

Wilfried Lipp

From the Modern to the Postmodern Cult of Monuments?* **Aspects of a repairing society**

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The title of our conference and of my introduction refers faithfully, but also somewhat disrespectfully to Alois Riegl's¹ paper "The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin" – with all the presumption of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, which is what our generation is in comparison to Riegl.

Riegl's treatise originated 90 years ago in 1903, at the beginning of the century which has now entered its last decade. It was commissioned by the executive of the Imperial and Royal Commission for Cultural and Historical Monuments, with the objective of drafting the re-organisation of state-run conservation in Austria.

The time gap which has opened over the course of almost a century is that between the "modern" and the "postmodern". The "time wave" of 1903 – alluding to J. Burckhardt's metaphor – allowed Alois Riegl to look backwards and forwards; it transported the 19th century into the 20th. The wave of 1993 is already ruffled by the winds of the new millennium.

What is most astounding, therefore, is that Riegl's treatise has retained its topical character for so long, and that it continues to offer opportunities and imperatives for revision and renewal. There are two determining reasons for this.

Together with his other theoretical writings on conservation, Riegl's concept of the cult of monuments has entered into the legal framework and the practice of conservation – and this also in countries where the dominant tendency was based on the teachings of Georg Dehio or Camillo Boito, with their subtly different emphases. Riegl's body of thought on conservation is also secured in law, bureaucratically formed, pragmatically tested – in a word, institutionally consolidated. This may offer an initial explanation of why his 1903 treatise still has a claim to timelessness: to some extent, it still has an ideal, normative character and is regarded as an orienting guideline. A second reason for its topicality lies in the fact that in spite of its institutional entrenchment, Riegl's cult of monuments possesses unrealized potential, as a postulate which calls to us and exhorts across the distance of a century. There is still, so to speak, "utopian ground" (E. Bloch) in Riegl's programmatic text, ground which – according to my core thesis – could merge with the postmodern horizon.

It would be fascinating to conduct this discussion as an extension of Fontenell's "dialogues des morts", which were published in Gottsched's translation in 1751 and quickly conquered the German reading public.² The "Dialogues of the Dead" of course revive an antique scheme shaped by Lucian, according to which historical contemporaneity is no longer a pre-requisite for common discussion in the realm of the dead.

The pedagogy of the Enlightenment used these temporally unbounded discussions to demonstrate the superiority of a worldview based on reason, and hence varied the "Querelles des anciens et modernes" which were so influential for the self-conception of modernity. The logical continuation would be a discussion of the living with the dead – in literary terms in any case.

In keeping with the media-centred condition of our time, this dialogue with Alois Riegl would be held as an interview, as a fireside chat or talk show – or else, reflecting our situation here today – as a podium discussion. And naturally Max Dvořák, Georg Dehio, Paul Clemen, Camillo Boito, Cesare Brandi and others would also take their place on the podium next to Riegl. Or

vice versa: We would have to submit to critical questioning by them in a dialogical inversion of the paradigm, so that not only the shallow question of Riegl's and Dehio's significance in the present would have import, but also the concern about the extent to which present-day conservation theory and practice could measure up to theirs.³

I must abandon this intellectual experiment at this point, since I do not possess the literary skill of an Alois Brandstetter to make more out of it, nor the unacademic lightness with which our colleague Christian W. Thomsen,⁴ literary historian and architectural theorist etc., concocted his plays: currently "Hamlet in Cyberspace". Perhaps we would simply call our play "Riegl in Passau".

Let us perhaps retain this image of a discussion circle spanning the 20th century as a stage set, as a background which gives the topic contour.

First of all I must call to mind – this is unavoidable – the most important points of the “modern cult of monuments”. The “idea of development”⁵ constitutes the “essence” of the treatise.⁵ According to Riegl's view -- as he expresses it, “in these modern terms” – every trace of human activity, every manifestation of human skill, without exception, may claim historical value. Riegl's core historical-developmental statement reads: “every historical event is irreplaceable”; however, the comprehensive reach of this statement simultaneously forms the point of departure for the effort to put precise limits on this "multiplication to infinity" by means of a “value system”⁶, which is also an “evaluation system”. Where evaluation is concerned, Riegl differentiates between “intentional” monuments, that is, monuments that were purposefully erected as such and thus have a defined memorial value, and unintentional monuments, which have been elevated to the status of “monuments” after the fact and which constitute the overwhelming majority of the body of potential monuments. As selective categories of value, Riegl differentiates between:

- the group of “past- or commemorative values”, with "historical value", “age-value” and at most “rarity value”, and
- the group of “present-day values”, with “use-value” and “art-value”, the latter of which is subdivided into “newness-value” and “relative art-value”.

In contrast to earlier concepts of monument conservation, Riegl's value categories include two essential innovations:

- the relativization of "art-value", which Riegl removes from among the commemorative values, and
- the elevation of “age-value” over all other values.

These two shifts of values are based on an aesthetic⁷ that contrasts the "self-contained character" of art with the dissolving force of an “amorphous universal nature”. The coherence, the "whole" of human work is only intact at the moment of completion, hence the strong aesthetic appeal of “newness-value”, which competes with “age-value” as the aesthetic symbolic value for the "natural cycle of becoming and passing away". Whereas Riegl sees the "production of accomplished artifacts as symbols of a necessary and lawful process of becoming", the natural forces at work in the period bear witness to the “disintegration of the accomplished as the symbol of an equally necessary passing”. For A. Riegl the paradigmatic illustration of this aesthetic of age-value was ruins; empty of functional purpose and relieved of the pressure of newness value, as a "testimony to natural laws”, they seemed suitable to “gratifying modern man's expectations”.⁸

For Riegl the 19th century was that of historical value, and the 20th was supposed to be the century of “age-value”. Riegl saw the reason for this in the process of emancipation of the individual, which since the end of the 19th century seemed increasingly to set other empirical values in the place of the classical foundations of education. According to Riegl, objective interest in knowledge should be overlaid with the subjective feeling which distinguishes

"modern man". Riegl hoped that age-value would be a quality "to make the redemptive significance of the concept of development accessible to the masses"¹⁰ under the changed social circumstances after the turn of the century. Importantly: Riegl opposes the historically constrained dominance of the historical, the disposition over history and the producibility of history, to an essentially pre-modern or partially early-modern thinking which does not see history as growing out of mastery over nature, but rather subordinates history to the powerfulness of nature.

Very much in the sense of Schiller's "aesthetic education", Riegl's hope was to let the life principle per se, the "cycle of becoming and passing away"¹¹ be illustrated by the atmospheric effects (Stimmungswirkung) of age-value, solely in an aesthetic way, without connotative educational ballast, quasi as the expression of a (divine) plan – a process which Riegl set ahead of the constant preservation of monuments, which is ultimately directed against nature. From an historical-philosophical perspective, one recognises today – in the postmodern era – that Riegl's "pre-modern" approach is also at bottom a critique of contemporary civilisation in the sense of a critique of progress. In his strict emphasis on natural, cyclical figures of development Riegl is clearly responding to the dynamics of progress of the 19th century, which still lay on the horizon of lived experience. The cult of monuments text is thus also a protest against the "accelerated" pace of the world, against a telos of development determined solely by humanity. The 19th century indeed signified an extraordinary surge in this direction, a narrowing and channeling of linearized dynamics of progress. These proceedings were also designated as the "denaturalization" and "temporalization" of history.¹² Riegl opposes this – paradigmatically in the postulate of age-value – to the "naturalization" and the imperative nature of a cyclical time rhythm. However, one should surely not conclude from this a desire for a general "re-naturalization" and a "re-rhythmization" of time. What one does find is rather an appeal to the memory of experiences of time which did not yet rigorously separate nature and history.

The social and psychological weighting of the cult of monuments text likewise has a background of cultural criticism. In the text Alois Riegl references the connection between the worth of things and society's conception of value.¹³ He makes the attempt to redefine the understanding of monuments under the conditions of mass society. Indeed, Riegl repeatedly speaks of the "great mass", the "crowd", the "great majority", the "broad social classes"¹⁴ -- by which he means those who, in contrast to elitist groups of the "better educated", belong to the strata of the "less educated", who in his view "constitute the vast majority of those interested in cultural values".¹⁵ Riegl thought that "age-value" in its most intensive primary meaning as "atmosphere value" (Stimmungswert) should speak more to these strata than would the more sophisticated "historical value" with its reliance on knowledge and interest. Age-value is also conceived by Riegl as an "offer to all" so to speak, similar by the way to what W. Sombart postulated as the task of museums in 1908, shortly after the publication of "The Modern Cult of Monuments".

That which motivated the (modern) career of the historical in the first place¹⁶ -- i.e. feelings of unease with civilisation, the increasing experience of alienation, the incapacity to grasp the present, the tempo of history itself in the end -- Riegl therefore attempted to extract from the acceleration of historic processes by channeling it into the notion of age-value. With age-value Riegl reminds of the concept of history as "Being-determined", as opposed to the modern concept which perverts history into the linearity of progress. To this extent Riegl's thinking is itself the result of the process of "modernization", which he contrasts, "naturalizingly" so to speak, to the idea of age-value. For Riegl the atmosphere (Stimmung) evoked by the age-value of monuments should thereby make possible the "sympathetic" (J. G. Herder) experience of commonality with regard to the concept of development. This communicative appeal function of atmosphere value is a further response to the experience of anonymity, rationality and the "coldness" of technical and industrial processes, an experience that emerged more strongly into consciousness around the turn of the century. This situation also prompted Max Dvořák¹⁷ in his

"Catechism" to legitimize the necessity of conserving historic monuments specifically with reference to the increasing "industrialization of life". And in connection with the "lifestyle of modernity", Georg Simmel¹⁸ speaks of a "lack of the definitive in the centre of the soul". The quintessence of the cult of monuments text can be summarized as:

1. The connection of the value of monuments to society's conception of value, as expressed in the initial basic division into commemorative values and present-day values.
2. The relativization of normative values, such as art-value for example, which Riegl radically determined in relation to contemporary optics of value.
3. The elevation of age-value in its significance as process value and atmosphere value. The attempt to save "atmosphere" as an area of potential effect of historical materiality is likely also the expression of an attitude which counters the truncated concept of authenticity of a historiographic practice reduced to "facts".
4. The revelation of the transitory character of monuments, whose defining characteristic is not duration but transition. Riegl essentially restricts this to naturally-occurring changes, which ultimately lead to a merging of the monument into nature – or as Simmel put it¹⁹, the "homecoming" of the monument. However, recognition of transitoriness also comprises the insight – quite apart from Riegl's "naturalization" – that the monument will be something "different" in each instance, that its essence lies in the change into ever new signs with symbolic character, that it therefore requires new "sense-making" again and again.

Thesis 1

In terms of its ideology, Riegl's modern cult of monuments is actually laid out as an anti-modern cult of monuments, a treatise which expresses the sense of unease in modernity²⁰ yet definitely seeks a "correspondance" with modern developments. But: The practice that invoked Riegl and the other participants in our fictitious discussion circle was and is decidedly affirmative of the modern.

This concerns the means and techniques of restoration as well as the methods of recording findings – think "room data sheet", "accurate measurement" etc. – and the dominance of material and substance – keyword "substance fetishism".²¹ And on the negative side of the balance sheet: the exclusion of all emotional values, exactly the values that Riegl found so important. It is a repression with at times devastating consequences for monuments conservation and one that inspires intensive compensatory efforts in competing fields. The fact that this is so is probably also due to the adoption by the field of monuments conservation, as it emerged from the amalgam of Historicism and became established as a science, of a "positivistic" attitude and approach.²² This is true of the dominance of the historical-developmental aspect with the imperative of selection on the basis of comparison, which in the end led to the phenomenon of "indifferentiation" (Vergleichgültigung), but it also applies to the methodology and practice of monuments conservation, which treated every inherited object, from the medieval wall painting to the bus stop shelter, as equal in an almost "socially-conscious" sense.²³

This "dissective" conservation completed the renunciation of the idea of holistic integration of the monument; it shut up the potential for myth, the aura of the sublime, the emotional charge, the sense of national pride etc., it finally withdrew from the process of producing meaning. These connections, however, had been among the fundamental motivations of monument culture from the Romantics up until the homeland Heimatstil movement. Riegl's para-religious stigmatisation of the concept of the monument was to this extent a rescue attempt, one intended to counteract the ever accelerating "demystification of the world" (M.

Weber). Thanks to their misuse by the Fascists, the terms “nation”, “wholeness”, “myth”, “sublimity” and “meaning” were discredited after the Second World War. In this way, positivistic infallibility and incontestable neutrality were able to (and probably had to) triumph – the price being a certain vacuity of justification.

After the Second World War the positivistic differentiation of conservation doggedly refused to answer questions about the motivation for its ever more hectic and far-reaching activities; at all events it operated with historical-developmental parameters, with concepts determining origin or identity. Monuments conservation thus shared the fate of its core discipline of art history, which no longer counted fundamental aesthetic questions regarding the beautiful, the terrible, questions about catharsis and about cultivation, among the central concerns of a discipline that was henceforth merely empirical -- even though these questions have kept European thought on art in motion from Aristoteles to Diderot and Schiller, and have justified philosophically and anthropologically, morally and politically the production and consumption of art.

Through this decoupling, monuments conservation was sucked into the current of “self-referential systems”, whose distinguishing characteristic, according to Niklas Luhmann²⁴, is that they become independent within society (not against society), that they determine and produce themselves. The temptation to see conservation in this sense as an autonomous, “autopoietic” system, one that does not strive for transboundary communication at all and that renounces the claim to any kind of appeal, is not unfounded. W. J. Siedler²⁵ recently defined this autopoiesis as “maintenance mania”, thus in a way as pathological.

Thesis 2

At this point I will break off my pursuit of Thesis 1, according to which – to remain within Riegl’s diction – Riegl’s “modern cult of monuments” by its nature and development was essentially conceived as an “anti-modern” cult of monuments with pre-modern orientations - keyword “the natural cycle of becoming and passing away”.

Accordingly – and this is Thesis 2 – a “postmodern cult of monuments” would also be anti-postmodern; it would primarily be compensatory to the prevailing reality, which still addressing the opportunities of postmodernism. The theories of the modern and postmodern cult of monuments would thus mainly be histories that “go against the grain” (W. Benjamin), anti-histories so to speak, in alliance with an affirmative or a dialogical practice respectively. If one does not take the postmodern simply as a “stylistic” and predominantly architectural fashion with bay windows, little towers and temple ornament, but rather as an over-arching cultural phenomenon²⁶ — and one which, despite having often been declared dead, shows itself to be a quite “lively phenomenon”²⁷ — then it would also seem worthwhile in this connection to refer back to two essential, by now indeed classic positions of postmodern thought, namely the diagnoses of Jean Baudrillard²⁸ and Francois Lyotard.²⁹ Both start from the main theme of postmodernism, the phenomenon of plurality which can be ascertained in many fields.³⁰ Although Baudrillard is principally a supporter of the idea of multiplicity, he sees this idea as unachievable in the present time period. Baudrillard sees the reason for this in the dissolution of the differences that outline reality, i.e. in the loss of differentiation. The resulting paradox, he states, is that even seemingly new differences in cultural production promote the development of indifference. The thesis, which Baudrillard treats in his paper “Agony of the Real”, is that the so-called “real” no longer “really” exists, because it is no longer distinguishable from its original anti-images, such as description, interpretation, depiction. Reality and reflection have melted together. An essential cause of this is the explosion in information, which creates its own new reality – one in which reality and “simulation” merge with one another, in which simulation indeed surpasses reality. Virtual reality and cyberspace

are the latest phenomena of a mediocratic "hybrid culture".

The result is indifference. Precisely through the increase in diversity, through the variety of cultural production and the multi-vocal sources of information about it, there arises a chorus in which sound and echo are indistinguishable, which ultimately makes the multi-vocalism of reality indifferent. "We live in an undefined reproduction of ideals, fantasies, images and dreams" states Baudrillard³¹, "which in the meantime lie behind us, but which we must nevertheless reproduce in a kind of fatal indifference". According to Baudrillard, the increase in diversity therefore leads to "indifferentiation" (Vergleichgültigung) and reproduction, arbitrariness and dispensability. We live in a situation, in which "only counterfeits can gratify the insatiable appetite for the real".

In contrast to this, F. Lyotard³² develops a positive image of postmodern plurality. For him diversity essentially means a programme that is already modern in conception, but is overlaid with a dominant uniformity; this programme is to be realized in the postmodern. Lyotard chooses linguistic-philosophical examples for his positive concept of plurality. In his view, to put it briefly, society is conveyed through "languages". And indeed through "heterogeneous" languages, corresponding to the divergence of pluralistic society. Lyotard's approach is the rejection of a "meta-language" geared toward a generally binding consensus and the elevation of the diversity of language. This means: Diversity in opposition to all types of totalisation, to unifying strategies, to the "terror" of uniform constraining systems. Lyotard postulates the end of "meta-stories", meaning the end of unifying programmes of ideas, and radically proclaims the opportunities offered by diversity.

There is no doubt that the multiple coding of plurality has given rise to competition for monuments conservation:³³ from amusement parks, museum villages, Disneylands, illusory realms of all kinds, perfect-world-enclosures, oases of beautification, theatres of memory, orgies or famines of attempts to conform and flatter, oversized and diminutive forms with a puzzle of historical allusions, department stores with their orchestrations and restaurants with their surrogate nostalgia, or even just the Rhaetian Railway dining car with its latticed windows, past which the backdrop of a cultivated landscape of historic monuments rolls by. From the perspective of conservation's "déformation professionnelle", the reaction to these phenomena, when it is not hollow incomprehension, is scorn, resignation and not seldom whinging. But mere negativity neither helps, nor does it do justice to reality. One can see hidden or else quite open yearnings in this, the efforts of a tentative awareness, which the classic discipline of monuments conservation could meet halfway. In any case these are attempts to communicate within the same linguistic family. Perhaps one should simply regard these developments from the perspective of competition, ask quite selfishly how the postmodern situation helps us with our own concerns? Couldn't some business be done there? The markets would not be unfavourable in any case. And: conservation could take its place comfortably on the postmodern sofa, without being squeezed, it would just have to really sit down for once.

"Life-world and monument"³⁴ have gotten mixed together. Reality and appearances have become fuzzy concepts. The clean separation of turbulent everyday life from enduring symbols has dissolved. To the degree that life is measured in experience, and society becomes a (primarily hedonistically oriented) event society, it cannot be expected that this society will moor its happiness above all to monuments, which are only reluctantly granted a function of psychological relief.

This is however an important element that Riegl clearly recognised in his modern cult of monuments, when he oriented his age-value utopia towards "modern man". Admittedly, one can hardly relate to the "redemptive significance of the concept of development" today.³⁵ It is time to take leave of ballast of this sort. The emphasis in our values has shifted into the profane, and the referential systems of things have changed.

Thesis 3

A final turn: I now link Thesis 2, according to which the postmodern cult of monuments, given the threats posed by the simulation and indifference of postmodernity, also cannot do without an anti-postmodern slant, to Thesis 3, with which I extend the track of Riegl's thought and advance into the realm of speculation.

If the 18th century was dominated by value schemes oriented toward nature, Riegl designated the 19th century the century of "historical value".³⁶ The 20th century was to save nature through the philosophy of age-value, a utopian promise that remained unrealized. What the 20th century in fact became, if one stays with this terminology of nature and history, was the century of technology – of necessity leaving aside the thousand other possible designations. The 21st century shows every indication of becoming a century of repair: the repair of nature above all, but also of history and technology, and of humanity. And because we are no longer disturbed by the rising inflation of hyphenated terms relating to society, I will add another term to the list of recent designations such as "event society",³⁷ "risk society"³⁸ or "value-shifting society"³⁹: namely "repair society". So how could monuments conservation be constituted in the repair society of the 21st century?

On this topic, a few key thoughts:

- Monuments conservation, as Sauerländer recently defined it with reference to Anne-Marie Lecoq⁴⁰, will indeed become part of a "monumental ecology", if only one aspect amongst many.
- In order to complete this task it will be necessary to leave behind the pupal stage for the hard casing of "autopoiesis"⁴¹, and to engage with the networked system of the "postmodernist repair project", as I would like to call it in allusion to the much-cited "modernist project".
- Monuments conservation could contribute to the previously mentioned effort to make good the damage to nature through a concept of selection, one that not only qualifies the limited part of the unlimited abundance of phenomena as significant in the sense of Max Weber⁴², but also recognises the trivial and expendable. This has indeed become a difficult task. Since Marcel Duchamp's provocative question as to whether it is possible to "create works that are not works of art", monument conservationists' (guilty) consciences have been plagued by the question of whether there are any works at all that are not monuments. And on the other hand, fears are growing that monuments may disappear among all the diversity.⁴³

For this reason exclusion and inclusion will be important tasks in the future, if we wish to make a regeneration of the story-laden world possible. As far as the present realities of global networking are concerned, however, the prospects hardly give cause for optimism.

- The saving of nature will in any case be inconceivable without a partial expunging of history.
- In order to give value and significance a place in this repair project, heightened "attributions of meaning" will be required for the objects selected as important. These attributions must go beyond the current lack of imagination that says that one can always turn a monument into a store, a cultural centre, a museum or a restaurant. Riegl's attempt to counteract the "metaphysical homelessness of modernity" (Lukàcs) by loading monuments with para-religious significance was still 19th-century. We have to admit to ourselves that little occurs to us on this topic. The "renaissance of the sublime"⁴⁴ was discussed, as was the "neo-mythical turn"⁴⁵ and the rehabilitation of the national – all evidence of efforts to attribute or to search for meaning, at any rate.
- Thus creativity is required – a term that is largely excluded from modern monuments

conservation. What is meant is not creativity in shaping or designing – although this too should be re-defined – but rather creativity with regard to innovations in value. Each of us knows how helpless we often are as itinerant preachers with our meagre little suitcase of values, when it comes time to explain to a community, a parish priest or a businessman why this or that item is of indispensable significance.

- Conservation can certainly reflect - more confidently than it has done to date – upon its avant-garde function. In my opinion, the feeling of being a “fighter for a lost cause”, to use Ernst Jünger's⁴⁶ metaphor with its negative but also its positive connotations, described the conservationist's professional mentality for too long. The loneliness of the conservationist is, however, also that of being a step ahead – with changing followers on different routes. However, it certainly makes a difference whether the conservationist's social function and the field of monuments conservation are defined as being a step ahead or as standing still. In any case, complete congruence with everyday understanding would be an illusion.
- The chances for a conservation field that is avant-garde in motivation and oriented to creating meaning are quite good. To the collective, “common-sense”⁴⁷ and binding understanding of conservation one can add the plural-postmodern positively-negatively connoted phenomenon of “patchwork identity”.⁴⁸ On the positive pole this means for monuments conservation: “To each his monument”,⁴⁹ not of course in the sense of the classic individual monument, but as a continuation of the history of individualism as an identificatory relation of a very personalized sort. K. M. Michel⁵⁰ recently described the (negative) hybrid form of this phenomenon quite fittingly as “topolatry”.
- Postmodernism – to address a further aspect – has enriched the critique of growth and progress, and the sense of scepticism toward perfection that accompanied the “modernist project”, by contributing the now essential category of “letting be”.⁵¹ It is at the same time the attempt to veer out of the diabolically accelerated home stretch of modernism, to obtain a “postponement”. Monuments conservation too, and monuments conservation in particular, will have to take seriously this challenge of opting out of modernism's drive toward completion – think: avant-garde – and will have to try to strengthen the anti-modern orientations of “non toccare” and “age-value” and realize them in a postmodern fashion: not as an exclusive doctrine, but as an important part of the spectrum of possibilities of monuments conservation.
- In its initial stages the “modernist project” was certainly still shaped by the double figures of rationality and emotionality. Only in the stage of narrow concentration did the “project conceived as a system of infinite perfection” become a project of “totalizing rationality”.⁵² Emotionality and sensitivity were forced into the private sphere or surrendered to the mechanisms of the culture industry. A postmodern cult of monuments could remedy a great deal here: an elevation of Stimmungswerte is called for. As yet we do not even have the instruments and vocabulary to capture these values. On the other hand a yearning for feeling, atmosphere and security is expressed by every flowering plant set in a window, by glued-on mullions and by surrogates of all kinds. We will have to consider everything that R. Bentmann⁵³ once took aim at so mercilessly and critically from the other side: as potential that can be harnessed positively with regard to conservation. Conservation should beware only of the narrow “para-religious” alignment of atmosphere values and should also accept exuberant, plurally diversified atmosphere values.
- Finally, some remarks on the concrete vocabulary of terms used in monuments conservation. As discussions in recent years have shown, terms such as original, developed condition, reversibility, reconstruction, substance value, exhibition value etc. have started to change. The transitory element of the monument, which Riegl still wished to understand as limited to the effects of natural forces, has also established

itself as an historically-motivated process value. Ernst Bacher's⁵⁴ phrase "Monument equals artwork (or work) plus time" accurately designates the "floating" character of the original. The original cannot be fixed to a particular topos or date in the past. Apart from the material and physical impossibility, patterns of reception have also changed. What one sees becomes something different with the passage of time. Therefore the original defines itself at the moment of perception.⁵⁵ The consequence is a strengthening of momentary perception in the sense of Proust's "memoire involontaire" as against – or at least as a complement to – the tired educational efforts developmental history.

- The rehabilitation of reconstruction, including the use of allusions for the sake of integration etc., should proceed. In order to prevent misunderstandings: we are not speaking of uncontrolled, uncritical and inflationary reconstruction. However, one should not forget that restoration, reproduction and continuing construction were always part of the architectural vocabulary,⁵⁶ and that the general exclusion of these possibilities, with a few exceptions, after the Second World War was the ideological consequence of a so-called "coming to terms with the past" which essentially focused, and perhaps had to focus, on forgetting.
- If the Charter of Venice demands consideration of the relevant period style when it comes to modifications and additions, one must counter that in its plural spectrum of possibilities, the period style of architectural postmodernism takes these categories into account. The discussion regarding historic architecture versus new architecture versus reconstruction etc. has gotten stale and should be left behind or else limited to questions of quality and factual arguments. The cases in which such choices exist are quite limited in any event.
- The rehabilitation of reconstruction which has only recently begun – and is as always vigorously contested - has in any case created new awareness of a fundamental value in conservation theory, one to which the modern cult of monuments did not concede autonomy: visual or viewing value (Schauwert). This value, arising⁵⁷ only in connection with "substance value", belongs to the rhetoric of postmodern monuments conservation as it were, and will experience an extraordinary surge in the continuing process of aestheticization, in the era of design that is postmodernism. It will not be enough for conservation to interpret Schauwert restrictively; the field will also have to recognize its positive possibilities and make use of them. The future of media façades, of the digital visualizability of history, of the hyperillusion of virtual reality, of the world of moving images – it will not be possible simply to dismiss this future with reference to simulation and indifference, to Baudrillard's "simulacra",⁵⁹ to irony, quotation and bluff. Rather, this future will demand the impartiality of a potentially fascinating extension of conservation's horizons, in the knowledge that these new media will change our view of the fictitiously authentic.⁶⁰ What Catherine Feff achieved in her painted visualisations here in Paris, what Jeffrey Shaw and the AG4 Team in Cologne projected using media, may only be a foretaste of a 21st century postmodernist conservation culture.
- The emancipated view of conservation in a radically changed world that is developing in this manner will have to strive – despite all its blurriness - to reach the world, or in any case the environment. The Cultural landscape conceived as a landscape of historic monuments⁶¹ is one of the great areas of hope – one of the areas of great expectations with regard to monuments – that is indispensable to the "monumental ecology" of the "postmodern repair project". I posit this in the knowledge that the legal and political preconditions for it are largely lacking, and that the necessary theoretical and practical conservation tools have yet to be developed. But the discussion – and this certainly reflects the sensitivity of our discipline – has already begun.
- The second area of great expectations with regard to monuments, next to the cultural landscape as landscape of historic monuments, is the big city⁶², which is indeed the

“homeland” (Heimat) of postmodern, global society. The established practice of creating delimited urban islands of tradition and manageable monument enclosures cannot do justice to the one great monument that is the big city.

- The big city – like the cultural landscape – indeed demands an expanded concept of monuments conservation, namely a flowing, almost “strolling” (flanierende) conservation concept. As Benjamin writes, “the street guides the flâneur” (who is a product of the big city) “into a bygone time”.⁶³ Perhaps this could be an approach; but one that not only encounters the vanished, but also the future. According to Virilio’s theses, the big city is a “dromogenous space of speed” with eruptive potentialities for change; it is the place of permanent deluge of images and destruction of images.⁶⁴ From above and below, from past and future, visual signals and visual messages continuously burst forth. In the topographical environment, big cities are areas of placelessness, they are utopian agglomerations whose inhabitants have moved from a settledness in space to a settledness in time.

The big city is the space of simultaneity exploding at every moment into another moment.

Is there such a thing as preserving change?

For now, the question must remain unanswered given the scenario of the big city. It is, however, basically the same question – though in other dimensions – that we have to deal with again and again.

The value doctrine of Riegl's “modern cult of monuments” has released the monument and the concept of the monument from the rigidity of normative statutes. In a postmodern interpretation, age-value is above all defined as “process value”, which also places the monument on the horizon of the future as a memorial that accompanies and orients “life”. From a conservation perspective, the future is therefore not merely a “fury of vanishing”,⁶⁵ but also the “utopian ground” of that which has not yet been perceived. The monument thus becomes what Umberto Eco⁶⁶ postulated for the work of art per se. It becomes an “opera aperta”. The postmodern definition of this openness is a multifaceted one. In view of the transitory character of the monument on the one hand, and the ultimately imperative adherence to the fiction of the authentic on the other, this openness will be understood as a subtle differentiation of the further possible “layering” of a monument that has become “layered” over time. What seems to me to be more important and more responsible in terms of conservation theory is however openness with regard to the plurality of the value attributions that a monument can absorb. In a postmodern monument culture, monuments are repositories; not only for aesthetics, history, education and memory, but also for other quite trivial, everyday or fictional and imagined attributions of value. Thus a new value, one corresponding to the diversity of life, gains power: the “plurivalence value” of monuments. Monuments conservation in a postmodern monument culture thus sets itself a fascinating, though not an easy task: To open monuments to the diversity of life and protect them against the diversity of life.

Notes

* On the current status of the theoretical discussion on the conservation of historic monuments cf. Wilfried Lipp (ed.), *Denkmal-Werte-Gesellschaft. Zur Pluralität des Denkmalbegriffs*, Frankfurt a.M./New York 1993. – Relevant to this particular topic is Wilfried Lipp, *Denkmalpflege: Moderne – Postmoderne*, in: *Kunsthistoriker*. Jg. V, 1988, Nr. 3/, pp. 17-25.

1. Alois Riegl, *Der moderne Denkmalkultus. Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung*, Vienna/Leipzig 1903.

- For the English translation see Alois Riegl, *The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Character and Its Origin*, trans. Kurt W. Forster and Diane Ghirardo, in: *Oppositions* 25, 1982, pp. 21-51.
2. Cf. Hans Blumenberg, *Schiffbruch mit Zuschauer. Paradigma einer Daseinsmetapher*, Frankfurt a.M. 1979.
 3. The question – with reference to Hegel – is drawn from Theodor W. Adorno, *Zur Metakritik der Erkenntnistheorie. Drei Studien zu Hegel*, Frankfurt a.M. 1971, p. 13.
 4. The allusion is to Christian W. Thomsen's lecture, which is also relevant to monuments conservation, entitled "Mediarchitektur", delivered on the occasion of the 7th Conference of Austrian Art Historians from 23 – 26 Sept. 1993 in Graz.
 5. Riegl (see note 1), p. 2; the following quotes, op. cit. Forster and Ghirardo p. 21.
 6. On what follows, cf. Norbert Wibiral, *Was ist ein Denkmal? Zur Klärung des Begriffs*, in: *Denkmalpflege in Österreich 1945–1970*, Exhibition Catalogue, Vienna 1970, pp. 33–40.
 7. The following quotations are from Riegl 1903 (see note 1), pp. 23 f.
 8. Op. cit., p. 21. Forster and Ghirardo, p. 31.
 9. Op. cit., p. 16.
 10. Op. cit., p. 33.
 11. Op. cit., p. 27. Forster and Ghirardo, p. 32.
 12. Reinhart Koselleck, *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt a.M. 1979. Johannes Rohbeck, *Die Fortschrittstheorie der Aufklärung*, Frankfurt a.M. 1987, pp. 34 f.
 13. From a different angle of approach: Max Dvořák, *Denkmalkultur und Kunstentwicklung*, in: *Kunstgeschichtliches Jahrbuch der k.k. Zentral-Kommission für Forschung und Erhaltung der Kunst- und historischen Denkmale IV*, Vienna 1910, pp. 1–32.
 14. Riegl (see note 1). pp. 32, 33, 48, 49.
 15. Op. cit., p. 38. Forster and Ghirardo, p. 35.
 16. Cf. Gottfried Korff and Martin Roth (eds.), *Das historische Museum*, Frankfurt a.M. 1990, p. 10.
 17. Max Dvořák, *Catechismus der Denkmalpflege*, Vienna 1918.
 18. Georg Simmel, *Philosophie des Geldes*, 2nd ed., Leipzig 1907.
Cf. Klaus Lichtblau, *Die Seele und das Geld. Kulturhistorische Implikationen in G. Simmels "Philosophie des Geldes"*, in: *Kultur and Gesellschaft, KZfS.S Sn.27* 1986, p. 60.
 19. Georg Simmel, *Die Ruine*, in: *Philosophische Kultur. Gesammelte Essays*, Leipzig 1919, p. 110.
 20. Peter L. Berger, Brigitte Berger, Hansfried Kellner, *Das Unbehagen in der Modernität*, Frankfurt a.M./New York 1975.
 21. On this cf. the article by Michael Petzet in this issue.
 22. On the following, cf. Willibald Sauerländer, *Methodische Erinnerungen am Rande der neuen Unmittelbarkeit*, in: *Kunsthistoriker, Jg. IV, 1987, Nr. 1/2*, pp. 4–9.
 23. Wilfried Lipp, *Was ist kulturell bedeutsam? Überlegungen aus der Sicht der Denkmalpflege*, in: *Denkmal-Werte-Gesellschaft. Zur Pluralität des Denkmalbegriffs*, ed. Wilfried Lipp, Frankfurt a.M./New York 1993, p. 362–382; first published in *Kulturpolitik: Standorte, Innensichten, Entwürfe*, ed. Wolfgang Lipp, Berlin 1989, pp. 189–214.
 24. Wolf Jobst Siedler, *Pflegewahn. Was ist Denkmal in Berlin?*, in: *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 12 Feb. 1992.
 25. Niklas Luhmann, *Soziale Systeme*, Frankfurt a.M. 1984.
 26. On this topic, see most recently: Heinz-Günther Vester, *Soziologie der Postmoderne*. Munich 1993.
 27. Sabine Lang, *Ist die Postmoderne tot? Für Leo Löwenthal zum 90. Geburtstag*, in: *Leviathan*, Jg. 19, 1991, H. 1, pp. 55–67.
 28. Jean Baudrillard, *Agonie des Realen*, Berlin 1978 (French original edition, Paris 1977).
 29. François Lyotard, *Das postmodern Wissen*, Graz/Vienna 1986 (French original edition, Paris 1979).
 30. Wolfgang Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*, Weinheim 1987, especially pp. 31–37 and pp. 149–154.
 31. Jean Baudrillard, *Das System der Dinge. Über unser Verhältnis zu den alltäglichen Gegenständen*, Frankfurt a.M./New York 1991 (French original edition, Paris 1968), p. 109.
 32. Lyotard (see note 29).
 33. Cf. Lipp (ed.) 1993 (see note 23), including the Introduction, pp. 19–30.
 34. Aleida Assmann and Dietrich Harth (eds.), *Kultur als Lebenswelt and Monument*, Frankfurt a.M. 1991.

35. Riegl (see note 1), p. 33.
36. Op. cit., p. 16. Forster and Ghirardo, p. 28.
37. Gerhard Schulze, *Die Erlebnisgesellschaft. Kultursoziologie der Gegenwart*, Frankfurt a.M./New York, 2nd ed. 1992.
38. Ulrich Beck, *Risikogesellschaft. Auf dem Weg in eine andere Moderne*, Frankfurt a.M. 1986.
39. Helmut Klages, *Traditionsbruch als Herausforderung. Perspektiven der Wertewandelgesellschaft*, Frankfurt a.M./New York 1993.
40. Willibald Sauerländer, *Erweiterung des Denkmalbegriffs? – Ein Nachwort in Zweifel and Widerspruch*, in: *Denkmal-Werte-Gesellschaft* (see note 23), pp. 142–147.
41. Cf. Luhmann (see note 25).
42. Max Weber, *Die "Objektivität" sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis* (1904), in: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, Tübingen 1922, pp. 146–214.
43. Cf. Amine Haase, *Verlust oder Vision. Dem Seiltänzer nur zusehen oder ihn begleiten?*, in: *Kunstforum*, Bd. 119, *Die Dokumenta (IX) als Kunstwerk*, 1992, pp. 87 ff.
44. Christine Pries (ed.), *Das Erhabene. Zwischen Grenzerfahrung and Größenwahn*, Weinheim 1989. Wilfried Lipp, *Adoptionsverweigerung? Zu den Schwierigkeiten unserer Gesellschaft mit ihrer Denkmalkultur*, in: *Denkmal in Deutschland*, ed. Richard Ziegert, Mainz 1993, pp. 36–52; esp. pp. 45 ff.
45. Hermann Schödter (ed.), *Die neomythische Kehre. Aktuelle Zugänge zum Mythischen in Wissenschaft and Kunst*, Würzburg 1991.
46. Ernst Jünger, *Das abenteuerliche Herz*, Stuttgart 1961.
47. Hermann Lübbe, *Die Wissenschaften und ihre kulturellen Folgen. Über die Zukunft des Commonsense*, Opladen 1987.
48. Heiner Keupp, *Auf der Suche nach der verlorenen Identität*, in: *Verunsicherungen: Das Subjekt im gesellschaftlichen Wandel. Münchner Beiträge zur Sozialpsychologie*, ed. H. Keupp and H. Bilden, Göttingen 1989, pp. 47–69.
49. Lipp 1988 (see note *).
50. Karl Markus Michel, *Topolatrie. Über eine modische Form, Betroffenheit zu bezeugen*, in: *Denkmal in Deutschland*, ed. Richard Ziegert, Mainz 1993, pp. 13–92.
51. Peter Koslowski, *Die Baustellen der Postmoderne – Wider den Vollendungszwang der Moderne*, in: *Moderne oder Postmoderne?*, ed. P Koslowski, R. Spaemann, R. Löw, Weinheim 1986, pp. 1–16.
52. Welsch (see note 30).
53. Rainer Bentmann, *Die Fälscherzunft – Das Bild des Denkmalpflegers*, in: *Denkmal-Werte-Gesellschaft* (see note 23), pp. 203–246.
Ders., *Geschichtsdesign. Die Verwandlung des Stadtraums zur guten Stube*, in: *Kursbuch 106*, Berlin 1991, pp. 33–52.
54. Ernst Bacher, *Kunstwerk and Denkmal – Distanz and Zusammenhang*, in: *Denkmal-Werte-Gesellschaft* (see note 23), pp. 260–270.
55. Lipp 1988 (see note *).
56. Wolfgang Götz, *Rekonstruktion und Kopie vor 1800. Ein ästhetisches, politisches, moralisches Problem oder eine Selbstverständlichkeit?* in: *Denkmalpflege in Rheinland-Pfalz 1982–83*, Worms 1984, pp. 58–73.
57. Helmut Börsch-Supan, *Schauwert und originale Substanz*, in: *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, Jg. 45, H. 2, 1987, pp. 173–179.
58. Vester (see note 26), p. 35 ff.
59. Op. cit., p. 38.
60. Cf. *Zeitschrift Arch+*, H. 108, Aug. 1991, special issue on "facades".
Ch. Asendorf, *Licht als Bausubstanz, Wand als Bildschirm, Medien und moderne Architektur*, in: *agenda 4/1992*, pp. 9–11.
61. Tilmann Breuer, *Denkmallandschaft – Ein Grenzbegriff und seine Grenzen*, in: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege XXXVII*, H. 3/4, 1988, pp. 75–82.
62. Cf. Vesper (see note 26), pp. 162 ff.
63. Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Bd. V-1, Frankfurt a.M. 1982, p. 524.
64. Cf. Wilfried Lipp, *Bilderflut–Bildzerstörung–Denkmal*, in: *kunst und kirche*, Jg. 56, H. 4, 1993, pp.

251–255.

65. Michel (see note 50), p. 87.

66. Umberto Eco, *Das offene Kunstwerk*, Frankfurt a.M. 1977 (Italian original edition "Opera aperta", Milan 1962).

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