

Before Beyond Function

David Kolb
Bates College

Architecture was not a field Hegel had studied widely. Perhaps as a result, his treatment of architecture in his *Lectures on Aesthetics* does not attempt the historical thoroughness of his discussions of literature and painting. He relies heavily on a few sources and then restricts his chosen examples even further.

One major source for Hegel's treatment of architecture was the work of his elder Berlin colleague Alois Hirt, who had written widely on ancient architecture. For the most part, Hirt's work is historical narrative, trying to produce a sense of the life (*lebendiges Bild*) of the ancient buildings. But Hirt also seeks to discover laws (*Gesetzen Grundsätze Formen Einrichtungen*) that lie behind the form of each type of ancient building.

As the overall law that underlies ancient architecture, Hirt proposes:

Ihre Formen, ihre Verhältnisse, ihre Neben und Uebereinanderstellungen der Theile gehen immer auf das Zweckmäßige. Das Bequemliche und Wohlgefällige ist immer der Ergebnis der einfachsten Mittel. Selbst das Größte und Prachvollste folgte derselben Regel. (Hirt 3, vi)

Its forms, its relations, its placement of parts near and above one another always aim at what is appropriate to a goal. The comfortable and the agreeable are always the result of the simplest means. Even the greatest and most magnificent followed the same rule.

Here, Hirt sounds like a nineteenth century modernist espousing functionalism. However, as Joseph Rykwert has shown, this kind of discussion of ancient architecture in terms of its function already had a long history by Hirt's time. What is unusual is not that Hirt should say such things but that Hegel should disagree with them.

External Function

Hegel's discussion of architectural function is complex and nuanced. Hegel describes architecture's difference from related arts in terms of the externality of function in the architectural work. Further, his three stages of architecture are organized around their relation to function: symbolic architecture comes before any posited separation of function and means, classical architecture achieves a perfect balance of the two, and romantic architecture goes beyond the dominance of function.

die Architektur . . . ist die Kunst am Äusserlichen. . . so dass hier die wesentlichen Unterschiede darin bestehen, ob dies Äusserliche an sich selbst seine Bedeutung erhält oder als Mittel behandelt wird für einen ihm anderen Zweck oder sich in dieser Dienstbarkeit zugleich als selbständig zeigt. (A 14.271/2.634)

Architecture . . . is the art of externality, so that here the essential differences depend on whether this external object has its meaning within itself or whether, treated as a means, it subserves an end other than itself, or whether in this subservience it appears at the same time as independent.

Function remains *external* in architecture: what architecture builds with has no inner purpose of its own. Architecture deals with the external as such, nature on the level of purposeless exterior other. Architecture shapes this into a purposive world around us. But those purposes remain external to the building. Stones and bricks are not part of an organism with an inner guiding form that expresses itself in their being and actions. Given this general characterization, however, the relation of purpose and built form varies in the different stages of architecture.

The Stages of Architecture and Function

Hegel's overall treatment of art is arranged according to his necessary logical sequence universal – particular – individual. He first discusses the universal ideal of art in general (*der noch unentwickelten Einheit seiner Grundbestimmungen*). Then he discusses the ways in which that ideal particularizes itself into forms of art, the symbolic, classical, and romantic (*entfaltete sich . . . in sich selbst zu einer Totalität von Kunstformen*). Finally he discuss the individual arts and actual individual works of art embodying and realizing the general ideal of art and its particularizations. (*das Kunstwerk wahrhaft konkret, ein zugleich reales, in sich abgeschlossenes, einzelnes Individuum*). (A 14.245))

In his treatment of the individual arts and works of art, Hegel is confronting their actual existence, not their notional essences. Nonetheless, he is still interested in finding necessary relations. Philosophy does not just catalog the empirical; it is always on the lookout for content which stands firm on its own.

For example, in the course of treating some puzzling forms of symbolic art Hegel remarks:

Im allgemeinen geht es damit im Ästhetischen wie mit gewissen Tierklassen oder sonstigen Naturvorkommenheiten in den Naturwissenschaften. In beiden Gebieten liegt die Schwierigkeit darin, daß es der Begriff der Natur und Kunst selber

ist, der sich einteilt und seine Unterschiede setzt. Als die Unterschiede des Begriffs sind dies nun auch die warhaft begriffsmäßigen und deshalb zu begreifenden Unterschiede. . . . Die wahre Einteilung aber darf nur aus dem wahren Begriff hervorgehen, und zwitterhafte Gebilde können nur da ihren Platz finden, wo die eigentlichen, für sich feststehenden Formen anfangen, sich aufzulösen und in andere übergehen. (A 13.491/1.382)

In general, therefore, it is the same in aesthetics as it is in the natural sciences with certain classes of animals or other natural phenomena. In both spheres the difficulty lies in the fact that it is the very concept of nature and art which partitions itself and posits its differentiations. As the differentiations of the concept, they are now the differentiations which are truly adequate to the concept, and therefore conceivable. . . . The true classification, however, may proceed only out of the true concept, and hybrid productions can only find their place where the proper explicitly stable forms begin to dissolve and pass over into others.

In his aesthetics Hegel is concerned to examine the individual arts with a view to their necessary and essential features. Hegel wants more than insightful arrangement of historical material; he is out to find some necessity that will be normative. This normativity can be seen at work in his remarks against various kinds of excess in architecture, which we will discuss later.

Given Hegel's systematic goals, his discussion of necessary structure will be carried out by tracing divisions and transitions implicit in the categories of art, and connecting these with spatial and temporal diversity and development. In Hegel's treatment many different notional and historical developments are going on at once:

- €the development of the concept of art and its Ideal
- €the development of each of the three particular kinds of art
- €the development of the different arts in relation to one another
- €the development of the actual arts as they appear over time.
- €the development within each art, and within each stage of that art

These sequences do not always proceed neatly in step, nor do they follow the same logical transitions.

Symbolic Architecture: Immediate Function

The beginning of architecture is the production of works that while they have been mediated by human creative activity, have a content and mode of signification that remains in a kind of unmediated immediacy. On this level, not only are ends and means not separated, but architecture and sculpture are not clearly distinct. (A 14.268)

Hegel says, speaking of the relation of the first stage, symbolic architecture, to its function, that such architectural works will

für sich selbständig dastehen und ihre Bedeutung nicht in einem anderen Zweck und Bedürfnis, sondern in sich selber tragen. (A 14.269/2.632)

stand there independently in themselves [and] carry their meaning in themselves and not in some external aim and need.

He writes something similar about the third stage, romantic architecture. That type of architecture

vereinigt beide Momente und erscheint daher innerhalb dieser Trennung zugleich als für sich selbständig. . . . gleichsam unbekümmert um diesen Zweck, für sich selbständig gestalten und erheben. (A 14.270/2.635f)

unites both factors [goals and means] and therefore appears within this cleavage as independent at the same time. . . . undisturbed, as it were, by this purpose . . . framed and erected on their own account and independently.

This means that of the three stages of architecture, only the second, classical architecture, contains a balanced distinction of ends and means, with a clear *and formally dominant* external purpose. But Hegel tells us that having an external purpose is part of the essence of architecture. (Should we then say that there is something non-architectural about the beginning, and the end, of architecture?)

Symbolic architecture is different. For one thing, it is not a well-structured category for Hegel. Hegel's treatments of the other two stages of architecture are divided as is his overall treatment of art: universal – particular – individual. The general character of the stage is first described, followed by a particularized division of its features and necessary aspects, concluding with a discussion of individual works or categories of works. However, for symbolic architecture the general description, while it comes first, is not one of the three main sections, and all of the sections concern both particular types and individual works. Hegel admits that he is unsure about how to divide up symbolic architecture, which escapes systematic organization. He attributes this to the lack of differentiation in the content and the resultant externality inherent in the symbolic mode of signification (A 14.274).

It is also striking that Hegel begins his discussion of art and architecture with constructed things that are neither quite works of art nor quite buildings. Hegel begins his treatment of symbolic architecture with the towers of Babylon and Belus; the first is not a building but an artificial mountain, serving as a rallying point of unity for a folk creating itself out of scattered tribes; Hegel takes this construct to have no meaning except that of willed unity; pure immediate undifferentiated unity. The second tower adds differentiated meaning in the form of cosmological symbolism, but neither construction manipulates or creates

an enclosed space,

Given the eighteenth century discussion in France about the "primitive hut" as the beginning of architecture, Hegel's choice of a beginning is unusual and significant. In Laugier's writings the primal architectural act is erection, support, and enclosure. Hegel (who was aware of these opinions at least to the extent of later citing Goethe's polemic against them) makes the primal act one of marking and assembling.

Enclosed spaces as such do not enter Hegel's discussion until the *third* sub-stage of symbolic architecture, which is described as a transition to the classical. And even there, Hegel says explicitly that the cave or hole comes (at least conceptually) before the hut (A 14.289). Extending a natural cave into a subterranean room unites into one seamless action the extending, the surrounding, and the creation of limits, and it produces one undivided surface that plays all these roles at once. Only with classical architecture will these roles be posited as separate and as assigned to separated units of the architectural structure.

As a result, the function fulfilled in symbolic architecture remains globally identical with the structure, without either being rationally articulated. To maintain this position, Hegel has to keep Egyptian temple architecture from becoming classical; he does this by stressing the naturalistic imagery dominating the shape of columns and other building parts, and the lack of organic unity in the whole assemblage.

Although no architectural work can have organic unity in the strong sense in which an animal body possesses such unity, symbolic architecture is particularly unorganic. Hegel emphasizes the paratactic nature of symbolic unities. Egyptian temples combine sculptures, columns, gates, rooms, and so on, but the mode of combination is an uncontrolled one-thing-next-to-another. Such adjacency and addition is characteristic both of the thinking and the construction in symbolic art.

Bei den symbolischen Gestaltungen . . . ist die architektonische Zweckmässigkeit blosse Nebensache und eine nur äusserliche Ordnung. (A 14.296/2.655).

In the case of symbolic formations . . . architectonic purposefulness is simply adjoined and only an external ordering.

This adjoined-ness or next-to-ness is crucial. Being added on, being next to (a *Nebensache*) is not only characteristic of symbolic art; it is what is specifically architectural. Speaking of the different parts of classical columns, Hegel says of these divisions that

auch in ihrer Unterscheidung zum Vorschein kommen müssen, so ist es andererseits ebenso sehr notwendig, dass sie sich zu einem Ganzen vereinen. Auf *diese Einigung, welche in der Architectur mehr nur ein Nebeneinandertreten und Zusammenfügen* und eine durchgängige Eurhythmie des Masses sein kann. (A 14.318/2.674, my emphasis)

the differences . . . must come into appearance *as* differences, on the other hand it is equally necessary for them to be united into a whole . . . *this unification, which in architecture cannot be more than a juxtaposition, and an association, and a thorough-going eurhythmy of proportion.*

The specifically architectural quality involves next-to-each-other-ness and stuck-together-ness, or paratactic order. All architecture is in this sense symbolic architecture.

In the symbolic the overall assemblage lacks an overall organizing form that would reflect the function of the whole. Classical architecture, though it remains paratactic, will be called 'organic' because it has a rationally necessary order guiding its parataxis. Romantic architecture will then go beyond parataxis by creating a whole that overreaches its posited internal divisions. But these successes remain shadowed by the externality of their medium and of the fundamental constructional act: putting something next to something else.

Classical Architecture: Self-Showing Function

We can ask, if parataxis is the fundamental mode of architectural unity, why should classical architecture be the most authentic stage of architecture?

The official answer is that classical architecture achieves a special free totality and unity in a special mode of self-relation and self-showing.

Die klassische Schönheit hat zu ihrem Inneren die freie, selbständige Bedeutung, d. i. nicht eine Bedeutung von irgend etwas, sondern das sich selbst Bedeutende und damit auch sich selber Deutende. (A 14.13/1.427)

Classical beauty has for its inner being the free independent meaning, i.e. not a meaning of this or that but what means itself and therefore intimates itself.

Symbolic architecture "meant" through paratactic unities of many diverse representations and ideas, mostly drawn from

nature. In what sense is classical architecture so different, indeed so closed in on itself that Hegel can call it *sich selbst Bedeutende*?

Whereas Hegel despairs of a rational division for symbolic architecture, he is proud of his way of organizing the basic forms and divisions of classical architecture. Unlike the symbolic, the classical has a unifying basic type (*Grundtypus*), namely, the form of a house surrounding an inside while remaining open to the enviroing context. This basic type can have notionally precise divisions.

Hegel refuses to trace the necessity behind classical architecture's forms to their acknowledged origins in wood construction. Instead he claims the forms (column, base, capital, the parts of the architrave, the roof profile, the style of walls, and so on) take their necessity from conceptual divisions posited by and within the overall function of enclosure: for instance, bearing loads (columns are *die materielle Anschauung des Tragens* (A 14.314)), being borne, enclosing (*Umschließen*), and so on. The three major classical orders are then connected not to any anthropomorphic imagery but to particular aspects of the notion of a building that stands securely and receives ornament.

Hegel knows about more anthropomorphic and ligno-morphic analyses of classical architecture. But he treats these imagistic and metaphorical origins as at best secondary and at worst excessive in relation to the "true" deduction of the parts from the basic ideas of standing and enclosing. This is particularly evident in his discussion of half-columns: he says that they are contradictory (*widerlich*) because they mix two opposed functions that have no inner necessity of being together. A true column should be round and complete in itself as it gives visible expression to the notion of support (A 14.316). Hegel here admits he may be going against the received picture of the historical development of columns, as represented by his colleague Hirt. (It is in this context that Hegel quotes Goethe against the primitive hut.)

The categorial background of the language of classical architecture, then, involves the building's own act of standing and enclosure. This sounds like Hirt's discussion of function as the guiding rule of architecture. But, as Hegel indicates in his discussion of half-columns, there are crucial differences. The function Hegel is talking about is peculiarly self-related.

Levels of Identity and Function

This self-relation or self-showing in classical architecture needs to be examined in order to understand the way function doubles itself in Hegel's vision of architecture.

We can distinguish at least six levels that are relevant here.

Level 0: absence of purpose

A building is a heavy thing, describable in mechanical and chemical terms. On this level there is no teleology, nor any clear delineation of the building from the surrounding physical and chemical things. There is no work of art. Hegel allows that teleological systems can be described in this way, but says that to do so misses their essence. An organism described chemically and mechanically is being described as dead.

Level 1: Pragmatic Purpose

A building is a manifestation of subjective and realized purpose; it embodies and realizes some pragmatic function. On this level the building is a tool. It brings people together, entombs the dead, surrounds or marks an area, houses the gods or provides a location for celebration and ritual, and so on. This is the level conventionally referred to as the program for the building.

Level 2: Self-Showing

No matter what its program or pragmatic function, a building can have the additional function of showing forth or embodying (*darstellen*) its own notional and performative essence. This is not the same as its pragmatic function.

The Greek temple's pragmatic function is to house the gods and provide a point of assembly for the community. Its columns and walls and roof could fill those functions in many ways. The temple should also look like something that is housing the gods, but this too could be done in many ways. But Hegel insists that function on that pragmatic level cannot be the final determinant of the form of the building. Hegel is concerned that in addition to these requirements the classical building should have each of its parts each show forth their own notionally determined role or action. A column should show forth load-bearing, a roof should show forth being borne and not itself bearing (as in Hegel's argument why southern building have pitched roofs even though there is no snow to worry about). What should go on is a kind of self-reference, where the building reveals its own inner activities of standing and surrounding. Those activities are not the same as the building's external pragmatic function, though in the classical building they are derived from the basic type and its overall function.

This self-showing of architectural function is posited explicitly only in classical architecture, which is another reason why classical architecture is the authentic form of architecture. This level of self-showing is missing in symbolic architecture, whose underlying categories cannot provide notional control and whose form becomes as a consequence fantastical and multiple. On the other hand, romantic architecture has articulated notional control, but this concerns the overall plan and leaves the particular parts freer than does the classical. Hegel is willing to correlate with notional divisions the classical orders and the differences between Ionic and Doric architraves. He will also find notional necessity in the cruciform plan of a

romantic church, and in its spires, but he leaves without notional guidance the particularities of decoration and symbolism and the different kinds of vaulting and pillars that replace the classical orders. The romantic does not lack resources to make inner distinctions but it has gone beyond any relation among its parts that can be stated in terms of categories of the Understanding.

Level 3: Expressing the People's Basic Thoughts

A work of art, by fulfilling its functions on levels 1 and 2 can fulfill yet another level of function; it can embody the thoughts of the people, their basic categories and general representations, their notions of individuality and its relation to the universal.

This embodying is more than the pragmatic purpose of the building, and also more than the self-showing of the parts of the building in their own notionally assigned roles. The temple keeps the rain off the statues and provides a place of assembly; it also shows forth support and load and such rational divisions. It does still more: on this new level it embodies the relation of an articulated inner unity of meaning that is fully expressed in the perfected particularity of an outside. This is the logical unity appropriate to classical civilization. So the architecture is also expressing a category or metaphysical vision of human life and cosmic form.

Just as with the first and second levels (pragmatic and self-showing functions), so the second and third levels (self-showing and expressing the basic categorial thoughts of a people) are fully distinct only in classical architecture. The levels are mixed in the other stages of architecture. Symbolic architecture has for its first level pragmatic function exactly this third level showing of a people's unifying conceptions (consider the tower of Babel, which expresses only the notion of immediate unarticulated unity). In romantic architecture as well, embodying the contemporary notion of spirit's unity becomes the first level pragmatic purpose and the second level self-showing of the building.

This third level overreaches the other two. But this is not yet the end. More than the historical people are involved with the building. There are also "we" philosophical observers, and for us there are two more levels of function.

Level 4: Doing What Architecture Does

By fulfilling its functions on the previous levels, the building is, to the eyes of the philosophical observer, fulfilling a still more general function within the overall development of architecture. For "us" the building's particular mode of unity and its achievement on the second and third levels fit in as a stage in a narrative which is not the narrative of this or that people but the story of architecture as a whole relating inner meaning and function to outer form and expression.

Level 5: Doing What Art Does

But the narrative of architecture is itself a part of the deeper narrative of art as a whole. We philosophical observers can also see the building as functioning within the movements and transitions involved in art as a mode of absolute spirit coming to itself. On this level all of architecture remains a first stage, functioning throughout in the symbolic mode of signification.

These fourth and fifth levels of function are not available to the members of the historical peoples, nor, if you grant an unargued claim about the spread of philosophical vision in Hegel's modern state to the citizens of the rational state. They are the privilege and the task of the philosophical observer. We might, however, envision a situation where these levels also became available to the ordinary people as art becomes further self-conscious. I will speak about this possibility below.

Function and Constraint

These levels of function put constraints on buildings. Talking of the arrangement of his chapter on symbolic architecture, Hegel makes it clear that what he would like would be fixed types and non-arbitrary assignments:

Fragen wir jedoch nach einer nähren Gliederung dieses Kapitels und der Hauptgebilde, welche hierher gehören, so kann bei dieser Architektur nicht wie bei der klassischen und romantischen von bestimmten Formen, von der des Hauses, z.B., aus gegangen werden; den es lässt sich hier kein für sich fester Inhalt und damit auch keine feste Gestaltungsweise als das Prinzip angeben, das sich dann in seiner Fortentwicklung auf den Kreis der verschiedenen Werke bezöge. (A 14.274/2.636f)

Yet if we ask for a more detailed systematic arrangement of this chapter and the chief productions belonging here, we cannot in the case of this architecture, as we can in that of the classical and romantic kinds, start from specific forms, e.g. a house; for here there cannot be cited any explicitly fixed meaning, or, therefore, any fixed mode of configuration, as a principle which then in its further development is applicable to the range of different works.

When Hegel thinks that there exists such content that is fixed in itself and can be the principle of a fixed mode of configuration, then he feels justified in criticizing deviations from such essential tasks and forms of architecture. For example:

Säulen zum blossen Schmuck gehören in der eigentlichen Architektur nicht zur wahren Schönheit.

In architecture proper there is no true beauty in columns used merely for adornment.

Such designs, and the use of human figures in columns, are at best

ein blosser Überfluss, insofern ihre Bestimmung nicht das eigentliche Tragen ist. (A 14.299/2.637)

a purely superfluous use of these figures, because their real purpose is not to carry a load.

(For other examples of Hegel censuring excess in classical architecture, see A 14.310 on the thickness of columns, A 14.319 on the proportions of the whole classical temple, or A 14.322 on Roman orders and garlands on columns.)

There should be no excess, no *Überfluss* beyond what is proper for the proper *Bestimmungen*. The form should be controlled by essences derived from (speculatively) fixed content.

Nonetheless, in both symbolic and romantic architecture there is uncontrolled excess. In symbolic architecture form is not controlled because there is no speculatively fixed content to provide a measure; symbolic architecture is all excess. In romantic architecture excess comes in the detail of decoration, sculpture, and other particularizations that are not defined by the overarching Spinozistic unity of the building in the way that the building's basic plan is defined.

We should not, however, think of Hegel as a modernist trying to control form and decoration by reference to a building's pragmatic function. For Hegel the teleology which is to control excess is not the functional teleology of the building as a tool (on the first level of function), but rather the special teleology of self-showing and of expressing the grounding categories of the time (the second and third levels of function).

For example, in discussing the difference between posts and columns, Hegel remarks that for a post

seine bestimmte Länge, sein Anfangen und Aussein gleichsam nur als eine negative Begrenzung durch Anderes, als eine zufällige Bestimmtheit, die ihm nicht für sich selber zukommt.

its specific length, its beginning and end seem as it were to be a negative limitation imposed by something else, or to be determined accidentally in a way that does not emerge from the post itself.

Whereas, for a column

Anzufangen aber und sich zu endigen sind Bestimmungen, die im Begriff der tragenden Säule selbst liegen und deshalb auch an ihr selbst als ihre eigenen Momente *müssen* zum Vorschein kommen. (A 14.310/2.666, my emphasis)

beginning and ending are determinations implicit in the very nature of a column as support and on this account *must* come into appearance on it as constituent features of its own.

Because there is this notional control, while excessively thin or thick columns and half-columns may be quite functional for supporting the roof they fail to present properly their own action of support.

In this control by notional essences, Hegel is close to modernist insistence that building parts show their own function. But Hegel envisions those functions more narrowly, even as they are allowed to admit and control un-modern decoration.

Notice that because this control comes from the level of self-showing function, it is most effective only on the level of classical architecture, where that level of function is explicitly posited. Pillar heights in symbolic and romantic architecture are under no such constraints (in symbolic architecture there is no measure, and in romantic architecture the pillars are part of a structure whose overall showing does not depend on such clearly demarcated measurable functions, so the ratio of length to width can become, as Hegel says, visually incalculable).

Hegel does find one kind of excess that is possible on the first level pragmatic functionality. Hegel says that if a building tries to fulfill too many pragmatic functions at once then beauty becomes only embellishment (*Zierde*), and goal relatedness (*Zweckmäßigkeit*) rules the building's form (A 14.348). But this exception proves my point; Hegel worries about a building trying to fulfill too many first level functions just because this gets in the way of the building fulfilling its second and third level functions. So he does not intend to control the form of a building by function in the sense in which Hirt and some modernists use the word. This becomes even more obvious when we turn to romantic architecture.

Romantic Architecture: Beyond Function

While the classical attains a beauty that goes beyond the impressiveness of the symbolic, classical beauty is in its turn subordinated in the romantic, which introduces self-related infinity into architecture. The romantic building

hat und zeigt einen bestimmten Zweck, aber es hebt sich in seiner Grandiosität und erhabenen Ruhe über das bloss Zweckdienliche zur Unendlichkeit in sich selber hinaus. (A 14.331/2.685)

has and displays a definite purpose; but in its grandeur and sublime peace it is lifted above anything purely utilitarian into an infinity in itself.

Romantic architecture goes beyond the classical harmony of differentiated structure with its task. Romantic architecture unifies its differentiated parts within a motion that goes beyond the building itself. If classical architecture expresses its own standing and rising, the symbolic expresses the concentration of the spirit within (*der sammlung der Gemuts in sich welche sich raumlich abschießt*) (A 14.332).

Hegel develops the particular divisions of the form of the romantic building out of the basic type of a house closed in upon its own interiority and there open to the infinite, rather than the classical house open to the environment while surrounding the images of the gods. The colonnade of the classical temple let one stand facing outward toward the world, but the windows of the gothic church raise one up to the indeterminate openness of the sky and a light that is not that of the Greek sun. The classical column speaks its own load-bearing, while the romantic pillar rises upwards, bearing its load without effort within a movement that cannot be defined by the task of resisting gravity (*Das Emporstreben gerade das Tragen in den Schein des freien Aufstiegs verwandelt*) (A 14.336, see also 338)). The calculable proportions of the classical give way to a romantic effect of the whole that goes beyond measure.

The limited functions in the interior of the classical temple change to the open independent space of the church that is generously indifferent to what takes place within it. Its overall pragmatic function is swept up within its third level function, or, more accurately put, its third level function is to express the people's notional self-conception, which at this point itself is the third level awareness of spirit's motion that sweeps up any first level pragmatic function within its movement.

In a letter describing his impressions of the Cologne cathedral, Hegel wrote:

Cologne is huge. I searched out the Cathedral right away. The majesty and gracefulness of it, or of what exists of it [building had just recommenced], the slender proportions, the elongation in them, which do not so much give the impression of a rise as of upward flight, are worth seeing and are wholly admirable as the conception of a single human being and the enterprise of a single city. In the Cathedral one vividly beholds in every sense a different dimension, a human world of a quite different sort, as also of another time. There is no question here of utility, enjoyment, pleasure, or satisfied need, but only a spacious ambling about enveloped by high halls that exist for themselves, and, as it were, simply do not care whether people use them for whatever purpose. An empty opera house, like an empty church, has something lacking in it. We encounter here a tall forest, though admittedly a spiritual forest full of art, standing for itself, existing there regardless of whether people crawl around down below or not. It could not care less. What it is, it is for itself. It is made for itself, and whatever ambles or parades about within its walls or tours about in it with a green oilcloth knapsack and an admittedly still unlit pipe in the mouth is, along with the caretaker, simply lost in it. All this standing and walking around in it simply vanishes in it. (Letter #436, Hegel to his Wife, from Cologne, September 28, 1822, HTL 585)

Such a romantic building relates to its particular parts in ways beyond explanation through relations of the understanding such as part and whole, or function and means. Such buildings are

als schlechthin zweckgemäss, aber ihr eigentlicher Charakter liegt gerade darin, über jeden bestimmten Zweck fortzugehen und als in sich abgeschlossen für sich selber dazusein. Das Werk steht da für sich, fest und ewig. Deshalb gibt kein bloss verständiges Verhältnis mehr dem Ganzen seinen Charakter. (A 14.331/2.684)

entirely suitable for [their functional goals], but their real character lies precisely in the fact that they transcend any specific end and, as perfect in themselves, stand there on their own account. Therefore no simple relation of the understanding determines the character of the whole.

Romantic architecture goes beyond the relations of the understanding and gives us a presentation of spirit, whose turn inward is also a rising to the universal. But this is not spirit in its full being-for-itself, since the externality of architecture cannot capture that movement. The universal that this movement expresses is in its way more Spinozistic than Hegelian:

Es ist die Substanz des Ganzen, welche sich in unendliche Teilungen einer Welt individueller Mannigfaltigkeiten auseinandersetzt und zerschlägt, aber diese unübersehbare Vielheit einfach sondert, regelmässig gliedert, symmetrisch verteilt, zu befriedigendster Eurhythmie ebenso bewegt als fest hinstellt und diese Weite und Breite bunter Einzelheiten zu sicherster Einheit und klarstem Fürsichsein ungehindert zusammenfasst. (A 14.331f/2.685)

The substance of the whole is dismembered and shattered into the endless divisions of a world of individual variegations, but this incalculable multiplicity is divided in a simple way, articulated regularly, dispersed symmetrically, both moved and firmly set in the most satisfying eurhythmy, and this length and breadth of varied details is gripped together unhindered into the most secure unity and clearest independence.

The classical is the realm of organic totality, where parts have a precise function in terms of the self-referential function of the whole. The romantic expresses a unity that includes and goes beyond functional divisions. It expresses both the particularity of the individual parts (the statues, the arches, the plan) and the life of the substantial whole which moves beyond them.

We recall that symbolic architecture comes before explicit function; it is all function, and all means, and all independent construction. Romantic architecture refuses to be determined by the functions it nonetheless fulfills. Only classical architecture is dominated by function, but that is the second level self-showing. So architecture in general refuses to be reduced to pragmatic function.

A Supplement

Hegel's descriptions of romantic architecture emphasize a complex task done with grace and transcendence. If the classical surrounds a usable interior and expresses that function in ways that the symbolic cannot manage, the romantic achieves that and more, not indifferent to function but overreaching it in the movement of recollection and inward transcendence. If the classical posits the essential divisions in its own concept in a way that the symbolic never could (because it had no unified concept), the romantic also posits its internal divisions, but affirms an intenser unity than the classical. If the goal of art is to bring spirit to presence in outward forms, then the romantic achieves that goal better than any other architecture.

Given these considerations, we can ask once again: why does Hegel say that classical architecture is the most authentic and proper architecture?

Hegel would answer that the Ideal of art is a perfect equilibrium of a self-articulated inner meaning and proportioned outer form. That is achieved in classical architecture. In romantic architecture the inner has begun to predominate. If, for Hegel, romantic painting and poetry bring the end of art, perhaps we should say that romantic architecture brings the end (or self-transcendence) of architecture.

But this emphasis on inner and outer suggests a way to renew our question: if architecture as such always involves externality of purpose and paratactic unities, and if as a result architecture cannot really ever achieve a perfect balance of inner and outer—which is why architecture remains low on the hierarchy of the arts—then why should we not consider the symbolic be the most authentic stage of architecture?

Hegel's reply would be that in the symbolic the necessary self-articulated totality of meaning has not yet been posited. But perhaps we should wonder about the possibility of that articulated totality of meaning. I argue elsewhere that externality will not be so neatly subsumed. Furthermore, the classical unity refuses to be as tidily harmonious as Hegel would have us believe. Hegel's notion of classical architecture maintains its purity only by a too rigorous exclusion of naturalistic and other "excesses" of meaning. Is the Egyptian temple really so un-classical as Hegel says, and are the Greek temple forms so purely dominated by notional second-level functions?

If there is some contamination of the classical that compromises the purity that keeps it apart from the other stages, then it might not be so strange to suggest that a hybrid of symbolic and romantic architecture may be where we now live: symbolic parataxis plus free externality, plus a self-conscious movement that acknowledges but goes beyond domination by inner divisions or by any level of function.

Hegel himself takes a step in this direction. Speaking of the walls and colonnades of Greek temples, he says that

In diesen Prostylen und Amphiprostylen, diesen einfachen und doppelten Säulengängen, die unmittelbar ins Freie führen, sehen wir die Menschen offen, frei umherwandeln, zerstreut, zufällig sich gruppieren; denn die Säulen überhaupt sind nichts Einschließendes, sondern eine Begrenzung, die schlechthin durchgängig bleibt, so daß man halb innen, halb außen ist und wenigstens überall unmittelbar ins Freie treten kann. In derselben Weise lassen auch die langen Wände hinter den Säulen kein Gedränge nach einem Mittelpunkte zu, wohin der Blick, wenn die Gänge voll sind, sich richten könnte; im Gegenteil wird vielmehr das Auge von solchem Einheitspunkte ab nach allen Seiten hingelenkt, und *statt der Vorstellung einer Versammlung zu einem Zweck sehen wir die Richtung nach aussen* und erhalten nur die Vorstellung eines ernstlosen, heiteren, müssigen, geschwätzigen Verweilens. (A 14.320f, my emphasis)

In these prostyles and amphiprostyles, these single and double colonnades, which led directly to the free open air, we see people wandering openly and freely, individually or in accidental groupings; for the colonnades as such enclose nothing but are the boundaries of open thoroughfares, so that people walking in them are half indoors and half outside and at least can always step directly into the free open air. In the same way the long walls behind the columns do not admit of any crowding to a central point to which the eye could turn when the passages were full; on the contrary, the eye is more likely to be turned away from such a central point, in every direction. *Instead of having an idea of an gathering together with a goal, we see a direction outwards*, and get the idea of people staying there cheerfully, without serious purpose, idle, and just chatting.

An un-earnest, loquacious, un-economical *Verweilen*. Here the tension of inner and outer is placed within a movement of dwelling with people and things in time; Hegel's temple is acting rather like Heidegger's Greek temple, to open a world. Like the Cologne cathedral, it offers a space not dominated by function, not even by the second-level self-showing function that for Hegel is so crucial to classical architecture. This dwelling with things is, like the symbolic, without a systematic or functional center, yet like the romantic, it includes but is not dominated by goal or purpose. But unlike the romantic it does not turn inward or upward in a motion of its own that goes beyond the agora.

Such a more open notion of the classical might make possible a joining with the symbolic and the romantic. That in turn

might lead towards a Hegel-derived notion of the postmodern, one that avoids endless irony and facile facade-ism, as well as purist formal play.

Such a postmodern *Ver-weil-en* would be self-conscious life in a stronger way than the agoraic life looking out from the Greek columned porch. This dwelling would have become aware of itself as expressing itself in art as such. In terms of our earlier discussion, we might imagine that the fourth and fifth levels of function had become available to the community as part of what the community expected of a building. Hence the building would publicly perform in a communal narrative about art and architecture's history and career.

In this stage beyond (or completing) the romantic, the perspective of "we" philosophical observers and that of the observed community would come together. This would perhaps be an artistic parallel to the achievement of self-consciousness in the modern state, or to the way the "we" and the observed consciousness come together at the end of the *Phenomenology of Spirit*. This joining would continue the never-complete liberation of architecture from determination by function.