

The Modern Cult of Monuments: Its Essence and Its Development

A L O I S R I E G L

§I. Values of Monuments and Their Historical Development

In its oldest and most original sense a monument is a work of man erected for the specific purpose of keeping particular human deeds or destinies (or a complex accumulation thereof) alive and present in the consciousness of future generations. It may be a monument either of art or of writing, depending on whether the event to be eternalized is conveyed to the viewer solely through the expressive means of the fine arts or with the aid of inscription; most often both genres are combined in equal measure. The erection and maintenance of such “deliberate” monuments, which can be traced back to the earliest documented periods of human culture, have all but come to a halt today. When we speak of the modern cult of monuments or historic preservation, we rarely have “deliberate” monuments in mind. Rather, we think of “artistic and historical monuments,” the official term to date, at least in Austria. This designation, which may have expressed quite a valid point of view from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, may lead to misunderstandings today, due to the widespread contemporary conception of the essence of artistic value. Our primary task will therefore be to explore what was meant by “artistic and historical monuments” up until recently.

By common definition a work of art is any tangible, visible, or audible work of man of artistic value; a historical monument with any of the same properties will possess a historical value. In this context we may exclude audible monuments (of musical art) from our consideration straightaway; for they, insofar as they are of any interest to us at all, are to be categorized simply as monuments of writing. The question that remains to be asked, therefore, refers solely to tangible and visible works of the fine arts (understood in the widest sense; that is, all creations formed by the hand of man): What is artistic and what is historical value?

Historical value is apparently the more comprehensive and may therefore be elaborated on first. We call historical all things that once were and are no longer. In keeping with the most modern conception, we include therein another view as well: that everything that once was can never be again, and that everything that once was forms an irreplaceable and inextricable link in a chain of development. Or, in other words: everything that succeeds was conditioned by what came before and would not have occurred in the manner in which it did if not for those precedents. The crux of every modern historical perception is precisely the idea of development. According to modern understanding, all human activity and all human fate of which we have evidence or knowledge may claim historical value: in principle, we consider every historical event to be irreplaceable. Since it is not possible, however, to take into consideration the vast number of events of which we have direct or indirect evidence, the number of which multiplies infinitely at every moment, one has no choice but to limit attention primarily and exclusively to such evidence that seems to represent especially striking stages in the development of a particular branch of human activity. This evidence may be a monument of writing, which, through reading, stirs images contained in our consciousness, or a monument of art, whose content is perceived directly through our senses. At this point it is

From ALOIS RIEGL, *Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Augsberg, Vienna: Dr. Benno Filser Verlag, G.m.b.H., 1928), 144 – 93; originally published as *Der moderne Denkmalkultus: Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung* (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1903). Translated by Karin Bruckner with Karen Williams.

In: *Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage*. Ed. Nicholas Stanley Price, M. Kirby Talley Jr., and Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 1996. – P. 69-83.

important to realize that every monument of art is, without exception, a historical monument as well, since it represents a particular stage in the development of the fine arts for which no entirely equivalent replacement can be found. Conversely, every historical monument is also a monument of art, since even such a subordinate monument of writing as a torn-off slip of paper with a short, unimportant note contains, along with its historical value for the development of paper manufacturing, script, writing materials, et cetera, a whole series of artistic elements: the outward appearance of the slip of paper, the shape of the letters, and the manner of its composition. Certainly, these elements are so insignificant that we will not notice them in a thousand cases, since there are enough other monuments that will impart nearly the same content in a richer and more detailed manner. However, should the slip in question turn out to be the only preserved evidence of artistic creation of its time, we would be compelled, despite its scanty nature, to consider it an utterly indispensable monument of art. Art, as we encounter it in this example, is of interest to us merely from a historical point of view: this monument appears to us as an indispensable link in the developmental chain of art history. The “monument of art” in this sense is really an “art-historical monument”; its value from this point of view is not “artistic value” but “historical value.” As a result, the distinction between “monuments of art” and “historical monuments” is incorrect because the former are included in the latter and merge with them.

Is it only historical value, however, that we appreciate in monuments of art? If that were the case, then all works of art of former times, or at least of all periods of art, would have equal value in our eyes and would only achieve a relative increase in value by virtue of scarcity or age. In reality, we often hold later works in higher esteem than earlier ones; for example, a Tiepolo from the eighteenth century over a Mannerist work from the sixteenth century. There must be another kind of interest in an old work of art besides historical interest, something that can be found in specifically artistic properties, such as concept, form, and color. Apart from art-historical value, which all old works of art (monuments) possess without exception, there is also a purely artistic value that is independent of a work's rank within the developmental chain of history. Has this artistic value been just as objectively present as historical value, in the past, so that it may be said to represent, independent of the historical, an essential part of the definition of the monument? Or is it subjective, invented by a modern viewing subject in whose will it is formed and according to whose will it changes? If this were the case, would artistic value have no place in the definition of a monument as a work of commemorative value?

Consequently, “artistic value” has to be defined differently, depending on the earlier or more recent point of view. According to the older definition, a work of art was considered to possess artistic value if it corresponded to the requirements of an allegedly objective, but to date never clearly formulated, aesthetic. The more recent point of view assesses the artistic value of a monument according to the extent to which it meets the requirements of contemporary *Kunstwollen* (artistic volition), requirements that are even less clearly formulated and, strictly speaking, also never will be because they change incessantly from subject to subject and from moment to moment.

It is therefore of fundamental importance to our task that we fully clarify this difference in the perception of artistic value, since it influences the principal direction of all historic preservation in a decisive way. If there is no such thing as eternal artistic value but only a relative, modern one, then the artistic value of a monument is no longer commemorative, but a contemporary value instead. The preservation of monuments must certainly take this into account, since as a certain practical daily value it needs to be considered along with a monument's historical past—commemorative value; this contemporary value must, however, be excluded from the definition of the “monument.” If one adheres to the understanding of artistic value that emerged recently as the inevitable result of the immense art-historical research activity of the nineteenth century, then one may no longer speak in the future of “artistic and historical monuments,” but only of “historical monuments.” In the following we will use the term only in this sense.

Historical monuments are unintentional only in contrast to deliberate monuments; yet it is clear from the outset that deliberate monuments, which represent only a small fraction of

all monuments, can at the same time be unintentional. Since the creators of these works, which we consider today as historical monuments, wanted primarily to satisfy certain practical or ideal needs of their own, of their contemporaries, and, at most, of their heirs, and certainly did not as a rule intend to leave evidence of their artistic and cultural life to future generations, then the term “monument,” which we nevertheless use to define these works, can only be meant subjectively, not objectively. We modern viewers, rather than the works themselves by virtue of their original purpose, assign meaning and significance to a monument. In both cases—that of deliberate and of unintentional monuments—a commemorative value exists, and for that reason we think of both as “monuments.” In both cases, we are interested furthermore in the original, uncorrupted form of the work as it left the hand of its maker, and this is the state in which we prefer to see it, or to which we prefer to restore it in thoughts, words, or images. In the case of deliberate monuments, the commemorative value is dictated to us by others (the former creators), while we define the value of unintentional monuments ourselves.

§2. The Relationship of Commemorative Values to the Cult of Monuments

In discussing commemorative value, naturally we have to begin with age value, not only because it is the most modern one and the one that will prevail in the future, but especially because it applies to the largest proportion of monuments.

A. Age Value

The age value of a monument reveals itself at first glance in the monument's outmoded appearance. That the monument appears outmoded is not so much caused by an unfashionable stylistic form, since the style of the monument could be imitated and therefore its recognition and evaluation reserved for a relatively small circle of learned art historians, as by the fact that age value claims to appeal to the masses. Age value is revealed in imperfection, a lack of completeness, a tendency to dissolve shape and color, characteristics that are in complete contrast with those of modern, i.e., newly created, works.

The fundamental aesthetic principle of our time based on age value may be formulated as follows: From the hand of man we expect complete works as symbols of necessary and lawful production; from nature working over time, on the other hand, we expect the dissolution of completeness as a symbol of an equally necessary and lawful decay. Signs of decay (premature aging) in new works disturb us just as much as signs of new production (conspicuous restorations) in old works. Modern man at the beginning of the twentieth century particularly enjoys the perception of the purely natural cycle of growth and decay. Thus every work of man is perceived as a natural organism in whose development man may not interfere; the organism should live its life out freely, and man may, at most, prevent its premature demise. Thus modern man recognizes part of his own life in a monument and any interference with it disturbs him just as much as an intervention upon his own organism. The reign of nature, including those destructive and disintegrative elements considered part of the constant renewal of life, is granted equal standing with the creative rule of man.¹ It is considered displeasing, however, to break nature's law of the transition of growth into decay and vice versa. The obstruction of natural activity through the hand of man, which seems to us an almost impious sacrilege, as well as the premature destruction of human creation by the forces of nature, are to be strictly avoided. If the aesthetic effect of a monument, from the standpoint of age value, arises from signs of decay and the disintegration of the work's completeness through the mechanical and chemical forces of nature, the result would be that the cult of age value would not only find no interest in the preservation of the monument in its unaltered state, but it would even find such restoration contrary to its interests. The modern viewer of old monuments receives aesthetic satisfaction not from the stasis of preservation but from the continuous and unceasing cycle of change in nature. Thus the monument itself should not be withdrawn—not even if it were in human power to do so—from the

disintegrating effects of nature's forces, provided these occur in calm, lawful continuity and not in sudden, violent destruction. From the standpoint of age value, one thing is to be avoided at all costs: arbitrary human interference with the state in which the monument has developed. It may suffer neither addition nor subtraction; neither a restoration of what was disintegrated by the forces of nature in the course of time, nor the removal of whatever nature added to the monument during the same period of time, disfiguring its original discrete form. The pure, redeeming impression of natural, orderly decay may not be diminished by the admixture of arbitrary additions. The cult of age value condemns not only every violent destruction of monuments through the hand of man as a heinous interference with nature's lawful activity of disintegration, in which case the cult of age value operates on behalf of a monument's preservation; but in principle it condemns every effort at conservation, every restoration, as nothing less than an unauthorized interference with the reign of natural law. Therefore, the cult of age value works directly against the preservation of monuments. Without doubt, the unhampered activity of the forces of nature will ultimately lead to a monument's complete destruction. One can certainly say that ruins become more picturesque the more they are subject to decay: although the age value of ruins becomes less and less extensive as decay progresses—that is to say, as their age value is evoked by fewer and fewer elements—it also becomes more and more intensive, since the remaining elements have a much more forceful effect on the viewer. However, this process also has its limits, for if the extensive effect of age value is lost completely, no substance remains for intensive effect. A bare, shapeless pile of stones will not provide the viewer with a sense of age value. For that purpose, at least a distinct trace of the original form, of the former work of man—of the original production—must remain, since a pile of stones represents no more than a dead, formless fragment of the immensity of nature's force, without a trace of living growth.

Age value, as indicated earlier, has one advantage over all other ideal values of the work of art: it claims to address everyone, to be valid for everyone without exception. It claims not only to be above all religious differences, but also to be above differences between the educated and the uneducated, art experts and laymen. Indeed, the criteria through which age value is perceived are, as a rule, so simple they can be appreciated even by people whose minds are otherwise absorbed completely with constant worries about their physical well-being and the material production of goods. Even the most limited peasant will be able to distinguish between an old church tower and a new one. In this sense, age value has a distinct advantage over historical value, which rests on a scientific basis and therefore can only be achieved through intellectual reflection. Age value, to the contrary, addresses the emotions directly; it reveals itself to the viewer through the most superficial, sensory (visual) perception. To be sure, age value has the same scientific root as historical value; but age value will eventually signify the final scientific achievement for everyone; what the mind has honed will become accessible to the emotions. . . .

B. Historical Value

The historical value of a monument is based on the very specific yet individual stage the monument represents in the development of human creation in a particular field. From that perspective, what interests us in the monument are not the traces of nature's disintegrating force, which has brought its influence to bear through the course of time, but in the monument's original form as a work of man. A monument's historical value increases the more it remains uncorrupted and reveals its original state of creation: distortions and partial disintegrations are disturbing, unwelcome ingredients for historical value. This holds as equally true for art-historical value as for every value of cultural history, and also, naturally, for all chronological values. That the Parthenon, for example, survives for us merely as a ruin can only be regretted by the historian, whether he considers it as a monument of a particular stage in the development of Greek temple architecture, of the stonemason's craft, or of cult ideas and the worship of gods, and so on. It is the task of the historian to use all means available to correct the damage wrought by nature's power throughout the course of time. Symptoms of decay, which are crucial to age value, must by all means be removed according

to the point of view of historical value. However, this must not happen with the monument itself but only with a copy or merely in thoughts or words. Thus even historical value considers the original monument fundamentally inviolable, but for an entirely different reason than age value. Historical value does not concern itself with preserving the traces of age or other changes caused by nature's impact since the time the monument was created; these do not matter or are just inconvenient. Rather, historical value is far more concerned with preserving the most genuine document possible for future restoration and art-historical research. Historical value knows that all human calculation and restoration is prone to individual error. For this reason, the original document must remain preserved whenever possible as an intact, available object, so future generations will be able to control our attempts at restoration and, if necessary, replace them with ones that are better and more well founded. The difference in interpretation between age value and historical value is most striking whenever questions arise as to the most suitable treatment of a monument by the standards of historical value. Prior disintegration by the forces of nature cannot be undone and should, therefore, not be removed even from the point of view of historical value. However, further disintegration from the present day into the future, as age value not only tolerates but even postulates, is, from the standpoint of historical value, not only pointless but simply to be avoided, since any further disintegration hinders the scientific restoration of the original state of a work of man. Thus the cult of historical value must aim for the best possible preservation of a monument in its present state; this requires man to restrain the course of natural development and, to the extent that he is able, to bring the normal progress of disintegration to a halt. So we see that the interests of age value and historical value, although both commemorative values, diverge decisively on the critical issue of monument preservation.

First of all, even the most radical adherents of age value, which still to date belong predominately to the educated classes, will have to admit that the pleasure they experience from viewing a monument does not arise solely from age value, but to a large extent from the satisfaction derived from assigning the monument to one of the stylistic categories present in their minds, be it Antique, Gothic, or Baroque, and so on. Thus historical knowledge becomes an aesthetic source in addition to and aside from a feeling for age value. This satisfaction is certainly not immediate (that is to say, artistic); but one of intellectual reflection, for it requires art-historical knowledge. However, it is irrefutable that we have not become so independent of historical precedents of age value that we could entirely dispense with an interest in historical value. And when one turns today from people with higher education to people with average education, the latter of whom constitute the majority of those at all interested in ideal artistic values, one finds that even they divide monuments according to general periods such as medieval, early modern (Renaissance and Baroque), and modern. (In central Europe, ancient works are too rare to be generally recognized and evaluated as an individual class.) Such a division presupposes a basic orientation in art history and once again proves that we are not yet capable of separating age value from historical value as completely as some pioneers of the latest development may have in mind. This also explains why, for example, we find the ruinous state of a medieval castle more appropriate and more in accordance with our desire for atmosphere than that of a Baroque palace, which appears to us too new to be in such a state. We postulate, therefore, a certain relationship between the state of decay a monument displays and its age, which again presupposes a certain amount of art-historical knowledge.

From all of the above it may at least be said that commemorative value, one of the most important cultural forces today, has not achieved its absolute version as age value, so that we cannot fully dispense with its historical version completely. . . .

Today we still have every reason to do as much justice as we can to the requirements of historical research, that is, to satisfy the need for historical value, rather than to simply treat it as a negligible quantity wherever it collides with the requirements of age value. Otherwise one would run the risk of impairing the higher interests that the preservation of age value is meant to serve.

It is not unusual for occasions to arise in which age value, while fundamentally opposed to interventions in the life cycle of the monument, must demand such measures. This is the case whenever the monument has suffered premature destruction by the forces of nature that threaten an abnormally rapid disintegration of its organism. If one observes, for instance, a segment of a previously well-preserved fresco on the exterior wall of a church being washed away by rain in such a way that the fresco itself threatens to perish before our eyes, then even an adherent of age value could certainly not oppose the installation of a protective awning, although this undoubtedly represents an intervention by the hand of modern man in the independent course of natural forces. . . .

In this particular case (the necessity of a protective awning over a fresco), we therefore see age value demanding the preservation of a monument through human intervention, something that typically only historical value, rather than age value, would strongly propose as in keeping with its intrinsic interests in protecting the original state of a work. To the proponents of the cult of age value, a gentle intervention by the hand of man seems the lesser of two evils when compared with the violence of nature. In such cases the interests of both values seem, at least on the surface, to go hand in hand, even though age value seeks merely to slow down disintegration, whereas historical value opts for a complete halt to the processes of decay altogether. The main issue for contemporary monument preservation is to avoid a conflict between both values.

C. Deliberate Commemorative Value

In contrast to age value, which appreciates the past for its own sake, historical value has had the tendency to select a particular moment from the developmental history of the past and to place it before our eyes as if it were part of the present. From the outset, that is from the erection of the monument itself, the purpose of deliberate commemorative value is to keep a moment from becoming history, to keep it perpetually alive and present in the consciousness of future generations. This third category of commemorative values forms the obvious transition to present-day values.

Whereas age value is based solely on decay, historical value seeks to stop the progression of future decay, even though its entire existence rests on the decay that has occurred to the present day. Deliberate commemorative value simply makes a claim for immortality, an eternal present, an unceasing state of becoming. The disintegrating forces of nature, which work against the fulfillment of this claim, must therefore be fought ardently, their effects paralyzed again and again. A memorial column, for instance, with its inscription effaced, would cease to be a deliberate monument. Thus the fundamental requirement of deliberate monuments is restoration.

The character of deliberate commemorative value as a present-day value is furthermore expressed in the fact that there have always been laws to protect it against the destructive intervention of the hand of man.

In this category of monuments, the conflict with age value has naturally been constant. Without restoration, monuments would soon cease to be deliberate; age value is therefore a sworn enemy of deliberate commemorative value. As long as mankind does not abandon the yearning for immortality, the cult of age value will find an insurmountable opponent in the cult of deliberate commemorative value. Yet this irreconcilable conflict between age value and deliberate commemorative value has caused fewer difficulties for monument preservation than one would at first assume, since the number of "deliberate" monuments is relatively small compared to the vast quantity of nondeliberate ones.

§3. The Relationship between Present-Day Values and the Cult of Monuments

Most monuments are also able to satisfy those sensory and intellectual desires of man that could as well (if not better) be met by modern creations; and this potential, for which the monument was erected and on which its commemorative value is derived, is also the basis for its present-day value. From the standpoint of present-day value, one tends not to consider a

monument as such but puts it on a par with a recently completed modern creation, thus requiring a monument (old) to display the same outer appearance as any work of man (new) in a state of becoming: that is, the appearance of absolute completeness and integrity unaffected by the destructive forces of nature. Depending on the nature of the particular present-day value considered, symptoms of natural decay may well be tolerated; sooner or later, however, a limit will be reached beyond which present-day value would become impossible and would strive to prevail over age value. A monument's treatment in accordance with age value, which wants to allow practically all things to run their natural course, ultimately comes into conflict with present-day value. . . .

A. Use Value

Physical life is a precondition for all psychic life and is therefore more important. The former can, at least, prosper just as well without the higher form of psychic life but not vice versa. Thus, for instance, an old building still in use must be maintained in good enough condition to accommodate people without endangering their lives or their health; any opening created in its walls or ceilings by the forces of nature must be repaired immediately. . . . In general, one could say that use value is basically indifferent to the kind of treatment a monument receives, as long as the monument's existence is not threatened. Beyond that, however, absolutely no concessions may be made to age value. . . .

The fact that innumerable secular and ecclesiastical monuments can still be put to practical use today and are actually being used does not need to be proved. If they were to go out of use, substitutions would be required in most cases. This demand is so compelling that age value's counterclaim to leave monuments to their natural fate could only be considered if one intended to produce substitutions of at least equal quality. However, the practical realization of this demand is only possible in relatively few exceptional cases. . . .

If we were to assume that it were actually possible to produce a modern substitution for all usable monuments, so that old originals could live out their lives without restoration, but as a result also without any practical use, would the requirements of age value be met completely? The question is not only justified, the answer to it is clearly no. Age value is based on the perception of the lively play of natural forces, an essential part of which would be irredeemably lost if a monument were not used by man. Who would want to view the dome of St. Peter's in Rome, for instance, without the lively entourage of modern visitors or religious ritual practices? Even the most radical adherent of age value would consider a residential building that was destroyed by lightning—even if remains indicated that the building had been built several centuries ago—or the ruins of a church on a well-traveled street more disturbing than evocative: we are used to seeing such structures used by man and find it disturbing when they have lost their familiar use and create an impression of violent destruction, unbearable even to the cult of age value. Age value reveals its full undiminished charm in the remains of those monuments that are no longer of practical use to us and in which we do not miss human activity as a force of nature, such as in the ruins of a medieval castle set in the wilderness of a steep mountain or in a Roman temple on one of Rome's busiest streets. We are still far from being able to apply the pure standards of age value equally and indiscriminately to all monuments. We still distinguish more or less accurately between monuments that can and cannot be used, just as we distinguish between older and more recent ones. In the latter, we take historical value into consideration, in the former, we take use value along with age value. Only unusable works—that is to say, works with no use value—can be viewed and enjoyed exclusively from the standpoint of age value. Our viewing of usable works is always more or less impaired or disturbed should they fail to exhibit the present-day value we have come to expect from them. Here one encounters the same modern spirit that has given rise to the well-known agitation against *prisons d'art*.² Age value must oppose even more fervently than historical value the attempt to uproot a monument from its previous, so to speak, “organic” context and to imprison it in a museum, even though this setting would most effectively exempt it from the necessity for restoration.

Newness Value

Every monument, depending on its age and other favorable or unfavorable circumstances, must have experienced to a greater or lesser extent the disintegrating effect of natural forces. The monument will therefore simply never attain the completeness of form and color that newness value requires. This is the reason why strikingly aged works of art have always, even up to the present day, appeared more or less unsatisfactory in terms of the modern *Kunstwollen*. The conclusion is obvious: If a monument bearing signs of disintegration is to appeal to the modern *Kunstwollen*, the traces of age must be removed first of all, and through restoration of its form and color appear once again like a newly created work. Newness character can therefore only be preserved by means that are absolutely contradictory to the cult of age value.

At this point, the possibility of a conflict with age value arises that exceeds all aforementioned conflicts in terms of its severity and implacability. Newness value is indeed the most formidable opponent of age value.

The completeness of the newly created is expressed by the simple criteria of unbroken form and pure polychromy and can be judged by everyone, even those devoid of education. Thus newness value has always been the art value of the mass majority of the less educated or uneducated; whereas relative art value, at least since the beginning of more recent times, could only be evaluated by the aesthetically educated. The masses have always been pleased by everything that appeared new; in works of man they wished to see only the creatively triumphant effect of human power and not the destructive force of nature's power, which is hostile to the work of man. According to the masses, only the new and complete is beautiful; the old, fragmentary, and discolored is considered ugly. This view of youth being undoubtedly preferable to age has become so deeply rooted over the past millennium that it will be impossible to eradicate in a couple of decades. For the majority of modern men, it is considered entirely self-evident that a chipped edge of a piece of furniture will be replaced by a new one or that sooty wall plaster will be taken down and replaced by fresh plaster. The great resistance that the apostles of age value encountered on their first appearance may be clearly explained by such a perspective. More than that, all of preservation of the nineteenth century was based essentially on this traditional point of view, or, to be more precise, on an intimate fusion of newness value and historical value: any striking trace of natural decay was to be removed, any loss or fragment was to be repaired, the work was to be restored to a complete, unified whole. The reinstatement of a document into its original state was the openly admitted and zealously propagated goal of all rational preservation of the nineteenth century.

We seem to face a hopeless conflict here: on the one hand is an appreciation of the old for its own sake, a view that condemns any renovation of the old on principle; on the other hand is an appreciation of the new for its own sake, a view that seeks to remove all traces of age as disturbing and displeasing. The immediacy with which newness value may affect the masses far exceeds, at least today, the immediacy previously claimed for age value. Furthermore, the perpetual esteem newness value has enjoyed throughout the millennia, even as far back as we can look in human history, has understandably yielded a claim to absolute and eternal validity for its adherents and, at least for now, has rendered its position close to irrefutable. The extent to which the cult of age value still requires the pioneering preparatory work of historical value becomes clear precisely from this point of view. Far wider classes of society will have to be won over to the cult of historical value before, with their help, the broad masses will be ready for the cult of age value. Wherever age value collides with newness value in a monument of continuous use, it will seek as much as possible to resign itself to newness value, not only for practical considerations (of use value, which was discussed in the previous section), but also out of ideal (elementary artistic) considerations. . . .

Practical use value corresponds aesthetically to newness value as well; for its own sake, the cult of age value will, at least at its present stage of development, have to tolerate a certain degree of newness value in modern and usable works. If, for example, a Gothic town hall were to lose the crown of its baldachin in a highly visible place, the proponents of age value would certainly prefer to allow the trace of age to remain undisturbed. Today, however, it does not cause any real controversy when, in the name of decorum, the adherents of newness value

advocate the restoration of the crown to its (indisputably verified) original form. The vehement controversy in which the proponents of both values engaged during the nineteenth century refer to another conclusion derived from newness value and in favor of historical value.

This controversy concerns monuments that have not been entirely preserved in their original form, but have, through the course of time, been subject to various stylistic additions through the hand of man. At a time when the cult of historical value for its own sake was still the most decisive and was based on the clear recognition of an original form, efforts were drawn toward the removal of all subsequent additions (cleaning, exposure) and the restoration of the original forms, whether these had been documented accurately or not. Even a mere modern approximation to the original seemed to be more satisfactory to the cult of historical value than an authentic, but stylistically foreign, earlier addition. The cult of newness value joins with historical value in this attempt insofar as the original to be restored also presents an intact appearance, since any addition that did not belong to the original style destroyed completeness and was considered a symptom of disintegration. The result of this was the postulate of stylistic unity, which advocated not only the removal of additions added to the work at a later stylistic period but also the renovation of the monument to a form in keeping with its original style. It is therefore correct to say that monument preservation of the nineteenth century was based essentially on the postulates of stylistic originality (historical value) and stylistic unity (newness value).

The strongest resistance to this system occurred when the cult of age value came into existence, since the latter concerned itself neither with stylistic originality nor with completeness but, on the contrary, sought to break with both of them. In this case, according to the cult of age value, what is required to keep a monument "alive," in use, is not necessarily concessions to either use value or its aesthetic counterpart, newness value, but rather a sacrifice of virtually everything that constitutes age value in a monument. To succumb would have been tantamount to a capitulation of age value; in order to avoid that, the adherents of age value began a fierce struggle against the previous system. Such struggles usually result in exaggerated claims against the opposing side, thereby obscuring clear insight into the matter at hand. As a result of these exaggerated claims, a reformer generally disputes in the heat of the battle some justifiable points of the old system that should not be sacrificed along with the truly untenable points. The impartial observer may feel compelled to unjustifiably support the truly untenable points of the old system endangered by reformist propaganda. However, the increasing change of opinion today has actually helped quite legitimate elements in the cult of age value to slowly establish themselves on their own. As one of many examples: eight years ago a decision was made to demolish the Baroque choir of the Altmünster parish church, even though it was not yet in need of repair, and to replace it with a Gothic choir in order to achieve stylistic unity with the Gothic main building. Four years ago this plan to construct a Gothic choir of very dubious historical value but indisputable newness value was abandoned, primarily for financial reasons. Today, adherents of both the old and the new systems agree that it would have been an inexcusably sinful act against age value and historical value to remove the Herberstorfer Choir, an artistic expression of the introduction of the Counter-Reformation in upper Austria. The postulate of stylistic unity appears to have been abandoned in this new, but widely shared point of view, which is even applicable to an ecclesiastical monument; the chasm between the thinkers among the adherents of the old system and the prudent among the reformers is actually bridged at the point where it earlier had been the widest.

Notes

1. Other characteristic traits of modern cultural life that refer back to the same origin as age value, especially in Germanic nations, are animal protection efforts and an appreciation for landscape in general. This appreciation has widened from the protection of individual plants or entire forests to the demand for the legal protection of "natural monuments," and thus to the inclusion of even inorganic matter into the scope of subjects requiring protection.
2. [Literally "prisons of art," used ironically to refer to art museums.]