers, banned any type of Jewish reform movement after 1815, fearing any inkling of emancipatory movements in Jewish congregations.⁹⁸ With the lack of archival sources from the city and the congregation, it is difficult to say whether the outmoded architectural impulse came from the government via their building representative, Carl Ferdinand Langhans, or influence from the Tiktin-led orthodox contingent of the congregation.

In any case, the White Stork Synagogue became too small for Breslau's growing and increasingly divided Jewish community. More importantly, the reform faction led by Geiger wanted a temple that would reflect their forward-looking world view in architectural terms from their present moment. Edwin Oppler was the perfect match for the Reform congregation. Like Geiger, Oppler was a man of great innovation and foresight in his field. After finishing his secondary education in Breslau, Oppler went to Hannover to begin studies at the Polytechnical School in 1849.

By the mid-nineteenth century, Hannover had become a major transportation hub and a metropolitan showcase for modern building. The year 1849 was an important transition for the architectural community of the city: Ludwig Droste became the successor of August Heinrich Andreae as city architect and Conrad Wilhelm Hase was summoned to be an instructor at the Polytechnical School. Under the tutelage of the famed neo-Gothicist Hase at the Polytechnic,

⁹⁸ Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 56.

Oppler developed an appreciation for medieval architecture and for the rationality of Gothic design. Indeed, Hase and his students developed an entire school of architecture based on the revival of a more austere, less sculptural variant of Gothic forms from northern Germany that relied on typical German materials, like brick.⁹⁹ The Hannover School included not only Hase and Oppler, but also Christoph Hehl (see Chapter 2), Hehl's Protestant colleague and church architect in Berlin Johannes Otzen, and countless other architects who spread the gospel of Hanseatic *Backsteingotik* throughout German-speaking territories in their designs for city halls, villas, and churches.

After architectural training in *Rundbogenstil*-dominated Munich in the 1840s, Hase sought to free himself and his students in Hannover of the plaster-encrusted, ornament-laden Classicist and neo-Baroque styles. In order to accomplish this, Hase preached a reliance on local materials such as brick, wood and sandstone. Instead of treating brick as a poor substitute for stone, the Hannover School created designs which highlighted the unique qualities of brick.¹⁰⁰ Elements like recessed arches, pilasters, blind panels and dynamic two-dimensional surface articulation instead of large sculptural pieces characterize this material-driven approach to building. Furthermore, Hase's commitment to Gothic design was born out of this approach and his formal training as a bricklayer and mason, which gave him a practical knowledge of materials and their properties many architects did not possess. And while Hase's materialist approach may have had some affinity with the early modernists who also espoused a notion of honesty in their

⁹⁹ For the most comprehensive account, including an appendix of architect biographies, of the Hannover School, see Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, *Baukunst in Norddeutschland*.

¹⁰⁰ Lewis, 214-5.

use of materials, Hase was, nevertheless, a firmly entrenched medievalist, refusing to incorporate any industrially mass-produced materials like terra cotta into his work.¹⁰¹

Hase's network of colleagues spread far across German-speaking regions and his friend from his Munich academy days, Protestant neo-Gothicist Georg Gottlob Ungewitter (1820-1864), had a particularly important influence on Oppler's education and early career. Scholars have explored Oppler's training under Hase and their subsequent cooperation on commissions (until their falling out in 1856 while working on Castle Marienburg for the Hannoverian royal house), often failing to recognize this key relationship between Oppler and Ungewitter. In her recent monograph on Ungewitter, Karen David-Sirocko notes this lack of scholarly attention. Such oversight has led not only to an under-appreciation for Ungewitter's contribution but also to an inaccurate assessment of Oppler's career in the German medievalist realm. According to her, "Oppler's office . . . must be considered an independent branch of the Hannover School and from this perspective a new analysis is required."¹⁰² My investigation of the New Syangogue in Breslau affirms how disjointed the Hannover School was in actuality.¹⁰³

During his tenure at the Kassel Polytechnikum from 1852-1864, Ungewitter altered the approach to neo-Gothic construction through the publication of patternbooks, histories and building treatises at a time when the German-language practical and scholarly literature on the topic was sparse.¹⁰⁴ Oppler surely used these texts in his studies in Hannover and incorporated Ungewitter's more practical tenets into his academic education. When Oppler worked on the

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² "Darin geht weiterhin die Tätigkeit des Büros Oppler ein, das als eigenständiger Zweig innerhalb der 'Hannoverschen Schule' betrachtet werden muss und aus diesem Blickwinkel einer neuen Analyse bedürfte." Karen David-Sirocko, *Georg Gottlob Ungewitter und die malerische Neogotik in Hessen, Hamburg, Hannover und Leipzig* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 1997), 211.

¹⁰³ David-Sirocko, *Georg Gottlob Ungewitter*, 206.

¹⁰⁴ Georg Gottlob Ungewitter, *Lehrbuch der gothischen Konstruktion*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Weigel, 1890-92); *Vorlegeblätter für Ziegel- und Steinarbeiten* (1865; reprint, Hannover: Th. Schäfer, 1983); *Entwürfe zur gothischen Möbel* (Leipzig: J.A. Romberg's Verlag, 1855).

commission for the New Synagogue in Breslau during the 1860s, he relied on over ten architects from Kassel during the project, including his on-site building supervisor, Albert Grau.¹⁰⁵

Ungewitter worked primarily as an educator and designer, completing few of his own commissions; however, his drawings reveal numerous formal similarities with Oppler's oeuvre. More fantastical and uninhibited in his approach than Hase, Ungewitter often produced top-heavy designs with a mix of colonettes, imposts, buttresses and spire lights, often stemming more from early Gothic features not seen in northern Germany, Hase's exclusive focus. Comparing Ungewitter's design for a town hall from 1852 with Oppler's later villa at Lange Laube 27 in Hannover (completed 1872-3), many stylistic similarities emerge. Each building is anchored with a tower. For Ungewitter, it prominently pierces the roofline and stands asymmetrically against the façade. The Oppler villa exhibits a shorter turret at a corner that interrupts the repeating symmetry of the roof gables. Both architects displayed great flexibility in their approach to neo-Gothic design, employing varied window and dormer arrangements and combining different motifs and materials in a method not seen in Hannover School architecture.

After his training with Hase and Ungewitter, Oppler joined the studio of renowned French theorist and preservationist Eugene Viollet-le-Duc in 1856 and remained for four years. Like Oppler's German teachers, Viollet-le-Duc promoted architectural design that was born from the function of the building and remained transparent in its use of materials. Oppler assisted him on his radical restorations and reconstructions of some of the best representatives of French High Gothic cathedrals in Paris, Rouen and Amiens, working on the details of individual elements.¹⁰⁶

After returning to Hannover in 1861 and setting up his own studio, Oppler applied the lessons he had learned to the shops and villas he designed for Hannover's wealthy business

¹⁰⁵ David-Sirocko, *Georg Gottlob Ungewitter*, 206.

¹⁰⁶ Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 199.

leaders. He brought the monumental, modern character of Parisian office buildings to Hannover, which propelled him to regional fame. It was his religious commissions, however, which made him well-known amongst assimilated Jewish communities throughout Germany and eventually earned him national praise.

His beginnings in religious architecture were modest, designing a Jewish cemetery in Hannover and a Protestant church in the village of Ahlerstedt bei Stade. In 1861, Oppler started the first of several projects for the Hannover Jewish community, and his first Jewish religious commission. He created a “sermon hall,” mortuary, prayer hall, and administrative rooms for a new cemetery. The central building at the Stangriede cemetery, the “sermon hall,” exhibits a blend of Romanesque and Gothic details. Although Oppler used round arches for the window and door openings, they also contain Gothic sex- and octo-foils.¹⁰⁷ As a pure brick construction, including the foils and other decorative elements, the hall also betrays the Romanesque leanings that Oppler would further develop in later works.

His ambitions remained high and in 1862 he traveled south and east to see and study the recently-completed monumental synagogues in Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, and Budapest. He did not use them as inspiration for his first major synagogue commission in Hannover, but rather as examples of the dangerous problem he saw in contemporary synagogue architecture, namely, the Moorish-Islamic style.

¹⁰⁷ Eilitz, 156.

2.4 STYLE WARS: INVENTING A GERMAN JEWISH ARCHITECTURE

Known intermittently as “Moorish,” “Islamic,” “Arabian,” “Saracen,” or “Byzantine,” the Moorish-Islamic style contained design elements ranging from those found in the architecture of Moorish Spain to Mughal India.¹⁰⁸ To a certain extent, Moorish-Islamic synagogues were another manifestation of the larger Moorish architectural movement in the mid-nineteenth century. Minarets, horizontal bands of alternating colors, horseshoe arches, and domes characterize this style that appeared in building types from synagogues to pavilions, garden villas, and theaters. For German Jews, however, the Moorish-Islamic forms held a special socio-political importance. This style had roots outside of Europe, which was appealing to German Orthodox Jews who sought to preserve their western Asian heritage in Europe. The minaret-like towers and polychrome facades of nineteenth-century Moorish-Islamic synagogues protruded in a sea of Germanic half-timbered houses and stone and mortar construction in Central European cities, asserting Judaism’s origin in western Asia and a unique identity vis-à-vis their Christian European peers. Gottfried Semper noted the non-European origins of the Jews as the motivation for choosing a Moorish-Islamic style for his design of the interior of the Dresden synagogue in the late 1830s.¹⁰⁹

Another major monument of the Moorish-Islamic style, the Leopoldstädter synagogue in Vienna, was a stop on Oppler’s trip. Constructed between 1853 and 1859 by the Christian historicist architect Ludwig von Förster, it represents the major tenets, and, for Oppler, the major

¹⁰⁸ Miles Danby, *Moorish Style* (London: Phaidon, 1995), 14. For the sake of simplicity and to avoid immediate association with Moorish Spain, I will follow the standard set by Carol Krinsky and use the term “Moorish-Islamic.” A succinct introduction to Moorish synagogues is Ivan Davidson Kalmar, “Moorish Style: Orientalism, the Jews, and Synagogue Architecture” *Jewish Social Studies* 7, 3 (2001), 67-100. See also Hannelore Künzl, *Islamische Stilelemente im Synagogenbau des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Peter Lang, 1984).

¹⁰⁹ Hans Semper, *Gottfried Semper: Ein Bild Seines Lebens und Wirkens. Mit Benützung der Familienpapiere* (Berlin: S. Calvary & Co., 1880), 14. Quoted in Kalmar, 77.

shortcomings, of the style.¹¹⁰ Although the interior painted plaster ornamentation was not finished when Oppler visited, the clay bricks in yellow, red, and gray, the series of minaret-like towers separated by thick cornices, and the octagonal Islamic-style medallion window openings of the exterior were exactly the architectural elements which Oppler believed alienated Jews and their architecture from their surroundings. For Oppler, German Jewish architecture needed to highlight Jews' deep-seated incorporation into German society rather than exoticizing them.

In the Leopoldstrasse synagogue, Förster makes reference to the icons of ancient west Asian architecture, including Solomon's Temple. The quadratic floor plan, the lantern-crowned columns on the façade, and the high entrance arch framed by the taller middle section of the facade all are derived from descriptions of the First Temple. Despite surviving descriptions and later studies, Förster and many other Moorish-Islamic defenders faced a lacuna of firm evidence for the appearance of the Temple. They instead turned to remnants of Arab architecture for their source materials. Förster explained, "In my humble opinion, the right way, given the circumstances, is to choose, when building an Israelite Temple, those architectural forms that have been used by Oriental ethnic groups that are related to the Israelite people, and in particular the Arabs."¹¹¹ When the cornerstone of this synagogue was laid in 1853, Rabbi Adolf Jellinek emphasized the building's eastern connections with the Jewish homeland, exclaiming the stone had been dug out of "Zion's holy and divinely consecrated soil," and that, "here on Austrian soil it will become the cornerstone, indeed the most important stone in this building."¹¹²

¹¹⁰ The following discussion of the Leopoldstädter synagogue draws primarily from Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 182-3 and 302-7.

¹¹¹ Ludwig Förster, "Das israelitische Bethaus in der Wiener Vorstadt Leopoldstadt," *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1859), 14. Quoted in Kalmar, 78-9.

¹¹² Adolf Jellinek, *Zwei Reden zur Schlusssteinlegung und zur Einweihung des neuen israelitischen Tempels in der Leopoldstadt am 18. Main und 15. Juni 1858* (Vienna: J. Knoepflmacher, 1858), 4. Quoted in Michael A. Meyer, "'How Awesome is this Place!': The Reconceptualization of the Synagogue in Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* XLI (1996), 58.

By 1859, another Moorish-Islamic synagogue began to take shape in Berlin that solidified the position of neo-Islamic synagogue design on a grand scale. Architect Eduard Knoblauch positioned his building, finished by August Stüler due to illness, as a direct affront to Oppler's developing counter-movement of medievalist synagogues. Dedicated in 1866 when Oppler began work in Breslau, the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue in Berlin and the New Synagogue in Breslau are often juxtaposed in the pages of architectural criticism of the day. As the two largest German synagogues of the nineteenth century, they stand as each other's counter-monument, presenting contrasting statements about the place of Jews in German society.

The magnificent polychrome brick façade, crowned by three gilded domes set on high decorative tambours, distinguished the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue in Berlin from the hulking Prussian administrative buildings and *Rundbogenstil* post office along the same street in the heart of the city. The opulent interior contained marble stairs and wall panels. The Torah shrine (*Aron kodesh*) was gilded with white marble elements. Dark walls teamed with intricate decoration. Gold plaster ornamentation adorned the vaults.

As with other Moorish-Islamic synagogues, comparisons with Solomon's Temple were prevalent, but associations with the Alhambra in Spain proved to be more lasting and important. Architects of Knoblauch and Stüler's caliber most certainly were familiar with Owen Jones' 1845 publication of *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra*, a pioneering study which transformed European architects' perception of Islamic architecture.¹¹³ British architect and decorative artist Owen Jones traveled with French designer Jules Goury, who at the time worked for Semper, in the early 1830s, conducting studies of Ottoman buildings in Istanbul. They spent six months at the Alhambra. The resulting publication exhibited a kind of attention

¹¹³ Jules Goury, Owen Jones, and Pascual de Gayangos, *Plans, Elevation, Sections and Details of the Alhambra* (London: O. Jones, 1842-1845).

to detail and rationalist approach typically reserved for Greek temples, elevating the hitherto lesser status of Islamic building.¹¹⁴ Jones believed his analysis of the use of polychrome in the Alhambra could be instrumental in pushing the architecture of his own day in new directions. Stüler, primarily responsible for the vibrant interior decoration of the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue, capitalized on this lesson by creating a new format for German synagogues.

Jones carried his work on the Alhambra further into contemporary architectural debates. He centered his 1835 lecture, “On the Influence of Religion upon Art,” on the use of non-European design elements as a way to critique contemporary European society.¹¹⁵ Similarly, the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue was a defiant commentary in marble and gilding of Berlin’s Orthodox congregation, proudly announcing their foreign origins.¹¹⁶

For Jewish Reform thinkers in Germany, their origins lay not in a distant biblical land, but were firmly entrenched in their Central European home. Oppler’s refusal to extricate the Jewish contribution from the Western canon led him to become a staunch opponent of the Moorish-Islamic style. He naturally gravitated towards a native medievalist German design. Consequently, his synagogue designs represented a Jewish variant of the association between medievalism and German nationalism. As Stüler completed the Berlin synagogue, Oppler asserted, “The German Jew in the German state must also build in the German style.”¹¹⁷ And for him that did not mean the minaret forms and horseshoe arches of the Moorish-Islamic style, but

¹¹⁴ Crinson, 32-3.

¹¹⁵ Owen Jones, “On the Influence of Religion upon Art,” in *Lecture on Architecture and the Decorative Arts* (London: Strangeways and Walden, 1863).

¹¹⁶ For more detailed accounts of the Berlin-Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue, see Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 284-96.

¹¹⁷ “Der deutsche Jude muss also im deutschen Staate auch im deutschen Style bauen.” *Erläuterungsbericht vom 15. Febr. 1864*, printed in Harold Hammer-Schenk, “Edwin Opplers Theorie des Synagogenbaus,” 106.

rather the rounded arches and bulky stone forms of the native German Romanesque.¹¹⁸ Oppler's sentiments recalled the assertions of the editor of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, Rabbi Ludwig Philippson, in 1845: "The German Jews are German. They think and feel German and want to live and act patriotically."¹¹⁹

Based on Oppler's firm neo-Gothic training and his repugnance for all that was Moorish-Islamic, a neo-Gothic style synagogue might have proven a feasible possibility. And neo-Gothicism certainly would have indicated German national allegiance. However, neo-Gothic synagogues were few and far between in most of Europe, especially regions under German jurisdiction.¹²⁰ And an elaborate Gothic cathedral plan with ambulatories and side chapels made little sense for Jewish liturgies. Furthermore, Protestants and Catholics alike considered the Gothic to be the highest form of Christian architecture. The tireless neo-Gothic champion August Reichensperger followed Pugin in proclaiming the Gothic to be the highest and most noble manifestation of Christianity. Shortly thereafter, Gobineau's racial theories appeared, in which he names the Gothic as the characteristic architectural style of Germanic peoples.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Oppler only mentions the word "Romanesque" two times in his *Erläuterungsberichte* written from 1863 to 1872 and reproduced in their entirety in Hammer-Schenk, "Edwin Opplers Theorie des Synagogenbaus." In the 1860s in Germany, Romanesque was still a relatively new stylistic term. By purposefully using the more non-descript "German style," Oppler plays to rising nationalist sentiment and attempts to give pre-Gothic architectural movements the same cultural significance as the High Gothic.

¹¹⁹ Philippson does continue by admonishing German Jews to not forget their religious uniqueness and the universality of Judaism that reaches beyond German territories. However, for him, as for many others, these two facets of identity are not mutually exclusive. "Die deutschen Juden sind Deutsche, denken und fühlen deutsch und wollen vaterländisch leben und tätig sein." *Protokolle und Aktenstücke der zweiten Rabbiner-Versammlung, Abgehalten zu Frankfurt am Main vom 15. bis 28. Juli 1845*, 40.

¹²⁰ Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 228. By the 1890s, there are a few neo-Gothic synagogues, most notably those by the Austrian Jewish architect Max Fleischer in his five synagogues designed between 1883 and 1903. In Germany, the synagogue in Lüneburg done by another Hase student, Richard Kampf, mimics the early fifteenth century Gothic which dominates the Hanseatic city's center. In the final product, the dome adorned with the six-pointed star and stunted central plan nave belie the building's function, but the gable, blind arcades, decorative banding, and deeply-set lancet windows are Gothic elements prevalent throughout the Hanseatic cityscape. For neo-Gothic synagogues see Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 433-44.

¹²¹ August Reichensperger, *Die christlich-germanische Baukunst und ihr Verhältnis zur Gegenwart* (Trier: Lintz, 1845). Arthur Gobineau, *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Paris: Libraire de Firmin Didot, 1855). Arthur Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*, trans. Adrian Collins (New York: H. Fertig, 1967).

Reichensperger elaborated further, labeling everything that was not Gothic as heathen and un-German and expressing relief that the “Enlighteners” and “unfaithful” have little say in the matter as “the socialists are not yet in power.”¹²² By grouping Enlightenment supporters, non-Christians and socialists together, Reichensperger explicitly implicated German Jews, who claimed leading figures in the German Enlightenment and socialism. He was not alone in his convictions. In Mothe’s building dictionary of the late 1860s, he also draws a racial, proto-folkish connection between Germans and the Gothic.¹²³ Although Jews were gaining acceptance in German society, they were not considered part of the German race. Thus, any chance of claiming German Gothic architecture for their own religious building projects seemed tenuous at best and likely to inflame.

By reserving the Gothic style strictly for Christian building, theorists and builders relied on centuries-old preconceptions about the nature of Judaism to advance their claims in the realm of architecture. Panofsky has shown how Jan van Eyck and other late fifteenth-century Netherlandish painters instrumentalized the ancient archetypes of Synagoga and Ecclesia in the stylistic distinction between Romanesque and Gothic as a way to positively distinguish the Christian (Gothic) tradition from the supposed antiquated and dilapidated Jewish (Romanesque) tradition.¹²⁴ These qualities attributed by architectural and religious scholars to both the mythical eternal Jew and Romanesque architecture – never able to advance and forever trapped in a dour, dark world – permeated German culture through theoretical writings in journals and

¹²² Reichensperger, *Die christlich-germanische Baukunst und ihr Verhältnis zur Gegenwart*, 52 and 56.

¹²³ Oskar Mothes, *Illustriertes Bau-lexikon*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Spamer, 1859), 96-7.

¹²⁴ See Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1953), 131-48.

periodicals.¹²⁵ Just as many believed Jews to be undeveloped, immature Christians, Romanesque architecture was thought to be innovative only insofar as its developmental role for the more triumphant Gothic style. The notion of the Romanesque period as a preparatory stage for the full-fledged Gothic style also emerged in the emancipation debates during the unification of Germany in 1871. Many argued that only when Jews became as cultured and mature as Christians could they be granted full membership in the citizenry of the state.

Avoiding the Christian taint of Gothic design and the overtly foreign quality of the Moorish-Islamic style, Oppler turned to earlier medieval styles and exploited the rich history and rounded lines of the Romanesque. Oppler developed his own brand of brick medievalist design, neither wholly Romanesque nor Gothic that also spoke to a modernizing penchant for clean lines and round arches. In his sermon hall for the Jewish cemetery in Hannover (1863-64), Oppler opted to use rounded-arch windows instead of lancet windows in his otherwise conventional Hannoverian Gothic design in order to avoid overtly Christian associations with the *Backsteingotik*.¹²⁶ Oppler also avoided overtly Gothic elements in some of the key details in the Hannover and Breslau synagogues to champion the neo-Romanesque as the style fit for German Jews.

¹²⁵ Hammer-Schenk, 225-9. See, for example: G. Palm, *Won welchen Principien soll die Wahl des Baustyls, insbesondere des Kirchenbaustyl geleitet werden?* (Hamburg: no publisher given, 1845) and F. Stöter, *Andeutungen über die Aufgabe der evangelischen Kirchenbaukunst* (Hamburg: Rauhes Haus, 1845).

¹²⁶ Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, *Baukunst in Norddeutschland*, 78-9.

2.5 THE BRESLAU JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE 1860S AND THE COMMISSION OF THE NEW SYNAGOGUE

Oppler's quest for a modern national style resonated with the reform agenda of the Geiger-led faction of the Breslau Jewish community. Although Geiger never saw the new synagogue project to fruition, his influence as one of the fathers of Reform Judaism established the modernizing, forward-looking perspective in Breslau, and propelled Oppler's innovative neo-Romanesque synagogue design. Geiger's congregation continued on their path of modernization and some of the modernization efforts had an effect on Oppler's design. Re-conceptualizing the service to include organ music meant a new organization of the synagogue's interior. Sermons and prayers were in the vernacular. The congregation had also adopted Geiger's 1854 modernized prayer book, *Israelitisches Gebetbuch*.¹²⁷ The prayer book contained the ideals Geiger already espoused at the rabbinical assemblies of the previous decade. Jerusalem and Zion became spiritual ideas and not specific geographic locations to be reconquered and revived. The universal reign of God over a singular humanity became paramount over a notion of the particularity of the Jewish people and their chosen status. Geiger retained some facets of a traditional worship plan, following the daily morning, afternoon, and evening schedule of services and stipulated a Levite to be the second to read from the Torah during worship.

The reform movement in Judaism was not a unified contingent. Geiger's career fell victim to the disputes between differing factions in Breslau's reform congregation. As a

¹²⁷ Abraham Geiger, *Israelitisches Gebetbuch für den öffentlichen Sabbathe und sämtlicher Feier und Festtage*, (Breslau: Verlag von Julius Hainauer, 1854). For a translation of the preface see Jakob Petuchowski, *Prayerbook Reform in Europe: The Liturgy of European Liberal and Reform Judaism* (New York: World Union for Progressive Judaism, 1968). For more on Geiger's prayer book, see David Ellenson's "The Mannheimer Prayerbooks and Central European Communal Liturgies and The Gebetbücher of Geiger and Joël" *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* 44 (1999), 143-54.

representative of the more radical reform wing, Geiger often came into contention with reformers who sought a more moderate middle road, known as Positive Historical Judaism. The Positive-Historical brand of liberal Judaism represented by Joël, Fränkel, and others held a positive outlook on modernity while maintaining the historical foundation of their beliefs. Although it is false to think of Positive-Historical Judaism as a separate denomination in nineteenth-century Germany, it did provide the theoretical underpinnings for the rise of Conservative Judaism in the United States.¹²⁸ Despite its careful nods to liturgical convention, the Positive-Historical contingent did not support Geiger's far-reaching change to their religious practice. He left Breslau in 1863 because of their irreconcilable differences. Zecharias Fränkel, a leader in the Positive-Historical faction in Breslau, held a powerful position in the community as president of the Jewish Theological Seminary. He had arranged for the conservative historian and bitter foe of Geiger, Heinrich Graetz, to teach at the Frankl Foundation. As the first non-Orthodox rabbinical seminary in Germany, the Frankl Foundation was the fulfillment of a long-held dream of Geiger's. His exclusion left him greatly disappointed. Although the position in Frankfurt presented Geiger with a more theologically contentious environment, the seminary offered him a teaching position and he accepted.

Geiger's replacement in the Breslau synagogue also adhered to a more moderate approach to religious reform. Manuel Joël (1826-1890) believed Jewish liturgy needed to accommodate the role of the modern individual and the rising tide of liberalism which had propelled Jewish emancipation in German territories. However, he was also more conservative

¹²⁸ The Positive-Historical trend remains gravely underrepresented in German Jewish historiography. As Michael A. Meyer notes, "While the field of recent German-Jewish Orthodoxy has been well ploughed in recent scholarship, that of Positive-Historical Judaism has lain almost fallow." In "Recent Historiography on the Jewish Religion," *Leo Baech Institute Yearbook* 35 (1990), 10-11. Franz D. Lucas and Heike Frank's book on Joël's Berlin professor, *Michael Sachs: Der Konservative Mittelweg* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1992) and Ellenson's "The Mannheimer Prayerbooks and Central European Communal Liturgies and The Gebetbücher of Geiger and Joël" have begun to answer Meyer's call.

than Geiger as a member of the Positive-Historical wing. The congregation charged Joël to revise Geiger's 1854 prayer book. This task proved to be a difficult balance of honoring Geiger's reforms – the reduction of the importance of Israel and the sacrificial cult – while reinfusing traditional elements he had omitted from the liturgy. Joël described the process stating, “On the one hand, we must express the freedom of the individual, but, on the other, especially as far as ritual is concerned, the individual must give expression not merely to that which moves him, but also to that which affects Israel and the total community.”¹²⁹

As their new synagogue was nearing completion, Joël published his prayer book in 1872.¹³⁰ In the introduction, Joël wrote of his quest to provide his congregation with not only an all-inclusive prayer book with multiple versions of texts in Hebrew and German but also a place of worship. Joël imagined, “a community synagogue, one which, for the first time was built to be representative of the community as a whole.”¹³¹ By directly referencing the nearly completed synagogue, Joël asserts the interconnectedness of the two projects – the moderate liturgical reforms and Oppler's new German Jewish architectural style - in Breslau. For Joël and his Positive Historical colleagues, liturgy must embrace modernity while reverentially looking back to the past. The design and style of the synagogue must do the same.

The New Synagogue sat on a prominent piece of property close to the imperial palace and new imperial-sponsored architectural projects like Karl Lüdecke's Stock Exchange. Despite the central location, the site was removed from the busy streets leading in and out of the city center. Although the site was not a hidden back courtyard typical of earlier synagogues, it was

¹²⁹ David Ellenson, *After Emancipation: Jewish Religious Responses to Modernity* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2004), 215.

¹³⁰ Manuel Joël, *Israelitisches Gebetsbuch für die öffentliche Andacht des ganzen Jahres* (Berlin: L. Herschel, 1872).

¹³¹ Manuel Joël, *Israelitisches Gebetbuch*. Quoted in Ellenson, *After Emancipation*, 214.

still tucked behind residential buildings rather than on a large public through-street as was the case for the synagogues in Berlin or Vienna.

When the community opened a call for designs for a new synagogue in 1865, Oppler triumphed with ease. Oppler's striving towards both social and stylistic assimilation via the use of the neo-Romanesque appealed to educated, middle-class Reform congregations in urban centers like Breslau who sought to combat the attitudes of Christian Germans like Orientalist scholar (and rabid anti-Semite) Paul de Lagarde. Commenting on the New Synagogue in Berlin in 1881, de Lagarde railed,

[Their] alien nature is stressed every day and in the most striking fashion by the Jews – who nevertheless wish to be made equal to Germans – through the style of their synagogue. What is the sense of raising claims to be called an honorary German and yet building the holiest site that one possesses in Moorish style, so as to never ever let anyone forget that one is a Semite, an Asiatic, a foreigner?¹³²

For nationalist conservatives like Lagarde, a monumental synagogue in a markedly non-German style in the middle of the Prussian capital was an affront to his entire *Weltanschauung*. However, the situation in Breslau was very different than the one Lagarde encountered in Berlin. The Jewish congregation at the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue in Berlin consisted of a large *Ostjuden* population, while the Breslau Jewish community was already far along a path of assimilation. Furthermore, anti-Semitism in Breslau never garnered the same force it did in other

¹³² Paul Anton de Lagarde, "Die Stellung der Religionsgesellschaften im Staate," (Feb 1881), included in his *Deutsche Schriften, Gesamtausgabe letzter Hand* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1886). Quoted in Kalmar, "Moorish Style: Orientalism, the Jews, and Synagogue Architecture," 89.

German cities. Although the city's Catholic press endorsed anti-Semitism by 1872, the action achieved little in the city where the liberal held a near monopoly in city politics and the Catholic Center Party received less than a third of Breslau Catholics' votes.¹³³

While they might have shared little else of Lagarde's political views, assimilated Jews did agree with him that the Moorish-Islamic style represented something exotic and foreign, with which they wanted nothing to do. Oppler's biographer, Johann Heinrich Kastenholz, committed his teacher's views on Moorish synagogues to posterity when writing in 1929, "The Moorish style, which is used so often in the construction of new synagogues, has no connection to Judaism. It possesses neither a national expression nor a contemporary one."¹³⁴ Just as Geiger and Joël reduced the image of Jerusalem in their prayerbooks from the concrete site of a future Jewish reign to abstract concept, Oppler rejected the evocation of the architecture of Zion (i.e. Moorish-Islamic) as unwarranted for the German Jews of the *Bildungsbürgertum*.

With the neo-Classicism of the White Stork Synagogue long exhausted, Moorish-Islamic styles deemed useless, and strict neo-Gothic considered incendiary, Oppler looked back to early German medieval architecture, specifically the Romanesque, as a way to retain his medievalist intellectual roots but find a suitable style to represent German Jewish assimilation. Although Oppler was a devoted member of the Hannover Jewish congregation and possessed a large collection of Judaica, he considered himself first and foremost a German citizen. Thus, as a German citizen, Oppler wanted to design a synagogue for Breslau that reflected something distinct about their German character. This style was the Romanesque. In this respect, Oppler

¹³³ Till van Rahden, "Rethinking German Antisemitism, Breslau, 1870-1914," *German History* 18, 4 (2000), 419. For more on anti-Semitism in Breslau, see van Rahden, *Jews and Other Germans*, 64-93 and 176-230.

¹³⁴ "Der Maurische Styl, so oft bei Neubauten von Synagogen verwandt, hat gar keine Beziehung zum Judenthume, und kann somit weder den Ausdruck der Nationalität geben, noch ist er der Ausdruck der Zeit." *J.H. Kastenholz, Dem Andenken des Königl. Hannoverschen Baurates Edwin Oppler* (Hannover: No Publisher Given, 1929), 8.

was two decades ahead of the Hohenzollerns in their quest to refer to the first German empire in architecture as a way to legitimize their claims of a new empire. The kaiser-sponsored neo-Romanesque building projects did not blossom until the late 1880s under Kaiser Wilhelm II.¹³⁵

Oppler sought to align newly emancipated Jews with what art historians were beginning to label a uniquely Germanic style (see Introduction), but he also wanted to recall the style of the earliest surviving synagogues on German soil – specifically, the twelfth-century Romanesque synagogue in Worms. Instead of Solomon’s Temple, the synagogue in Worms served as Oppler’s model for his new brand of neo-Romanesque, which suited his assimilative Reform-minded clients in Breslau.¹³⁶ The Worms Cathedral masons’ lodge from the same period, was also another influence on Oppler. These masons most likely built the Worms synagogue, as there were no Jewish architects in the Middle Ages.¹³⁷ The façade of the masons’ lodge may have shared stylistic similarities with the much larger cathedral, but the interior organization deviated greatly from the cathedral space. In the lodge, two aisles divided the small central room with six Romanesque ribbed groin vaults enclosing the hall. This arrangement was not well-suited to Christian worship, yet with the central row of columns dividing the interior into two symmetrical aisles it was particularly adaptable to Jewish sacred space. The Bimah, the elevated platform from which the Torah is read, typically straddled the aisle which separated men’s and women’s seating. Thus, the plan of the Worms synagogue emulated that of the masons’ lodge. The Torah shrine in the Worms synagogue stood along the middle of the east wall, distinguished on the exterior of the building by a niche.

¹³⁵ See Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*.

¹³⁶ Hannelore Künzl, “Der Synagogenbau im Mittelalter,” in *Die Architektur der Synagoge im deutschsprachigen Raum*, ed. Hans-Peter Schwarz, (Frankfurt: Deutsches Architekturmuseum and Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1988), 62. Between its completion in the twelfth century and its destruction in 1938, the Worms Synagogue was in the longest continual use among all European synagogues.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

By turning to the Romanesque, Oppler asserted the long-standing Jewish presence in German public life and the fact that Jews had adhered to the same building styles as Christians for centuries. He configured a neo-Romanesque style that was both new and historically reverential, both national and sacred. With new architectural elements (the organ loft and pulpit) and a more open spatial arrangement, Oppler also responded to the liturgical reforms and the reconceptualization of Judaism in the modern era. By referring back to both the Worms cathedral and synagogue in the neo-Romanesque style, Oppler created an architectural link to the national heritage of the German *Volk*, regardless of religion.

Oppler's first major synagogue, begun in his adopted home of Hannover in 1862, directly tackled these issues. As Oppler's first major statement on Jewish architecture, a discussion of the Hannover synagogue is crucial to frame Oppler's approach to the Breslau project, which immediately followed the Hannover commission. Situated on an open public square very close to the Catholic Basilica of St. Clemens (1712-1718) and the Protestant Neustädter Church (1666-1670), the Hannover synagogue boldly announces Jewish assimilation.

Although the Worms synagogue became the historical justification for Oppler's use of the Romanesque, it was the city's cathedral which he frequently referenced in his work. In Hannover, the horizontal divisions of Oppler's synagogue façade quote the famous Rhenish cathedral. Other elements, like the dwarf gallery and rose window, verge on the Gothic in their citation of Chartres cathedral, possibly a stylistic remnant of his earlier work in France.

The interior space is organized in a central plan. The central plan, unusual in the Hannover school repertoire, could be a connection to earlier central plan churches like Semper's proposal for the Hamburg Nikolai church, as Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink assert.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, 78.

However, it may also have more to do with the distinctive requirements of Jewish liturgy and the impracticality of multi-aisled cruciform plans for Jewish worship. The interior decoration consists of a combination of Gothic design elements, many in modern cast iron, which draw from Viollet-le-Duc's distinctive medievalism.

On both the exterior and interior, Oppler balances the Romanesque style with Gothic quotations that present a complex stylistic statement. Hammer-Schenk attempted to explain Oppler's use of Romanesque details (the trefoil windows, entrance portals, etc.) in conjunction with later Gothic elements in the Hannover synagogue: "When he wielded the force of Gothic in a Romanesque building, his goal was to introduce the only truly acknowledged church style, which all confessions and all architecture theoreticians accepted, into synagogue building."¹³⁹ Contemporary press like the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, however, attributed this juxtaposition of Gothic and Romanesque to Oppler's use of the Transitional Style, the late Romanesque/early Gothic period which exhibits elements of both styles, without elaborating on the particular elements.¹⁴⁰ And Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink connected the Romanesque and Gothic elements of the Hannover Synagogue to architecture beyond German territory, such as English and French churches of the previous decades.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ "Sein Ziel war es, im jüdischen Kultbau den einzigen, wirklich anerkannten Kirchenstil, den alle Konfessionen und alle Architekturtheoretiker akzeptierten, für die Synagoge insoweit einzuführen, als er die Wirkungsmöglichkeiten der Gotik in einem romanischen Bau zum Ausdruck brachte." Hammer-Schenk, *Synagogen in Deutschland*, 212. Hammer-Schenk explains the curious combination of Romanesque elements in a structurally Gothic building as possessing a Gothic modus with Romanesque individual elements. For the notion of modus in nineteenth century architecture, see Jan Bialostocki, "Das Modusproblem in den bildenden Künsten," in *Stil und Ikonographie. Studien zur Kunstwissenschaft* (Dresden: VEB Verlag der Kunst, 1966).

¹⁴⁰ "Die neue Synagoge in Hannover," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* 50 (1869), 1015.

¹⁴¹ Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, 77-8. For English and French models, they list P.B. LeFranc's funerary chapel in Dreuz from 1842, St. Mary and St. Nicholas by T.H. Wyatt and D. Brandon in Wilton from 1843, and St. Paul in Nancy by C.-A. Questel in 1850.

2.6A JEWISH-GERMAN NEO-ROMANESQUE COMES TO FRUITION: THE CONSTRUCTION AND DEDICATION OF THE NEW SYNAGOGUE IN Breslau

The New Synagogue in Breslau (built between 1865 and 1872) reflects a fascinating blend of medievalisms, where Oppler's concepts of German nationalism and Jewish spirituality coalesce. A central plan structure seating 1,000 men on the main floor and 850 women in the galleries, it was the second largest synagogue in Germany behind the Orthodox synagogue on Oranienburgerstrasse in Berlin. The building costs for Breslau more than doubled those of Hannover at 800,000 Marks (237,333 Taler), but still paled in comparison to the 1,759,000 spent on the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue.¹⁴²

Albrecht Grau (1837-1900), another former student of both Hase and Ungewitter and member of the Cologne cathedral mason's lodge, served as the site manager for Oppler in Breslau.¹⁴³ Like Oppler, Grau had traveled to France after his studies and held an apprenticeship with Emile Boeswillwald on the renovation of Sainte Chapelle in 1864. After the completion of the New Synagogue, he remained in Breslau as an independent architect until his death, designing both the Augusta and Maltese hospitals, the synagogues in nearby Liegnitz (present-day Legnica) and Glatz (present-day Kłodzko), and the *Fränkelsche Stiftung* (the Fränkel Foundation), one of the most important Jewish organizations in Breslau.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² Hammer-Schenk lists the cost of the Hannover synagogue as 384,000 Marks and the Oranienburgerstrasse synagogue in Berlin at 1,759,100 Marks in Harold Hammer-Schenk, "Die Architektur der Synagoge vom 1780 bis 1933," in *Die Architektur der Synagoge im deutschsprachigen Raum*, ed. Hans-Peter Schwarz, (Frankfurt: Deutsches Architekturmuseum and Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag, 1988), 205. The cost of the New Synagogue in Breslau is found in "Synagoge zu Breslau," *Zeitschrift für Bauhandwerker* 31, 14 (1887), 107.

¹⁴³ Rohde, "Oppler und seine schlesischen Bauten," 71; Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, 528.

¹⁴⁴ "Das Fränkelsche Stiftungshaus in Breslau." *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 5, 20 (1871), 156-58. The Fränkel Foundation combined social services with a library, seminary, and publishing house, which produced the influential *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*.

The New Synagogue became the architectural manifestation of the new tenets of both strains of reform Judaism (Reform and Positive-Historical) as championed by both Geiger and Joël. As the synagogue was destroyed in 1938, I worked from Oppler's drawings and plans as well as published photographs from contemporary periodicals to assess the actual structure.

While the synagogue's copper-plated dome made a prominent contribution to the city's silhouette, it was located outside of the medieval city center removed from the traffic of the city. Situated across the canal from the hidden courtyard site of the White Stork Synagogue, the New Synagogue sat on a side street parallel to the main vehicle and pedestrian traffic on Neue Graupen and Schweidnitzer Streets.¹⁴⁵ Between the two synagogues stood the neo-Classical imperial palace along the canal that separated the New Synagogue from the old city. The oddly-shaped plot of land the Reform congregation purchased for its synagogue proved difficult for the entrance design. There was no room for a grand west entrance, so Oppler moved the main façade to the north face of the structure to allow for an open view of the synagogue from a small front garden. The northwest corner held the entrance portal.

As in Hannover, Oppler loosely modeled the exterior of the west façade on Worms cathedral. The rounded arch frieze, dwarf gallery, and horizontal divisions in the towers all stem from elements of the cathedral. However, the cathedral was not the only inspiration for Oppler's design. Looking at the plan, Oppler avoids a pronounced Latin cross arrangement by including only a shortened pseudo-transept on the north and south sides of the centralized space. These half-octagonal protrusions and side turrets do show a similar footprint to the west end of the cathedral, but Oppler's stout polygonal roofs, open round arch windows in the middle elevation, and tripartite fenestration in the lower level add a heavy, horizontal emphasis to the synagogue

¹⁴⁵ After the completion of the police station across the street from the New Synagogue in 1927, the effect of the synagogue's large dome in the cityscape was significantly diminished.

which the more narrow verticality of the Worms cathedral does not display. The entire structure was crowned with an octagonal dome rising above the crossing, giving the synagogue a bold presence in the cityscape of Breslau and announcing the Jews' arrival on the contemporary architectural scene. The crossing tower of Worms cathedral exhibits no corresponding features with the Breslau dome, a foreign element in a city of Gothic spires that Oppler inserted and adorned with Romanesque blind arcades, rose windows, banding and gables.

On the interior, the eastern apse is an amalgamation of Romanesque arches, Gothic finials, and even organic vine decorations reminiscent of Moorish-Islamic design.¹⁴⁶ There is no fixed meaning to this combination of stylistic influences, rather the unstable connotations and new juxtapositions. In contrast to the uniformity of the neo-Romanesque exterior, the interior draws from numerous stylistic traditions. In this intimate realm, we find a more complex relationship between style and German-Jewish identity that reveals the conflicted process of assimilation for a religious minority that has its origins outside of German lands. Whereas on the exterior the Reform Jewish community sought to convey their allegiance to German nationalism and their priority in German lands with what was considered to be a German style, they expressed a more diverse affiliation - to the heritage of German medieval architecture, to their western Asian origins, to contemporary movements in historicist architecture - for an audience of the initiated on the interior.

As shown on Oppler's drawing, the focal point of the apse was the Torah shrine (*Aron kodesh*). A Gothic-inspired gable framed the entire shrine with the tables of law mounted above. The Bimah, or readers' platform, no longer stood in the center of the space but was moved to the

¹⁴⁶ This distinctive vine pattern appeared decades later in the funerary monument of Max Kaufmann in the Breslau Jewish Cemetery. I am grateful to Eleonora Bergman for making me aware of this connection. See her book, *Nurt mauretański w architekturze synagog: Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej w XIX I na początku XX wieku* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2004), 77-8.

eastern wall alongside the Torah shrine, more in line with a Christian pulpit. The Bimah immediately adjoins at the front of the Torah shrine and organ loft. In pre-modern and Orthodox synagogues, the platform was located in the middle of the interior space instead of at the eastern end. Reform-minded rabbis like Joël began delivering sermons from the Bimah in Sabbath services, a Christian tradition that earned them the nickname “pulpit rabbis.” In Oppler’s New Synagogue, Rabbi Joël stood on the Bimah to look out at his congregation. The massive round arch arcade with ornate archivolts and patterned compound columns supported the gallery and framed the rabbi’s figure. These Romanesque elements worked in concordance with the centralized plan of the synagogue to create a worship service that was modern and rooted in German national heritage while remaking Jewish liturgy.

The organ and choir seating sat on a raised gallery in the apse with the organ pipes flanking a Romanesque rose window. The balustrade of the gallery displayed a round arch colonnade similar to the Romanesque dwarf gallery of the Worms cathedral. Oppler used a combination of sandstone and Silesian marble for these architectural elements.

The interior walls and vaults were painted to create a lavish sanctuary. The elaborate painted vine decoration on the ceiling is not, however, an evocation of the non-European tradition so despised by Oppler, but rather part of a larger trend in historicist painting decoration. The decorative profusion stems from Islamic design, but the actual elements of the painting are found in European ecclesiastic architecture.

In September 1872, the Reform Jewish citizens of the German Empire assembled in Breslau to dedicate the New Synagogue. Honored gentile guests included Count Pninsti (district president), Major General von Lindern (commandant of Breslau), Dr. Bartsch (rector of the university privy council), delegations from the municipal and city councils, royal bank director

Martin and police counselor Weiß.¹⁴⁷ Dr. Kletke, director of the Frankl Foundation and instructor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, led the delegation of Jewish dignitaries with Provincial Rabbi Tiktin, Rabbi Joël, Cantor Deutsch, and leaders of the synagogue's council.

The dedication ceremony became an important act of sanctification in the nineteenth century. During the same period, the concept of the synagogue changed from an instrument used to attain the redemption of Israel into a sacred house of God.¹⁴⁸ Following the post-Enlightenment transformation of the role of the church and Christian worship services, Jewish congregations began to focus on the moral and pedagogical functions of the synagogue. Joël upheld those tenets in his sermon at the dedication, imploring that this structure was first and foremost a house of prayer as well as a house of learning and community, rather than a petition to God for the restoration of Israel's former glory.¹⁴⁹

In this context, the style and design of a synagogue also became paramount as bearers of the new moral message. Oppler's neo-Romanesque campaign encompassed a moral imperative for German Jews to build in the style of their German ancestors, rather than dwell on the ancient origins and prophecies of their faith. The traditions and heritage of their German diasporic state became paramount for Oppler's architecture. As the Reform movement transformed the "Israelite Temple" (*israelitisches Tempel*) into a "House of God" (*Gotteshaus*) in Germany, clients dictated that architectural style and structure follow suit. Oppler enthusiastically obliged. By these means, devout Reformers hoped to preserve the centrality of religion in the lives of future generations. Joël nostalgically lamented the fading of religion's presence in modern society in his address at the dedication, "Today the house of God is practically the only place,

¹⁴⁷ "Correspondez," *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums*, 42 (1872), 829.

¹⁴⁸ Michael A. Meyer, "'How Awesome is this Place!,'" 53-57.

¹⁴⁹ *Predigt gehalten bei der Einweihung der neuen Synagoge in Breslau am 29. September 1872 von Dr. M. Joël, Rabbiner der israelitischen Gemeinde zu Breslau* (Breslau: Schletter'sche Buchhandlung, 1872), 8-10.

which offers us as citizens a religion which is not a deflated, weak memory of our youth, but rather something living that touches our lives.”¹⁵⁰

For Reformers, a significant part of this religious reawakening was the use of the vernacular in services, something which Joël also stressed in his sermon. “Alongside the [Hebrew] language, which preserves the connection with our religious origins and the entirety of our faith, our native language, the language in which we think and feel, has found uses everywhere where we as *loyal sons of the Fatherland* and as *children of the momentous present* turn to our Father in heaven.”¹⁵¹ The congregation of the New Synagogue in Breslau believed the future of German Jews rested in the active use of their native language. Recognizing this important shift in religious practice as well as how personal the schism was for Breslau Jews, Joël reinforced his congregation’s role in the modernization process as “children of a momentous present.” This change was not a wholly liturgical one either, but had wider implications for the perception of Jews in the newly formed German empire, which Joël also referenced when labeling his flock “the loyal sons of the Fatherland.”

This schism between tradition and reform was not only manifest in the Jewish congregations of Breslau, but seeped into the architectural criticism of the building’s style. Eduard Knoblauch, architect of Berlin’s newly dedicated Moorish-Islamic synagogue on Oranienburgerstrasse, did not hesitate from using his sway as founder of the Berlin Architects’ Association (*Architektenverein*) to strike back at Oppler. He criticized Oppler’s use of the neo-Romanesque in a predominantly Gothic and Baroque city on the pages of the club’s weekly

¹⁵⁰ “Heute ist das Gotteshaus fast die einzige Stätte, die uns die Bürgerschaft bietet, dass die Religion für uns nicht eine abgeblaste, unkräftige Jugenderinnerung werde, sonder ein Lebendiges, das in unser Leben eingreift.” *Predigt*, 10.

¹⁵¹ “Neben der Sprache, die den Zusammenhang mit unseren Religionsquellen und mit unserer religiösen Gesamtheit lebendig erhält, hat unsere Muttersprache, die Sprache, in der wir denken und fühlen, überall Anwendung gefunden, wo wir als *treue Söhne des Vaterlandes* und als *Kinder einer hochbedeutsamen Gegenwart* uns wenden an unseren Vater im Himmel.” *Predigt*, 12-3.

periodical. “The new synagogue is . . . a central plan Romanesque structure. It promises to deliver us a stately monumental work, although this style will appear just as exotic for the local architectural character of Breslau as the use of a Christian style for a Jewish purpose.”¹⁵² Knoblauch is right that the synagogue’s rounded dome does distinguish itself from the Gothic church spires in the nearby city center, making the building somewhat exotic in Breslau. He continues his attack to accuse Oppler of co-opting an exclusively Christian style (the Romanesque) for a Jewish building, despite Oppler’s treatises which claim the Romanesque for all Germans, Christians and Jews. At the completion of the New Synagogue in Breslau, however, these claims were far from settled.

Despite Knoblauch’s disapproval, the majority of the critical reception of the New Synagogue exhibited the same enthusiasm as that of the journalist from the *Zeitschrift für Bauhandwerker* who proclaimed, “It may be classified as a first-rate work in artistic as well as practical terms. . . . The excellent proportions in the construction and the harmonious color palette work together wonderfully.”¹⁵³ Before the synagogue was even completed, the *Deutsche Bauzeitung* commented favorably on the addition of the synagogue’s dome and “with it the lively city silhouette full of towers will be enriched by a distinguished and interesting building mass.”¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² “Der Bau einer neuen Synagoge wird . . . als romanischer Centralbau ausgeführt und verspricht uns ein stattliches monumentales Werk zu liefern, wengleich dasselbe für den architektonischen Lokal-Charakter Berslau’s ebenso exotisch erscheinen, als der gewählte christliche Styl für den israelitischen Zweck.” “Mitteilungen über die Bauprojekte und Bauausführungen,” *Wochenblatt des Architektenvereins zu Berlin* I (1867), 28-9.

¹⁵³ “Sie darf sowohl in künstlerlicher Beziehung wie vom praktischen Standpunkt als ein Werk ersten Ranges bezeichnet werden. . . . Die ausgezeichneten Verhältnisse in der Konstruktion und die harmonische Farbenstimmung wirken ausgezeichnet zusammen.” “Synagoge zu Breslau,” *Zeitschrift für Bauhandwerker* 31, 14 (1887), 107.

¹⁵⁴ “. . . damit die belebte thurmreiche Silhouette unserer Stadt um eine bedeutende und interessante Baumasse bereichert werden wird.” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 3, 47 (1869), 575.

2.7 THE NEW SYNAGOGUE'S URBAN RELIGIOUS CONTEXT: CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN ARCHITECTURE IN Breslau

As Oppler was formulating a German Reform Jewish architectural statement in Breslau, the city's Catholic and Protestant communities were also on their own paths of modernization and reform. Although there is no evidence of any direct interaction between Oppler and those involved with the concurrent Christian building projects, this architectural contestation is a vital component to the built religious landscape of the city. Ultimately, both the Catholics and the Protestants emulated Oppler's late Romanesque revival and translated his innovations in their own building projects.

After Breslau's separation from Catholic Austria and annexation to Protestant Prussia in 1741, the city's Catholics had become a cultural and political minority, although they constituted half of the population. Thus, they shared similar aims with the Jewish community. They used a different medieval style to seek assimilation and acceptance, the neo-Gothic, in their plans for St. Michael's.¹⁵⁵

Archbishop Heinrich Förster plucked Alexis Langer, a mason trained at the Royal Art, Building and Craft School (*Königliche Kunst-, Bau-, und Handwerkschule*) in Breslau, from obscurity as the architect to execute his ambitious church building plans for Breslau. Langer made his presence known on the international neo-Gothic stage in 1854 by winning one of the first-place prizes in the elite Votivkirche competition in Vienna. His strict neo-Gothic design denotes his connection to the Cologne Cathedral masons' lodge (*Dombauhütte*), which also appealed to the Archbishop and his political aims. After the 1850 Prussian legislation that

¹⁵⁵ The following discussion of St. Michael's stems from Agnieszka Zabłocka-Kos, *Sztuka, Wiara, Uczucie: Alexis Langer, śląski architekt neogotyku* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1996).

granted equal status to the Protestant and Catholic churches, Förster's diocese, along with those in the Rhineland, assumed a leadership position amongst Catholics in the state. As he embarked on an ambitious building plan, Förster wanted to model his parish churches in Breslau on the French cathedrals of the High Gothic period as a way to express his allegiance to the Catholic Rhineland and assert his independence from Berlin by avoiding the Berliner *Rundbogenstil* in his churches. The Archbishop found in Silesian-born Langer an architect who could fulfill precisely and faithfully his neo-Gothic vision. After moving to Breslau in 1855, Langer converted to Catholicism and began a fruitful period of collaboration with Förster, designing nine churches from 1855 to 1868, including St. Michael's.

St. Michael's was to be the magnum opus of Langer and Förster's series of city churches. Larger than any of Breslau's many Baroque churches or the Gothic cathedral, St. Michael's long narrow nave and soaring neo-Gothic spires loomed over every other sacred structure in Breslau. The archbishop had also chosen a strategic site for its construction. Known as the Elbing, the location once was the site of a large Romanesque monastery, a key center of Silesian Christianity, until the Protestant city council ordered its destruction in 1529. Instead of recalling the site's history through a stylistic evocation of the monastery, Förster and Langer presented an orthodox neo-Gothic basilica in the vein of Pugin and Reichensperger. The arrangement of the floor plan also points to changes in Catholic liturgy executed in the mid-nineteenth century as the Church sought to retain its hierarchical sacrality in the face of rising democratization and modernization. The hierarchical plan includes a sharp distinction between the worldly realm of the nave and the holy space of the east choir, the border demarcated with the communion rails and a triumphal arch. Langer's use of Silesian spring vaulting in the side aisles is an unusual addition to such a strict interpretation of the High Gothic style, an attempt to carve out a

recognizable regional feature in his oeuvre. The decorative program contains renderings of Silesian coats of arms and saints, and Archbishop Förster, to reinforce further the significance of the Catholic Church for Silesia and Breslau.

The collapse of the north tower of the west façade during construction in 1868 was the tragic end to Förster's patronage of Langer's work. Deeply disappointed in the immense structural failure of Langer's design, Förster hired building advisor (*Baurat*) Karl Johann Lüdecke and he assumed direction of the building's completion. As a Protestant Berlin *Bauakademie* graduate, Lüdecke was the very antithesis of Langer's program. Instead of rebuilding the tower to match its twin, Lüdecke left the tower truncated with a high hip roof and no sandstone tracery.¹⁵⁶ Although an asymmetrical façade is not unusual in medieval churches, Lüdecke's work erased the deep theological symbolism in Langer's neo-Gothic design. The original tower was to include five levels. The first three square floors symbolized the Holy Trinity. The fourth floor displayed a more complex octagonal form to represent the interconnectedness of the four prophets of the Old Testament and the four Evangelists. Finally, the elaborate tracery pinnacle of Langer's design, adorning the entire work, corresponded to the reign of Christ.

Archbishop Förster was able to consecrate St. Michael's a few years before the crushing tide of the *Kulturkampf* squelched further Catholic building activity in Breslau. In 1875, his anti-state actions forced Förster to leave the city, fleeing to the castle in Johannisberg in the Austrian-ruled portion of Silesia. After his death in 1881, Catholic officials returned his body to the Breslau cathedral for a proper interment. Two years later, Breslau Bishop Robert Herzog named Josef

¹⁵⁶ *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 3, 47 (1869): 575.

Ebers the first architect to hold the newly created office of Diocese Building Inspector.¹⁵⁷ Ebers, a Hannover school follower, designed the *Backsteingotik*-inspired St. Heinrich in the early 1890s, the first church completed after the *Kulturkampf*. He modeled the basilican plan and westwork of St. Boniface parish church (1897-1898) after Ottonian and Romanesque churches such as St. Cyriakus in Gernrode and St. Pantaleon in Cologne.¹⁵⁸

The Protestants watched as the Jews and then the Catholics made their contribution to the architectural program of Breslau. The Protestants had been the first to instigate a new building project, but scrapped their plans from the mid-1850s after seeing Oppler's and Langer's innovations emerge in the late 1860s. City building advisor Karl Johann Christian Zimmermann completed the Church of the Savior in the first years of the 1870s. Trained at the Berlin *Bauakademie* and president of the seventy-member Architect and Engineers' Association in Breslau, he represented the Prussian school of architectural thought in the city. Zimmermann worked as an architectural attaché sent to the province from the Prussian capital, which still represented a post-Schinkel, *Rundbogenstil*-inspired building mode. In short, Zimmermann represented everything against which Förster and Langer worked. Zimmermann's three-aisled, brick hall church drew from fourteenth-century northern German Gothic churches and the designs of his Berlin mentor Friedrich August Stüler, who also had worked on the Oranienburgerstrasse Synagogue in Berlin. Despite their differences, the Church of the Savior's final incarnation bears certain resemblances to Langer's work, more a function of the legislation of the Eisenach Regulative than any collaborative work between the two architects.

¹⁵⁷ See Sławomir Brzezicki, *Architektura kościołów Josefa Ebersa (1845-1923) jako przykład syntexy sztuki katolickiej i portestanckiej* (M.A. thesis, University of Wrocław, 1999).

¹⁵⁸ See articles from Agnieszka Zablocka-Kos on both churches in *Atlas Architektury Wrocławia*, vol I (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, 1997), 64-67.

The Eisenach Regulative of 1861 was one of the most important, wide-sweeping architectural reforms of the nineteenth century. Named after the location of the congress that determined its contents, the Regulative brought together leaders of the provincial church administrations and three architectural titans of the era – Christian Friedrich von Leins (1814-1882) from Stuttgart, Stüler, and Hase – to lay down a set of required elements for Protestant churches.¹⁵⁹ Many of the dictums merely set in writing what had already been common practice such as situating organs in a raised west choir or placing the pulpit toward one of the sides of the east choir. The impassioned and open discussion of appropriate styles for Protestant churches distinguished the results of the congress. To a certain extent, the debates mirror Oppler’s own crusade to coordinate the religious, the national, and the functional in one medieval style. The third thesis of the Eisenach Regulative stated churches must use a longitudinal plan, preferably a cruciform, as well as, “one of the historically developed Christian building styles . . . next to the Old Christian basilica and the so-called Romanesque (pre-Gothic), preferably the so-called Germanic (Gothic) style.”¹⁶⁰ Therefore, the committee opened the parameters of style to any and all medieval manifestations from an open basilican hall to a multi-aisled, and vaulted sanctuary. The final result was a compromise between Hase’s strict brand of neo-Gothicism and Stüler’s support of more flexibility in the floor plan design (arguing in favor of central plans) and the more asymmetrical English Gothic variant.¹⁶¹

The lack of support for one particular style in Protestant building led Protestant projects along on a converging trajectory with Catholic architecture. The Church of the Savior in Breslau

¹⁵⁹ Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, 360. Lewis, 223-9.

¹⁶⁰ “an einen der geschichtlich entwickelten christlichen Baustyle . . . neben der altchristlichen Basilika und der sogenannten romanischen (vorgothischen) Bauart vorzugsweise den sogenannten germanischen (gotischen) Styl.” “Eisenacher Regulativ,” in *Kunsttheorie und Kunstgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland, Teil II Architektur*, ed. Wolfgang Beyrodt (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1982), 334.

¹⁶¹ Zietz, 32. Lewis, 223-9.

clearly illustrates this tendency. Albeit on a smaller scale (without the long east choir, transept and flying buttresses), the Church of the Savior appears strikingly similar to St. Michael's. Not only the west spires, but also the narrow plan, nave windows and reliance on German brick Gothic that bind demonstratively the churches to the German nation all point to the same general medievalist approach. A generation later, Protestants in Breslau and throughout the German empire broke ranks with the Eisenach Regulative, opting for the stouter, blockier polygonal towers, Rheinisch arcades, and rounded fenestration of Oppler's New Synagogue.¹⁶²

2.8 THE LEGACY OF OPPLER'S NEW SYNAGOGUE AND LATER NEO-ROMANEQUE SYNAGOGUES

Oppler died prematurely in 1880. In his last few projects, his synagogue design revealed less of an assimilationist approach and a more assertive Jewish identity. At a time when Christians began to emulate his neo-Romanesque approach to religious architecture, Oppler began to embrace a more overt Jewishness in his synagogue designs. In his 1868 concept for Nuremberg, not completed because the projected costs were double what the congregation was prepared to spend, Oppler achieved a more comprehensive blend of Romanesque form and Jewish identity. Here, Oppler fused a Rheinisch Romanesque-inspired westwork (with side towers and arcading evocative of his Breslau synagogue) with a monumental central plan in the form of a six-pointed star topped with a looming dome. In this brief phase, Oppler believed the Star of David, just like

¹⁶² Some examples of later neo-Romanesque churches in Breslau are the Protestant St. John (1907-09, Richard Gaze and Alfred Böttcher), the Protestant St. Carl Boromeus (1911-3, Joseph Maas), and the Catholic parish of the Holy Mother (1909, Hermann von Carlowitz).

the Latin and Greek crosses, could be implemented as a key element of a sacred structure without detracting from the national character of the building.¹⁶³

This optimism about an overtly Jewish building plan was short-lived. By 1872 Oppler returned to a strict Christian floor plan for his competition submission for a new synagogue in Munich. The committee rejected Oppler's three-aisled longitudinal plan complete with westwork, east transept and crossing tower, and rose window in favor of lesser-known Munich architect Albert Schmidt's more understated, simplified neo-Romanesque proposal. In a period of early imperial state formation and early anti-Semitic political movements, Oppler's alternative for a more independent Jewish architecture in the German empire did not find support. It was, perhaps, this rising anti-Semitism that made Oppler aware of his distinctiveness and propelled him to embrace a more overt Jewish expression in his architecture.

In the 1880s and 1890s, the office of Wilhelm Cremer and Richard Wolffenstein continued Oppler's mission up until World War I, designing neo-Romanesque synagogues for their native Berlin (Charlottenburg in 1889 and Lindenstrasse in 1889-91) as well as Königsberg (1893) and Posen (1907). In Königsberg, the neo-Romanesque side towers and dominating central dome evoke Oppler's synagogues in Hannover and Breslau. Cremer and Wolffenstein cast off Oppler's attachment to Worms cathedral, a transitional Romanesque-Gothic monument, to implement a more uniformly neo-Romanesque building. The Königsberg synagogue is a stouter structure with less vertical emphasis. Their synagogue on Lindenstrasse in Berlin echoes the round arches and stark architectural ornamentation propagated by the city's academy and Kaiser Wilhelm II, void of Gothic leanings.

¹⁶³ "Erläuterungsbericht vom 10.Mai.1868," printed in Hammer-Schenk, "Edwin Opplers Theorie des Synagogenbaus," 109.

The question remains, however, why Oppler's theories did not have an immediate impact on other synagogue architects. His short-lived shift to a more overtly Jewish medievalism did not win the favor of a wider audience. The stifling depression of the 1870s and the rising tide of modern, politicized anti-Semitism did their parts to squelch enthusiasm for the Opplerian neo-Romanesque. In 1879, noted Prussian historian and Reichstag member Heinrich von Treitschke joined Prussian court preacher Alfred Stöcker in the first popular organized backlash against social and economic advances made by Jews since the declaration of the Empire.¹⁶⁴ Manuel Joël had been the first Jewish intellectual to take a stance against von Treitschke in the dispute now known as the Berlin anti-Semitism Conflict. This public fight led to the International Anti-Jewish Congresses held in 1882 in Dresden and 1883 in Chemnitz, during which participants called for the reversal of emancipation.

It was not only anti-Semitic action, but also the anti-liberal mobilization of the *Kulturkampf* which repressed Jewish public activity via restrictions placed on left-leaning political parties supported by the overwhelming majority of Jews. Liberalism had been on the decline since the inception of the Second Reich and reached its lowest percentage of the national vote in 1893 with 27.8, after garnering 46.8% of the votes in 1871.¹⁶⁵ As the middle class felt their livelihood disintegrate with the economic crisis, they turned away from liberal values and *Bildungsbürgertum*, which had ushered in complete emancipation for German Jews. And without its own strong democratic, humanist traditions, racially-infused anti-Semitism and exclusionary nationalism surged to the fore in Wilhelmine Germany during the 1890s.

¹⁶⁴ Kalmar, "Moorish Style," 88.

¹⁶⁵ These statistics include both the National Liberal and Left Liberal parties. See Christian Wiese, *Challenging Colonial Discourse: Jewish Studies and Protestant Theology in Wilhelmine Germany*, trans. Barbara Harshav and Christian Wiese (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2005) 42.

In this atmosphere of heightened anti-Semitism and anti-liberal, neo-romantic nationalism, German Jews needed to prove their national allegiance once again and defend their position with neo-Romanesque westworks, rounded arches, and sturdy piers in a renewed vigor. Cremer and Wolffenstein led an entire generation of architects, both Jews and Gentiles, who turned more to purely neo-Romanesque forms. Emil Schreiterer and Bernhard Below mimicked the Romanesque churches of Cologne's city center in their design for the city's 1895 synagogue. On the other side of the empire from Breslau, in a different borderland region, Ludwig Levy erected a neo-Romanesque temple for the German Jews of Strasbourg. And in the immediate pre-war years in Berlin, Ehrenfried Hessel outfitted the largest, most cosmopolitan Jewish congregation in Germany with a neo-Romanesque synagogue only blocks away from Schwechten's Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in the most affluent neighborhood in the city. By the 1890s, the debate seemed to be over between the neo-Romanesque and Moorish-Islamic camps within the debates over Jewish synagogue design.

As was the fate of almost all of Oppler's, Cremer and Wolffenstein's, and others' synagogues, the New Synagogue in Breslau burned on the Night of Broken Glass (*Kristallnacht*), November 9-10, 1938. By that time the Jewish population of the city had dwindled to 10,309 members, half of its former peak.¹⁶⁶ Jewish salesman Walter Taush, who witnessed the destruction of the New Synagogue, later recounted,

It was around a quarter to ten when I reached the Schlossplatz in order to turn down Wallstraße: the so-called "fiddle hall," a famous beautiful building by Oppler (a Romanesque domed building), was only a smoking ruin. The top dome already started to sink to one side and

¹⁶⁶ Josef Joachim Menzel, *Breslauer Juden 1850-1945* (St. Augustin: Konrad Audenauer Stiftung, 1990), 14.

had to be demolished between two and four in the afternoon, during which all residents in the surrounding buildings had to leave their apartments.¹⁶⁷

After the increased restrictions on Jewish life and later the deportation and murder of the entire Jewish community in Auschwitz or Theresienstadt (save for a handful of Jews with Christian spouses), Breslau, now Wrocław, lost any human element of a once thriving community in its city. Its Jewish population comprises a group of exceptional character, which produced seven Nobel prize winners, educated countless rabbis, and held a steadfast belief that the liberal values of the *Bildungsbürgertum* would be their entrance ticket into full participation in German civic life. With no need to rebuild such a grand synagogue for a newly relocated miniscule Polish Jewish population after World War II (most of whom left again after a brash wave of anti-Semitic campaigns in Poland in 1967-68), the only indication of where Oppler's New Synagogue once stood is a memorial plaque erected for the fiftieth anniversary of the Night of Broken Glass in 1988.

It seems a righteous decision, therefore, for the Jewish community of Hameln to accept Oppler's great-grandson's offer to build the fledgling liberal congregation, composed almost entirely of post-1991 Russian immigrants, on the site where his great-grandfather's neo-Romanesque synagogue once stood. Arnold Oppler's father (Edwin's grandson) fled with his family to the United States in 1939, where his son (Edwin's great-grandson) has followed in the family footsteps, becoming an architect. When Arnold Oppler discovered via the Internet the

¹⁶⁷ "Es war gegen dreiviertel zehn (21:45), als ich den Schlossplatz erreichte, um in die Wallstraße einzubiegen: die so-genannte „Mauschelhalle," ein bekannter schöner Bau von Oppler (romanischer Kuppelbau), war nur noch eine rauchende Ruine. Die obere Kuppel hat sich bereits nach einer Seite zu senken angefangen und musste nachmittags von zwei bis vier gesprengt werden, wozu all Einwohner der umliegenden Häuser die Wohnung zu verlassen haben." Quoted in Leszek Ziątkowski, *Die Geschichte der Juden in Breslau*, trans. Barbara Kocowska (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Dolnośląskie, 2000), 77.

plans to construct a new synagogue in Hameln, the first newly constructed Reform synagogue in Germany after 1945, he knew he had to be involved.¹⁶⁸ As congregation chairwoman Rachel Dohme remarked, “That Mr. Oppler contacted us, it is a sign from God for me.”¹⁶⁹ Oppler’s sleek white stucco and brick exterior and austere interior designs bear little resemblance to his great-grandfather’s work. The conical glass turret above the sanctuary is the only quotation of the elder Oppler’s red brick neo-Romanesque work from 1879. The original caretaker’s house remains from Edwin’s initial ensemble. The community intends to use the medievalizing space as a café and gift shop alongside the contemporary synagogue and community center, thereby preserving with these two architectural styles the forever prominent gap in German Jewish life.¹⁷⁰

Edwin Oppler’s reconfiguration of religious and architectural theories to assert a bold new identity for German Jews in the later nineteenth century proved groundbreaking beyond the pockets of Reform communities in German urban centers. The widespread success of the New Synagogue in Breslau lay in the proper combination of a well-trained but non-conformist architect and a progressive, dedicated religious community. Minority groups of German Catholics had much to learn from this approach. As Oppler solidified his career in neo-Romanesque architecture, Christoph Hehl was just beginning his. Sixteen years younger than Oppler, Hehl was serving as an apprentice to Gilbert George Scott in England while Oppler designed his Breslau masterpiece. Before Ungewitter’s untimely death in 1864, Hehl had

¹⁶⁸ Michael Grau, “Neue Synagoge für Hameln: Jüdischer Architekt tritt in Fußtapfen seines Urgroßvaters,” *Dewezeit*, 3 Februar 2004, Hameln edition. Michael Grau, “Urenkel des Star-Architekten Oppler soll die Synagoge bauen Amerikaner erfuhr im Internet vom Projekt/Der Urahn plante die Marienburg,” *Dewezeit*, 27 January 2004, Hameln edition.

¹⁶⁹ “Dass sich Herr Oppler an uns gewandt hat, ist für mich ein Fingerzeig Gottes.“ Grau, „Urenkel des Star-Architekten Oppler,“ *Dewezeit* 27 January 2004, Hameln edition.

¹⁷⁰ “The Hamelin Jewish Cultural Center,” *Jüdische Gemeinde Hameln*, <http://www.jghreform.org/hjcc/index.html> (accessed 10 April 2006).

studied with him in the early 1860s, sharing Oppler's unconventional entry into the Hannover School and his outsider position once he arrived in the north (Hehl was Catholic). A dedicated nationalist, Hehl first studied with Hase after serving in the army during the Franco-Prussian War. By the time Hehl entered Oppler's atelier in the early 1870s, the synagogues in Hannover and Breslau had garnered Oppler national acclaim. These works were not simply heralded as the products of another talented student of the Hannover School, but rather as the product of an innovative theorist of sacred architecture and champion of the Jewish Reform movement. Similarly, Hehl's Catholic parish church, dedicated to the Rosary in Berlin-Steglitz, builds on the same themes of hybridity and distinctive assimilation.

3.0 “NOW I PROPHESEE, LEHNIN, YOUR FUTURE DESTINY”: CHRISTOPH HEHL AND THE REVIVAL OF THE ROMANESQUE ROOTS OF BERLIN CATHOLICISM IN THE ROSARY CHURCH

In the fall of 1898, Engelbert Seibertz was angry, and rightfully so. Seibertz was a well-known Berlin architect and designer of fourteen churches, including the Dominican St. Paul's in Moabit (1892-93) and Catholic parish St. Matthew's on Winterfeldplatz (1894). He had just spent a great deal of time preparing drawings for a new Catholic church in the growing Berlin suburb of Steglitz, to be named St. Mary, Queen of the Rosary.¹⁷¹ Things seemed to be progressing without any difficulty until Seibertz discovered that Josef Deitmer, the parish priest, had shown Seibertz's designs to Christoph Hehl to critique. A recent Berlin transplant and relative unknown, Hehl had just completed his first Berlin commission, the Catholic church Heart of Jesus, in the working class district of Prenzlauer Berg. On October 25 Deitmer had been at the dedication of this monumental central plan church with its towering north German Romanesque façade, and he later referred to it in the parish chronicle as “a glorious building.”¹⁷²

Deitmer's relations with Seibertz degraded rapidly. On November 24, 1898, Seibertz wrote Deitmer a letter both to defend his artistic prowess and to distance himself from what he

¹⁷¹ The Virgin Mary is the official patron of the church; however, the name in formal records and colloquially is simply Rosary. Pope Pius XII elevated the church to a basilica minor in 1950.

¹⁷² “ein herrlicher Bau,” Pfarrchronik, I: 34, Pfarramt Archiv Rosenkranz-Basilika, Berlin-Steglitz, Germany. The Pfarrchronik is the parish chronicle. The church's archives, Pfarramt Archiv Rosenkranz-Basilika, Berlin-Steglitz, Germany, will hereafter be cited as Church Archives.

saw as Hehl's derivative work: "When desired I work just as authentic and old as Mr. Hehl. If I should hold slavishly to the old models, I would create from the same sources from which Mr. Hehl has created up to this point."¹⁷³ In spring 1899, Deitmer and the consistory awarded Hehl the commission and gave Seibertz 1,000 Marks for his troubles.

Scholars today bracket both Seibertz and Hehl together in a group of significant Catholic architects in Wilhelmine Berlin that also includes the Catholic architects Max Hasak and August Menken. The differences in their approach to medieval models and in their reactions to liturgical developments also tend to become subsumed into a universalizing narrative of architectural medievalism. This moment of Seibertz and Hehl's stylistic confrontation, however, reveals a more complex picture of neo-medieval church construction in Berlin. It also exposes what was at stake for the fledgling Berlin Catholic diaspora as it was building new parish churches in this period. Deitmer's eagerness to break a contract with a well-established architect and catapult a virtual unknown to serve as the architectural spokesman of Berlin Catholics demonstrates how the neo-Romanesque style found expression beyond the kaiser-sponsored large scale building projects in the imperial capital. It was also, as the story of the Rosary Church makes plain, manipulated and transformed in the architectural language of Catholics. Furthermore, Seibertz's snide commentary on Hehl's supposedly "slavish" holding to historical building models and his "authentic and old" style tell us that the notion of neo-Romanesque architecture as merely imitative and uncreative is not an invention of recent architectural historiography. It has, on the contrary, a long, full tradition.

¹⁷³ "Ich arbeite auf Verlangen genau so echt und alt wie Herr Hehl. Wenn ich mich knechtisch an die alten Vorbilder halten soll, schöpfe ich aus denselben Quellen aus denen Herr Hehl bisher geschöpft hat." Seibertz to Deitmer, November 18, 1898, Files 1898–1900, Kirchenbau und Ausmalung, Church Archives.

At its inception, the Rosary Church in Steglitz embodied the contention that lay at the intersection of religious identity negotiation and neo-Romanesque architecture during the Kaiserreich. In this chapter I will present Hehl's design of the Rosary Church as a multi-layered hybrid. With a Germanic façade and Italianate interior, the Rosary Church defies categorization as a purely historicist building and instead points to a more flexible approach to design that accommodated both innovation in form and the needs of the urban community. Ultimately, the architecture and decorative program of the Rosary Church reveal the dynamic transformations that were occurring in the Prussian Catholic community and in neo-Romanesque architecture at this time.

The work of German architectural historian Andreas Tacke has been fundamental to my understanding of Hehl's Berlin churches.¹⁷⁴ Tacke singles out building materials, notably the use of *Klosterziegel* (monastic brick), as the crucial religious signifier of Hehl's Catholic churches. He overlooks, however, the concurrent use of this same material in Protestant churches in Berlin, which seems to strip the monastic brick of its exclusive Catholic affiliation. By focusing on Hehl's use of a decidedly anti-modern brick and bond tradition, Tacke overlooks the truly inventive nature of Hehl's hybrid designs that responded to shifting needs in burgeoning Catholic congregations. Instead of relegating Hehl to an "architect totally committed to historicism,"¹⁷⁵ I present a dynamic view of an architect blending convention and innovation for a minority community in the process of transformation. Tacke's single-minded focus on the history and development of the two competing brick formats in the Berlin-Brandenburg region, *Klosterziegel* and *Reichsziegel* (imperial brick), has caused him to neglect Hehl's more vital architectural contribution to the development of the Catholic Church in the Wilhelmine Empire.

¹⁷⁴ For a list of works by Andreas Tacke, see footnote 10.

¹⁷⁵ "[G]ar dem Historismus verpflichtet geliebt." Tacke, "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel," 145.

As I argue in the following, that contribution was importantly based on Hehl's combination of a German Romanesque westwork with an Italian central plan interior.

Culminating in an analysis of this hybrid design, this chapter first considers changing liturgy and modernization attempts by the Church, coupled with larger developments in medievalizing architecture. The liturgical history and architectural history help to highlight Hehl's inventive spatial arrangement and the significance of his architectural designs' hybrid forms. Hehl's Rosary Church functions as a medievalist structure that looks both backward to Romanesque architecture and forward to new spatial arrangements for modern congregations. It also becomes a precursor to the early twentieth-century religious architecture of Theodor Fischer, Dominikus Böhm, and Otto Bartning.

In Breslau, as we have seen, an upper-middle class congregation single-handedly realized the construction of a revolutionary synagogue by a top-tier architect, who used his design to advance his notion of an architecture that was both German in nationality and Jewish in creed. The story of the Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz stems from a very different context, although Catholics in Prussia faced many of the same social hurdles that Jews confronted. Just as Protestants questioned Jewish national allegiance to Germany long before the rise of the modern Zionist movement in later decades, so, too, did they doubt Catholic Germans' dual loyalty to the Church in Rome and the kaiser in Berlin. Protestants often regarded Jewish and Catholic worship in much the same terms – as ritualistic and with little import for individual morality and betterment. Both minorities under Prussian rule remained largely underrepresented in the military, diplomatic corps, and university appointments.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Clark, "German Jews," 144.

3.1 THE CULTURAL BATTLE: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GERMANY IN THE MODERN ERA

In the nineteenth century, the Tridentine Missal, the standardized liturgy written as part of the Counter Reformation amendments of the Council of Trent in the late sixteenth century, still dictated Catholic Mass.¹⁷⁷ Tridentine reformers attempted to expunge any local traditions, keeping Mass in Latin and emphasizing more frequent celebrations of Communion. Baroque Catholic churches reflected these changes, going from a more rational austere Renaissance design to a long nave with side chapels, an apsidal chancel and ornate interior decoration. A growing focus on connections between theology and the personal lives of the congregants as well as evangelical flamboyance in the sermon necessitated placing the pulpit further down into the extensive nave to establish a more tangible connection between clergy and parish. Despite these attempts to reach Catholics on a more personal level, the rift between officially sanctioned practice and popular religious expression continued to expand in the early nineteenth century, as the laity preferred local pilgrimages, feast days, and other extra-liturgical devotions.¹⁷⁸

German-speaking Catholics experienced a great deal of social and political upheaval in the Napoleonic era, also contributing to their growing disillusionment with the Church in Rome. Under the dissolution of the imperial church (*Reichsdeputationshauptschluss*) in 1803, territory in the Holy Roman Empire was redistributed to sovereigns who lost land annexed to France after

¹⁷⁷ Nigel Yates, *Liturgical Space: Christian Worship and Church Buildings in Western Europe 1500-2000* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 45-7.

¹⁷⁸ See David Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary in a Nineteenth-Century German Village* (New York: Knopf, 1994).

the revolution.¹⁷⁹ In this arrangement, millions of Catholics came under Protestant rule. Isolated from larger Church institutions, they focused even more on local religious festivals and saints. Furthermore, many monasteries and convents were dissolved, shifting the balance of power towards Protestants. Yet, the sixteen million Catholics (and ten million Lutherans) living in the German nation at the end of the Holy Roman Empire in 1806 had their religious rights affirmed in Article 16 of the Federal Constitution (*Deutsche Bundesakte*) of June 8, 1815, which proclaimed, “The difference between the Christian religious parties cannot establish a difference in the enjoyment of civic and political rights in the states of the German Confederation.”¹⁸⁰ By 1850, the Prussian constitution granted further freedoms to the Catholic Church. Under Friedrich Wilhelm IV, Catholics enjoyed greater liberties, as the “Romantic on the Throne” rallied Prussians to complete Cologne Cathedral and sought a more universal Christian spiritual experience in his personal life that incorporated many Catholic elements.¹⁸¹

As the Catholic Church sought to maintain its influence in an increasingly secular German world ruled by Protestants, it saw itself forced to modernize. Church officials changed the education of priests after the model of the more rigorous academic training of Protestant pastors. The Catholic clergy was thus transformed into a more unified body. The first parish priest at Rosary Church, Josef Deitmer, belonged to this new breed of well-educated clergyman. He had studied theology at Münster and Innsbruck in the early 1880s and was an active member of the Catholic Students’ Association (*Kartellverband katholischer deutscher Studentenvereine*.) With a more educated, engaged clergy, sermons became more of a central feature of the mass.

¹⁷⁹ The following discussion draws from Wolfgang Altgeld, “German Catholics,” in *The Emancipation of Catholics, Jews and Protestants: Minorities and the Nation State in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, eds. Rainer Liedtke and Stephan Wendehorst, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 100-121.

¹⁸⁰ Quoted in Altgeld, “German Catholics,” 103.

¹⁸¹ On the completion of Cologne Cathedral, see Dann, *Religion-Kunst-Vaterland*. On Friedrich Wilhelm IV’s spirituality see Curran, *Romanesque Revival*.

Congregations, which were seeking religious connection in a time of great social upheaval, were receptive. Elements of popular belief once scorned by the Catholic Enlightenment became acceptable again. Pilgrimages flourished and the Marian cult gained strength in the 1850s and 1860s.¹⁸² Yet another aspect of this revival and modernization of Catholicism was a turn towards ultramontanism. Disappointed by the *kleindeutsch* solution to German national questions, German Catholics looked beyond the Alps to Rome for papal authority.¹⁸³

When the empire consolidated in 1871, it did not include Austria, a *grossdeutsch* constellation which would have greatly increased Catholic influence in the political sphere. With a more even balance of Protestants and Catholics in a *grossdeutsch* empire, the Rosary Church congregation would have encountered a different social atmosphere in the Berlin metropolitan area as they built their church. Although the Rosary Church parish and other German Catholics did not question their own national loyalty to the new German nation-state, their minority status encouraged this close relationship with the Vatican as a way to concentrate the social and political sway they had. The ultramontane perspective only grew stronger as Catholics witnessed Chancellor Bismarck's attempt to impose national-religious homogenization on the new German empire through the *Kulturkampf*. To Bismarck and other Prussian nationalists, recent Catholic dogma like the Immaculate Conception of Mary (1854), the Syllabus Errorum damning modern principles and institutions (1864), and papal infallibility (1870) represented a direct affront to their nationalizing project.

¹⁸² Blackbourn, *Marpingen: Apparitions of the Virgin Mary*.

¹⁸³ The *kleindeutsch* nationalists conceived of a German state under the leadership of the King of Prussia. This German state that was realized under unification in 1871 only included members of the North German Confederation and not the Catholic Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The *Kulturkampf*'s barrage of anti-Catholic legislation began immediately in 1871 when Bismarck subsumed Catholic authority into the Prussian Ministry of Culture.¹⁸⁴ The following year he introduced the "Pulpit Paragraph," a new addition to the Criminal Code which forbade clergy from discussing politics in front of their congregations. The School Oversight Law required religious schools to undergo government inspection and removed religious teachers from public schools. The Jesuits were expelled in 1872, and did not return until 1917. The government also severed diplomatic relations with the Vatican. The Bread Basket Laws of 1875 blocked the usual state subsidies provided to officially recognized churches, amounting to a loss of sixteen million Marks over the next few years.

As an immediate reaction to the repressive legislation, Catholics implemented the tools of modern mass movements to politicize their faithful. The Catholic Center Party appeared on the ballot for the first national elections of 1871. The party's victories in elections throughout the 1870s prove how effectively Catholics mobilized against the *Kulturkampf*. At the height of the *Kulturkampf*, the Center Party received four of every five Catholic votes in the empire. Under the leadership of Ludwig Windthorst, the Catholic Center Party also responded to social injustice, speaking out against anti-Semitic attacks on the civil rights of Jews and special laws against socialists, even voting in 1906-7 to curtail funding for German South-West Africa due to human rights violations under the German colonial administration.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the party continued to lose votes to the social democrats after the immediate wave of the *Kulturkampf* had subsided in the 1890s.

¹⁸⁴ On the *Kulturkampf*, see Altgeld, "German Catholics"; Ronald J. Ross, *The Failure of Bismarck's Kulturkampf: Catholicism and State Power in Imperial Germany, 1871-1887* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of American Press, 1998); Helmut Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict: Culture, Ideology, Politics, 1870-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 19-49; Jonathan Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 207-52.

¹⁸⁵ Altgeld, "German Catholics," 114. For more on Windthorst, see Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Windthorst: A Political Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981).

The first mitigating laws came in 1880, six years before the official retraction of all *Kulturkampf* legislation in 1886. However, the effects of the *Kulturkampf* lingered in the parish churches without priests, the victims of legislation that prevented clerical appointments in Prussia between 1873 and 1884. The social rift between Protestants and Catholics had only grown larger in the meantime. In 1886 Catholics constituted 36.5 percent of the population in Prussia but only 21.3 percent of upper school (*Gymnasium*) graduates.¹⁸⁶ Catholics also had a much higher infant mortality rate. By the end of the nineteenth century, the average Catholic was a few centimeters shorter than the average Protestant (based on military recruits' health examinations), all due to the great social and economic rift between the Christian religions.¹⁸⁷

Berlin, still overwhelmingly Protestant, experienced the brunt of the *Kulturkampf* as massive waves of immigration radically altered the city's demographics. Uneducated rural Prussians – servants, craftspeople, manual laborers – amassed in the capital throughout the nineteenth century in hopes of jobs in industry. Berlin became a true European metropolis in this period, expanding from 401,000 inhabitants in 1843 to 613,000 in 1861.¹⁸⁸ Catholics from the annexed territories of the Rhineland and Silesia immigrated, contributing to the 33,905 recorded Catholics in the city by 1852.¹⁸⁹ The proportion of Berlin residents who were members of the Catholic Church increased steadily through the second half of the nineteenth century, reaching ten percent of the city's population in 1900, while the Protestant majority sank from 93 percent

¹⁸⁶ Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch*, 41.

¹⁸⁷ Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert," 65.

¹⁸⁸ *Berlin in Zahlen* (Berlin: Das neue Berlin, 1947), 51.

¹⁸⁹ Joseph Heinrich Müller ed., *Jahrbuch der Römisch-Katholischen Kirche* (Berlin: Th. Grieben, 1852), 87.

in 1849 to 82 percent in 1910.¹⁹⁰ The introduction of civil marriage in 1871 contributed to the declining Protestant majority, as more inter-confessional marriages were recorded.¹⁹¹

Furthermore, the *Kulturkampf* created an environment that perpetuated the general feeling of inferiority amongst Catholics vis-à-vis the Protestant majority. The most basic necessities for Catholic life – access to enough educated priests, materials to develop and expand a confessional network in the Berlin area – became insurmountable challenges for the Berlin Catholics to confront on their own. News of the dire situation for Berlin Catholics spread throughout the German Catholic community, moving the Bishop of Münster to comment as early as 1849, “I dare not explain to you how infinitely important the situation at hand is. It suffices you to know, that there is no other mission on the entire European continent, which deserves our attention more than Berlin.”¹⁹² When Berlin became the capital of the newly unified German empire in 1871, its population soared over 750,000 and the Catholic Church’s plea only intensified.¹⁹³ By 1913, the *Bonifatiusblatt*, the periodical from the Catholic diaspora aid organization Boniface Association (*Bonifatius-Verein*), named Berlin the largest diaspora city in Europe and the second largest Catholic city in Prussia, trailing only Cologne.¹⁹⁴

Resentment and suspicion of Catholicism lingered in Berlin, surfacing most vehemently in the celebrations of the 350th anniversary, in 1889, of the introduction of Protestantism to the

¹⁹⁰ Horst Matzerath, “Wachstum und Mobilität der Berliner Bevölkerung im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert,” in *Seelsorge und Diakonie in Berlin. Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Großstadt im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Kaspar Elm and Hans-Dietrich Loock, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 214.

¹⁹¹ During this period, over 73 percent of marriages with one Catholic partner were considered mixed. *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin*, 32 (1913), 91. Quoted in Matzerath, “Wachstum und Mobilität,” 216.

¹⁹² “Ich darf Ihnen nicht zuerst auseinandersetzen wie unendlich wichtig die Stelle ist, um die es sich handelt. Es genügt ihnen zu wissen, daß auf dem ganzen europäischen Kontinent es keinen Missionsort gibt, der jetzt mehr ins Auge gefaßt zu werden verdient als Berlin.” Quoted in Hubert Bengsch, *Bistum Berlin: 1000 Jahre christlicher Glaube zwischen Elbe und Oder* (Berlin: Stapp Verlag, 1985), 82.

¹⁹³ *Statistisches Jahrbuch der Stadt Berlin*, 32 (1913), 3. Quoted in Matzerath, “Wachstum und Mobilität,” 204.

¹⁹⁴ *Bonifatiusblatt*, 14 (1913), 309. Quoted in Hans-Georg Aschoff, “Berlin als katholische Diaspora,” in *Seelsorge und Diakonie in Berlin. Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Großstadt im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Kaspar Elm and Hans-Dietrich Loock, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 225.

Mark Brandenburg (and Berlin) in 1539 by Prince-Elector Joachim II. Protestants had long occupied pre-Reformation houses of worship. Now they publicly presented their Catholic-free version of local history. The *Vossische Zeitung* went so far as to suggest that Catholics had not in fact been the original bearers of Christianity in the region encircling Berlin, the Mark Brandenburg, erasing centuries of Catholic missionary work, education, and building achievement:

Catholicism never lost the Mark, because it never possessed it. The power to expand, inherent in the Catholic Church, was stemmed by the idiosyncratic, obstinate, and incomprehensible populations that inhabited the “blotting sand box” of the German Empire. They may have adopted Catholicism, but they never accepted Catholicism in their hearts. They observed the external forms, but the old paganism persisted under this thin veneer with great tenacity. Only in the new form [Protestantism] did Christianity become palatable to the Markish peasants; they became Christian and Lutheran on the same day.¹⁹⁵

Protestants capitalized on the fervor resulting from the 1889 celebration by dedicating seventy-five churches between 1889 and the outbreak of World War I.¹⁹⁶ These churches often contain imagery that overtly joins the rise of Prussia and the German nation with the triumph of Protestantism into one seamless narrative. In the Emmaus Church (1891-1893) in the district of

¹⁹⁵ “Der Katholizismus hat die Mark niemals verloren, weil er sie niemals besessen hat. Die ausbreitende Kraft, welche der katholischen Kirche innewohnte, fand ihre Schranke an dem eigentümlichen, hartnäckigen und hartverständigen Volksschlage, der die Streusandbüchse des deutschen Reiches bewohnt. Er hatte den Katholizismus wohl angenommen, aber nicht in sich aufgenommen. Er beobachtete die äußere Formen, aber unter einem dünnen Firnis erhielt sich das alte Heidentum mit grosser Zähigkeit. Erst in der neuen Form wurde das Christentum dem märkischen Bauern geschlecht annehmbar; es wurde an dem selben Tag christlich und lutherisch.” “Die Reformation in der Mark,” *Vossische Zeitung*, 1 November 1889.

¹⁹⁶ Tacke, “Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel,” 143.

Kreuzberg, sculptural reliefs on the chancel do not include the conventional motif of the Four Evangelists or Church Fathers, but rather the pre-modern exemplars of the union of Protestant church and state, Luther and Prince-Elector Joachim II, the latter a perfect precursor to the Protestant Hohenzollern emperors.¹⁹⁷ The monumental statue of Joachim II along the *Siegesallee* (Victory Boulevard) completed in 1900 included not only a bronze relief portrait of Luther but also a representation of Matthias von Jagow, the Bishop of Brandenburg who performed Joachim II's first Protestant Eucharist. Luther, Joachim II, and other Reformers appear in many other Protestant churches in Berlin, including state-sponsored churches of national significance like the Berlin Cathedral (Julius Raschdorff, 1894-1905) and the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (Franz Schwechten, 1891-1895).

Despite the virulent anti-Catholic climate and financial challenges the Berlin-Brandenburg Catholics encountered, this aggressive stance of the Protestants heightened the consciousness of a distinct Catholic identity and spurred Catholic congregations to answer the Protestants' building spree with one of their own. The first churches were built in the city center: the neo-Classical St. Hedwig's Cathedral tucked behind the State Opera on Unter den Linden (1746-1773) and August Soller's St. Michael's near the district border between Mitte and Kreuzberg (1845-1861). Then, outlying districts and suburban communities rose to meet the Protestant challenge and their own community's crippling need for parish churches, schools, and hospitals.

¹⁹⁷ Tacke, "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel," 144.

3.2AN OUTPOST IN BRANDENBURG: THE BEGINNINGS OF A CATHOLIC PARISH IN STEGLITZ AND THE FIRST PARISH PRIEST, JOSEF DEITMER

From the middle of the nineteenth century onwards, suburban areas like Steglitz, not officially incorporated into the metropolitan area of Berlin until 1920, had become increasingly appealing to city dwellers as they sought reprieve from the rapid industrialization and overcrowded conditions of the city center.¹⁹⁸ Steglitz became especially attractive after the opening of the train routes between Berlin and Potsdam in 1838, which connected the village to the neighboring urban centers. Its population ballooned from 648 in 1855 to 21,474 residents in 1900. On the eve of World War I, Steglitz had over 80,000 residents, making it the largest rural municipality (*Landgemeinde*) in Prussia.¹⁹⁹

A photograph of Steglitz circa 1900 shows the brick *Rundbogenstil* train station in the foreground surrounded by bourgeois apartment houses set on wide streets. To the right, the town hall looms over the residential buildings. Built immediately before the Rosary Church in 1897 by the Berlin architectural team of Reinhardt and Süssenguth, the Steglitz city hall evokes the Gothic brick architecture of the surrounding Mark Brandenburg. Although the Rosary Church and city hall share northern German medieval architectural features like round arches, white plaster, red bricks, and a saddleback roof, the signification of these forms shifts dramatically from the public institution to the minority parish church. Each structure's place in the cityscape also creates a particular context for meaning. While the municipal building dominates the

¹⁹⁸ Under the Greater Berlin Act of 1920, the Prussian government greatly expanded the area of the city to incorporate surrounding towns and villages and officially separated the city from the state of Brandenburg.

¹⁹⁹ Gebhard Streicher, *Berlin: Stadt und Kirche* (Berlin: Morus Verlag, 1980), 306.

skyline, the Rosary Church is completely obscured from view, as part of the urban fabric that spreads out from the city hall.

Steglitz's first monumental Protestant parish church, St. Matthew's (1876-1880) pierces the skyline on the left side of the photograph. Like all other areas of Brandenburg, Steglitz had been predominantly Protestant since 1539. When the village church became too small, Emil Gette, a building inspector from Berlin and designer of the Emperor Friedrich Church in Golm near Potsdam, built a new parish church with a 68-meter tower and open cruciform plan. St. Matthew's, like the city hall and Rosary Church, also capitalizes on the regional Gothic brick architecture. The state funded one-third of the total building costs, which totaled 306,000 marks, while the congregation and donations covered the remainder. This situation was radically different, however, for the Rosary congregation. They raised funds for their parish church pfennig by pfennig.

By the 1890s, Catholics established their own parish in Steglitz and no longer needed to travel to Berlin for Mass, where they originally belonged to St. Matthew's parish on Potsdamer Street in Berlin. On October 12, 1891, Archbishop Kopp of Breslau established a parish for Steglitz and other small communities to the southwest of the city center.²⁰⁰ In these rapidly growing communities outside of the urban core, minority groups fared better. Demographic figures give evidence of a diverse religious population, including Protestants, Catholics and Jews.²⁰¹ The Catholic community in Steglitz consisted almost exclusively of native German-speakers. The parish archives reveal none of the German-Polish tension that weighed down

²⁰⁰ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 30.

²⁰¹ In nearby Wilmersdorf, 81.8 percent of the municipality was Protestant in 1905, with 10.4 percent Catholic and 6.8 percent Jewish. In the bordering town of Schöneberg 10.7 percent of the residents were Catholic and 4.9 percent Jewish. See Heinrich Silbergleit, *Preußens Städte* (Berlin: C. Heymann, 1908), 66. Quoted in Matzerath, "Wachstum und Mobilität," 215.

Catholic congregations in central areas of Berlin. Nonetheless, the Catholic infrastructure in Steglitz was overwhelmed. Not only did it provide social services to its ever-increasing flock, but it also attempted to retain new members in the fold while socialism and other enticements of modern urban life called. A strong parish priest and a new physical space were needed to respond to these challenges and assert an enduring Catholic presence in the Berlin-Brandenburg.

Josef Deitmer (1865-1929), a young priest with strong connections to the Marian pilgrimage site of Kevelaer am Rhein accepted the position of parish priest to replace Josef Uppenkamp in June 1893. At the height of the *Kulturkampf* in the early 1870s, the Catholic Church organized special pilgrimages to the shrine of the Virgin at Kevelaer.²⁰² Deitmer did not arrive until the late 1880s, but he participated in the intense Marian devotion at the site. He first came to Berlin to serve as a chaplain at St. Matthew's, Steglitz's original parish center. He eventually left Steglitz in 1920 to become a provost at St. Hedwig's, a testament to the work he did building new parishes and activating the Catholic communities in the southwestern suburbs of Berlin. In 1923, he became the first auxiliary bishop of Berlin, under the Breslau diocese. Berlin was not granted its own bishopric until 1930, a few months after Deitmer's death.

Emphasis on the life of Mary and her role in the church, as exemplified by the worship space and shrines at Kevelaer, has always differentiated the Catholic and Protestant confessions. The set of devotional prayers that constitute the Rosary, focusing on the lives of Mary and Christ, developed from late medieval mystic piety and the context of religious conflict in the first confessional age in the sixteenth century. It was precisely the textual repetition, call for direct intervention, and the non-Biblical source of the Rosary texts which Protestants criticized about Catholic devotional practice. The dedication to the Rosary at the Steglitz parish, thus, was

²⁰² Sperber, *Popular Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Germany*, 224.

another way for the Catholic Church to assert a distinct identity and recall the importance it placed not only on the Virgin Mary, but also on the Rosary. The Marian dedication for the parish church in Steglitz was the first one since the Reformation. A church had not been dedicated to the Virgin in the Berlin metropolitan area since 1270 (St. Mary's, the second parish church in the city).²⁰³

Six thousand members strong, the Steglitz congregation needed not only a place to worship but an architectural statement to present its version of regional and national history. Each Catholic parish was responsible for raising funds for all building costs. Represented by a parish council, the congregation could collect donations from other German bishoprics, accept loans from its archdiocese in Breslau, and ask for contributions from its own community. These community collections, often quite meager, led Deitmer to proclaim that the churches of Berlin were built “with the pennies of the poor and the chamber maids.”²⁰⁴ The introduction of the Church Tax Laws by Archbishop Kopp in 1899 helped later building projects of poorer eastern city districts by pooling money from all of the Berlin and Brandenburg parishes to use for community needs.²⁰⁵

²⁰³ Streicher, *Berlin: Stadt und Kirche*, 306. The only exception is St. Mary's in Spandau-Behnitz dedicated in 1848 at the request of the “Romantic on the Throne,” King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. A political and religious conservative, Friedrich Wilhelm IV attempted to reorganize a universal church on the model of the Early Christian Church.

²⁰⁴ “mit den Groschen der Armen, der Dienstmädchen.” Georg Banasch, “Vom Delegaturbezirk zum Bistum Berlin. Historischer Rückblick und persönliche Erinnerungen,” *Wichmann-Jahrbuch* 7 (1953), 87. Quoted in Felix Escher, “Pfarrgemeinden und Gemeindeorganisation der katholischen Kirche in Berlin bis zur Gründung des Bistums Berlin,” in *Seelsorge und Diakonie in Berlin. Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Großstadt im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, eds. Kaspar Elm and Hans-Dietrich Loock, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 274.

²⁰⁵ Escher, “Pfarrgemeinden und Gemeindeorganisation,” 286.

3.3 CHRISTOPH HEHL AND THE CENTRAL PLAN CHURCH

The fledgling Steglitz congregation had no architectural model for its new church. Engelbert Seibertz seemed to be a dependable choice. His two major commissions in Berlin – the Dominican St. Paul’s in Moabit and Catholic parish church St. Matthew’s on Winterfeldplatz – displayed a traditional neo-Gothic style with complex facades of brick patternwork, tracery, and a longitudinal plan. However, Seibertz’s involvement with the Steglitz consistory was short lived.

As we have already seen, the Heart of Jesus Church by recent Berlin transplant Christoph Hehl so moved Deitmer, that he questioned the validity and prowess of Seibertz’s steadfast Gothicism and called on Hehl to build the Steglitz church. When Hehl took over the project in the fall of 1898, he cast off the strict neo-Gothicism of his teachers in Hannover and colleagues like Seibertz. Instead, he embraced a more flexible approach toward layout and form, combining a locally resonant exterior form and materials with a more modern open-plan interior that recalled early Christian churches in Italy.

Deitmer does not make it clear in the parish chronicles what inspired him to break a spoken contract with a prominent local architect.²⁰⁶ Nineteenth-century theorists and architects in Germany had long revered the Gothic as a sacred style, whose dramatic verticality and elaborate vaults reflected Germany’s most lasting achievement. Hehl’s hybridized monumental neo-Romanesque churches, combining an Italian central plan with Berlin’s local medieval

²⁰⁶ In the parish chronicle, Deitmer notes on October 25, 1898 the dedication ceremony of the Heart of Jesus Church designed by Hehl. Six days later, Seibertz delivered the floor plan of the Steglitz church to Deitmer. By mid-December, however, Hehl had submitted his designs, without any explanation of Seibertz’s dismissal. “Aus verschiedenen Gründen hat der Kirchenvorstand einem vom Prof. Hehl in Charlottenburg vorgelegten Skizzen für den Neubau der Kirche den Vorzug gegeben und am 13 Dez. 1898 mich zum Abschluss einer Vertrages mit genannten Herrn ermächtigt.” Pfarrchronik, 1: 34-35, Church Archives..

building traditions, represented a clear break from convention. As one later observer notes, “With Hehl no one can speak of a straightforward imitation of medieval church styles.”²⁰⁷

Contemporary press noted this same freer approach towards design and style in the Rosary Church. An article in the *Berliner Architekturwelt* extolled, “Not only does the light dispensed from the dome windows illuminate the entire church space, but it also achieves a picturesque effect of great appeal, which as yet is very seldom in modern church buildings.”²⁰⁸ Other critics called it “one of the most unique buildings of the past years.”²⁰⁹ Hehl’s reputation as an innovator followed him throughout his career. Even in his obituary, the same journal again noted, “He never made poor imitations of historical buildings but newly designed works, precisely to meet modern requirements.”²¹⁰

Whatever the specific reason, Hehl captivated Deitmer with his first Berlin church design at Heart of Jesus in the working class district of Prenzlauer Berg. Hehl’s Catholic upbringing and education might also have compensated for his newcomer status in the city. Hehl first trained with the neo-Gothicist Ungewitter at the upper vocational school in Kassel. Shortly before Ungewitter’s untimely death, he taught the use of medieval formal language.²¹¹ Ungewitter most likely presented Hehl with his first formal education in medieval design by having him peruse his highly successful *Gothisches Musterbuch*, published together with

²⁰⁷ “Von einer bloßen Nachahmung mittelalterlicher Kirchenstile kann bei Hehl gar keine Rede sein.” Josef Limburg, *Christliche Bildwerke und Tagebuchblätter aus der Schaffenszeit* (Munich: Gesellschaft für christliche Kunst, 1928), 113.

²⁰⁸ “Nicht nur, dass das von den Kuppelfenstern gependete Licht alle Kirchenräume bis in die entferntesten Ecken erhellt, so erzielt es auch malerische Wirkungen von grossem Reiz, die bei modernen Kirchenbauten bisher sehr selten gewesen sind.” A. R., “Die Rosenkranzkirche in Steglitz bei Berlin” *Berliner Architekturwelt* 6, no. 2 (1901): 48.

²⁰⁹ “zu den eigenartigsten Kirchenbauten der letzten Jahre.” “Die neue katholische Kirche für Steglitz bei Berlin,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 33, no. 68 (1899): 425.

²¹⁰ “[H]at er doch niemals – eben weil es sich um modern Anforderungen handelte – den Abklatsch geschichtlicher Bauten gegeben, sonder neu empfundene Werke.” Hans Schliepmann, “Christoph Hehl” *Berliner Architekturwelt* 14, no. 5 (1911): 168.

²¹¹ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 14.

Vincenz Statz in 1856.²¹² The collaboration of Catholic Statz and Protestant Ungewitter in this part-theory, part-model book represented the expansion of the neo-Gothic debates in smaller regional centers like Hamburg or Cologne to the larger, national stage. By such international, multicultural architect-scholars and strong medievalist advocates as his teachers, Christoph Hehl, a Catholic from Prussia, was able to measure himself in the larger arena of medievalist building.

Between 1867 and 1869, Hehl lived in England, apprenticing under George Gilbert Scott during the latter's work on the interior of Hamburg's St. Nikolai Church.²¹³ The open competition for the church in the 1840s exposed the entrenched rivalry between proponents of *Rundbogenstil* and Gothic.²¹⁴ The conservative panel of judges first chose Gottfried Semper's classical-inspired *Rundbogenstil* design. Public outcry and Scott's own impassioned pamphlets forced the building committee to reconsider the jury's decision. A new panel of "impartial" judges reversed the design and Scott assumed the project. Although some claimed Scott to have merely transplanted English Gothic onto northern German, Protestant soil, his building was the outcome of a two-month intensive study trip throughout Germany aimed at determining the nature of German Gothic. In the end, an Englishman gave the German Gothicists their most important national symbol at St. Nikolai's, alongside the freshly completed Cologne Cathedral. This push and pull between the two main camps of medievalist architects in Germany must have left an indelible mark on Hehl. Even after German unification in 1871 and throughout Hehl's career, he walked a line that criss-crossed between Romanesque and Gothic, Germanic and "foreign." Ultimately, his varied experiences helped him to create inventive hybrid forms that spoke to the German Catholics in an era of the modernizing nation-state.

²¹² Vincenz Statz and Georg Gottlob Ungewitter, *Gothisches Musterbuch*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Weigel, 1856).

²¹³ Hans Reuther, "Die Sakralbauten von Christoph Hehl" *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 8 (1969): 214.

²¹⁴ For a more detailed account of St. Nicolai, see Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival*, 99-110.

Hehl completed his formal training in the early 1870s with Hase, an architect who carried out the dreams of Ungewitter by establishing a neo-Gothic architectural school in Hannover.²¹⁵ He inspired an entire generation of students at the Hannover Polytechnic to carry on his mission in various forms. After having studied the *Rundbogenstil* in Munich in the 1840s, Hase trained as a mason and bricklayer, later investing these building materials with the greatest significance for northern German medievalist building.²¹⁶ It is likely that Hehl first heard of Hase through Ungewitter, who had been a classmate of Hase in Munich. As a teacher, Hase instilled in his students his dedication to German medieval brick construction and his contempt for modern building materials.

While a student at the Polytechnic, Hehl began working at Edwin Oppler's studio. Although separated in age by sixteen years, Oppler and Hehl shared a similar outsider perspective on the Hannover architectural world. Both had been born outside of northern Germany, Oppler in Silesia and Hehl in Hesse. Both had traveled extensively, even working abroad, during their careers. As members of religious minorities in Prussia, their social standing perhaps contributed to the development of their own particular brand of Hannoverian medievalism. At the time when Hehl was his employee, Oppler was working on the New Synagogue in Breslau. In designing its exterior, he drew heavily on one of the major monuments of the German Romanesque, Worms Cathedral. However, as already discussed, Oppler did not match the New Synagogue's exterior with the corresponding interior one would imagine – a longitudinal hall with rounded arches, bulky masonry and simplistic decoration. Instead, he based the organization of space in the New Synagogue on a central plan, while the interior of the eastern apse combines stylistic elements from Romanesque, Gothic, and Islamic architecture.

²¹⁵ For more on the Hannover School and Hase, see the Introduction and Chapter 1.

²¹⁶ Lewis, *The Politics of German Gothic Revival*, 212.

Hehl would later adapt Oppler's hybridized, compartmentalized approach to his designs for building commissioned by the Catholic diaspora in Berlin. Working for religious minorities in cosmopolitan urban centers dominated by Prussian Protestants, Oppler and Hehl do not represent an abandonment of the functional and materialist tenets of the Hannover School. On the contrary, their designs overtly display the fragmentary, multi-layered struggle of religious groups to define their position in modernizing Germany. The end result in both the New Synagogue and Rosary Church are structures with a purposeful disjunction between the exterior and interior. While asserting their claims on German Romanesque architectural heritage on the outside, they speak a more subtle language of hybridity to an audience of the initiated on the interior. Oppler included Gothic and Moorish elements in the interior decoration on the New Synagogue while Hehl relied on central plan Italianate models to construct the spatial arrangement in the Rosary Church.

Hehl was not immune to the nationalistic battle cries of 1870. He immediately joined the military that summer and was wounded near Wörth, healing in time to take part in the siege of Paris.²¹⁷ After the Franco-Prussian war Hehl began to work as an independent architect in Hannover. Hehl's early churches display a regimented neo-Gothic style common to the Hannover School. When comparing his first commission, the Catholic Godehardi Church in Hannover-Linden, with the later Protestant Garrison church (1896), his departure from his neo-Gothic training and his development of a more neo-Romanesque direction in his designs becomes apparent. Here, he has cast off the sleek uniformity of Gothic verticality in favor of heavy blocky construction. The imposing westwork and natural stone harken back to the imperial monasteries, churches and fortresses of the medieval Ottonian and Hohenstaufen rulers.

²¹⁷ Reuther, "Die Sakralbauten von Christoph Hehl," 214.

Completed at the same time as Franz Schwechten's famous Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin, the Garrison Church also represents a larger architectural trend of neo-Romanesque building promoted by Kaiser Wilhelm II. However, Hehl's turning toward the neo-Romanesque was not an act of stylistic allegiance to the kaiser or an unthinking show of patriotism. Berlin Catholics sought the same historical and stylistic references as the kaiser, but for entirely different reasons. They sought to wrestle the neo-Romanesque away from its instrumentalization by the Hohenzollerns to legitimize their new empire. Rather, reviving the architectural style of the first Christians (Catholics) to come to the Mark Brandenburg coordinated with the Catholic spiritual revival already underway.

After accepting a position at the Royal Technical Academy in Berlin in 1894, Hehl began teaching four courses a semester focusing on medieval architecture.²¹⁸ Hans Schliepmann referred to Hehl in his obituary as, "a first-rate teacher, in the greatest sense of the word."²¹⁹ Hehl found particular enjoyment in leading excursions for his students. During his own initial trip to Italy in 1890 and subsequent trips with students in 1896 and 1902, Hehl devoted a great deal of study to the Roman, early Christian and medieval architectural sites he visited in northern and central Italy.²²⁰ On his first trip to Italy with students in spring 1894, he led them through northern Italy, visiting the medieval churches of Milan, Pavia, Verona, and a small island in the Venetian lagoon, Torcello. It was on Torcello that one particular structure caught Hehl's eye. Santa Fosca, a small, eleventh-century central-plan church, so captivated Hehl, that he quickly

²¹⁸ Tacke, *Kirche für die Diaspora*, 13.

²¹⁹ "Hehl war ein erster Lehrer im schönsten Sinne des Wortes." Schliepmann, "Christoph Hehl," 168.

²²⁰ Tacke provides a complete list of Hehl's excursions based on records at the Hochschularchiv at the library of the Technical University of Berlin in *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 309-311.

sketched the complete plan, partial perspective of the choir, and the elevation of the north side aisle to use in his Berlin designs.²²¹

Hehl's interest in the central plan was unusual for a Catholic architect. At the Second Congress of German Architects and Engineers at Bamberg in 1843, participants had deemed the central plan church most suitable for Protestant worship.²²² A central plan, it was thought, offered more people a better view of the service. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, German clergy and architects had come to associate the central plan with the Protestant building reforms resulting from the Wiesbaden Program of 1891, which called for the unified placement of altar, pulpit and organ in a centrally-planned place of worship. Profoundly anti-hierarchical and, thus, anti-Catholic, the central plan provided Protestants with a bold counter-statement for the neo-Gothic cathedral-like churches of their Catholic peers.

Indeed, the Wiesbaden Program conceived of the church less as a performative space than as a democratic meeting house. Communion was to be celebrated in full view. Congregants were included in the same space where the mass was celebrated, not separated by rood screens or a long choir. With these tenets in mind, leading Protestant architect Johannes Otzen (fellow Hase student and Hehl's colleague at the Royal Technical Academy in Charlottenburg) designed a parish church to reflect what the conference decreed. The Ring Church in Wiesbaden (1892-1894) exhibited a central plan, ignoring the medieval standards and following the liturgical demands of the church. The ground plan most dramatically announces

²²¹ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 111.

²²² Curran, "The German Rundbogenstil and Reflections on the American Round-Arched Style," *Journal for the Society of Architectural Historians* 47, 4 (1988): 364-5.

the shift in church architecture – pews fan out from a central altar in a fashion similar to modern theaters and lecture halls.²²³

Although the Wiesbaden Program was a conscious attempt by Protestants to create their own architectural language, one that did not rely on the model of High Gothic Catholic churches, its approach to religious design suited some of Hehl's Catholic clients in Berlin. In response to their desire to provide their growing congregations with an open view of the mass, Hehl, in his central plan Catholic parish churches in Berlin, created a more democratizing open church interior, thus following the Wiesbaden program despite its anti-Catholic rhetoric. A little later, in the Rosary Church in Steglitz, he broke with placing the altar in a chamber elevated above the pulpit and nave accessible only to clergy, as was the rule in longitudinal Catholic churches. Instead, he brought the altar down into the open expanse of a wide nave, removed from the pulpit by only a few steps.

3.4 THE “BEGGAR PRIEST” ATTEMPTS TO FINANCE THE ROSARY CHURCH

Financing such building projects were Olympian tasks for these young congregations. The total cost of the Rosary Church was approximately 150,000 marks, compared to over 300,000 marks for the Protestant Church of St. Matthew's in Steglitz or over three million marks for the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church.²²⁴ In a show of generosity towards a Catholic community, the kaiser presented the Rosary parish with 10,000 marks to aid their cause. Although he held very

²²³ See Jeanne Halgren Kilde, *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-Century America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

²²⁴ Gröning [Seibertz's lawyer] to Deitmer, March 4, 1899, Files “1898-1900, Kirchenbau und Ausmalung,” Church Archives.

conflicted beliefs about the role of Catholics in his empire, Wilhelm II did move beyond the *Kulturkampf* impasse and reach out to his Catholic countrymen at times.²²⁵ In an open letter to German bishops written in the first months of his reign, Wilhelm II noted, “I know that religious freedom for my Catholic subjects is assured through rights and law, which strengthens my commitment to the enduring preservation of the religious peace.”²²⁶ Another 20,000 marks came from Archbishop Kopp in Breslau, who visited this site in January 1899.

Despite these large solicited donations, Deitmer relied primarily on grass roots fundraising. He organized fund drives for the four Hehl-designed churches he commissioned. Deitmer, and other priests who worked with Hehl, sent series of “begging letters” (*Bettelbriefe*) to German Catholics throughout the Reich. The letters pleaded, in the words of Maximilian Beyer (1872-1937), priest at Holy Family in Lichterfelde and contractor of Mater Dolorosa in Lankwitz, “Ach, help, please, help just this once, don’t reject the bothersome beggar. Believe me, it hurts, year in and year out to beg and to find so many closed doors and hard hearts. Not for me, no, for your poor fellow brothers and sisters in the diaspora, amongst the dangers of the big city, . . .”²²⁷ Catholic associations (*Vereine*) also played a large part in organizing fundraisers of all sorts to support these building projects, but it was the pfennig-by-pfennig donations that Deitmer amassed which earned him the name, “beggar priest.”²²⁸ Deitmer’s efforts garnered some critical reception in Steglitz from the Protestant majority. He received

²²⁵ See Stefan Samerski, ed., *Wilhelm II. und die Religion: Facetten einer Persönlichkeit und ihres Umfelds* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2001).

²²⁶ “Daß Ich die Glaubensfreiheit Meiner katholischen unterthanen durch Recht und Gesetz gesichert weiß, stärkt Meine Zuverzicht auf die dauernde Erhaltung des kirchlichen Friedens.” Quoted in Georg W. Büxenstein, *Unser Kaiser: Zehn Jahre der Regierung Wilhelms II.* (Berlin: Deutsches Verlagshaus Bong & Co, 1898), 267.

²²⁷ “Ach, hilf, bitte, hilf nur noch einmal, weise den lästigen Bettler nicht zurück, glaub mir, es thut weh, Jahr aus, Jahr ein, zu betteln und so viel verschlossene Thüren, so viel harte Herzen zu finden. Nicht für mich, nein, für Deine armen Glaubensbrüder und Schwestern in der Diaspora, in den Gefahren der Großstadt, . . .” “Sammlungen für den Kirchenbau (D V, 1),” Pfarramt Heilige Familie, quoted in Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 90.

²²⁸ *Festschrift zum Silbernen Jubiläum der Rosenkranzkirche zu Berlin-Steglitz* (Berlin: Gemeinde der Rosenkranzkirche Berlin-Steglitz, 1925), 5.

letters crying, “Close your begging snout, you dear, pious begging bastard.” One writer told Deitmer, “I will give nothing for this sow pen! You will not pollute beautiful Steglitz with your Roman stink!”²²⁹

Specifically for the Rosary Church, the congregation put on a Passion play in Steglitz in 1896, similar to the well-known event in Oberammergau. Actors depicted the Passion of Christ and the corresponding Old Testament stories in acted scenes and living pictures.²³⁰ Held at the Albrechthof near the Steglitz train station, parish members reenacted the Passion story from the procession into Jerusalem to the Resurrection. A narrator introduced each scene and gave commentary while the choir provided musical accompaniment. By bringing Catholic ritual out into a public square, this Passion play fit into a much more complex, unstable context than the Oberammergau plays ritually performed for centuries in the small Bavarian town. The Steglitz passion plays also draw on the medieval tradition of religious displays and processions that make use of the public sphere. Despite backlash from the mail fundraising campaigns, the Rosary’s public performances received little negative reaction from the Protestant majority. In this transitional moment, the Protestants in the immediate vicinity of Steglitz already saw their Catholic neighbors as an integrated community. Therefore, these open performances did not resonate as other or foreign, but as a religious community event.

With the necessary funds assembled, groundbreaking commenced on June 10, 1899. On August 20, Assumption Day, the congregation celebrated the laying of the cornerstone.²³¹ Festivities began in the small provisional chapel in the adjacent street in the afternoon. A procession marched to the construction site for the religious celebration. Catholic processions on

²²⁹ “halten Sie Ihre Bettlerschnauze, Sie lieber, frommer Bettelsack; Für den Gaustall gebe ich nichts! Verpesten Sie doch das schöne Steglitz nicht mit Ihrem römischen Gestank!” Ibid.

²³⁰ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 81.

²³¹ Pfarrchronik, 39-52.

public property and open streets were forbidden in Berlin throughout the entire Wilhelmine period, but in Steglitz the Rosary congregation generated no larger outcry for their public demonstration of faith.²³² Tickets sales for the celebration open to the broader community in the Albrechthof served as another building fundraiser. The ten-pfennig programs detailing the military band's performance also aided in the endless collection efforts. Regional Catholic newspapers like *Germania*, the voice of the Berlin Catholic association of the same name, and the *Germania*-owned *Märkische Volkszeitung*, as well as the local *Steglitzer Anzeiger* and *Steglitzer Zeitung*, extensively covered the festivities.²³³ Besides the clergy, monks and diocesan representatives, the Steglitz mayor, school directors and over forty Catholic associations participated in the parade to the Albrechthof and the ensuing open celebration. The military band concert and dance at the end of the day, as well as the presence of local officials and press, indicate that the groundbreaking of a large Catholic parish church was accepted by the immediate community. The absence of larger secular Berlin newspaper coverage also points to a lack of interest or even awareness of the major events of the Berlin-Brandenburg Catholic diaspora. As with the Passion play in 1896, the fact that the 1899 groundbreaking ceremonies were part fundraiser, part religious festival, and part community event did not raise the suspicions of the Protestant population. By the late 1890s, such events could be read through the filter of national or regional pride as Catholics had already assimilated in those fields of Wilhelmine civic life.

²³² Reuther, "Die Sakralbauten von Christoph Hehl," 238. There is no evidence in the parish chronicle or in the contemporary press of any criticism the procession garnered.

²³³ *Germania: Zeitung für das deutsche Volk*, August 22, 1899; Grundsteinlegung der Rosenkranz-Kirche" *Märkische Volkszeitung*, August 22, 1899; "Lokales und Provinzielles" *Steglitzer Anzeiger* August 21, 1899; *Steglitzer Zeitung*, August 21, 1899.

Under the supervision of Hehl's on-site manager, building progressed rapidly until the winter break between December 1899 and February 1900. Deitmer diligently kept track of the construction in the parish chronicle. For him and his congregation, it must have been inspiring to see a church emerge that resembled the architecture of their religious forbears in the region, Cistercian monks. After Ottonians established bishoprics in the Mark Brandenburg during their colonization of eastern territories in the tenth century, the Cistercians were the first monastics to institute missions beginning in the Mark Brandenburg in the late twelfth century. The parish council had specifically called for the church to be executed in the style of Markish brick architecture the Cistercians had used to build their first monastery at Lehnin.²³⁴

3.5 THE INFLUENCE OF THE CISTERCIAN MONASTERIES OF THE MARK BRANDENBURG

For Berlin Catholics, the twelfth and thirteenth-century monasteries of Lehnin and Chorin in the Mark Brandenburg legitimized their contribution to the region, for Catholic monastics had established Christianity amongst the people of northeast Germany long before the Protestant Reformation. This historical fact did not prevent the Hohenzollerns from attempting to capitalize on the history of Lehnin as well. Founded by Otto I, Margrave of Brandenburg, the abbey had been the burial ground of Otto's House of Ascania, and later also for the House of Hohenzollern.²³⁵ Prussian archaeologist and architect, Friedrich Adler, had been ordered by

²³⁴ "Gebete und Ceremonien bei der Consecration der katholischen Pfarrkirche zu Steglitz," Church Archive, and "Die neue katholische Kirche für Steglitz bei Berlin," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 33, no. 68 (August 26, 1899): 425–429, 438.

²³⁵ Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*, 87.

King Friedrich Wilhelm III to carry out research on Lehnin as part of a larger survey of medieval architecture of the Mark Brandenburg, culminating in Adler's *Mittelalterliche Backstein-Bauwerke des Preussischen Staates*, first published in 1862.²³⁶ Adler's pioneering research served as a reference guide for decades; Hehl most likely supplemented his own excursions to Lehnin with careful analysis of Adler's illustrations and plates of Lehnin and other Markish medieval monuments.

On January 18, 1871 from the palace of Versailles, Kaiser Wilhelm I ordered the dilapidated monastery at Lehnin to be restored so it could be used for Protestant church services.²³⁷ It seems puzzling that the Hohenzollern dynasty would be so interested in Lehnin and its pre-Reformation history to the extent that the kaiser himself called for its reconstruction the day of the declaration of the German empire. However, this project held the utmost importance for the kaiser; in fact, his family discovered a model of the monastery at Lehnin in the kaiser's personal collection after his death.²³⁸ In an effort to legitimize his family's right to the new imperial throne, he co-opted the medieval Lehnin monastery and transformed Lehnin into a national memorial commemorating not the religious and cultural achievements of the Cistercian monks but the political prowess of their medieval secular rulers, the Ascanians and the Hohenzollerns.²³⁹ Represented by Crownprince Friedrich III, the Hohenzollerns celebrated the dedication for the completed renovation on June 24, 1877.²⁴⁰ Just as the Cistercians spread their

²³⁶ Friedrich Adler, *Mittelalterliche Backstein-Bauwerke des Preussischen Staates*, 3 vols., (Berlin: Ernst & Korn, 1862-1898).

²³⁷ G[eorg] Sellos, "'Lehnin,'" *Zeitschrift für Preußische Geschichte und Landeskunde* 19 (1882): 219. Andreas Tacke, "'jung wie ein Parvenü,'" 243.

²³⁸ Tacke, "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel," 153.

²³⁹ Tacke, "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel," 152. As a reaction to the Prussian-led reconstruction of the Lehnin monastery, local Catholics attempted to organize the erection of a new Catholic parish church in the village to no avail. See Tacke, "Klosterziegel contra Reichsziegel," 66n158.

²⁴⁰ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 66.

religion throughout the known world, the Hohenzollern rulers attempted to emulate their rapid and thorough missionizing in their own empire and beyond their borders.

Berlin Catholics sought a different method of honoring the monuments of their forbearers. Directly citing known architectural elements from Lehnin in their new churches could not reverse over three hundred years of Protestant-rule in the region. Hehl also was not interested in an exact reproduction of the Cistercian monasteries in Berlin. When he traveled with students to Lehnin's daughter monastery at Chorin in May 1898 and May 1899, he was not looking at the twelfth and thirteenth-century brickwork through the eyes of a historicist, calculating which pieces he could incorporate into his design. Rather, Hehl sought to understand the essence of Markish Romanesque architecture in order to reduce historicist formalism to its most important elements. At the Rosary Church, one of these elements took the shape of a rust-colored brick, whose face was 9 by 28 centimeters, the so-called *Klosterziegel* (monastic brick).

This large brick type has been used in all construction since the Middle Ages, but, as described by Tacke, advancements in the mechanized production of building materials ushered in the use of a different type of brick associated with the nationalization of Germany in the late nineteenth century. In October 1871, a public memorandum to architects and engineers announced the introduction of this new brick format, called *Reichsziegel* (imperial brick), beginning the following year. Highly uniform in its narrow shape of 6.5 by 25 centimeters, the *Reichsziegel* began to be mass produced after the universal application of the metric system in 1872 and the standardization of factory production.²⁴¹ Importantly, Catholic congregations like Rosary did not adopt the imperial brick and instead continued to build with the wider and shorter *Klosterziegel*.

²⁴¹ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 149.

The use of *Klosterziegel* also dictated an approach to bricklaying that, as time passed, appeared increasingly distinctive, if not antiquated, as the use of *Reichsziegel* became more common. Monastic and imperial bricks could not be set in the same bond. The cross bond or block bond, full rows of exposed long sides alternating with full rows of the short sides of the brick across the façade, came to be seen as a more modern method of brick-laying that suited this smaller imperial brick format. Because of the monastic bricks' larger face, they were not suited to the cross bonds. For the Rosary Church, masons once again turned back to a more traditional method called the Markish or Gothic bond, alternating between the long and short sides of the monastic brick in each row on the face of the wall.²⁴²

The monastic bricks came from the small town of Rathenow in Brandenburg known for its brick manufacture. They were expensive and even more so as they needed to be transported over many miles to Steglitz. For Hehl and Deimter, however, these bricks connoted a golden age of Catholic architecture before the existence of Protestantism. The use of monastic bricks was a way for Catholics to remind their Protestant neighbors who first brought not only Christianity, but also Western civilization, east of the Oder River. The antiquated, larger bricks used in Catholic building did not go unnoticed by contemporary commentators. With every new Catholic church in Berlin, the Catholic press noted the use of the bricks of the "ancestors," the same bricks used for the monastic church of Lehnin.²⁴³

However, the use of the Romanesque brick style of the Cistercian past could not fully encapsulate this struggle to maintain a distinct religious-national identity because of its simultaneous use in Protestant churches. Remarkably, the first display of monastic bricks in a Protestant church was in Schwechten's St. Simeon Church. The church was completed in 1897,

²⁴² Tacke, "jung wie ein Parvenü," 242 and Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 150.

²⁴³ Tacke, "Lehnin," 64, 66.

the year Hehl began work in Berlin. Permission for the use of monastic brick had come directly from the kaiser.²⁴⁴ The Protestant Church Building Association, led by the Empress and close advisors to the kaiser, oversaw the entire project. As Paul Seidel notes, “At St. Simeon’s Church the large medieval brick format was used again with the permission of the kaiser, whose powerful architectural effect in the choice for later buildings in Berlin and the area was definitive.”²⁴⁵ The Protestant church in Steglitz, St. Matthew’s, also referenced the medieval arches and patternwork of the region like many Catholic churches. However, St. Matthew’s architect, Gette, did not use the pre-modern monastic brick to do so like Schwechten, but rather the modern, mass-manufactured imperial bricks set in the modern cross bond.²⁴⁶

From the beginning of its modern reincarnation, architects, patrons and congregants did not conceive of the *Klosterziegel* as a solely Catholic marker. Rather, the pre-modern building material suggested a regional identity that was becoming less distinct in an era of nationalization and homogenization. However, the market for monastic bricks created a problem both for the industry and the state. The entire brick industry, structured to produce only *Reichsziegel*, feared decreased production and a loss of jobs.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, the use of a pre-modern building material, despite the *Klosterziegel*’s reference to the era of the first German empire, was ultimately not entirely compatible with the second empire’s larger agenda of nationalization and standardization. By 1902, any lingering confessional affiliation Catholic congregations originally saw was removed when the state officially recommended the use of monastic bricks

²⁴⁴ Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*, 82. Tacke makes no reference to the use of monastic brick at St. Simeon’s in his scholarship, declaring there are no Protestant churches in Berlin that use monastic bricks. (*Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 154).

²⁴⁵ “Bei der Simeonkirche wurde mit Genehmigung des Kaisers zum ersten Male wieder das große mittelalterliche Ziegelformat verwandt, dessen kräftige architektonische Wirkung auch für die Wahl bei späteren Bauwerken in Berlin und Umgegend bestimmend war.” Seidel, *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*, 82.

²⁴⁶ *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 14 (1880): 562; *Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung*, 3 (1883): 77-9.

²⁴⁷ M. Winter, “Der Kampf um das Klosterformat,” *Deutsche Bauhütte* 5 (1901): 101-2.

for secular buildings and Protestant churches.²⁴⁸ While Catholics lingered on the ancestral connotations of the monastic bricks, the state was already co-opting their aesthetic for their own building projects.

What is striking about Hehl's use of monastic bricks is that he used a decidedly anti-modern building material to create a definitively modern centralized Catholic parish church with a Markish Romanesque and Italianate hybrid interior design and spatial arrangement. The monastic brick was one of many tools employed by Hehl in a composite design that evoked different layers of Prussian Catholic identity that became absorbed into the national style. The westwork quotes the region's medieval architecture in the large central raised section with a narrow pitched roof bookended between two round turrets that are slightly higher than the main roof line. The round arch fenestration and blind arcades reference the Ottonian and Romanesque imperial churches and monasteries of the region. As will be described in detail below, the interior models the earliest Catholic structures from the Italian peninsula with its large central dome as well as new approaches to sacred space that sought to embrace a modern, mass audience. With a Germanic façade and Italianate interior, the Rosary Church defies categorization as a purely historicist building, instead pointing to a more flexible approach to design that accommodates both innovation in form and the needs of the urban community.

²⁴⁸ "Runderlass, betreffend Verwendung von Ziegeln grossen Formats," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 22 (1902): 507.

3.6 SPATIAL ORGANIZATION AS THE BEARER OF MEANING: THE CENTRAL PLAN AND THE WESTWORK

In the Rosary Church, Hehl expressed a truly forward-looking Catholic identity that looked to include a new growing urban congregation in an open central-plan interior space while still referencing the community's distinctive connection to local medieval religious and building traditions. Whereas in the New Synagogue the hybridity was displayed on an interior in which Oppler incorporated Romanesque, Gothic and Islamic formal elements, the hybrid element of the Rosary Church is in the actual structure and the joining of a brick Romanesque westwork with an Italian central plan. A large central dome sits on four large arches in a square space, making the Rosary Church the first central plan church in the area since St. Hedwig's (completed 1773). Although Hehl does not reference St. Hedwig's specifically in discussing his use of a central plan, Hedwig's iconic dome along Unter den Linden in the heart of the Hohenzollern's Berlin had been a symbol of Catholic resilience deep in the Prussian, Protestant capital since the late eighteenth century. Although the Rosary Church's central dome is obscured by a massive westwork, the centralized space immediately triggers connections to St. Hedwig's. Hehl's rejection of a longitudinal arrangement in favor of a central plan is especially significant for Catholic architecture in Berlin and represents a more democratic, inclusive concept of a Catholic parish church. Neither Max Hasak nor August Menken used central plans in their Catholic church designs in and around Berlin. These prominent Catholic architects opted for more traditional, hierarchical spatial organizations in their work that followed a longitudinal plan.

Hehl derived this particular centralized plan from the Roman tetrastylon, a central dome supported by four half-round apses.²⁴⁹ Santa Fosca on the island of Torcello exhibited this same plan, which captivated Hehl on an Italian excursion. The Romanesque Church of Santa Fosca was the inspiration not only for Hehl's Catholic parish churches, but also for Protestant designs.²⁵⁰ For the Church of the Redeemer in Gerolstein, the kaiser's architect, Schwechten, modeled both the plan and elevation on Santa Fosca.²⁵¹ The tradition of a central plan with a pseudo-Greek cross does have a precedent in Berlin, beginning with Protestant architect Johannes Otzen's Church of the Holy Cross, built 1885-1888. The central cruciform church has a high dome to emphasize the middle spatial arrangement on the exterior.²⁵² Otzen also chose to use local materials like bricks. Otzen, however, did not seek to combine these central plans with a distinctive regional architectural element, like the westwork. The Church of the Holy Cross boldly announces its layout on the exterior in a way that the Rosary Church does not.

In fact, the designs of Hehl's contemporaries elsewhere in Berlin rarely show his level of complex juxtaposition of styles and political messages. For Schwechten, Otzen, and others these issues were not as pertinent when designing for Protestant congregations in Berlin. And despite Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* against Catholics lingering in the social atmosphere, Catholic building in Bavaria or the Rhineland also did not take place in this same dire situation. Hehl's ability to juxtapose seemingly incongruous design elements won him favor during his lifetime for producing what contemporaries saw as modern buildings. Writing about his Berlin Catholic

²⁴⁹ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 148.

²⁵⁰ Tacke addresses Hehl's interest in Santa Fosca, but neglects to note the Protestant interest in the same monument.

²⁵¹ Zietz, 68.

²⁵² Kokkelink and Lemke-Kokkelink, 398.

churches, a critic for *Die christliche Kunst* proclaimed, “Through them also blow the fresh breeze of a modern attitude towards building.”²⁵³

For many Catholics, the reinvigoration of Cistercian architecture so prominent on the exterior of the Rosary Church was a sign of the fulfillment of the Lehnin Prophecy.²⁵⁴ Believed at the time to have been written in the fourteenth century by a monk named Hermann at Lehnin, the prophecy was a popular foretelling of the downfall of the Hohenzollerns and the rise of the Catholic Church. It described the fate of the Mark and its dukes, beginning with Joachim II who took Communion according to the Protestant ritual in 1539. The Lehnin Prophecy foresaw the downfall of the Mark in the eleventh generation after the Reformation and its rebirth under a rejuvenated Catholic Church. This transition was predicted to occur after the rule of Prussian King Friedrich I in the early eighteenth century. The renewed interest in the Lehnin Prophecy was initially spurred by the discovery in 1693 of a late seventeenth-century copy of the text in the library of *Kammergerichtsrat* Seidel.²⁵⁵ The post-1848 disillusionment with the failed revolution, coupled with the ferocity of the *Kulturkampf* a few decades later, created a population of democrats and Catholics alike eager to read signs of the downfall of the house of Hohenzollern anywhere they could find it. And despite the highly questionable authenticity of the manuscript, the Lehnin Prophecy provided further incentive to reinvest the Catholic churches of Berlin with the spirit of Lehnin, a quiet affront to the Hohenzollerns. Combined with the neo-Romanesque style on the exterior of the church, the revival of Lehnin was a strategy of preservation for Catholics, to begin stylistically where their cultural production had been violently cut off at the Reformation.

²⁵³ “Durch sie weht auch der frische Zug moderner Baugesinnung.” W. Rave, “Christoph Hehl und seine letzten Kirchen,” *Die christliche Kunst* 11 (1912/1913): 55.

²⁵⁴ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 62-4.

²⁵⁵ Tacke, *Kirchen für die Diaspora*, 141.

3.7 THE ROSARY CHURCH AS *GESAMTKUNSTWERK*: INTERIOR DECORATION

Hehl's treatment of the interior space and its decoration as a totality also displays an innovative approach to design. Hehl managed every element of the interior of the church, making Rosary a *Gesamtkunstwerk* entirely of Hehl's own devising. Thus, in order to understand fully the process of constructing a German Catholic identity in Berlin-Brandenburg, we must consider the interior decoration alongside the formal architectural language.

This comprehensive design approach taken by Hehl is also evident in the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church designed by Franz Schwechten (1891-1895), a key comparison to the Rosary Church as one of the most important religious structures from the Wilhelmine period in Berlin. Schwechten played an instrumental role in developing the complex iconographic program of the paintings, mosaics and sculptural decoration of the neo-Romanesque Memorial church. Particular elements, like the inclusion of a bust portrait of Luther next to the pulpit convey important religious messages about the importance of the sermon in Protestant liturgy. Including these religious portraits and Biblical scenes with imperial portraits (most notably in the foyer mosaics which survive today) expresses an inextricable connection between religion and the state in the second German Reich.

In the Rosary Church, Hehl designed the high altar reliefs, which sculptor Wilhelm Haverkamp executed in a modern technique called galvanoplasty (*Galvanoplastik*).²⁵⁶ Galvanoplasty was the most technologically advanced and economical method of producing

²⁵⁶ Christine Goetz, "Hochaltar in 'High Tech 1900': '... ein Meisterwerk von seltener Vollendung ...,'" in *100 Jahre Rosenkranz-Basilika Berlin Steglitz* (Berlin: Katholische Kirchengemeinde der Rosenkranz-Basilika, 2000), 14.

monumental metal sculpture in the late nineteenth century.²⁵⁷ Despite the modern technique, the source for such a complex altar might have been the Romanesque altar at Klosterneuburg (1181) by Nikolaus Verdun, one of the most famous medieval goldsmiths and enamelists. Haverkamp obviously rejected the medieval process of cloisonné, but the classical drapery of the figures, the congested composition of individual scenes, and the effect of the gleaming metal in darkened church interiors are similar in both pieces. Hehl could have created the design for the Rosary altar with the Verdun altar in mind, but like the rest of his building, he and his collaborators found a way to bring this medieval style into the present day by infusing modern approaches and new juxtapositions into the subject. The congregation was fortunate to have one of the most famous and prolific sculptors of its day in their ranks; Haverkamp had created bronze portraits of kaisers and generals including tympanum reliefs for the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial church.²⁵⁸

The altar for Rosary reveals Christ enthroned underneath a round Romanesque arch in the center and surrounded by the four symbols of the Evangelists (Fig. 70). Underneath bust length portraits of the disciples, one finds two scenes on either side of Christ. On the left is the Last Supper with Christ seated in the middle between two huddled groups of disciples and framed by a round arch colonnade. On the right is the Wedding at Cana with the same colonnade in the background. Immediately behind Christ, seated at the wedding table, are three figures whose distinctive faces and modern haircuts distinguish them from the group. Hehl included his (seated at left), Deitmer's (seated at right), and Archbishop Kopp's (standing with cap) likenesses in this Biblical scene. Including the parish's own priest and archbishop, as well as the prominent Catholic architect who designed the space, the altar creates a sense of familiarity and intimacy in the Biblical scenes for the original congregation members and draws on the Italianate tradition of

²⁵⁷ Galvanoplasty is the process of galvanizing another material with a thin layer of metal. Goetz, 18.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

embedded donor portraits. The crucial inclusion of these portraits was yet another way for the Catholic Church to reach out to modern parishioners and give a personal touch to their liturgical space. Specifically, the inclusion of Deitmer, the parish priest, in an image of one of the most important miracles Christ performed, creates a spiritual bridge between the Rosary Church and the origins of their faith. This iconographic pairing is similar to the inclusion of portraits of the contemporary royal family with the Protestant Reformers and the secular rulers who support them in Schwechten's Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church. As imperial leaders representing the state religion of Protestantism, they solidified their contemporary political-religious position by including figures like Luther and Friedrich the Wise of Saxony, just as Deitmer and Kopp wished to be positioned as defenders of a modernized Catholicism that also remained true to the religion's roots in the Rosary Church.

And when Deitmer stood at the altar to perform Holy Communion, he found himself symbolically re-enacting the same miracles of bread and wine depicted on the altar. He was framed by the large round arch of the east apse and enclosed by the massive piers of monastic brick in Gothic bond, further connecting early Christianity with the architectural traditions of the Mark Brandenburg.

The carved wooden pulpit, also designed by Hehl, was carried out by a workshop in Wiedenbrück in Westphalia, a world-famous center for craftwork. The Wiedenbrück atelier also created the communion benches, confessionals, side altars, and furniture in the sacristy.²⁵⁹ The image on the front side of the pulpit depicts the story of Jesus as a boy in the temple. The same round arch colonnade appears behind the temple elders, evocative of the round arches supporting the massive dome of Rosary. The repetition of these architectural elements underscores the

²⁵⁹ Goetz, 19.

authenticity of the Romanesque style, portrayed as stemming from the architecture contemporary to Jesus and the disciples. Two evangelist portraits adorn each side of the pulpit with the rest covered in sumptuous leafy ornamentation.

The dedication ceremony on November 11, 1900, was a day of celebration not only for Berlin Catholics, but also the Church, its architect, and its leaders, who received recognition from regional and national secular leaders. As evidence of the distinctive assimilation that already ushered Prussian Catholics into public civic life, government officials, including Minister of Culture Studt, Oberpräsident von Bethmann-Hollweg, Government President von Moltke, and Provincial Counselor Stubenrauch participated in the services along with Archbishop Kopp from Breslau. Minister Studt awarded Father Deitmer the highest Order of the Red Eagle and Hehl was named Geheimen Regierungsrat.²⁶⁰ Rosary Church was hailed by clergy and press alike. An article from the *Deutsche Bauzeitung* extolled, “After its completion it can be counted among the most exceptional churches of the last years.”²⁶¹

The large painting program was not completed until after Hehl’s death, but the architect had already made plans in 1903 with Deitmer and artist Friedrich Stummel for the cycle.²⁶² The subject of the program is the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary divided into the five images of the glorious mysteries along the central axis, with the five images of the joyful and sorrowful mysteries distributed in the crossing arms. Immediately above the high altar in the eastern apse, the Virgin sits enthroned with the Christ child on her lap, receiving a Rosary donation from assembled Saints Dominic and Pope Pius V on the left and Catherine of Siena in her Dominican

²⁶⁰ Thomas Raus, “Chronik der Rosenkranz-Gemeinde in Kirche und Welt,” in *100 Jahre Rosenkranz-Basilika Berlin Steglitz* (Berlin: Katholische Kirchengemeinde der Rosenkranz-Basilika, 2000), 50.

²⁶¹ “[N]ach ihrer Vollendung zu den eingentartigsten Kirchenbauten der letzten Jahren zählen dürfte.” “Die neue katholische Kirche für Steglitz bei Berlin,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* (1899): 425.

²⁶² Sabine Hannesen, “‘Wir müssen lernen, wir müssen sehr viel vom Orientteppich lernen.’ Die Ausmalung durch Friedrich Stummel,” in *100 Jahre Rosenkranz-Basilika Berlin Steglitz* (Berlin: Katholische Kirchengemeinde der Rosenkranz-Basilika, 2000), 25.

garb and Joseph on the right. The image is not one of the official set of mysteries but rather a dedication scene for the church. Pope Pius V (also a member of the Dominican Order) was the key instigator in the modernization and standardization of Catholic liturgy during the Council of Trent, significant for a parish that also sought to incorporate change in their new confessional age. Especially in this overtly Catholic subject matter of the Rosary, we see how this interior space reveals a different message than the actual built environment. While the architecture conveys a formal hybridity with overtones of regional, national, and religious identity, the iconography of the painting program strictly adheres to the dogma of the Rosary. Instead of revealing stylistic hybridity on the interior, as we have seen in the New Synagogue, the strict Catholic iconography of the Rosary Church's interior program exhibits a dogmatic uniformity for the audience of the initiated.

Framing the donation scene along the arch delineating the east choir is Stummel's depiction of Pentecost. This subject was popular during the modern period of Catholic restoration as it references wider themes of the inevitable triumph of the Church and focuses on the Virgin's role in the Church.²⁶³ Mary sits at the apex of the arch with the disciples hierarchically arranged on either side. Their classical robes belie the reference to contemporary Wilhelmine woodcarving in their stools and provide another case of stylistic hybridity to reinforce Hehl's complex architectural composition. The manipulation of an established convention is also evident in Stummel's painting technique. In traditional fresco painting, artists work on damp plaster, whereas Stummel preferred to paint on smooth, dry plaster. His pigments were pure germinal mineral colors in order to ensure posterity.

²⁶³ Hannesen, 28.

3.8 HEHL'S CATHOLIC CHURCHES: LOOKING TOWARDS MODERNISM

The success of Rosary Church in Steglitz was also the beginning of a fruitful collaboration between Deitmer and Hehl that continued until Hehl's death in 1911. Rosary Church was only the first commissioned church in the inaugural Steglitz parish. Hehl's parish churches in Zehlendorf (Heart of Jesus, 1908), Gross Lichterfelde (Holy Family, 1904), and Spandau (St. Mary's, 1910) all use the larger monastic bricks in their exterior. However, by this time, the Protestants and the state had been using monastic brick for some years, negating the religious exclusivity the Catholics saw in this building material.

Hehl's later churches also continue his development of a central plan and variations thereof. His centralized churches point to later generations of modernist church architecture because of the democratizing, egalitarian organization of space they offer. Kathleen James-Chakraborty notes how centralized spaces were suitable to the new modern function of architecture to house and collect a diversified mass audience, including both Protestant and Catholic churches.²⁶⁴ In the neo-Romanesque churches of the Weimar era, architects continued to use the central plan for a democratic, community-oriented architectural concept. Later under the National Socialists, the central plan in church designs was reappropriated for very undemocratic purposes.²⁶⁵

The central plan of the Rosary Church, however, still represented a democratic community effort to fundraise and build their own house of worship. These Catholic parishioners in Steglitz also admired the monastic bricks of the façade of their new Rosary

²⁶⁴ See James-Chakraborty, *German Architecture for a Mass Audience*.

²⁶⁵ See Holger Brülls, *Neue Dome: Wiederaufnahme romanischer Bauformen und antimoderne Kulturkritik im Kirchenbau der Weimarer Republik und der NS-Zeit* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1994).

Church and stood amazed under the great Italianate dome of its nave. They thought, perhaps, that they were fulfilling the Lehnin Prophecy with the church's creation. Christoph Hehl had responded eloquently to the exceptional needs of their community by creating an exterior that drew from local Romanesque traditions to highlight the historical place of Catholics in northern Germany and an interior holy realm that looked beyond the local to the European origins of the faith itself.

Contrary to prevailing scholarly opinion, the Rosary Church in Steglitz was not an anti-modern project, however. Catholics modernized their faith and redesigned their churches based on new liturgical needs to suit a complex, urbanizing lay population. Thus, a hybridized neo-Romanesque style also aligned with the reform-oriented goals of the Steglitz congregation, not just their quest to establish a historically determined identity in the growing German nation-state. Similarly, Jews in Breslau, in seeking connections to their religious roots, built their synagogue in a neo-Romanesque style that staked their claim at the same time to German national patrimony, as we have seen in chapter one.

For German Protestants, the duality of legitimizing present-day identity claims with historical references and accommodating the changing nature of religion in the modern era led them to the *Ur-city* all three religions shared, Jerusalem. As German imperialists stretched their colonial wings around the world in the late nineteenth century, Protestant leaders, both religious and secular, were already working in Jerusalem to claim a part of the most important religious city in the world for their own confession. Back in Steglitz, Deitmer noted the kaiser's well-publicized visit to the Holy Lands in 1898 to dedicate the new German Protestant Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem, the culmination of the complete incorporation of the Protestant Church into the German imperial project. For Deitmer, however, it was the kaiser's donation of land for

the Catholic Church of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary (built 1900-1910) and not the creation of the Church of the Redeemer which he noted as “very generous.”²⁶⁶

The question of its authenticity alongside the far older confessions put the relatively young Protestant religion in a precarious position in the modern era. The Protestants’ strong connections to the imperial and political goals of the Wilhelmine empire dictated the use of a neo-Romanesque architectural vocabulary, as the neo-Romanesque was already employed in many state buildings in the 1890s. The Protestant religion, post-dating Romanesque architecture by centuries, did not have the same direct claim to the style as Jews and Catholics. However, as we will see in the following chapter, the German Protestant Church of the Redeemer in the Christian Quarter of the Old Town of Jerusalem is not a wholesale transfer of the official imperial neo-Romanesque style, but represents the same type of piecemeal appropriation alongside stylistic innovation as seen in the New Synagogue and Rosary Church. This variant of neo-Romanesque Protestant architecture announced a German presence in the Holy Land and represented the marriage of German Protestantism to a soft imperialism for citizens back in the Kaiserreich.

²⁶⁶ “Im Herbst 1898 hat der deutsche Kaiser Wilhelm II eine Palästina-reise gemacht und bei dieser Gelegenheit den Katholiken die Dormition de Virge zu Jerusalem in hochherziger Weise geschenkt.” Pfarrchronik, I: 34, Church Archives.

**4.0 “AN IMAGE, SO COLORFUL, SO RADIANT AND IMPRESSIVE, SINCE EVER
THERE HAS BEEN AN EVANGELICAL CHURCH”: FRIEDRICH ADLER
INTRODUCES THE PROTESTANT NEO-ROMANESQUE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
STAGE IN THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER IN JERUSALEM**

October 31, Reformation Day, was an important day which encapsulated much of the religious tension during the Second German Empire. Commemorating the day on which Martin Luther nailed his theses of dissent to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg in 1517, Reformation Day represented a rallying point in which the lines between German nationalism and the transnational brotherhood of Protestantism blurred. The dedication ceremony for the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem on October 31, 1898 reflected these multiple allegiances. After a much-touted journey through the Ottoman Empire and the Holy Land, Kaiser Wilhelm II and his wife, Auguste Viktoria, rode through the Jaffa Gate of the Old Town of Jerusalem on the morning of the thirty-first to announce the Kaiserreich’s new architectural presence at the Church of the Redeemer. Prussian architect Friedrich Adler had built the representative parish church for German Protestants on the site of a medieval Hospitaller church that had belonged to the Order of St. John. In its new manifestation, the kaiser renamed the church for the Son of God. The pinnacle of the dedication service came after the kaiser addressed the assembled dignitaries and local authorities. Theologian Ludwig Schneller described the scene:

A breathless silence fell over the church. Everyone raised their glistening eyes to the altar, deeply moved, where the glowing silhouette of the kaiser stood. Just as King Solomon bowed during his temple's dedication three thousand years ago, just a few minutes east of here, the kaiser knelt before God at the end of the dedication ceremony, pledging fidelity until his death and his entire *Volk* claimed the same belief and the same fidelity.²⁶⁷

In this chapter, I consider the Church of the Redeemer as a point of complex identity negotiation, as German Protestants attempted to position themselves amongst the architectural statements of other European religious groups in Jerusalem, the Ottoman imperial presence, the local Palestinian community, as well as the German audience at home who experienced the church through its mediated representations. This case study encompasses the three most significant issues of Oppler's New Synagogue and Hehl's Crown of Roses Church: the role of local and regional history for the minority congregation, the complex interaction of the religious building with its multicultural urban context, and the use of neo-Romanesque as a stylistic intercessor between religion and state.

Just as Solomon built the First Temple in Jerusalem and presided over a period of prosperity, Kaiser Wilhelm II envisioned himself as not only the benevolent ruler but also *summus episcopus*, the head of the German Protestant Church. He arrived in the Holy Land to re-establish his empire's place among both the secular and religious world powers. Despite the importance to the entire German nation of the Church of the Redeemer and the German religious

²⁶⁷ "Eine atemlose Stille war in der ganzen Kirche entstanden. In tiefster Bewegung und mit glänzenden Augen schaute alles zum Altar empor, wo die leuchtende Gestalt des Kaisers stand, der am Schlusse dieses Einweihungsgottesdienstes – ähnlich wie einst der König Salomo vor 3000 Jahren einige Minuten weiter östlich von hier bei der Tempelweihe – seine Knie vor Gott beugte, ihm Treue gelobte bis in den Tod und sein ganzes Volk aufrief zu gleichem Glauben und gleicher Treue." Schneller, 138.

institutions that sprang up in Palestine, scholars tend to view German involvement in Palestine as merely a brief precursor to the actual German-owned colonies scattered throughout the world. And art and architectural historians of Kaiserreich Germany only recently have begun to address the lacuna of scholarly attention devoted to German cultural production abroad.²⁶⁸ In terms of German building in Palestine, Kathleen Curran has noted that the bulk of the meager literature focuses on reconstruction and renovation projects of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre attributed to Schinkel (1840-41) to the detriment of the new construction erected by the Germans during the Second Empire.²⁶⁹

I also situate my investigation of the Church of the Redeemer in the larger transnational movement in German Studies. In her 2008 German Studies Association presidential address, Sara Lennox offers some possible questions to give our research a broader global perspective required today:

How are cultural representations affected by impulses exterior to the nation-state, say, colonialism, the Cold War, September 11, or the war in Iraq, and how does the cultural product position itself vis-à-vis those impulses? To what degree does the text directly thematize these questions, and how must we read differently to find the answers? How are the national and the transnational explicitly or implicitly represented in the text? Where does the text situate itself with respect to the colonality of power? . . . How does the text draw upon the national and/or

²⁶⁸ See: Itohan I. Osayimwese, "Colonialism at the Center: German Colonial Architecture and the Design Reform Movement, 1828-1914," (PhD diss., Michigan, 2008); Esra Akcan, "Modernity in Translation: Early Twentieth-Century German-Turkish Exchanges in Land Settlement and Residential Culture," (PhD diss., Columbia, 2005); Esra Akcan, "Towards a Cosmopolitan Ethics in Architecture: Bruno Taut's Translations out of Germany," *New German Critique* 99, 33/ 3 (2006): 7-39; Torsten Warner, *Deutsche Architektur in China – Architekturtransfer* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 1994).

²⁶⁹ Curran, *Romanesque Revival*, 183. See Schütz, *Preussen in Jerusalem*.

the transnational to construct identity, subjectivity, solidarity, notions of individual or collective resistance?²⁷⁰

Instead of restricting this avenue to literary materials, German architecture abroad can be framed effectively in terms of national and transnational impulses, visual representations of power, and the negotiation of multiple axes of identity.

In terms of the Church of the Redeemer, the work of Jürgen Krüger, while not framed in terms of a German imperial worldview, first incorporated the building into discussions about the architectural and religious policies of the Hohenzollern family.²⁷¹ As one of the premier scholars of Wilhelmine church architecture, Krüger situates the Church of the Redeemer into both the history of German involvement in Palestine and the large body of Protestant churches completed during the reign of Wilhelm II. In *Rom und Jerusalem: Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert* his approach excludes consideration of the role of visual mediation in establishing meaning in a religious structure. He does not handle perhaps the most important church of the Wilhelmine period – the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin. Furthermore, he does not treat Wilhelmine Protestant churches as part of the larger array of confessional building. And while he stresses that dedication ceremonies are one of the most important bearers of meaning in these churches, he does not consider how images of these religious buildings functioned in the imperial print propaganda produced for German domestic

²⁷⁰ Sara Lennox, “Transnational Approaches and Their Challenges: GSA Presidential Address, 2008,” *German Studies Association Newsletter* 33, no. 2 (Winter 2008-09): 24-5.

²⁷¹ By Jürgen Krüger, see: “Deutsche evangelische Kirchen im Ausland – vom einfachen Kapellenbau zur nationalen Selbstdarstellung,” in *Geschichte des protestantischen Kirchenbaues: Festschrift für Peter Poschansky zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. Klaus Raschok and Reiner Sörries, (Erlangen: Junge & Sohm, 1994), 93-9; *Rom und Jerusalem: Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995); “Wilhelmenische Baupolitik im Ausland: Die Deutsche Evangelische Kirche in Rom,” *Römische Historische Mitteilungen*, 39 (1997): 375-94; “William II’s Perception of Sacrality,” in *Baalbek: Image and Monument*, eds. Helene Sader, Thomas Scheffler, and Angelika Neuwirth, (Beirut, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998), 89-95.

audiences. In fact, form and style take a back seat to religious and historical themes in his analysis. As Stephan Muthesius explains,

The chief problem with the book is that Krüger explicitly does not want to stress what he sees as narrowly architectural aspects and is especially wary of the problem of style (p. 211-212), . . . In the end we are told that the patron saint of a church and the dedication ceremonies associated with it are “more important as carriers of meaning” than the architecture (back cover). Such a statement, however, is not conducive to interdisciplinary progress.²⁷²

Kaiser Wilhelm II, along with his Evangelical Church Building Association, oversaw the finance, commission and construction of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem. No files exist at the Evangelical Church Building Association’s current headquarters in Berlin. However, I was able to find archival material in the Evangelical Central Archives (*Evangelisches Zentralarchiv*) in Berlin, including the pertinent papers of Friedrich Adler, the chief architect. Since Kaiser Wilhelm II attended the dedication of the church as part of his much-heralded Middle East Trip in 1899, published trip reports, journals, picture books, and accounts in periodicals are also extant. Historians have not examined the formal qualities of these materials or incorporated an analysis of these objects into a larger investigation of the visual culture of the Church of the Redeemer. I approach the architecture of the church, the pageantry associated with its dedication, and the imagery of the related publications as an integrated phenomenon to advance our understanding of the role of visual culture for German imperialism and Protestantism.

²⁷² Stefan Muthesius, review of *Rom und Jerusalem. Kirchenbauvorstellungen der Hohenzollern im 19. Jahrhundert*, by Jürgen Krüger, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 2 (1999): 228.

Yet, the Church of the Redeemer also presents new challenges that shift its meaning outside of the code of imperialism. As a German neo-Romanesque building on non-German soil, the church forces us to refocus our analytical lens onto a wider international stage. The Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem, like other European buildings abroad, breaks down the notion of the supremacy of European metropolitan architectural centers, enriching both our understanding of imperial history and modern architecture. The history of these international building projects can even offer insights into contemporary architectural production in the global, post-colonial era. In outlining his investigation of Victorian architecture in the British Empire, Mark Crinson relates his work to a host of ramifications extending into many scholarly fields:

Indeed, it is intended to clarify the historical background to a range of more contemporary interests: the understanding of modernism and modernization in non-European settings, and their coexistence with customary or traditional practices; the development of post-colonial theory, especially in terms of the built environment; the similarities . . . between Victorian and postmodern concerns; and perhaps even the problems and opportunities of architecture in Third World societies under new forms of colonialism today.²⁷³

While Wilhelm II had no intention of occupying Palestine as an imperial territory, the general imperial context of the age must be foregrounded when considering the Church of the Redeemer. Our understanding of the Church of the Redeemer must hinge on the notion of the church as a cultural product of the age of empire. Previous scholarship on the Church of the Redeemer has emphasized the Hohenzollern family's close personal and spiritual connection to

²⁷³ Crinson, 10.

this building project, while denying the imperial forces at work in the building process and the dedication ceremony. The completion of the Church of the Redeemer under Wilhelm II has been hitherto understood as the definitive capstone to King Friedrich Wilhelm IV's initial work to establish a Protestant presence in Jerusalem. Yet, these rulers did not share one unified vision of a church in the Holy Land. Friedrich Wilhelm IV dreamt of a single world church, under the guise of Protestantism, with its headquarters in the holiest of cities. Wilhelm II turned this plan into a Prussian Protestant state church in the age of empire. Contemporary observers did not overlook this political and theological departure. Reporting on the laying of the cornerstone in 1893, a journalist for the *Orientpost* wrote, "The entire [ceremony] possessed a narrowly confessional, Prussian provincial church character, which was already recognizable in the previously observed measures and appeared to correspond little to the spirit of Friedrich Wilhelm IV."²⁷⁴ Nevertheless, many scholars claim Wilhelm II sought to "underscore the continuity of the Hohenzollerns in their efforts in Jerusalem."²⁷⁵

Never a formal colony, the Wilhelmine empire's relationship with Jerusalem and their building sites in the Holy Land is more aligned with the concept of informal imperialism. Although it does not lead necessarily to official occupation, the vestiges of informal imperialism (economic integration, free trade) can be equally powerful means of establishing European hegemony.²⁷⁶ It is not just economic factors, however, but also cultural policy and production that play a significant role in shaping the realm of informal imperialism. The central tenet of Edward Said's *Orientalism* rings clear when considering this system: the cultural is not an effect

²⁷⁴ "Das ganze trug einen eng konfessionellen preußisch landeskirchlichen Charakter, der schon in den vorher eingehaltenen Maßnahmen zu erkennen war und dem Geiste Friedrich Wilehlms IV. wenig zu erkennen schien." "Grundsteinlegung der evangelischen Kirche auf dem Muristan," *Orientpost*, 30 Nov 1893.

²⁷⁵ "die Kontinuität der Hohenzollern unterstrichen in ihrem Bemühen um Jerusalem." Schütz, 13.

²⁷⁶ The notion of informal imperialism originated in John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," *Economic History Review* 6 (1953): 1-15.

of the economic, but rather a partner in the machinery of orientalism.²⁷⁷ In his later work, *Culture and Imperialism*, Said continued to advocate for assigning an active role to imperial culture, not as a result of imperialist policy but rather as a formative element in colonial projects.²⁷⁸ Although architecture appears only peripherally in Said's work, his theories lay a solid foundation for probing the relationship between the built environment, imperialism, and the projection of religious identity abroad.

The Church of the Redeemer stands as a microcosm of the most dynamic years of transformation in Prussia from the attempts to form a joint Anglican-Prussian bishopric in Palestine in the 1840s to the church dedication in 1898 at the height of the German Empire's strength. Its story includes the looming architectural giant, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, and key political and religious figures ranging from King Friedrich Wilhelm IV to Theodor Herzl. My ultimate aim is to show how the neo-Romanesque, specifically, suited both an imperialist and religious agenda for German Protestants in the Holy Land. In the New Synagogue in Breslau and the Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz hybridity in structure and style was a key element of how the neo-Romanesque aesthetic functioned in these religious building projects. In this church designed for the religious majority of the Kaiserreich, hybridity is not part of its architectural program, but instead is at the core of the two-pronged message, promoting both the German Empire and Protestantism, the building expresses in this foreign, international city. In assessing the Church of the Redeemer alongside a synagogue and Catholic parish church, this investigation of neo-Romanesque building beyond Germany can enrich our understanding of the development of the style itself.

²⁷⁷ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978).

²⁷⁸ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994).

The building's multi-layered context, including its transmission to the German public via photography and mass media, becomes crucial. Because of the small Protestant presence in Jerusalem and the non-proselytizing legislation of the Ottoman Empire, the style and agenda of the Church of the Redeemer could only reach a limited local population. I do not address the reaction of the Palestinian and Ottoman communities in Jerusalem in this chapter; that perspective requires further inquiry and travel to Jerusalem, which I intend to do at a later date. I argue, however, that it was, in fact, Germans back in Europe who served as the primary audience for the building. As a small German Protestant enclave divorced from its local community, a church of this level of grandeur was not intended simply for the worship of German Protestants in Jerusalem, but rather for Germans back home. For them, the church functioned as a symbol of the wide reach of German culture, specifically German Protestant culture, which melds with the German imperial project in the Church of the Redeemer to stake a claim in the Holy Land. The relationship between the Kaiserreich and Protestants is more intimate and interdependent than that between the state and Jews or Catholics. Far removed from contemporary neo-Romanesque architectural projects in German cities and built for a minority in an Ottoman-controlled city, the Church of the Redeemer provides a more nuanced picture of both neo-Romanesque architecture and the connection between German imperialism and Protestantism.

The Church of the Redeemer presents a different case study also in terms of the role of Kaiser Wilhelm II and his concept of Germanic spirituality. Indeed, the Church of the Redeemer compels us to treat religious, especially Protestant, identity as deeply embedded in German nationalism. This approach is fundamentally different than in earlier linguistic or ethnic-based theories of nationalism in which a religious standpoint cannot engage and embrace the ideology of nationalism. It was not only the leadership of Kaiser Wilhelm II under which Protestantism

and German nationalism became inextricably intertwined. As Helmut Walser Smith argues, many German Protestants saw nationalism as part and parcel of their religious beliefs, not contradicting, but mutually reinforcing one another.²⁷⁹ In his contemporary description of the kaiser, Georg Büxenstein attributed Germany's rising reputation amongst its European peers precisely to the kaiser's devout spirituality and situated the empire in a Protestant-Catholic struggle for power. "Only a state figure, who feels 'Protestant to the bone,' was able to accentuate the long overlooked Mark Brandenburg to the Catholic powers of Austria and France."²⁸⁰

4.1 PROTESTANTISM IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY GERMANY

Kaiser Wilhelm II inherited a bureaucratic machine which had controlled the leadership of the Protestant Church since 1850. Up until this time, Protestant rulers had been the head of the Protestant church in their individual territories, binding the interests of the Prussian state and the church under this leadership. After 1850, the new constitution granted the Prussian Ministry of Culture authority over the church. The Protestant upper church council (*Oberkirchenrat*), consisting of jurists and theologians chosen directly by the King of Prussia, oversaw the provincial consistories and general superintendents of Prussia, blurring the lines between

²⁷⁹ Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 236-7.

²⁸⁰ "nur ein Staatswesen, das sich 'protestantisch bis in die Knochen' fühlte, konnte die so lange übersehene Mark Brandenburg den katholischen Grossmächten Österreich und Frankreich gegenüber zur Geltung bringen." Georg W. Büxenstein, ed., *Unser Kaiser: Zehn Jahre der Regierung Wilhelms II.* (Berlin: Deutsches Verlagshaus Bong & Co., 1898), 251.

religious and state affairs.²⁸¹ After 1871, the Prussian system of Protestant church direction was transferred wholesale to the Kaiserreich.

Beyond the official levels, Protestants formed their own associations as a way to combat the efforts of the Catholic Center Party and to purge ultramontane influence from the empire after 1871. The Protestant League to Defend German-Protestant Interests (*Evangelischer Bund zur Wahrung der deutsch-protestantischen Interessen*) formed in 1886 both to counter the efforts of the Center Party and to create a similarly politicized Protestant organization. With its nationalist, anti-ultramontane platform, the Protestant League received the support of the Berlin *Oberkirchenrat* and counted over 500,000 members by 1914.²⁸² Other organizations like the nationalist Pan-German League (*Alldeutscher Verband*) sought an alternative path through the confessional impasse in the reconstruction of a native, *völkisch* Christianity.

At the same time that state bureaucracy altered Protestant church administration and the Protestant League gave voice to the aggressive fusion of German nationalism and Protestantism, changes in liturgy transformed Protestant worship into a more inclusive, democratic experience. Just as the Catholics reshaped their Mass around the sermon, Protestant services turned to the sermon as a way to infuse moral teachings into worship. The notion of the church as the protector and purveyor of morality became a driving force in Protestant liturgy in the second half of the nineteenth century. As we will see, it had profound impacts on the design and organization of space in church architecture.

A Protestant agenda not only infiltrated German nationalist organizations, but also found its goal aligned with German imperialism. Protestant missionaries viewed new settlements and

²⁸¹ Nipperdey, *Religion im Umbruch*, 84-5.

²⁸² Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 14. For more on the Protestant League, see Walser Smith, *German Nationalism and Religious Conflict*, 50-78 and 178-85.

colonies as fresh ground for their work and advocated for colonial policies to advance their aims. While Christian morals may not seem conducive to European imperialism, Susannah Heschel argues that Christianity harbors an innate colonizing impulse: “Christianity was well suited to serve as a religious justification of colonialism . . . because at its core it is a colonialist theology. Colonialism was at the heart of Christianity’s origin within Judaism . . . [N]o other major world religion has colonized the central religious teachings and scriptures of another faith and then denied the continued validity of the other, insisting that its own interpretations are exclusive truth.”²⁸³

Through the work of the church-building commission of the Protestant Church Aid Association (*Evangelisch-kirchlichen Hilfsverein*), Wilhelm II was able to propagate his nationalist brand of Protestantism. Between 1884 and 1904, the building commission, after 1900 known as the Protestant Church Building Association (*Evangelischer Kirchenbauverein*) completed 38 churches, including the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem.²⁸⁴ The imperial family contributed over three million marks to the building projects. Smaller parish churches in urban centers like Berlin, where social democrats and communists vied for the loyalties of the working classes, and national representative churches, like the Church of the Redeemer or the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, combined the vision of a nationalized Protestant church with the emerging architectural form of neo-Romanesque. A nineteenth-century revision of Romanesque architecture was easily transformed into the national style, with which the kaiser sought to present a Protestant-infused, Prussian-centered version of the German nation. The

²⁸³ Susannah Heschel, “Theology as a Vision for Colonialism: From Suppressionism to Dejudatization in German Protestantism,” in *Germany’s Colonial Pasts*, eds. Eric Ames, Marcia Klotz, and Lora Wildenthal, (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 148.

²⁸⁴ Seidel, 74-6. These figures vary slightly with those provided by Büxenstein, who claims 42 churches were built in Berlin in ten years, increasing the total number from 96 to 135. He also says the kaiser donated five million marks to the building projects. Büxenstein, 264.

Romanesque proved to be the architectural bridge between the so-called First Empire rulers like Otto the Great and Friedrich Barbarossa and the reawakening of the German Empire under the Hohenzollerns. And neo-Romanesque religious building became the proving grounds for Wilhelm II's concept of German national religiosity.

4.2 THE ANGLICAN-PRUSSIAN BISHOPRIC AND EARLY EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH A GERMAN PROTESTANT CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

While the actual building process may have been the impetus of the *Kirchenbauverein*, the initial idea of constructing a German Protestant church in the heart of the Holy Land had its roots in the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm IV (Prussian King, 1840-1861). Friedrich Wilhelm IV worked to establish an Anglican-Prussian bishopric in Palestine in 1841. Only a year into his rule, Friedrich Wilhelm summoned Christian Charles Josias Bunsen, cultural scholar and ambassador to the Court of St. James, to Berlin in April 1841 to begin plans to form a joint bishopric in the Holy Land between the two largest Protestant churches in Europe. As Bunsen's wife, a Welsh woman, later recalled, "In Jerusalem the two principal Protestant Churches of Europe should, across the nave of the Redeemer, reach to each other the right hand of fellowship."²⁸⁵

Lingering political tensions in the Middle East had ushered in a new urgency for a strong European presence in the region. Muhammad Ali, the aggressive pasha of Egypt, threatened the sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire after gaining control of parts of Syria and Palestine in the 1830s. The weakening Ottoman Empire had sought the advice of a young Prussian army officer,

²⁸⁵ Baroness Frances Waddington Bunsen, *A Memoir of Baron Bunsen, Late Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of His Majesty Frederic William IV. at the Court of St. James*, vol. 1 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1868), 594. Cited in Curran, *Romanesque Revival*, 180.

Helmuth von Moltke, to prevent Muhammad Ali from encroaching further on the Sultan's territory to no avail. At the Battle of Nisib in 1839, the Ottomans suffered a grim defeat. The Austrians, Russians, British and Prussians then intervened to lend a hand to the sick man of the Bosphorus, as the Ottoman Empire was known, to restore Ottoman rule to Syria and Palestine. Von Moltke returned dishonored. Nevertheless, he had armed himself with knowledge of the people, languages, and cultures of the multinational empire. He believed he could nevertheless offer a solution to the growing instability. Moltke wrote in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1841 that the best solution under the given circumstances would be to place "an uninhibited ruler of the German nation and a truly tolerant sense" at the helm of Palestine.²⁸⁶ Moltke believed the Germans were in the best position to instill order and prevent dangerous jealousy over territorial rights in the Holy Land from the other European powers.

Moltke's vision met with little enthusiasm. The political and economic stakes were too high for other European states to allow the Prussians to establish rule in Palestine. The British saw their cotton trade with India potentially jeopardized. Friedrich Wilhelm IV's predecessor, King Friedrich Wilhelm III (ruled 1797-1840), could not take Moltke's risky suggestion. Instead, he saw the power vacuum as an opportunity to wield greater international influence with the backing of a well-established European superpower.²⁸⁷ While a European mandate over Palestine took another eighty years, Friedrich Wilhelm IV fulfilled his father's aim to establish the joint bishopric as the beginning of his dream of a great Protestant world church, not only uniting German Lutheran and Reform (Calvinist) Protestants, but eventually all Christians.

²⁸⁶ Helmuth von Moltke, "Deutschland und Palestine," *Augsburger Allgemeinen Zeitung, Gesammelte Schriften und Denkwürdigkeiten*, vol. 2 (Berlin: Ernst Siegfried Mittler und Sohn, 1892), 279-88.

²⁸⁷ Curran, *Romanesque Revival*, 181.

This uneasy reckoning between political maneuvering and theological aspiration defined the short life of the joint bishopric and perhaps also predicted its ultimate failure. For one, Catholics in France and Austria and Orthodox Christians in Russia were not eager to embrace Friedrich Wilhelm IV's vision of a unified church. They had their own church members living in Palestine in officially recognized communities and overseen by their own bishops. The Turks hesitantly agreed to the joint bishopric, but feared the conversion of Christian, Muslim and Jewish Ottoman subjects by the Evangelicals. In the end, British and Prussian officials had to assure the Ottomans that the bishopric would merely serve the fledgling Protestant communities in Palestine and not proselytize.

The outline of the bishopric was conceived as early as autumn 1838 by Tory leader Lord Ashley with input from Bunsen.²⁸⁸ Ashley was a leading member of the Low Church, or Evangelical Party, with more militant religious views supporting conversion and imperialism. Thus, Ashley saw the prospect of a bishopric in Palestine as a way to convert the roughly five thousand Jews living in Jerusalem at the time. A topic of persistent obsession by the British Evangelicals, Ashley, Bunsen, and Friedrich Wilhelm IV were proto-Zionists insofar as they promoted the return of the Jews to the Holy Land. Their reasoning was less than altruistic, however, as they believed the Jewish pilgrimage back to Palestine (and their eventual conversion there) would hasten the Second Coming. Although hampered by the Ottoman restrictions on missionary work, the announcement of Michael Solomon Alexander, a converted Prussian Jew born in the grand duchy of Posen who had also taught Hebrew at King's College, as the first Protestant bishop of Jerusalem, signaled the underlying aims of the unified undertaking. In Alexander's hometown, Prussian authorities had actually encouraged missionary organizations

²⁸⁸ The following discussion draws primarily from Curran, *Romanesque Revival*, 182-4.

like the London Society of the Promotion of Christianity among the Jews to set up free schools for Jewish families, delivering police fines to those parents who refused to send their children.²⁸⁹ Just as participation among Posener Jews remained sparse, similar difficulties confronted the convert-turned-bishop in Jerusalem: the number of conversions remained dismally low. The leaders of the joint bishopric did not see the project as a complete failure, however. Lord Palmerston and the British government believed the Jews, converted or not, could play a key role in the modernization of the Ottoman Empire, building industry and creating commercial partnerships in the region. With their own economic interests in mind, the British declared Jews under the protection of their newly-established consul-general, similar to the French supervision of Catholic interests and the Russian-led Greek Orthodox Christians.²⁹⁰ German Protestants and Jews continued to co-exist in Palestine with mutual benefits. Kaiser Wilhelm II tried to reinforce this relationship in his meeting with Zionist leader Theodor Herzl during his West Asian trip in 1898.

Plans for the construction of a church took precedence in the first years of the bishopric. The London Society for Promoting Christianity among Jews had purchased a site on Mount Zion. John Nicolayson, an energetic priest who had been in Jerusalem since 1826, selected architect James Wood Johns to design the place of worship. Tensions with the Society led to Johns' dismissal already by 1842, but his original plans were published in London in 1844.²⁹¹ *The Anglican Cathedral Church of Saint James Mount Zion Jerusalem* displays a church firmly entrenched in the English neo-Gothic style as advocated by Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin with little regard for the local conditions. The interior reveals a three-bayed nave with exposed

²⁸⁹ Clark, 137.

²⁹⁰ The first British consul-general in Palestine was established in Acre in 1837, followed by Jerusalem in 1838. Crinson, 204-5.

²⁹¹ Schütz, 129.

trusses that terminate in an eastern apse. Early English Gothic elements – triple lancet and rose windows – define the fenestration. Yet Johns’ design shows awkward proportions and a disjoint between the stout crossing tower, with its slender pinnacles rising from each of the corners and the relatively short nave and choir. Thus, the true accomplishment of Johns’ unrealized design is not its role as a masterpiece of neo-Gothic design but rather “its extraordinary attempt to make evangelical presence architecturally manifest in a city where there were still only the seeds of a political influence to justify it.”²⁹²

It was unfathomable for Friedrich Wilhelm IV that this Anglicized Catholic architecture could represent the new universal Protestant church in Jerusalem. He sought a return to the wide round arches and simple materials of the basilicas of the oldest Christian architecture. This earlier architecture style was at the peak of its popularity in Prussia, as it was reincarnated in the *Rundbogenstil* churches and public buildings. In vain, the king tried to implement his architectural vision, writing to Bunsen in 1843, “According to my feelings, my plan through Stüler, which is quite open to modifications, bears the imprint of Christian Protestant humility and has the original Christian form, I would like to say, almost of the apostolic buildings. It does not hide anything, it does not overshadow the landscape; rather, it bestows glorious space in comparison to the English plan.”²⁹³

Friedrich Wilhelm IV found some reprieve in the choice of Matthew Habershon as Johns’ replacement, after the Turks did not grant building permission to Johns’ imaginative project. In his 1836 book, *The Ancient Half-Timbered Houses of England*, Habershon attacked “Pugin’s

²⁹² Crinson, 211-2.

²⁹³ “Mein Plan durch Stüler, der sehr modificationsfähig ist, trägt nach meinem Gefühl das Gepräge christlich evangelischer Demuth und hat die Form der urchristlichen, ich möchte sagen, der fast apostolischen Baue; will nichts verstecken, zeigt nichts in die Landschaft hinaus, gewährt aber herrlichen Raum im Vergleich zum englischen Plan.” Leopold von Ranke, *Aus dem Briefwechsel Friedrich Wilhelm IV. mit Bunsen* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1873), 100-1.

crusade for ‘Catholic architecture’,” which the King later publically lauded.²⁹⁴ Habershon was the resident architect of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews and his career pales in comparison to his contemporaries Johns and George Edmund Street. Loyal to the tenets of the Society, Habershon believed firmly that Jewish conversion to Christianity was necessary preparation for the Second Coming, a thesis he advanced in his *Dissertation on the Prophetic Scriptures*.²⁹⁵

Despite Friedrich Wilhelm IV’s initial enthusiasm, Habershon’s revised design was a far cry from the Prussian *Rundbogenstil* basilicas the king favored. The end result, which still stands today as part of the British Consulate in Israel, is a reduced version of Johns’ original plan. Habershon shortened the nave to one bay, and the massive crossing and corner turrets, described by Friedrich Wilhelm IV as “mosque-like,” were gone completely.²⁹⁶ The wooden roof and fittings had been sent out directly from England to retain some national quality in the materials.²⁹⁷ On the day of its dedication, January 14, 1849, Christ Church became the first official Protestant church in Palestine.²⁹⁸

The Germans, never sharing equal power in bishop nomination, church administration, or architectural policy, did not get their own church project launched until the bishopric dissolved in 1888 and they struck out on their own. The Evangelical Jerusalem Foundation (*Evangelische Jerusalemstiftung*) came into existence through a statute from Kaiser Wilhelm II on June 22,

²⁹⁴ Howard Colvin, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (London: J. Murray, 1978), 374. Quoted in Schütz, 136.

²⁹⁵ Matthew Habershon, *A Dissertation on the Prophetic Scriptures* (London: J. Nisbet, 1834).

²⁹⁶ Israel State Archives, Jerusalem, R.67-347a: Heinrich von Bülow, Minister des Auswärtigen, an den Königlichen Generalkonsul von Wildenbach, Beiruth, vom 18.Dezember.1843. Quoted in Schütz, 129.

²⁹⁷ Crinson, 214.

²⁹⁸ Propst Lic. H. W. Hertzberg, *Fünfundsiebzig Jahre deutsche evangelische Gemeinde Jerusalem* (Leipzig: Verlag des Centralvorstandes des Evangelischen Vereins der Gustav Adolf-Stiftung, 1927), 14. Religious freedom in the Ottoman Empire became official doctrine seven years later at the end of the Crimean War. The first church to mark this event was also an English Gothic construct, George Edmund Street’s Crimean Memorial Church in Istanbul/Constantinople. See Krüger, *Kirchen im Ausland*, 95.

1889 as a way to finance work. A five-member board of trustees (*Kuratorium*) including clergy and secular cultural leaders led the foundation in Berlin with the purpose of establishing and maintaining German Protestant institutions in Jerusalem. The foundation had three main sources of funds that exceeded one million marks.²⁹⁹ The *Dotationskapital*, established in 1841 by Friedrich Wilhelm IV to fund the joint bishopric, contributed 430,000 marks. The Jerusalem-*Kollektionsfond* held 220,000 Marks, administered by the ministry of Religious Affairs (*Ministerium der geistlichen Angelegenheiten*). The provincial church administration (*Landeskirchen*) accumulated church collections to add 530,000 marks in the Church Building Fund (*Kirchenbau-Fonds*).³⁰⁰

By that point, Berlin architect and leading building historian Friedrich Adler (1827-1908) was finally able to see his plans for a Jerusalem church to fruition. At the Berlin *Bauakademie*, Adler had trained under the leading *Rundbogenstil* architects of the day. Friedrich August Stüler, Heinrich Strack, and Carl Bötticher had filled the void left by Schinkel, melding his classicist treatment of ornament with a medieval structural system and an awareness of regional building materials and traditions. Carl Bötticher, an advocate of *Rundbogenstil*, whose 1852 *Die Tektonik der Hellenen* (*The Techtonics of the Hellenes*) steered the course of architectural thought for the following generations, became a particularly important role model for Adler and his dual-professional interests in classical and medieval round-arch architecture.³⁰¹ According to Bötticher, contemporary German architecture needed to be the synthesis between the seemingly incompatible Greek and Gothic systems of construction.

²⁹⁹ Hertzberg, 35.

³⁰⁰ "Evangelische Jerusalemsstiftung," *Orientpost*, 12 September 1889.

³⁰¹ Carl Gottlieb Wilhelm Bötticher, *Die Tektonik der Hellenen*, 2 vols. (Potsdam: Ferdinand Riegel, 1844-1852).

Adler was also an accomplished archaeologist, working on excavations throughout the Mediterranean, many with his colleague and Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm's tutor, Ernst Curtius.³⁰² Curtius was deeply ensconced in the architectural debates of the time as well. He was the first to review Bötticher's *Tectonics of the Hellenes*, proclaiming that "it contained the key to a new perception of ancient art."³⁰³ Adler's extensive training in the favored style of the Hohenzollern kings and his close working relationship with Curtius most likely helped him secure the Jerusalem church project.³⁰⁴

Adler made a name for himself in Berlin, completing the Thomas Church in Berlin-Kreuzberg in 1869, a *Rundbogenstil* synthesis of classicism and medievalism. His research had also turned from the marble ruins of ancient Greece to the medieval brick architecture of his native Prussia.³⁰⁵ Since 1863, Adler taught as a full professor of architecture and the history of architecture at the *Bauakademie*. Until 1903 he was a colleague of Christoph Hehl's at the Charlottenburg *Technische Hochschule*.

Adler had drafted a design for the Church of the Redeemer after being sent to Jerusalem at the end of the Franco-Prussian war to examine the ruins at their intended building site, the Muristan.³⁰⁶ The Muristan was a small enclosed square in the Christian Quarter of the Old City with a long history of European Christian involvement. On October 25, 1871 Adler entered Jerusalem as part of Curtius' kaiser-sponsored research trip through Asia Minor and found the 50

³⁰² Ernst Curtius and Friedrich Adler, eds, *Olympia und Umgegend. 2 Karten und 1 Situationsplan, gezeichnet von Kauper und W. Dörpfeld* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1882); Ernst Curtius and Friedrich Adler, eds., *Olympia. Die Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen I-V* (Berlin: Wasmuth, 1890-1897).

³⁰³ Curtius, *Kunst-Blatt* 26 (1845): nos. 11-15, 46, quoted in Wolfgang Hermann, "Introduction" in *What Style Should We Build?: The German Debate on Architectural Style*, ed. and trans. Wolfgang Hermann (Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and Humanities, 1992), 33.

³⁰⁴ Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 207.

³⁰⁵ Adler, *Mittelalterliche Backsteinbauten des preussischen Staates*.

³⁰⁶ Jürgen Krüger, "William II's Perception of Sacrality," 92.

by 120 meter building site partially cleared.³⁰⁷ Because of the slow progress of the excavations on this area of the Muristan, Adler first submitted preparatory drawings in 1872, but did not finalize the design until 1874.³⁰⁸

As a prime piece of sacred real estate, the Muristan held the interests of other European imperial powers. Both the Russians and French maneuvered to have their own church built on the property that sat in the shadow of the Holy Sepulcher.³⁰⁹ The eastern half of the Muristan had initially been a present to then-Crownprince Friedrich Wilhelm, Wilhelm II's father and future Emperor Friedrich III, from Sultan Mehmed IV in 1869 during a visit to Jerusalem after attending the dedication of the Suez Canal. It had sat locked and vacant through the wars that eventually birthed the new German empire.³¹⁰ The site held historical significance for the Hohenzollerns, as it was the site of a medieval church and hospital of the German Order of St. John. The Church of St. Mary Latina was a three-aisled Latin cross basilica built between 1118 and 1159 by Raymond du Puy, Grand Master of the Order of St. John.³¹¹

The Order of St. John (*Johanniter*) had been one of the three great orders of knights whose principal task was to care for pilgrims and nurse the sick.³¹² When Christians were driven out after the siege of Jerusalem in 1187, Sultan Saladin's nephew turned the church into a type of recuperative facility, from which the present area receives its name "Muristan," from the Persian

³⁰⁷ Peter Lemburg, "Das Leben und Werk des gelehrten Berliner Architekten Friedrich Adler 1827-1908" (PhD diss., Freie Universität Berlin, 1989), 72.

³⁰⁸ Friedrich Adler, "Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 18 (1898): 374.

³⁰⁹ "Die Grundsteinlegung der evangelischen Kirche auf dem Muristan," *Orientpost*, 30 November 1893.

³¹⁰ The property remained in possession of the royal family until 1893, the year the cornerstone was laid for the Church of the Redeemer. At that point the Muristan transferred to the Protestant Jerusalem Foundation for permanent use. In 1921 full legal ownership was completed. See Hertzberg, 41.

³¹¹ Friedrich Adler, "Die Baukunst von Jerusalem," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 4, no. 5 (1884): 54.

³¹² Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 91.

word “bimaristan,” meaning “hospital” or “asylum.”³¹³ The reclaiming of the Muristan for a Christian institution was just as important to German imperial leaders and citizens back in Europe as the architectural style of the planned church. The reported later use of the property as a Halal butcher and barn by the newspaper *Neuste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande* in 1898 was meant to convey the poignancy of this Protestant building project and incite German Christian interest in Ottoman-controlled Jerusalem. “Not without intention the Muslims chose a former church close to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher as the unloading ground for such dirty things.”³¹⁴

Just as St. Mary Latina began to crumble in the modern era, the Order of St. John also sank into obsolescence until its revival by the Romantic king, Friedrich Wilhelm IV. With the final expulsion from Palestine in 1291, the Order retreated to Europe and changed their name to the Knights of Malta or the Knights of Rhodes. During the Reformation centuries, the Protestant branch in Brandenburg degraded into a decorative Prussian order and was eventually dissolved in 1810. With his penchant for medieval spirituality and heraldry, Friedrich Wilhelm IV restored the Order of St. John in 1852 as a charitable organization, returning to its original convalescent duties. Added to the medieval oath to care for the sick was the pledge to fight the enemies of the church and those who destroy religious and secular order. In Jerusalem this enemy was not the Muslim neighbors who ruled the territory. The Ottoman Sultan, Abdul Hamid II, was too important of a political ally for Friedrich Wilhelm IV’s great nephew Wilhelm II to risk his favor by demanding further rights for his small Christian settlements. The true enemy of the empire and their quest to assert a more dominant Prussian Protestant presence were the social democrats

³¹³ Hertzberg, 27.

³¹⁴ “Nicht ohne Absicht hatten die Muhammedaner gerade eine einstige Kirche und die Nähe der Grabeskirche zur Abladestelle solcher schmutzigen Dinge gewählt.” *Neuste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande* 42 (1898): 116.

at home. The choice of neo-Romanesque elements in the redesign of the Crusader church and the elaborate dedication ceremony were carefully transmitted messages via press reports and photographs, printed memoirs, and picturebooks for all citizens of the German empire to witness and experience the religious zeal and political prowess of the German imperial machine.

4.3 GERMAN PROTESTANTISM, NATIONALISM, AND THE RENOVATION OF THE CASTLE CHURCH IN WITTENBERG

On Reformation Day in 1893, precisely five years before the dedication of the Church of the Redeemer on Reformation Day, the cornerstone was ceremoniously laid. And exactly one year before laying the cornerstone, the renovation of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, the Ur-temple of Prussian Protestants, where Martin Luther had proclaimed his dissent from the Roman Church, was dedicated. In many ways, the renovation project at Wittenberg laid the theological and architectural foundations for the Church of the Redeemer. Similar to the Hohenzollern involvement in Jerusalem, royal interest in Wittenberg had spanned much of the nineteenth century, beginning with the Luther Memorial initiated by Friedrich Wilhelm III in 1817. His son's plans to renovate the church never materialized (only the portal doors were finished), but eventually in 1883, the Luther Year, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (the future Friedrich III) initiated a full-scale renovation of the church in commemoration of the four-hundredth anniversary of Luther's death.³¹⁵

³¹⁵ Martin Treu, "Reformation als Inszenierung – Die Neugestaltung der Schloßkirche zu Wittenberg 1885-1892," in *Das Melanchthonhaus Bretten: Ein Beispiel des Reformationsgedankens der Jahrhundertwende*, eds. Stefan Rhein and Gerhard Schwinge (Ubstadt-Weiner: Verlag Regionalkultur, 1997), 16-8; Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 192-5.

Similar to Oppler's New Synagogue and Hehl's Rosary Church, both the Wittenberg Castle Church and the Church of the Redeemer function as *Gesamtkunstwerke*, in which architecture, sculpture, mosaic and painting harmonize to represent a unified ideological statement. In these cases, the churches were not merely empty vessels to fill with the Prussian faithful, but rather they were imperial programs to display the Hohenzollern worldview. The most important architectural bond between the two projects is the directive role of Friedrich Adler. His designs at the Castle Church in Wittenberg serve as a bridge between the first design phase of the Church of the Redeemer in the early 1870s and the actual construction phase in Jerusalem during the 1890s. Martin Treu explains, "The simultaneous building time line of Wittenberg and Jerusalem and the identical construction supervisor should be considered anything except a coincidence. Because this resulted from a decidedly Prussian view, one undoubtedly may read the building and decorative program of the Wittenberg church as a domestic foundation for the foreign activities."³¹⁶

The original Wittenberg Castle Church was part of the palatial complex from the late fifteenth century in a late Gothic-early Renaissance style.³¹⁷ The building slowly fell into disrepair over the next centuries. It suffered a final catastrophe on October 13, 1760 when imperial troops destroyed both castle and church, including Luther's doors. As part of the Catholic Saxon kingdom, Wittenberg and Luther did not enter into public consciousness until Saxony joined Prussia in 1815. Attention to historical sites connected to Luther's life became part of rising German nationalism, culminating in the 1883 Luther Year. When renovation of the

³¹⁶ "Der zeitgleiche Bauablauf von Wittenberg zu dem in Jerusalem und die Personalunion des Baumeisters dürften nun alles andere als ein Zufall gewesen sein. Dass dies aus einer dezidiert preussischen Sicht geschah, lässt sich am Bau und Schmuckprogramm der Wittenberger Kirche als eines innenpolitischen Fundaments für die aussenpolitischen Strömungen deutlich ablesen." Treu, 25.

³¹⁷ Treu, 15-6.

Castle Church began two years later, Adler maintained the late Gothic formal vocabulary to reference the origins of the Reformation.³¹⁸

The corner tower of the old castle became the focal point of the exterior, rising twenty-two meters and topped with a simple cross. Kaiser Friedrich III had initially envisioned a German imperial crown adorning the tower, but no physical imperial crown existed for the Hohenzollern family. Thus, Friedrich's son and successor, Wilhelm II, reverted to a simple cross to represent his Protestant world view. A mosaic band displaying the title of Luther's most famous hymn, "a mighty fortress is our God" (*"ein fester Burg ist unser Gott"*) reinforced this notion of Protestant domination.³¹⁹

The decorative program on the interior introduced challenges to the Hohenzollern's Protestant ideology. The Reformation was not a solely German phenomenon. In the era of rising German imperialism, however, the question of including figures like Czech reformer Jan Hus or English leader John Wyclif divided the radical Lutheran (in favor of complete exclusion of non-German reformers) and extreme Union (upholding a pan-European program) supporters. The stakes were particularly high in Wittenberg not only because of the historical significance of the location, but also the intentions to build something more than a simple parish church - a memorial space dedicated to the leaders of the Reformation. Büxenstein names the Castle Church, "a Pantheon of German spiritual leaders" and a "sacred memorial site of the Reformation."³²⁰ In the end, the compromise between the two Protestant factions included bust medallions of Swiss reformers Ulrich Zwingli and John Calvin under the organ loft in the west

³¹⁸ Treu, 20.

³¹⁹ Krüger, "Deutsche evangelische Kirchen im Ausland," 97.

³²⁰ Büxenstein, 260.

end of the nave while portraits of German Reformation theologians and rulers adorned the main aisles.³²¹

By the dedication of the Castle Church of Wittenberg in 1892, the government had long since revoked all *Kulturkampf* legislation, but the memories of the aggressive legalistic persecution were still fresh. For the ceremony, the Catholic kings of Saxony and Bavaria were not amongst the Protestant princes seated in the newly designed neo-medieval choir stalls. When the invited monarchs spoke their declaration of faith and Protestant unity in the “Wittenberg Confession,” they activated the Wittenberg Castle Church as the physical manifestation of the *kleindeutsch* solution to the German national question which narrowly defined the German nation based on confession and region. Beyond Wittenberg, however, notions of German national expansionism and an all-inclusive notion of German nationality, reigned supreme. And it was this *grossdeutsch* approach which fueled the construction of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem.

4.4PLAIN AND SEVERE: THE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

With construction at Wittenberg completed in 1892, building supervisor Paul Ferdinand Groth (1859-1955) relocated with his family to Jerusalem to begin his duties in the Holy City in 1893, staying for five years until the dedication ceremony until 1898.³²² Although he made subsequent trips to Jerusalem, Adler stayed in Berlin to oversee orders for the interior fittings and furniture.

³²¹ Treu, 23-4.

³²² Adler, “Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem,” 374.

The festive cornerstone laying ceremony on October 31, 1898 commenced the construction in the presence of a multicultural assembly of secular and religious leaders – Adler, representatives of the ambassador from Constantinople, the German imperial consul from Jerusalem Paul von Tischendorf, the Anglican Bishop George Francis Popham Blyth, architect Conrad Schick, banker Johannes Frutiger, director of the Syrian orphanage Johann Ludwig Schneller, and president of the Jerusalem foundation Dr. Barkhausen.³²³

A number of challenges confronted Groth from the onset, including climate differences and the poorly developed urban infrastructure.³²⁴ Groth kept Adler continually abreast of construction developments on site, writing in November 30, 1896 about the difficult climate conditions, “The air has become somewhat cooler, the heat with the dry air was up until last week unbearable and we breathe a sigh of relief, that work gradually begins again at a slow pace, because we both [Palmer also] are almost at the end of our strength . . .”³²⁵ *Centralblatt der Bauverwaltung* placed the blame on the local Arab workers: “The building process created exceptional worries and difficulties for all involved, especially for the head building supervisor, who was obligated to finish as quickly as possible an unusually complicated structure from an oriental perspective with completely inexperienced and careless Arabs who tended towards idleness.”³²⁶ While the Germans had trained local craft workers in the specific skills needed for

³²³ Ejal Jakob Eisler, “Der Bau der Erlöserkirche 1893-1898,” in *Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land: Die Palästina-reise Wilhelms II. 1898*, eds. Alex Carmel and Ejal Jakob Eisler (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln: Kohlhammer, 1999), 44.

³²⁴ Adler, “Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem,” 374.

³²⁵ “Die Luft ist etwas frischer geworden, war die Hitze bis zur vorigen Woche unerträglich bei der trockenen Luft und wir athmen auf, dass nun allmählig im Betrieb ein langsames Tempo beginnt, denn wir sind beide [auch Palmer] fast mit unseren Kräften fertig geworden . . .” Letter from 30 November 1896 to Adler, Bestand 56, Akte C1, Bd. II, Evangelisches Zentralarchiv, Berlin (hereafter Evangelical Archive).

³²⁶ “Die Ausführung hat aussergewöhnliche Sorgen und Schwierigkeiten für alle Beteiligten bereitet, besonders für den leitenden Baumeister, dem es oblag, mit den gänzlich unerfahrenen und dabei leichtsinnigen und zur Trägheit neigenden Arabern einen für orientalische Verhältnisse selten complizirten Bau möglichst rasch fertigzustellen.” Adler, “Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem,” 386.

the masonry work, the German Templars living in Palestine also worked on the church and some finished pieces were imported from Germany along with shipments of building materials.³²⁷

The pejorative attitude towards Muslim Palestinians permeated publications outside of the field of architecture meant for a larger German public. Two illustrations from Pastor Ludwig Schneller's 1899 publication, *Die Kaiserfahrt durch's Heilige Land*, detailing the kaiser's trip through Palestine reveal the colonial attitude of the German towards the Muslim locals.³²⁸ In the first image, accompanied by the caption, "a load carrier heaves the mighty cross up the tower of the Church of the Redeemer, with a neighboring minaret in the background," a Muslim heaves the heavy stone cross on his back without the aid of modern equipment. He wears traditional garb and supports the weight on a wooden cane. The immensity of the Christian cross divides the picture plane and separates the figure from the minaret looming in the background, so to be superseded by a loyal follower as he raises the cross of the European outsider over his city. In the following image, the cross now stands on its perch on the church tower, conspicuous in its foreignness. The Muslims linger on the sides, standing proudly after completing the manual labor they performed for the new church. Only low-level housing and another church tower appear in the background, with no traces of Islamic architecture left in the cityscape. In a city where Palestinian Muslims and Ottoman Turks greatly outnumbered the small pockets of Christian Europeans this image of Jerusalem only existed in the German artistic rendering.

Adler did not translate his expertise in ancient and medieval history and his extensive archaeological training into straightforward recreations of the long delapidated churches in Wittenberg and Jerusalem. Describing his work at the castle church in the *Zentralblatt für Bauwesen*, Adler asserted the church was, "no directed effort to imitate slavishly the destroyed

³²⁷ Bestand 56 Baubelege, Akte 56/85/5, 85/6, 85/7, 85/8, Evangelical Archive.

³²⁸ Schneller, *Die Kaiserfahrt durch's Heilige Land*.

complex based on antiquarian erudition, but rather a goal-oriented beautiful artistic creation in the confines of piety,” despite the fact that Wilhelm I originally called for the church to remain true to its original form and for as many surviving building fragments to be used as possible.³²⁹

The Muristan, while it held the remains of the dilapidated structure to be revived, also proved a unique situation, as Adler served as both archaeologist conducting extensive on-site investigations and also architect designing a new building. Adler concluded the original church’s style stemmed more from French and Auvergnatine influences, which was problematic in the imperial agenda of the kaiser.³³⁰ Therefore, his end result was not a recreation of St. Mary Latina which had once stood at the site. Instead, he fashioned a composite of elements from the former Crusader church, other European Crusader churches in Jerusalem, and contemporary neo-Romanesque churches in Germany to execute a building that embodies the complex cultural and political nature of its location.

One important source for Adler was Melchior de Vogüé’s *Les Églises de la Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1860).³³¹ Part government attaché and part historian-archaeologist, de Vogüé compiled a catalog of early Christian and medieval churches, pilgrim hospitals and boarding houses in Jerusalem and the surrounding area complete with plans, elevations and detail illustrations to scale. The French government later sponsored research trips for de Vogüé to Syria and Lebanon in 1861 to study early Christian monuments.³³² His publications *Temple de Jerusalem* (1864-5)

³²⁹ “keine auf antiquarische Gelehrsamkeit oder gar sklavische Wiederholung der . . . zerstörten Anlagen gerichtete Bemühungen zu erstreben sei, sondern eine zielbewusste, künstlerische schöne Herstellung im Rahmen Pietät.” Friedrich Adler, *Zentralblatt für Bauwesen* (1883), quoted in Treu, 20.

³³⁰ “Jerusalem, den 14.Juli.1886,” *Orientposten* 5 August 1886.

³³¹ Heinrich Budde and Andreas Nachama, eds., *Die Reise nach Jerusalem: Eine kulturhistorische Exkursion in die Stadt der Städte, 3000 Jahre Davidsstadt*, Ex. Cat. (Berlin: Jüdische Gemeinde zu Berlin, 1996), 318.

³³² Crinson, 88-9, 92.

and *Syrie centrale* (1865-77) developed from this research, establishing cultural analysis of potential colonial territory.³³³

De Vogüé's work introduced St. Mary Latina to a wider European audience and allowed Adler to work from reliable drawings of the building from Berlin. In the end, however, Adler was only able to use one major element from St. Mary Latina in his new design – the north portal, displaying archivolt reliefs of the twelve calendar months.³³⁴ The west front and the entire superstructure were new constructions, using a type of local limestone, *missi*. Being thick and weather durable, this limestone had been the main material for monumental building in Jerusalem.³³⁵

As Büxenstein described, the building was, “plain, severe, without pomp, of a true Protestant character.”³³⁶ Like the castle church in Wittenberg, the Church of the Redeemer did not need to function as a large parish church serving a diverse congregation. The interior outfitting is sparse as Büxenstein asserts and the only traces of neo-Romanesque are the rounded eastern apses and the groin vault of the main aisle. The entire project cost slightly over one million marks, compared to over six million marks for the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin.³³⁷

The north portal of the Church of the Redeemer, used as the main entrance, opens on to a shortened three-aisle nave with seating under the center three bays. Simple compound piers separate the narrow side aisles. The half round apses complete the eastern end of the interior,

³³³ *Le Temple de Jerusalem: monographie du Haram-ech-Chérif, suivie d'un essai sur la topographie de la Ville-sainte*. (Paris: Noblet & Baudry, 1864) and *Syrie centrale: architecture civile et religieuse du I^{er} au VII^e siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris: J. Baudry, 1865-1877).

³³⁴ Adler, “Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem,” 386.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*

³³⁶ “Schlicht, streng, prunklos, von echt evangelischen Charakter.” Büxenstein, 260.

³³⁷ Bestand 56/223, Evangelical Archive. 775,000 Marks as of August 9, 1895, costs for the pre and side work- over 100,000 Marks, costs for the niche- 152,000 Marks.

holding the organ in the northeast niche and a small baptismal font in the southwest corner. The pulpit is pushed forward into the crossing closer to the congregation. The only adornments on the pulpit are the slender columns supporting the platform which mimic the Romanesque colonette on the compound piers. The central half round apse displays the only surface decoration in the interior – painted geometric motifs encircling a medallion portrait of Christ in mosaic, reminiscent of the Lateran Basilica.

In 1898, the congregation only included 302 members, 286 of whom were members of the Templar society.³³⁸ Indeed, most Germans knew the Church of the Redeemer through its two-dimensional representations in the contemporary press. Since its main function was symbolic, the nave did not need to accommodate large crowds and Adler could use a small hall church format.

One of the most important changes was the church's dedication – from the Virgin to Christ. While excavating for the foundations of the church, a huge wall was unearthed. Scholars believed the wall was the former city wall, therefore confirming the proper identification of Golgotha, which had to have been outside of the Jerusalem city walls at the time of Jesus.³³⁹ During the laying of the cornerstone on Reformation Day in 1893, clergy and officials treated the ancient wall as a sacred relic and linked the new church to the life of Christ and no longer with the history of the Order of St. John. Thus, the patron saint transformed from the Virgin Mother to her son, the Redeemer of the World. The document sealed in the cornerstone emphasized this relationship between German Protestantism, the rising interest in the actual life of Jesus as a historical figure and not merely as a deity, and the site of the Church of the Redeemer, describing the church as, “a memorial to the belief in the Redeemer, the son of God, made human, crucified

³³⁸ Budde and Nachama, 319.

³³⁹ Krüger, “William II's Perception of Sacrality,” 93.

and rose again, . . . as a visible testament to the spiritual community, in which the Protestant church of Germany and beyond are bound to each other.”³⁴⁰

The showcase of the church design was the 45-meter bell tower, whose design contemporary reports attributed to the kaiser himself, although the kaiser’s handwritten signature can be more likely explained as a mark of approval, due to his careful surveillance of the project. Nevertheless, in *Der Kaiser und die Kunst*, Hohenzollern insider Paul Seidel relayed an imperial journey to Tivoli in 1893, during which the kaiser discovered a rustic Romanesque tower, which he had photographed and upon return to Germany drew a version of that massive church tower for his own Church of the Redeemer.³⁴¹ Contemporary press and Adler himself drew sharp distinction between the slim minarets of Jerusalem and the church tower’s massive, imposing presence.³⁴² The dominating visual character of the bulky Romanesque masonry seemed to imply for the journalists and architect a durability and strength the elegant minarets failed to convey.

Wilhelm II also drew a connection between the early medieval round arches and the architectural achievement of Constantine, his role model in the Middle East. Just as Constantine built three churches in Jerusalem (Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem begun by Helena, Church of Eleona- Mount of Olives, also begun by Helena), the kaiser envisioned the Church of the Redeemer as a part of a larger building program to commemorate the same locations – the sites of Christ’s birth, crucifixion, and burial. From Wilhelm’s architectural commissions, which emphasized the same round arches and expansive

³⁴⁰ “ein Denkmal des Glaubens an den menschengewordenen Gottessohn, den gekreuzigten und auferstehenden Heiland, . . . als ein sichtbares Zeugnis der Glaubensgemeinschaft, in welcher die evangelischen Kirchen in Deutschland und darüber hinaus miteinander verbunden sind.” *Neuste Nachrichten aus dem Morgenlande* 42, 4 (1898): 116-7.

³⁴¹ Seidel, 83.

³⁴² Adler, “Die evangelische Erlöser-Kirche in Jerusalem,” 386.

basilican interiors as Constantine's churches, to his conceptualization of his rule as a Constantinian defender of the (Protestant) faith, Constantine's figure loomed over the architectural, theological, and imperial projects of the kaiser in the Holy Land. Although Wilhelm claimed a distinction between the church and politics, his chosen role as *summus episcopus* led to a blending of religious and imperial aims that cannot be disentangled in a place like the Church of the Redeemer. Büxenstein explains, "as much as thoughts of tolerance for all confessions and the first volition for the protection of the practice of faith permeates Wilhelm II, he also possesses a clear awareness of the Protestant concept of 'sola fide,' 'from faith alone,' as well as the mission and the cultural duties of the Protestant church."³⁴³

Physical remnants in Wilhelm's churches both in Jerusalem and Germany bear witness to this ideological maneuver. The mosaic medallion of Christ in the central eastern apse presides over the interior of the Church of the Redeemer. It is a specific reference to the apse mosaic of Christ in the Lateran Basilica in Rome, a church constructed during Constantine's reign and also originally dedicated to Christ as Redeemer.³⁴⁴ In the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin, the connection is not directly to Constantine, but in the mosaic design Wilhelm II wears the black coat with an ermine fur trim of the medieval Crusader Order, the Hospitallers.³⁴⁵

³⁴³ "so sehr Wilhelm II von dem Gedanken der Toleranz gegen alle Bekenntnisse und dem ernsten Willen, sie bei der Ausübung ihres Glaubens zu schützen, durchdrungen ist, so besitzt er doch andererseits eine klare Erkenntnis von dem Sinn des evangelischen „Sola fide“ „Allein aus dem Glauben“ wie von der Mission und den kulturaufgaben der evangelischen Kirche." Büxenstein, 259-60.

³⁴⁴ Krüger, "William II's Perception of Sacrality," 94.

³⁴⁵ Edina Meyer-Maril, "Der 'friedlich Kreuzritter' Kaiser Wilhelm II. Die Kreuzfahrrezeption in der deutschen Kunst des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Geschichte und bildende Kunst, Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* 34 (2006), 77.

4.5A GERMAN CRUSADER IN JERUSALEM: KAISER WILHELM II TOURS PALESTINE AND ATTENDS THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

On his month-long tour of the Ottoman Empire in the fall of 1898, culminating in the dedication ceremony of the Church of the Redeemer, the kaiser enacted his role as the Protestant Constantine for an international audience. He traveled with 200 official guests, with hundreds of tourists and pilgrims following as part of planned accompanying trips organized by travel agencies.³⁴⁶ This modern-day pilgrimage retraced the medieval pilgrimage routes between Europe and the Holy Land, but now using the luxuries of mechanized travel. Between the 1830s and the late 1890s, Jerusalem's population had tripled and European tourists could arrive easily by train from Jaffa, using their Cooks and Baedeker guidebooks as reference.³⁴⁷ Just as the medieval pilgrimages were not without political agendas or economic influence, the kaiser's journey was equally complicated. Criticism garnered from the European powers presenting the trip as merely a thinly veiled move to secure allies and business prospects in the Ottoman Empire indicate again how muddled the line between German Protestantism and Wilhelmine imperialism became at the Church of the Redeemer. The significance of this well-publicized journey in the German Empire, the rest of Europe, and the Ottoman Empire cannot be overestimated, all the more since the kaiser was the only reigning ruler of Europe to travel to Palestine.³⁴⁸ And Germans could not overlook the nationalist importance of the journey. They had waited 670 years for their ruler to enter the Holy Land. The last German emperor to touch ground in

³⁴⁶ Alex Carmel, "Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land – Legende und Wirklichkeit," in *Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land: Die Palästina-reise Wilhelms II. 1898*, eds. Alex Carmel and Ejal Jakob Eisler (Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne: Kohlhammer, 1999), 59.

³⁴⁷ Crinson, 219.

³⁴⁸ Krüger, "William II's Perception of Sacrality," 90.

Palestine was Hohenstaufen Emperor Friedrich II (1194-1250) when he landed in Akko as a Christian warrior during a Crusader campaign in 1228. Now Wilhelm II returned as a Crusader on a different mission.

The cover of Schneller's widely read publication on the imperial trip, *Die Kaiserfahrt durch's Heilige Land*, implements visual vocabulary to identify Kaiser Wilhelm II as a modern Crusader. Black and white bust portraits of the kaiser and his wife hover over an illustration of the newly dedicated Church of the Redeemer. Immediately above the idealized rendering of the church, removed from the cramped confines of the Muristan, a Palestinian landscape opens underneath a stone arch. The structure in the center of the barren landscape resembles the Dome of the Rock on Temple Mount in Jerusalem with its golden dome and hexagonal plan, but like the church it, too, is removed from its more complex setting and brought into a bucolic wilderness. In the far right corner a minaret, the same one that appears in the publication's illustration of a Muslim worker carrying the cross up the church tower, recedes into the shadows created by the brightly illuminated cross radiating from the top of the plane. The cross, with the German imperial eagle on the left side and the cross of the Knightly Order of the Holy Sepulcher hanging on the stone wall on the right, create a triangular arrangement of symbols that announces overtly the religious imperial quest to Germans at home who purchased this book as a memoir. The Knightly Order of the Holy Sepulcher, like all other knightly orders, has its roots in the Crusades when it served as both a religious and military institution serving the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and ensuring the safety of European pilgrims. Similar to the Order of St. John, the Knightly Order received new life in the nineteenth century after the Latin Patriarchate was restored in Jerusalem in 1847 and Pope Pius IX restored to the Order to an official papal knightly order in 1868. Thus, the particular cross would have been familiar to a larger German public a

few decades later in the midst of the revival of Crusader politics and cultural imagery by Wilhelm II.

The pomp and press aside, the kaiser's most important goals for his journey were the advancement of his ecclesiastic policies which overlapped with his imperial vision only in terms of establishing Protestant supremacy in the Holy Land and reinforcing strong ties with the sultan. Unlike Qingdao where the German Empire wanted foremost to establish a naval base or Namibia where Germans established a true colony, interest in Palestine had more to do with Wilhelm II honoring his family's longtime interest in the region, his architectural agenda, and his self-formulation as a Constantine reborn. However, the atmosphere of aggressive European colonization was never entirely divorced from Wilhelm's interest in the area. One report in particular used politically-charged language to state the desire for a strong Protestant presence in Jerusalem and the role of the dedication of the Church of the Redeemer in this plan. "One cannot overestimate the importance of this day; . . . But the dedication of the Church of the Redeemer . . . will teach the Roman and Greek Catholics and the Turks, that the Gospels are a power, which one has to respect. The most powerful ruler of Europe is a Protestant Christian."³⁴⁹

The kaiser's first stop was at the court of Sultan Abdul Hamid II (1842-1918) in Constantinople where he received a warm reception. His brief appearance in Constantinople was only a precursor, however, to the intensive tour trips, receptions and speaking engagements in Palestine. Yet his meeting with the sultan was a critical opportunity to establish his position as not only German emperor but also Protestant Church head. As Krüger explains, "When he was

³⁴⁹ "Man darf gewiss die Bedeutung dieses Tages nicht überschätzen; . . . Aber die Einweihung der Erlöserkirche . . . wird den römischen und griechischen Katholiken und den Türken dortzulande lehren, dass das Evangelium eine Macht ist, die man respektieren muss. Der mächtigste Fürst Europas ist ein evangelischer Christ." "Die evangelische Erlöserkirche in Jerusalem," *Sächsischen Gustav-Adolf Boten* 9, no. 4 (1898).

greeting the Sultan he was greeting the caliph of 300 million Muslims, thus the Sultan Abdul Hami II was simultaneously the secular sovereign and the *summus episcopus*, the same roles as Wilhelm II, both heirs of the old Roman and medieval emperors.”³⁵⁰

After landing in Haifa in Palestine on October 25, the kaiser spent the majority of his stay, an entire week from October 28 to November 4, in Jerusalem. Despite his purported intense spirituality the kaiser soon tired of the endless receptions and tours with major religious leaders at the various denominational shrines at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other Christian sites. Mirbach described the atmosphere, “The emperor and empress, closely surrounded by 200 people, went from chapel to chapel . . . therefore, the entire impression could be neither uplifting nor captivating. One felt much more oppressed, sad, and . . . was finally at peace once one exited . . . the Church [of the Holy Sepulchre] into the open air.”³⁵¹

The dedication of the Church of the Redeemer on October 31, however, erased the drudgery of official visits in a celebratory display of German pomp and Protestant religiosity. Months of renovations and repairs preceded the celebrations as a way to showcase modernization attempts to the prominent European visitors. Engineers from Constantinople came to Palestine to improve the roads from the kaiser’s port of entry at Jaffa to Jerusalem (and further on to Jericho) as well as the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, another stop on the kaiser’s itinerary.³⁵² Engineers also constructed the first drivable road up the Mount of Olives, the future site of the Empress Auguste Viktoria Foundation. The German Empire had contributed 40,000

³⁵⁰ Krüger, “William II’s Perception of Sacrality,” 95.

³⁵¹ “Kaiser und Kaiserin von etwa 200 Menschen dicht umdrängt, von einer Kapelle zu der anderen . . . Der Gesamteindruck konnte daher weder erhebend noch ergreifend sein. Man fühlte sich vielmehr bedrückt, traurig und . . . war erst zufrieden, als man aus . . . der [Grabes]kirche wieder hinaus ins Freie trat.” Mirbach, *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar*, 112 and 199.

³⁵² “Jerusalem, den 16. Juli. 1898,” *Orientpost*, 11 August 1898.

francs to road repairs and to widen the narrow alleys around the Church of the Redeemer.³⁵³ The kaiser led the official procession to the church through the Jaffa Gate, riding on horseback in the uniform of the Garde du Corps (the royal bodyguards).

Ottoman plans to dismantle the gate to allow for traffic relief and for the kaiser to enter on horseback met both criticism abroad and from the kaiser himself, who wrote a few days after learning of these plans in early October, “This should be prevented. I do not hope that such barbarism will actually be carried out.”³⁵⁴ His ambassador, Marshall von Bieberstein, had reported that despite his efforts to the contrary, a small wall next to the gate had been demolished; however, authorities had been planning this measure before knowledge of the kaiser’s state visit.³⁵⁵ The emperor then proceeded down the freshly paved Jaffa Street, transformed into a Via Triumphalis with a series of flags and victory arches. Two arches erected by city officials stylistically demonstrated the cultural encounter this visit represented: one arch was flanked by two minaret-like towers and the other was a Romanesque arch adorned with pilgrimage badges and Crusader imagery.³⁵⁶ The Roman triumphal arch and Romanesque architectural arch become fused in this hybrid temporary structure meant to glorify the kaiser. Finally, the procession turned down Crown Prince Friedrich Street, newly constructed to lead directly to the western façade of the church.

In front of the Church of the Redeemer, the street was filled with flags of the German empire and garlands, framing the dominant outline of the church. Screens along the church side of the narrow street hid the piles of rubble (from the dismantled chapterhouse of the Order of St.

³⁵³ “Jerusalem, den 20. August. 1889,” *Orientpost* 12 September 1889.

³⁵⁴ “Das soll inhiert werden; ich hoffe nicht, dass eine solche Barbarei wirklich gemacht wird.” PAAA Preußen (Personal), Akte 1/4v, Bd. 4, quoted in Carmel, “Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land,” 51.

³⁵⁵ Budde and Nachama, 316.

³⁵⁶ “Die Kaisertage in Palästina (Fortsetzung III),” *Orientpost* 22 December 1898.

John) and dilapidated building foundations from the procession, but they are clearly visible in the photographs. And despite the festive decorations and parade of official guests in the street, the city appears empty and quiet with a few isolated onlookers standing on piles of rubble and building roofs. Before the kaiser's visit, Egyptian officials heard of an anarchist assassination plot on the kaiser and immediately instructed residents of their district (including Palestine) to stay out of Jerusalem.³⁵⁷ Jerusalem residents were ordered to stay in their homes and not to view the festivities from their windows or roofs, creating the empty city views captured during the kaiser's visit. German newspapers did make a point to mention the variety of nationalities represented at the festivities, giving the illusion to Germans back in Europe of an international welcome of the German Protestant church in Jerusalem. Yet the German press was not interested in giving voice to the local population of Muslims who shared their city with the Europeans. Instead, Germans and their partners in the Ottoman government sought a sanitized presentation of the kaiser's visit to Jerusalem with no room for Muslim participation.

In the church, a solemn string of speeches was given by Protestant leaders from Germany and German clergy in Palestine, the pastors in Bethlehem at the Church of the Nativity, and the provost and pastor in Jerusalem, culminating in the kaiser's own brief oration. Mirbach did not dwell on the nationalist/imperialist implications in the festive opening of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem. Instead, his description of the service conjures an expression of sincere and glorious spirituality,

An assembly, which deeply touches the heart . . . an image, so colorful, so radiant and impressive since ever there has been a Protestant church presented in a house of God. The kaiser stepped to

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

the altar and said, 'For what my ancestors, resting in peace, have longed for more than a half century and for what they have strived as promoters and protectors of Protestant works of love, it has found its fulfillment in the construction and the dedication of the Church of the Redeemer.'"³⁵⁸

Neither the kaiser, who spoke more of his family connections to the Holy Land, nor his clerical representatives, who saw the church as more of a triumph for global Protestantism than for the Kaiserreich, nor the overt link to Constantine presented a very specific image of the German nation in the ceremony. However, this vagueness has more to do with the delicate relationship between the German and Ottoman empires, as the Germans did not want to upset their business dealings with the Turks by inciting religious strife in this heavily charged city.

Other smaller commemorative works created for the dedication of the Church of the Redeemer propagated the message of German imperialism more strongly, as they were meant as keepsakes for German citizens. A commemorative coin minted to honor the occasion shows a double portrait in profile of the kaiser and his wife on the obverse, or front, of the coin with the legend (inscription along the outer edge), "Memorial coin in remembrance of the Palestinian Journey of the German Imperial Couple." The reverse or back of the coin shows an image of the Church of the Redeemer surrounded by the legend, "As a remembrance of the Protestant Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem, Reformation Festival 1898." The iconography of the coin stems

³⁵⁸ "Vor eine bis ins innerste Herz bewegte Versammlung . . . Ein Bild, so farbenprächtig, so glänzend und eindrucksvoll, wie es wohl noch niemals, seit es eine evangelische Kirche gibt, in einem Gottshause sich dargeboten hat schritt der Kaiser zum Altar und sprach, 'Was meine in oft ruhenden Vorfahren seit mehr als einem halben Jahrhundert ersehnt und als Förderer und Beschützer der hier im evangelischen Sinne gegründeten Liebeswerk erstrebt haben, das hat durch die erbauung und [jetzige] Einweihung der Erlöserkirche Erfüllung gefunden.'" Mirbach, *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar*, 240 and 248.

from the long tradition of imperial portraiture on coins of the Roman Empire.³⁵⁹ By reproducing his portrait on these coins, Wilhelm II recalls the custom of Roman emperors, including his idol Constantine, secular ruler and religious leader. Unlike Constantine and other emperors of antiquity, Wilhelm is adorned neither with regal symbols like the orb or scepter nor military garb, but shown alongside his wife. This egalitarian presentation suggests the active role she played in the Protestant Building Association and her constant presence throughout the imperial journey through the Holy Land. Another precursor for the commemoration of the erection of a church is the 1506 medallion designed by Christoforo Foppa Caradossa to commemorate Bramante's design for the rebuilding of St. Peter's Basilica.³⁶⁰ Bramante's grandiose dome over the church, meant to emulate the Pantheon, dominates the medallion.³⁶¹

A smaller piece of memorabilia, a commemorative medal designed by Otto Rohloff for the church dedication, is a small bronze piece with Wilhelm II in his Garde du Corps uniform on the front and an image of the church on the back.³⁶² The entire length of the church is rendered atop the branches of a small tree, perhaps to assert the presence of a Protestant church on the Muristan in the middle of Jerusalem is a natural organic development. The sapling grows from a broken column lying on the ground, a reference to the rebirth of the Church of the Redeemer from the ruins of Maria Latina. In the upper corners the Chi Rho and the cross of the Knightly Order of the Holy Sepulcher hover over the church. Islamic-inspired architectural elements and leafy ornamentation frame the image and enunciate the foreign surroundings of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem.

³⁵⁹ For the history of ancient coins, see Carol L. Lawton, ed., *Bearers of Meaning: The Otilia Buerger Collection of Ancient and Byzantine Coins at Lawrence University* (Appleton, WI: Lawrence University Press, 1995).

³⁶⁰ For more on Bramante, see R.A. Scotti, *Basilica, The Scandal and the Splendor: Building St. Peter's* (New York: Viking, 2006).

³⁶¹ This version of St. Peter's was never completed; Bramante died in 1516 and his replacement, Michelangelo, made major modifications.

³⁶² Budde and Nachama, 317-8.

Another piece commissioned to celebrate the dedication of the church was a Bible the small congregation gave to the kaiser to remember his connection to the Jerusalem community.³⁶³ The carved cover shows the church in a quatrefoil opening capped with the German imperial crown. The imperial eagle and Hohenzollern coat of arms rest on palm branches in the corners, joining dynastic, imperial and religious history in one image.

4.6 INTER-GERMAN DIPLOMACY: THE KAISER, GERMAN JEWS AND CATHOLICS IN THE HOLY LAND

Although the kaiser retained a steadfast focus on Protestant ascendancy in the cultural projects in Jerusalem, he did not neglect the other major religious groups of his empire in Palestine. German Catholics had long sought land in the city to build their own representative center. All Catholics in the Ottoman Empire were under the French protectorate; however, France, already wary of German involvement in their realm of cultural influence provided no help. On the afternoon of the thirty-first after the ceremony finished at the Church of the Redeemer, the kaiser traveled to Mount Zion to announce before the Catholic German Association of the Holy Land (*Deutscher Verein vom Heiligen Lande*) his bequeathal of land on the site to build a church. The sultan had initially made the transaction possible, first purchasing the territory in question from the Waqf family and then allowing ownership to transfer to the kaiser for 100,000 marks. The kaiser proclaimed, “in order to speak forever more, that my Catholic subjects, where and when they should ever need something, can be secure in the imperial protection.”³⁶⁴

³⁶³ Ibid.

³⁶⁴ Mirbach, *Das deutsche Kaiserpaar*, 90.

Cologne Diocese building supervisor Heinrich Renard realized these plans in 1910 with the completion of the Dormition Church, a neo-Romanesque church with a hulking central dome and slender towers not dissimilar from Adler's earlier Protestant church.³⁶⁵ The central plan Romanesque churches of St. Gereon and St. Mary of the Apostles in Cologne must have provided the inspiration for the Dormition's form and the local limestone helps insert it into its Middle Eastern context. The Dormition Church completed the impressive German architectural ensemble, which also included Renard's St. Paul's Hospital at the Damascus Gate. Here on the international stage, national pride trumps the German confessional divide, as evidenced by the 1910 *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* article: "In the focal point of Jerusalem, where the different ethnicities and religions meet, the German Volk is represented in a most exceptional way by the awe-inspiring buildings of the Church of the Redeemer, the [Dormition] St. Mary's Church, the powerful St. Paul's Hospital also built by Renard and the new Auguste-Viktoria Foundation on the Mount of Olives, especially the buildings of other nations also do not reach the architectural value of these four German buildings."³⁶⁶

German Jews also attempted to capitalize on the kaiser's historic journey, not in territorial acquisition but in the establishment of a Jewish autonomous region under the umbrella of German imperial protection. Jews in Palestine suffered under Turkish rule and Zionists viewed Wilhelm's involvement in the area as a welcome potential for change. On Jaffa Street in

³⁶⁵ See: Edina Meyer, "Die Dormition auf dem Berge Zion in Jerusalem, eine Denkmalskirche Kaiser Wilhelm II. im Heiligen Lande," *Architektura* (1984): 149-170; Edina Meyer-Maril, "Der 'friedliche Kreuzritter' Kaiser Wilhelm II"; "Marienkirche und Kloster auf dem Zion in Jerusalem," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 30, no. 23 (1910): 153-8, 169-71.

³⁶⁶ "In dem Brennpunkt Jerusalems, wo die verschiedenen Rassen und Bekenntnisse zusammentreffen, ist das deutsche Volk durch die achtunggebietenden Bauten der Erlöserkirche, der Marienkirche, dem mächtigen, ebenfalls, von dem Architekten Renard erbauten St. Paulushospiz und die neue Auguste-Viktoria-Stiftung auf dem Ölberg in hervorragend würdiger Weise vertreten, zumal die Bauten der anderen Völker auch nicht annähernd architektonisch so wertvoll sind, wie die genannten vier deutschen Bauten." "Marienkirche und Kloster auf dem Zion in Jerusalem," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung*, 30, no. 23 (1910): 170.

Jerusalem, Jews built the kaiser a triumphal arch to welcome him to the city. Simple double columns supported a large round arch and German and Ottoman flags sprouted from the top. A German translation running the edge of the top of arch accompanied the Hebrew inscription from Psalms 118, verse 26: “Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Jehovah. We have blessed you out of the house of Jehovah.”

After promising correspondence and meetings with Ambassador Count Phillip von Eulenberg and Defense Minister Karl von Bülow, Zionist leader Theodor Herzl traveled to Palestine to meet the kaiser himself in front of the Jewish agricultural school Mikve Israel on November 2, 1898, seventeen years to the day before the Balfour Declaration.³⁶⁷ The photographer missed the initial meeting between the two leaders. In the original photograph the kaiser is off to the right side of the plane and only a small sliver of Herzl’s left hand and leg are seen. After the photographer shot Herzl alone at a later date and different location, he then spliced the two images together to recreate the historic encounter.³⁶⁸

In his gray colonial uniform and veiled helmet, the kaiser heard Herzl’s argument for a Jewish colony as a place of sanctuary for the destitute Jewish proletariat in Central Europe. And despite the letter to his uncle Friedrich I, the Duke of Baden, from September 29, 1898 worrying, “Nine-tenths of all Germans would avoid me with disgust, if they later found out, that I sympathized with the Zionists or even gave them my protection . . .,” the kaiser held his relationship with Jewish colony to a vague statement of lukewarm support.³⁶⁹ Ultimately, his

³⁶⁷ The 1917 Balfour Declaration was a deliberately ambiguous letter from the British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur Balfour to Baron Rothschild, who was seen as a representative of the Jewish people. The statement declared a national Jewish home in Palestine, but conceded no rights of the non-Jewish inhabitants of the area and left the territory with no clear legal status. The following discussion of the Kaiser’s meeting with Herzl stem from Budde and Nachama, 323-31.

³⁶⁸ Budde and Nachama, 328.

³⁶⁹ “neun-Zehntel aller deutschen [sic] mit Entsetzen mich meiden werden, wenn sie in späterer Zeit erfahren sollten, dass ich mit den Zionisten sympathisiere oder [sic] gar unter meinem Schutz stellen würde . . .” GLA Rep Bd. IV/9,

strong relations with the Sultan trumped any desire to rid Germany of left-wing Zionists and clear overcrowded Jewish working class neighborhoods in German cities.

4.7 THE CONTINUED PRESENCE AND LEGACY OF KAISER WILHELM II IN PALESTINE

Kaiser Wilhelm II was the only European ruler in the nineteenth century to visit Jerusalem during his reign. And his self-crafted image as peaceful crusader in Jerusalem did not end with the Church of the Redeemer. This church was merely one piece of a larger building program to construct churches at the site of Jesus' birth, death and resurrection as Constantine had done centuries before. August Orth's Church of the Nativity (1889-1893) mirrored the original Constantinian basilica in Bethlehem. The Hohenzollerns went to great lengths to acquire the Muristan, in the shadow of Constantine's successor Church of the Holy Sepulchre, to build the Church of the Redeemer. Finally, the Church of the Ascension (1907-1910) constructed as part of the larger Empress Auguste-Viktoria Foundation on the Mount of Olives outside the city walls marks the same location as the Eleona Basilica commissioned by Constantine's mother Helena.

Exactly twenty-four years after the visit of Crownprince Friedrich Wilhelm in Bethlehem, Prussian officials (no member of the imperial family participated) dedicated the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem on November 6, 1893. Ceremoniously opening the church dedicated to

Wilhelm II. an Friedrich I., Großherzog von Baden, von 29. September 1898, quoted in Carmel, "Der Kaiser reist ins Heilige Land," 51. Scholars have long debated the kaiser's relation with the Jews and anti-Semitism. See W. E. Mosse, "Wilhelm II and the Kaiserjuden: A Problematic Encounter," in *The Jewish Response to German Culture: From the Enlightenment to the Second World War*, eds. Jehuda Reimhamz and Walter Schatzberg (Hannover and London: University Press of New England, 1985), 164-94; John Roehl, *Kaiser, Hof und Staat. Wilhelm II. und die deutsche Politik* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1987).

the Savior's birth mere days after laying the cornerstone of the Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem initiated the Church of the Nativity into the canon of German Protestant temples. Architect August Orth designed the Church of the Nativity with the same round-arched, brick style dominant in his and others' works in his native Berlin.³⁷⁰

The Church of the Ascension, centerpiece of the hulking neo-Romanesque Empress Auguste-Viktoria Foundation high atop the Mount of Olives, was completed in 1910 by Robert Leibnitz and included visual cues setting Wilhelm II's place in the German imperial pantheon. The bronze statue of the kaiser stands in the garb of a Crusader in the foyer, accompanied by his wife in the guise of church patron and follower of St. Elisabeth, a reference to the famous Gothic statues of Uta and Ekkehard from Naumburg cathedral.³⁷¹ In the narthex bay, the four Crusader kings appear: Gottfried of Bouillon, Balduin I and II and Fulko. In the central ceiling panel of the neo-Romanesque basilican church, Wilhelm sits enthroned, surrounded by the Crusader rulers who came before him, including Barbarossa and Friedrich II, the last kaiser to reach Jerusalem, signaling himself as the heir to the Hohenstaufen legacy.³⁷²

Wilhelm II's attempt to promote both Protestantism and German imperialism via the architectural language of the neo-Romanesque style did not lose its potency to an international audience even decades later. During World War II a British reporter in Jerusalem considered the bulky rounded arches of Wilhelm's neo-Romanesque projects as the paramount sign of Germany's destructive imperial aims and employed his critique of these churches' style, long since trumped by the sleek industrial modernism of the international avant-garde, as an attack on Germany itself. Speaking about the Auguste-Viktoria Foundation, the reporter wrote, "In a

³⁷⁰ See Eva Borsch-Supan, *Berliner Baukunst nach Schiken: 1840-1870* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1977).

³⁷¹ Meyer-Maril, "Der 'friedliche Kreuzritter' Kaiser Wilhelm II," 83.

³⁷² Krüger, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 108.

country so rich in noble ruins it was a positive achievement to put up so miserable an imitation. . . . no one had left so striking a memorial to himself in Jerusalem as he did. . . . No one will blame Wilhelm for his alliance with the Turks. Lord Palmerston, too, was their sincere friend. But it is hard to imagine Lord Palmerston allowing posterity to admire him in the chain armour and shield of a Crusader.”³⁷³

As we have seen, however, the image of the German kaiser as the modern Crusader erecting neo-Romanesque religious institutions in the name of nationalism and imperialism is only one facet of medievalist architecture of the period. Jewish and Catholic congregations realized the potential for nationalist associations in the neo-Romanesque style, but they also broadened the spectrum of possibility to include regional histories and the expression of minority distinctiveness via their neo-Romanesque synagogues and churches. The use and manipulation of neo-Romanesque forms and imagery persisted after World War I by artists and architects across the entire spectrum of religious identity, as the three major religions resituated themselves in the rapidly changing political landscape of the Weimar Republic. The British journalist’s observations from 1941, at the height of Nazi Germany’s expansionist reach, do reveal similarities in terms of both cultural policy and imperial aims between the Kaiserreich and the Third Reich. The intersection of nationalism, religion and neo-Romanesque architecture during the late nineteenth century has much to teach us about the reinterpretation of not only Romanesque architecture but also religious identity and symbolism under the Third Reich and in the postwar era of rising globalism and multiculturalism.

³⁷³ “The Kaiser’s Bad Taste in Architecture: Wilhelm II and Jerusalem,” *The Palestine Post*, 9 June 1941, 4.

5.0 MEDIEVALISM, RELIGION, AND THE STATE: IMPLICATIONS BEYOND THE KAISERREICH

The neo-Romanesque New Synagogue in Breslau, Rosary Church in Berlin, and Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem reveal the complex expression of modern religious and national identity that art historians only recently have begun to evaluate critically. Instead of envisioning the modern era as a period in which religious zeal waned, these structures display the heightened religious consciousness that inevitably led to contestation in the secularizing nation-state in an urbanizing, globalizing context. As discussed earlier, reasons for this delayed interest in modern religious expression are multivalent. Art and architectural historians have focused on the drive towards abstraction and industrialized design, championed by the generations succeeding Oppler, Hehl, and Adler, to the detriment of concurrent strains of architectural thought (i.e., medievalism and regionalism). Historians have tended toward political and economic histories that often neglect intersections with social and religious developments.

The reason that looms above all others, the driving force of German historical studies for the past few decades, however, is the theory of the *Sonderweg*, the question of what is particular about the Germans' path through modernity. The dominance of the *Sonderweg* theory to explain

the world wars and Holocaust in the twentieth century has led to what one author describes as the historian's farewell bid to the nineteenth century.³⁷⁴

Yet, when we refocus on the complexities of Wilhelmine society in the later nineteenth century, we can begin to understand the deep roots of religious exclusivity, anti-Semitism, and the dangerous intersection of religious zeal and nationalism, all of which all contributed to the rise of National Socialism decades later. Furthermore, the second confessional age in Germany did not end in 1918 with the dissolution of the Kaiserreich but continued under the Weimar Republic in the guise of organizations like the Evangelical Association (*Evangelischer Bund*) and the Catholic Center Party.³⁷⁵ Religious allegiance continued to run much deeper than class lines. In 1907 only ten percent of Catholics voted for the Social Democratic party (SPD).³⁷⁶ The neo-Romanesque ecclesiastic architecture that gave physical form to these struggles is an important strain in modern German history. While the Reform Jewish congregation's pursuit to build a new synagogue in Breslau or the racist attitudes of Germans building the Church of the Redeemer towards Arab workers does not immediately signify a cause and effect relationship with the Holocaust, these moments of tension compound our understanding the relationship between religion and secularism in modern German history and the role of neo-Romanesque architecture in it.

Indeed, as both historians and art historians move toward diachronic investigations, medievalism emerges as a key concept in understanding historical and stylistic connections

³⁷⁴ Paul Nolte, "Abschied vom 19. Jahrhundert oder Auf der Suche nach einer anderen Moderne," in *Wege der Gesellschaftsgeschichte*, eds. Jürgen Osterhammel, Dieter Langewiesche and Paul Nolte (Göttingen, 2006), 103-32. Helmut Walser Smith (*Continuities of German History: Nation, Religion and Race across the Long Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and Suzanne Marchand ("Embarrassed by the Nineteenth Century" in *Consortium on Revolutionary Europe: Selected Papers*, Tallahassee: Florida State University Press, 2002, 1-16) also make note of the myopic focus which, in turn, hinders scholars from seeing longer continuities and diachronic developments in German history.

³⁷⁵ Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert," 65.

³⁷⁶ Blaschke, "Das 19. Jahrhundert," 67.

across long spans of time. The reinvention of medieval forms and themes in the modern era is an inherently diachronic phenomenon, in which architects, theorists, historians and contemporary commentators turned one eye back to the medieval past and the other eye to the future of the world they were creating. The story of medievalist architecture reveals the major axes of modern identity in different constellations: religion, nation-state, ethnicity, and class.

Medievalist art and architecture of the later nineteenth century foreshadowed the medieval rediscovery and reawakening by the modernists a generation later. The heightened spirituality the Expressionists found in non-European painting and sculpture was similar to what they also discovered in their own native Romanesque and Gothic traditions.³⁷⁷ Magdalena Bushart's work on the German Expressionist theorist Wilhelm Worringer reflects this more sophisticated view of the relationship between Expressionism and Gothic. Instead of relying on earlier scholars' vague discussions of similarities between Expressionist spirituality and Gothic mysticism, Bushart presents a much richer view of how the Expressionists formulated their artistic statements vis-à-vis the Gothic. The relationship between Expressionism and Gothic was never a tidy package, but shifted with the geo-political context. Before World War I, the search for national heritage intersected with medievalism and primitivism in search of stylistic innovation (contemporary critic Wilhelm Hausenstein referred to German Gothic panel painters as "the negroes of the North"). Political and cultural isolationism and the mobilization of German Gothic and Expressionism for nationalist propaganda during World War I created an entirely different cultural context. During World War I, art critic Adolf Behne attributed the stylistic innovation of German expressionism to what he saw as the inherently Germanic quality

³⁷⁷ Magdalena Bushart, *Der Geist der Gotik und die expressionistische Kunst: Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttheorie 1911-1925* (Berlin: S. Schrieber, 1990).

of Gothic.³⁷⁸ At a 1917 exhibition of recent German art in Zürich, Waldemar Jollos noted the crucial precedent of the Gothic style for the work of Paul Klee.³⁷⁹ A utopian, spiritual Gothic as an alternative to the brutalities of modernized, industrialized life surfaced after the war.

A host of interwar architects used stripped-down Romanesque and Gothic forms in their architectural projects, including churches by Otto Bartning and Dominikus Böhm as well as office buildings and exhibition halls by Peter Behrens and Hans Poelzig. Holger Brülls has noted how the Werkbund and Bauhaus expanded on the concepts of seriality and a depersonalized functional approach to architectural design first championed by the medievalist church architects of the late nineteenth century.³⁸⁰ These ideas were not the only manifestations of medievalism by the German avant-garde. At the Bauhaus, Walter Gropius structured the school's training after the late medieval guild system. The cover of the Bauhaus's 1919 manifesto featured Lyonel Feiniger's *Cathedral of Socialism* with an exaggerated verticality and angularity clearly inspired by Gothic cathedrals.

The same late nineteenth-century medievalists who served as a platform for the Werkbund and Bauhaus also sowed the seeds for the later National Socialist ideological and formal manipulation of German medieval traditions. Johannes Otzen, a Protestant colleague of Hehl's and Adler's at the Technical School in Berlin-Charlottenburg, berated what he saw as the degeneration of architecture in his public addresses around the year 1900.³⁸¹ Otzen often used the common term from cultural criticism of the nineteenth century, degeneration (*Entartung*).

³⁷⁸ Adolf Behne, "Organization, Deutschtum und Kunst," *Zeit-Echo* 1, nos. 23-24 (1915): 361-5, quoted in O. K. Werckmeister, *The Making of Paul Klee's Career: 1914-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 36.

³⁷⁹ Photocopy of the manuscript in Bern, Paul Klee Stiftung; quoted in Werckmeister, 95-6.

³⁸⁰ Brülls, "Die Modernität rückwärtsgewandten Bauens," 12.

³⁸¹ Two of Otzen's speeches were published in their entirety by various architectural journals. See: Johannes Otzen, "Über die historische Tradition in der Kunst und den Einfluss des Individualismus," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* (1899): 558-60; Johannes Otzen, "Die moderne Kunst in der Architektur und deren Einfluss auf die Schule. Vortrag gehalten in Paris den 1. August in der Ecole des Beaux Arts," *Berliner Architekturwelt* 3 (1900): 225-30.

Decades later, the National Socialists appropriated the same term, adding a racial dimension, in their tirades against modernist art. Reminiscent of Hitler's more well-known outbursts against the supposed amorality and spiritual inferiority of modern art, Otzen critiqued the rising modernists for their lack of reverence for tradition and their emphasis on individuality, claiming they have "no deeper core and no inner conviction," but rather "only a pathological pose."³⁸²

The nationalism-fuelled medieval architectural research of Wilhelmine scholars also provided National Socialist architects and conservators a solid foundation on which to build their exclusionary theories of cultural production. The development of the field of research known as *Ostforschung* (literally "east research") propelled German medieval historiography during the Third Reich. What before World War I began as regional art history and art-geography in the Vienna School of art historiography, transformed into a tool for legitimizing imperialist goals of the National Socialist regime. Certain cities and universities became important centers of *Ostforschung* and, thus, medieval architectural research. Viewed by Germans as a Teutonic outpost facing a sea of "Slavic barbarians" to the east, art and architectural historians situated borderland cities like Breslau as important bastions of German culture.

And while Hitler's interest in the architecture of classical antiquity is emphasized over any regional German building models in art historical literature, the early medieval fortresses, monasteries, and churches scattered throughout the German countryside were no less significant models than Roman ruins hundreds of miles away. Stylistically, the monumental building of contemporary National Socialist architects like Wilhelm Kreis and Albert Speer correlated with the solid, severe Romanesque churches and fortresses, which Third Reich preservationists

³⁸² "keinen tieferen Kern und keine innere Überzeugung" and "nur eine pathologische Pose." Otzen, "Über die historische Tradition in der Kunst," 558

concurrently were redesigning and reconstructing in their own image of German medieval history in places like Quedlinburg and Brunswick.³⁸³

These two categories, modernist and National Socialist, are not, however, mutually exclusive, but intertwine in profound ways that scholars ranging from Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno to Jeffrey Herf have illustrated.³⁸⁴ The study of medievalist art and architecture spans these fields of inquiry that are often removed, artificially, from each other in modern research. My work on neo-Romanesque religious architecture probes the nature of religious expression in a pluralistic society and ultimately the nature of modernity itself, reestablishing important continuities of German history in meaningful and productive ways. Thus, Edwin Oppler, Christoph Hehl, and Friedrich Adler are ideal examples to represent the national/international, sacred/secular, modern/medieval tensions that run through this study.

Edwin Oppler conceived of a new approach to synagogue building in Germany. The New Synagogue in Breslau set the tone for the later proliferation of neo-Romanesque synagogues during the later Wilhelmine period. However, Oppler's most significant contribution is not in the field of synagogue architecture. An investigation of his oeuvre calls into question the architectural canon which excludes synagogues. Oppler claimed German Jewish rights to Romanesque and Gothic architecture. His incorporation of medieval elements with other

³⁸³ On the Braunschweig Cathedral under National Socialism, see: Karl Arndt, "Mißbrauchte Geschichte: Der Braunschweiger Dom als politisches Denkmal (1935/45)," *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 20 (1981), 21 (1982): 213-44; Christian Fuhmeister and James van Dyke, "Zeitlose Kunstwerke und moderne(s) Gestalten im Braunschweiger Dom in *Deutsche Kunst 1933-1945 in Braunschweig – Kunst im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Städtisches Museum und Hochschule für Bildende Kunst in Braunschweig (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2000), 48-65. For the SS appropriation and renovation of the collegiate church in Quedlinburg, see: Katharine Ruf, "Der Quedlinburger Dom im Dritten Reich." *Kritische Berichte* 12, no. 1 (1984): 47-59; Annah Kellogg-Krieg, "Restored, Reassessed, Redeemed: The SS Past at the Collegiate Church of St. Servatius in Quedlinburg," in *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past*, eds. Paul B. Jaskot and Gavriel D. Rosenfeld (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 209-27.

³⁸⁴ Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1972); Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

stylistic traditions in the interior of the New Synagogue reflects the complex and piecemeal process of assimilation and preservation of heritage for religious minorities in the Kaiserreich.

The Rosary Church exhibits a similar melding of different structural and stylistic elements. However, this hybridity is no longer concealed on the interior, but rather displayed in the exterior westwork combined with an Italianate central dome. Just as German Jewish identity was fraught with mixed allegiances – a loyalty to a state in which anti-Semitism festered, dedication to ancient Jewish practice and the modernized alterations to it - Prussian Catholics found themselves between Berlin and Rome. The Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz reflects the dynamic interplay between local, regional and national iconography and imagery in one structure. Hehl combined regional quotations like the westwork and *Klosterziegel* with an Italianate central plan to point to Prussian Catholic's dual affiliation with both the Mark Brandenburg and the Vatican.

The Church of the Redeemer appears to be a more straightforward example of top-down kaiser-sponsored neo-Romanesque architecture. However, even here we find tension between the transnational context of Jerusalem, the international brotherhood of Protestantism and the German desire to expand its cultural influence beyond its borders. A study of the Church of the Redeemer provides a fascinating counter-example to synagogues and Catholic parish churches in Prussia. This church concretizes the fusion of the Protestant church and the Wilhelmine state as the neo-Romanesque was wielded on the international stage and through mediated representations for the German public.

These three case studies focus on issues less discussed in German studies – the role of religion and modern society, the relationship between changing liturgy and religious practice in architecture and the role of religion in the age of empire. They also speak to timely issues in

Germany and our more interconnected world today. Non-Muslim Germans in the Ehrenfeld district of Cologne continue to protest against the German-Turkish desire to build a large central mosque in their neighborhood, claiming, Cologne is a “Christian city.”³⁸⁵ Minarets have been banned in Switzerland in a November 2009 referendum in which 57.5 percent of the voters approved a constitutional amendment outlawing the construction of new minarets.³⁸⁶ Swiss Jews fought the referendum and recalled their own struggle to build their houses of worship. Herbert Winter, the president of the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities, noted, “As Jews we have our own experience. For centuries we were excluded: we were not allowed to construct synagogues or cupola roofs. We do not want that kind of exclusion repeated.”³⁸⁷

The Jewish population in Germany, a slight fraction of its former number, also has been seeking public recognition through the construction of new synagogues and reconstruction of old ones. Edwin Oppler’s great-grandson, Arnold, an architect in Washington, D.C., has teamed up with the fledgling Jewish community in Hameln to build a new version of the synagogue Edwin had designed over 120 years ago.³⁸⁸ Communities in Dresden and Munich have also dedicated new synagogues in recent years on the plots where grand medievalist temples had stood before their destruction during *Kristallnacht*. While the debates still rage about the expression of religion in public schools or the location of new mosques, one only needs to turn to discussions

³⁸⁵ The architect of the winning proposal, Paul Böhm, specializes in church building, somewhat by way of his birthright. His grandfather, Dominikus Böhm, was a modernist church architect who successfully combined modern floor plans and building materials with the needs of the Catholic Church. German Turks comprise 12 percent of the city’s population. For more on the controversy, see http://www.boehmarchitektur.de/englisch/hochbau/hochbau_zentralmoschee.html; “Constructing Conflict,” *The Economist*, 30 August 2007; Mark Landler, “Germans Split over a Mosque and Role of Islam,” *New York Times*, 5 July 2007.

³⁸⁶ Thomas Stevens, “Minaret result seen as ‘turning point’” *swissinfo*, 29 November 2009, www.swissinfo.ch.

³⁸⁷ “Controversy: Minaret debate angers Swiss Muslims” *euronews*, 19 November 2009, www.euronews.net.

³⁸⁸ Michael Grau, “Neue Synagoge für Hameln: Jüdischer Architekt tritt in Fußstapfen seines Urgroßvater” *Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 3 February 2004; “Urenkel des star-Architekten Oppler soll die Synagoge bauen” *Dewezeit* (Hameln), January 2004.

and disputes such as those which surrounded Oppler's New Synagogue in Breslau, Hehl's Rosary Church in Berlin-Steglitz, or Adler's Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem to find predecessors.

These historical confrontations between the state, religion and architecture can help us reframe our contemporary struggles with the role of religion in secular society and multicultural urban landscapes. Although burgeoning Jewish congregations, mainly consisting of post-1991 Russian immigrants, erected a new synagogue, community centers, and museums throughout Germany, the construction of large mosques and Islamic centers in cities like Cologne or Berlin have spurred arguments that mimic public debates surrounding the first monumental synagogues almost 150 years earlier. Critics claim that the mosque/temple is too imposing and that it does not meld with the established architectural style of the city. Some fear the building will become a center for a sub-culture mainstream society does not accept or understand. While some elements of the context may be radically different today, the core factors of exclusivity, multiculturalism, and public presence have become only more pertinent in the post- September 11th world.

This brief period of nineteenth-century German history, when Protestants, Catholics, and Jews shared in a new modernizing empire with relatively little violent conflict, can offer an example of the triumphs and challenges of a multicultural society. These religious groups sought a balance between exclusion and inclusion as they maintained some traditions and forged ahead with assimilation. The three major religions in Wilhelmine society adapted to understand their traditions in the parameters of the new nation-state, which formed a new community with equally compelling, despite oftentimes being invented, traditions. Ultimately, these case studies force us to reconsider our definition of multiculturalism today. As Margaret Lavinia Anderson

reflects, “But if ‘multicultural’ is to mean anything at all – that is, if we really do prize difference – then we can hardly desire to erase entirely the ‘bias’ that comes with belonging to a particular religious community.”³⁸⁹

³⁸⁹ Margaret Lavinia Anderson, “Living Apart and Together in Germany,” in *Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Germany 1800-1914*, ed. Helmut Walser Smith (New York: Berg, 2001), 327.

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