Baltic Identity via German Heritage? Seeking Baltic German Art in the Nineteenth Century*

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The paper investigates the Baltic art historiography concerned with the heritage of medieval architecture in what is now Estonia and northern Latvia, aiming to detect possible conflicts and collisions – or at least a tense relationship – between a specifically Baltic identity and an inevitably German heritage. Against the background of the cultural and national aspirations of the German 'motherland', tsarist Russia and native Estonians/Latvians, the Baltic German identity constructions gradually became more and more pronounced in the course of the long nineteenth century. Asking when the need to differentiate between a German and a Baltic German heritage was first sensed, and when the research on this heritage was placed in the context of art history, the writings by the German-born, but Riga-based art historian Wilhelm Neumann serve as a case study. The focal point of the paper is the interrelation between the 'discovery' of the local heritage and the emergence of art history: the texts examined mirror the constructions of a Baltic identity, as much as they mirror the influence of the (German) discipline of art history. Can the fact that the roots of both of these were in Germany be considered a situation of double colonialisation? How independent were Baltic German authors in their opinions and conceptions? Can studies on these issues benefit from the theories of postcolonialism?

Introduction

In 1900 the leading Baltic German art historian Wilhelm Neumann (1849–1919) opened his programmatic paper *700 Jahre baltischer Kunst* with the provocative statement that not long before the phrase 'Baltic art' would have aroused nothing but mocking laughter.[1] Although the local heritage of architecture had been one of the cornerstones of the Baltic German cultural 'awakening' since the late eighteenth

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1 W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst. – Baltische Monatsschrift 1900, vol. 49, pp. 319–320. His full name was Johann Wilhelm Carl Neumann, in Latvian the form Vilhelms Neimanis is used.

century, more than a century later the Baltic Germans themselves were still faced with the question *Gibt es eine baltische Kunst?* ('Is there a Baltic art?')[2]. This paper aims to explore how the Baltic Germans began to construct their history of art, particularly their approaches to the heritage of medieval architecture in Estonia and northern Latvia (constituting the Baltic in the narrow sense: the areas inhabited by Baltic Germans) during the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries.

The Baltic Germans represented the cultural elite in the area, but throughout the nineteenth century they sensed with growing concern a threat to their domination both from the Russian state and the local inhabitants; moreover, rising German nation-building played an important role. When placed in the context of the ongoing national 'awakenings'[3], Neumann's manifestation of seven hundred years of Baltic art seems even more insistent: it is these same seven hundred years that the intellectuals of Estonian origin, starting with Jakob Hurt and Carl Robert Jakobson, had considered an era of colonial darkness and serfdom:[4] an image that is widespread until today. Due to the historical context of many foreign powers, 'local' remained an ambiguous concept. Over time, the ethnic borderline between the German newcomers and Estonian/Latvian natives had remained clearly visible, but the belonging of the territory or its heritage was more difficult to designate.[5] Even though the Baltic Germans were generally willing to use 'Baltic art' as the common denominator for the Baltic German, Estonian and Latvian contemporary artists,[6] this did not apply to historical art. Attitudes that the different ethnic communities had towards the antiquities of the area varied greatly, making the situation ever more ambivalent.

Defining monuments of art-historical value in the Baltic region exclusively as the heritage of the (Baltic) Germans left the Estonians and Latvians with a vast archaeological and ethnographic heritage, but no art history of their own. Therefore, when 'Baltic' occurs in the texts cited below, this mostly signifies 'Baltic German'. Although the Estonian and Latvian cultures had developed side by side with the Baltic German culture, national otherness[7] continued to be the key issue when discussing the heritage of art and architecture. The whole project of writing of art history remained the privilege of Baltic Germans throughout the nineteenth cen-

2 G. von Rosen, Gibt es eine baltische Kunst? – Rigaer Tageblatt. Kunst-Beilage 10 March 1907.

3 See e.g. E. Jansen, 'Baltlus', baltisakslased, eestlased ['Being Baltic', Baltic-Germans, Estonians]. I–II. – Tuna 2005, no. 2, pp. 35–44; no. 3, pp. 31–42. Available in German translation: E. Jansen. Das 'Baltentum', die Deutschbalten und die Esten. – Forschungen zur baltischen Geschichte 2007, no. 2, pp. 71–111.

4 See C. R. Jakobson, Kolm isamaa kõnet [Three fatherland speeches]. St. Petersburg, 1870. See also J. Undusk, Kolm võimalust kirjutada eestlaste ajalugu. Merkel – Jakobson – Hurt [Three alternative ways to write the history of Estonians: Merkel – Jakobson – Hurt]. – Keel ja Kirjandus 1997, no. 11, pp. 721–734; no. 12, pp. 797–811.

5 See A. V. Wendland, The Russian Empire and its Western Borderlands: National Historiographies and Their 'Others' in Russia, the Baltics and the Ukraine. – The Contested Nation: Ethnicity, Class, Religion and Gender in National Histories. Eds. S. Berger, C. Lorenz. (Writing the Nation 3.) Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008, pp. 405–441.

6 E.g. G. von Rosen, Gibt es eine baltische Kunst?

7 One model for stepping outside the discourse of nationalism has been offered by the Estonian literary scholar Jaan Undusk, with his concept of *maiskondlik ajalugu*, which traces the lineage of autonomy of the Baltic region, regardless of the ethnic background of the particular political elite of an era. It considers regional identity to be determined by a geopolitical mentality rather than by the nation (J. Undusk, Ajalootõde ja metahistoorilised žestid. Eesti ajaloo mitmest moraalist [Historical truth and meta-historic gestures: Multiple morals in Estonian history]. – Tuna 2000, no. 2, p. 121).

tury, and this paper focuses solely on their views on the local history of art. It can be mentioned, however, that during the inter-war era, continuous efforts were made by the new generation of (Estonian) researchers to overcome the colonial character of local art. The term 'Baltic art' was finally given a clear definition in the 1930s, and was used to distinguish between Baltic German and national (i.e. post-awakening) Estonian art.[8]

But colonialism was raised as a topic also in terms of the relationship between Baltic Germandom and Germandom. It is well known that the Baltic provinces maintained strong ties with their German 'motherland'. How did the German–Baltic German axis, the juxtaposition of Baltic and German identity, occur in art historiography? Although the colonial situation in the Baltics is a re-occurring feature of art-historical texts of the era, little research has been done on art historiography from a colonial perspective. German colonialism has started to attract scholarly attention lately,[9] but most of it excludes the Baltics. The latter part of my paper deals specifically with Baltic colonialism, and aims to test the usefulness of the concept of postcolonialism in this context. Particularly influential for my own research have been the works of the German(-Estonian) historian Ulrike Plath[10] and the US film and literature historian, Kristin Leigh Kopp[11]. Loads of relevant research has been done outside the direct framework of colonialism, however. To name just one example, issues highly pertinent to my topic have been addressed in the book *Die Kunsthistoriographien in Ostmitteleuropa und der nationale Diskurs* (2004).[12]

Balancing between the tangible architectural heritage and its representation in art historiography, my interest is two-fold: the writings on local antiquities reflect both the constructions of a Baltic identity, and the influence of the international (or German) discipline of art history. Besides the fact that the medieval architecture of the region in its physical form was interpreted as a constant reminder of the German roots of the local culture, the German-centredness penetrated deep into Baltic art historiography because Germany was an essential player in the process of forming the discipline of art history. The ways of seeing and defining Baltic heritage, or judging its value, were provided by this very process that began in the early nineteenth century. Due to the multi-layered historical relationship with Germany,

8 E.g. A. Vaga, Eesti kunsti ajalugu I. Keskaeg [History of Estonian art I. Middle Ages]. Tartu: Eesti Kirjanduse Selts, 1932, pp. 5–6, 281–282. See M. Eller, Eesti kunst ja tema ajalised piirid. Historiograafiline ülevaade ja probleemiseade [Estonian art and its temporal boundaries: A historiographical overview and problem setting]. – Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Humanitaar- ja Sotsiaalteadused / Proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences: Humanities and Social Sciences 1996, vol. 45 (3), p. 309; K. Jõekalda, 'Võõra' pärandiga leppimine ja lepitamine. 1920.–1930. aastate debatid ajaloolise arhitektuuri väärtuse ja kaitse üle [Coping and reconciling with 'alien' heritage: Debates over the value and protection of historical architecture during the 1920s–1930s]. – Maastik ja mälu. Pärandiloome arengujooni Eestis. Eds. L. Kaljundi, H. Sooväli-Sepping. Tallinn: TLÜ Kirjastus, 2014, pp. 182–245.

9 See Germany's Colonial Pasts. Eds. E. Ames, M. Klotz, L. Wildenthal. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005; German Colonialism and National Identity. Eds. M. Perraudin, J. Zimmerer. (Routledge Studies in Modern European History 14.) New York, London: Routledge, 2011.

10 Especially U. Plath, Esten und Deutsche in den baltischen Provinzen Russlands: Fremdheitskonstruktionen, Lebenswelten, Kolonialphantasien 1750–1850. (Veröffentlichungen des Nordost-Instituts 11.) Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011.

11 Especially K. Kopp, Germany's Wild East: Constructing Poland as Colonial Space. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012.

12 Die Kunsthistoriographien in Ostmitteleuropa und der nationale Diskurs. Eds. R. Born, A. Janatková, A. S. Labuda. Berlin: Mann, 2004.

it is particularly intriguing to examine which issues the international discipline – or the art-historical standards and hierarchies it created – raised in the Baltic context. The beginning of art history in the contemporary sense only dates back to the mid-nineteenth century;[13] this is also when Baltic heritage began to attract scholarly attention, and when deliberate attempts to write 'art history' became widespread in the Baltics. Coy and unsystematic writings about art[14] were gradually replaced by more knowledgeable (and simultaneously nationally motivated) ones. Although nationalism is commonly referred to as a phenomenon of the latter nineteenth century, essential changes had already begun during the romanticist era.

Considering that there was a certain Baltic German cultural 'awakening' going on, my initial hypothesis when starting the research was that a logical counter-reaction to the re-emerging German colonialising tendency of the latter nineteenth century would have been a pronounced emphasis on the sovereignty of Baltic German culture. In order to figure this out, I must ask: Who were the first authors to elaborate on the concept of 'Baltic art'? How was it positioned 1) in the ideological and nationally inspired debates of the era[15], and 2) in the professional art-history-related discussions? I shall limit my analysis to one concept – colonialism – and one author – Wilhelm Neumann (fig. 1) – comparing his work with other local forefathers of the discipline. As for Neumann, his oeuvre has been considered the most noteworthy and scholarly exception to the general 'amateurish' character of the Baltic art history. In existing research Neumann – a German-born, but Riga-based productive architect and art historian, and the first director of the Latvian National Museum of Art – has been regarded as the 'grand old man' of local art history, or even 'the father of Baltic art history'.[16] Moreover, it has been claimed that it was only in Neumann's writings that the foreign influences on Baltic heritage were pinpointed and analysed[17], and that Baltic art came to be seen as an inseparable part of German art. Both in terms of art and the writing of its history, this raises questions about ownership and belonging, lines of influence, the German example, and the colonialising or 'othering' gaze.

13 It is symptomatic that there are many (opposing) answers to the question of an exact 'date of birth' of art history: the majority of subsequent decades until the very end of the century have been proposed to be the 'real' birth of the discipline. See e.g. M. Podro, The Critical Historians of Art. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982; K. Brush, The Shaping of Art History: Wilhelm Vöge, Adolph Goldschmidt, and the Study of Medieval Art. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

14 On the early history of the discipline, see K. Jõekalda, Art History in Nineteenth-Century Estonia? Scholarly Endeavours in the Context of an Emerging Discipline. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2015, vol. 24 (1/2) [forthcoming].

15 See Free Access to the Past: Romanticism, Cultural Heritage and the Nation. Eds. L. Jensen, J. Leerssen, M. Mathijsen. (National Cultivation of Culture 2.) Leiden: Brill, 2010; Nationalizing the Past: Historians as Nation Builders in Modern Europe. Eds. C. Lorenz, S. Berger. (Writing the Nation.) Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2010; M. Baár, Historians and Nationalism: East-Central Europe in the Nineteenth Century. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

16 Most straightforwardly in J. Kaljundi, Baltimaade kunstiajaloo isa [The father of Baltic art history]. – Sirp 8 October 1999.

17 E.g. J. Keevallik, R. Loodus, Fremdsprachige Texte. Einleitendes. – J. Keevallik, R. Loodus, L. Viiroja, Tekste kunstist ja arhitektuurist / Texte über Kunst und Architektur. Vol. 3, Kunstikirjutus Eestis 1900–1918 / Kunstschreibung in Estland von 1900 bis 1918. Tallinn: Teaduste Akadeemia Kirjastus, 2006, p. 15; O. Sparitis, 200 Jahre kunst- und architekturhistorische Forschung in Lettland. – Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte im Baltikum. Studien zur Kunstgeschichte Kurlands. (Homburger Gespräch 23, 2006.) Kiel: Böckler-Mare Balticum-Stiftung, 2007, pp. 39–40; S. Pelše, Creating the Discipline: Facts, Stories and Sources of Latvian Art History. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2010, vol. 19 (3/4), p. 28.

Histories of local art

It is in the essence of art history to be inextricably intertwined with studies of identity and nationalism, and this applies especially to architectural heritage that is physically present in – and thus closely tied to – a specific location. This nature of the discipline of art history makes its authors constantly face the contradiction between the local and the universal, but with romanticism basic changes occurred in the attitude towards the local heritage, particularly regarding medieval art.[18] Research on various aspects of regional (art) history began to attract authors across Europe, but the 'peripheral' Baltic area was certainly not the primary interest of the centres-focused narrative of the general history of art. How did Baltic research perspectives fit into the categories of a universal history of art? And how did they emerge over all?

The nineteenth century witnessed the first attempts to offer ample overviews of the general history of art, but also efforts to present the history of art in the form of national schools of artists. Localising and globalising art history can be seen as parallel processes: two sides of the same coin. The publication of Luigi Antonio Lanzi's *Storia pittorica della Italia…* (History of painting in Italy…, 1792)[19] long before the actual political unification of Italy created a precedent for future art historians. The first truly all-European history of art, Johann Dominik Fiorillo's nine-volume *Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste…* (1798–1820), rejected the universal classical ideals applied in its own earlier volumes[20]: as a reaction to the Napoleonic wars, Fiorillo shifted the focus to what he termed *vaterländische Kunst*: the national history of German and Netherlandish art.[21]

It cannot be disregarded that in the early nineteenth century, German art had a somewhat unstable position in the 'grand narrative' of art history, the forming 'canon' of which tended to prioritise Greek, Italian and French art. Whereas the first national art histories were born by applying the Winckelmannian scheme to the art of their own region, with romanticism – particularly the works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and the brothers August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel – propagating medieval and early modern (German) art became a patriotic practice.[22] In this re-evaluation of medieval art, the new wave of authors found support from Johann Gottfried Herder's writings, particularly those from the years he had spent in Riga during the 1760s, offering an alternative to the centres-oriented 'grand narratives'

18 See also A. Hein, 'Et kellelgi ei peaks voli tekkima vähimatki neist ära rikkuda või raisata…' Muinsuskaitse ja restaureerimise varaseimast ajaloost Eestis ['That nobody should be given the opportunity to ruin or waste any of them…' The earliest history of heritage protection and restoration in Estonia]. – Maastik ja mälu, pp. 159–160.

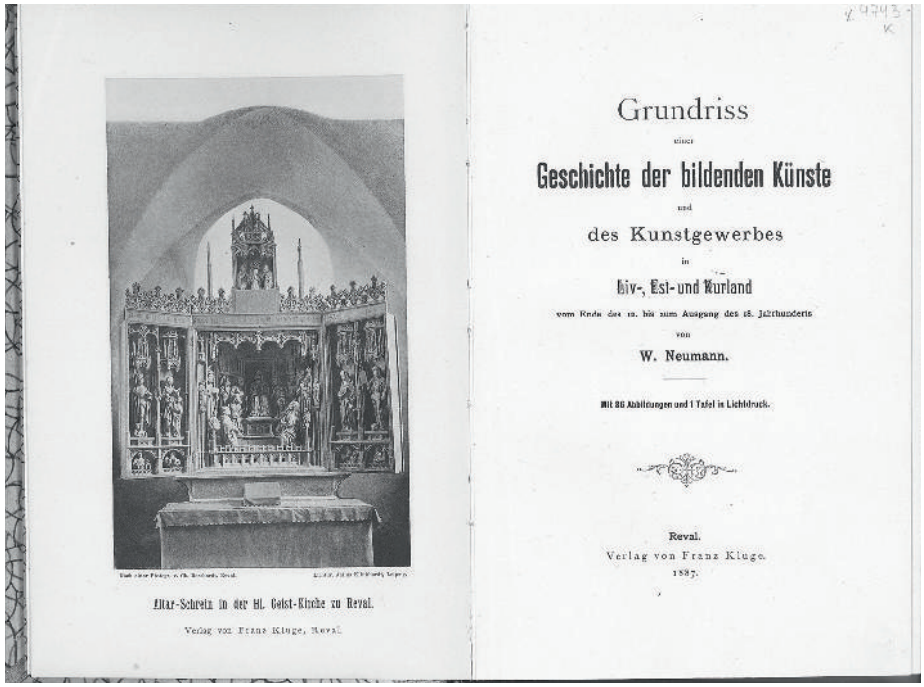
19 L. A. Lanzi, La storia pittorica della Italia inferiore o sia delle scuole fiorentina, senese, romana, napolitana: compendiata e ridotta a metodo per agevolare a' dilettanti la cognizione de' professori e de' loro stili. Florence: Pagani, 1792.

20 J. D. Fiorillo, Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste von ihrer Wiederauflebung bis auf die neuesten Zeiten. 5 vols. Göttingen: Rosenbusch, 1798–1808; J. D. Fiorillo, Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste in Deutschland und den Vereinigten Niederlanden. 4 vols. Hanover: Hahn, 1815–1820.

21 See G. Bickendorf, Die ersten Überblickswerke zur 'Kunstgeschichte': Jean-Baptiste-Louis-Georges Séroux d'Agincourt (1730–1814), Luigi Lanzi (1732–1810), Johann Domenico Fiorillo (1748–1821) und Leopoldo Cicognara (1767–1834). – Klassiker der Kunstgeschichte. Vol. 1, Von Winckelmann bis Warburg. Ed. U. Pfisterer. Munich: Beck, pp. 39–42, 46–61. See also H. Locher, Kunstgeschichte als historische Theorie der Kunst 1750–1950. Munich: Fink, 2001, pp. 195–202 (chapter *Patriotische Kunstgeschichte*).

22 See R. Prange, Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte. Philosophische Ästhetik und empirische Wissenschaft. Cologne: Deubner, 2004, pp. 71–93, 105–108, 111.

1. Portrait of the art historian and architect Wilhelm Neumann. Pastel by Theodor Karl Otto Kraus (1910s). Deutsches Dokumentationszentrum für Kunstgeschichte – Bildarchiv Foto Marburg. Collection: Krusenstjern-Archiv (Baltische Ritterschaften).



Altar-Schrein in der Hl. Geist-Kirche zu Reval.

Verlag von Franz Kluge, Reval.

Grundriss

einer

Geschichte der bildenden Künste

und

des Kunstgewerbes

in

Liv-, Est- und Kurland

vom Ende des 12. bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts

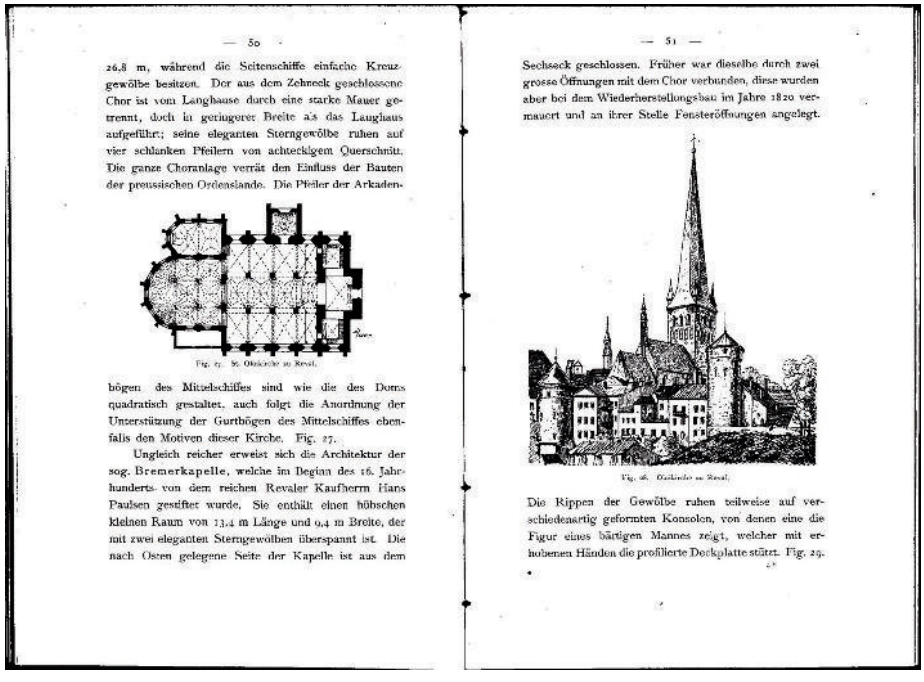
von

W. Neumann.

Mit 86 Abbildungen und 1 Tafel in Lichtdruck.

Reval.
Verlag von Franz Kluge.
1887.

2. Title page of Neumann's grand opus.
W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte der bildenden Künste und des Kunstgewerbes in Liv-, Est- und Kurland vom Ende des 12. bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts. Reval: Kluge, 1887.



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26,8 m, während die Seitenschiffe einfache Kreuzgewölbe besitzen. Der aus dem Zehneck geschlossene Chor ist vom Langhause durch eine starke Mauer getrennt, doch in geringerer Breite als das Langhaus aufgeführt; seine eleganten Sterngewölbe ruhen auf vier schlanken Pfeilern von achteckigem Querschnitt. Die ganze Choranlage verrät den Einfluss der Bauten der preussischen Ordenslande. Die Pfeiler der Arkaden-

Fig. 27. St. Olaikirche zu Reval.

bögen des Mittelschiffes sind wie die des Doms quadratisch gestaltet, auch folgt die Anordnung der Unterstützung der Gurtbögen des Mittelschiffes ebenfalls den Motiven dieser Kirche. Fig. 27.

Ungleich reicher erweist sich die Architektur der sog. **Bremerkapelle**, welche im Beginn des 16. Jahrhunderts von dem reichen Revaler Kaufherrn Hans Paulsen gestiftet wurde. Sie enthält einen hübschen kleinen Raum von 13,4 m Länge und 9,4 m Breite, der mit zwei eleganten Sterngewölben überspannt ist. Die nach Osten gelegene Seite der Kapelle ist aus dem

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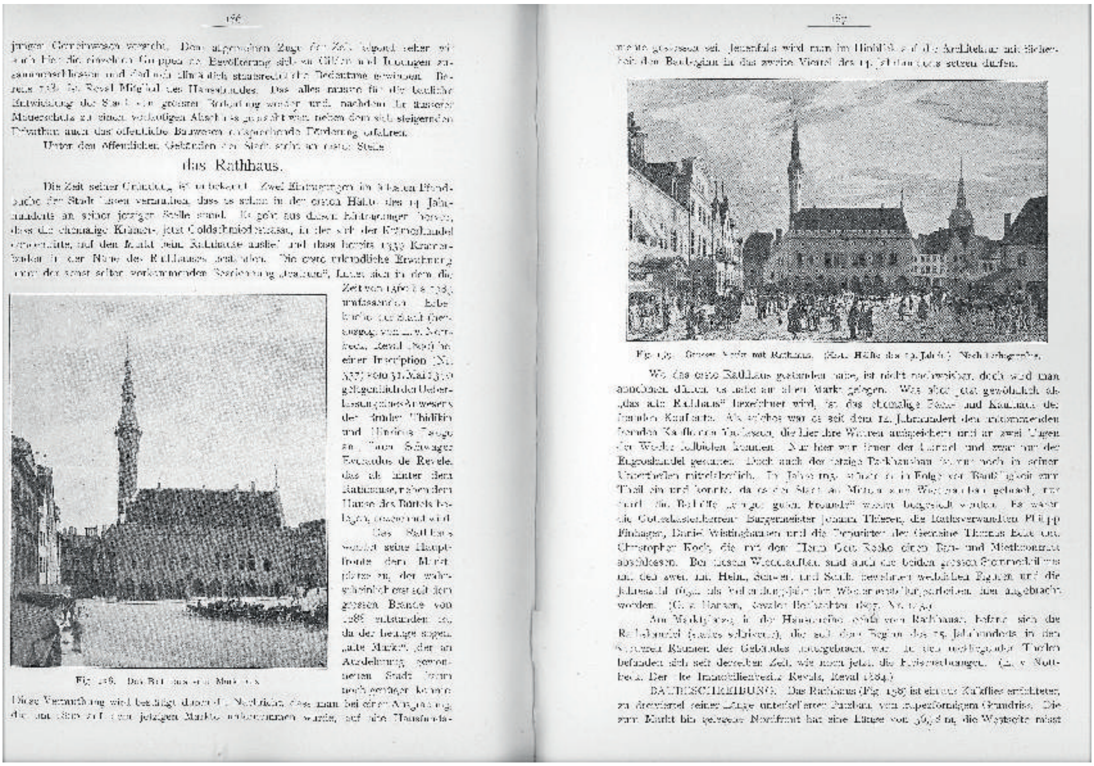
Sechseck geschlossen. Früher war dieselbe durch zwei grosse Öffnungen mit dem Chor verbunden, diese wurden aber bei dem Wiederherstellungsbau im Jahre 1820 vermauert und an ihrer Stelle Fensteröffnungen angelegt.

Fig. 28. Olaikirche zu Reval.

Die Rippen der Gewölbe ruhen teilweise auf verschiedenartig geformten Konsolen, von denen eine die Figur eines bärtigen Mannes zeigt, welcher mit erhobenen Händen die profilierte Deckplatte stützt. Fig. 29.

3. St Olaf's church in Tallinn (Reval) as pictured in Neumann's book.
W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte..., pp. 50–51.

4. Interior of St Olaf's church in Tallinn after the fire of 1820. Johann Carl Emanuel von Ungern-Sternberg, lithography and ink on paper (1827).
Art Museum of Estonia, G 3483.



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das Rathhaus.

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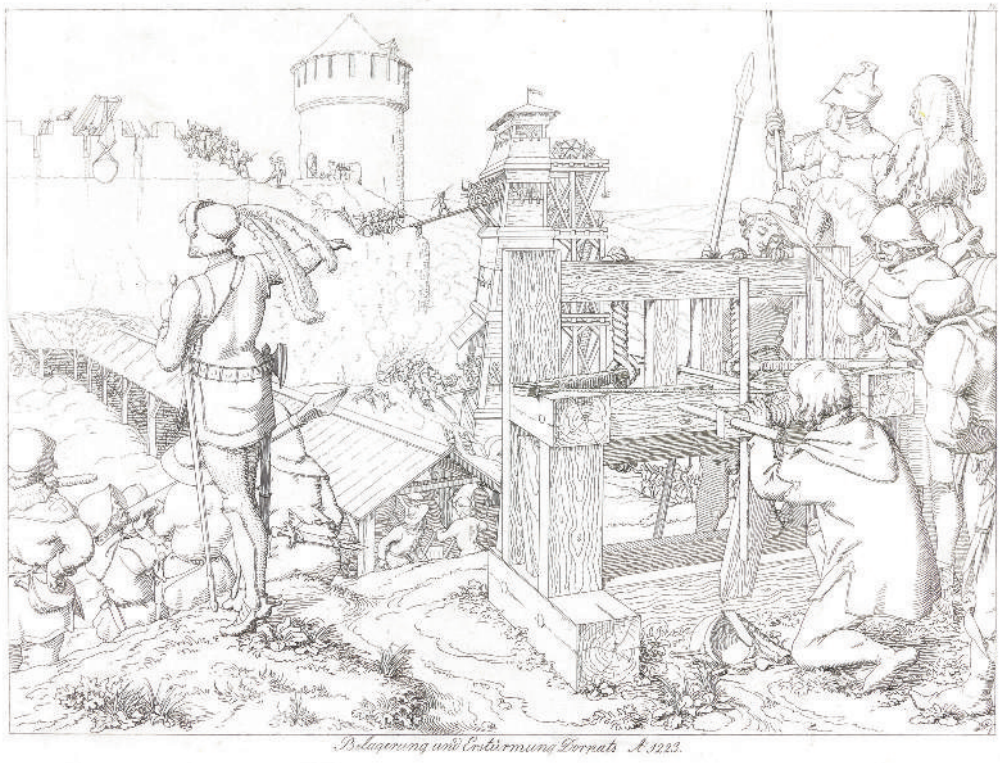
5.

Tallinn town hall in the early nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the latter showing the effect of the 1860s renovation.
E. von Nottbeck, W. Neumann, Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval. Vol. 2. Reval: Kluge, 1904, pp. 186–187.

6.
Medieval cathedral ruins in Tartu (Dorpat). The church was constructed from the thirteenth to early sixteenth century and gradually became a ruin after the reformation. The former choir was reconstructed in 1804–1807 by the re-established University of Tartu to house its library (architect Johann Wilhelm Krause). Photo by Carl Schulz, ca. 1875.
Estonian History Museum, F17679.

7.

Northern console of Karja (Karris) church in Saaremaa (Ösel) with a sculpture relief depicting Estonians, late thirteenth or fourteenth century. Photograph from 1920s.
Tallinn City Museum, F 10237:19.



8. Nineteenth-century imagination of the medieval fortifications. Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell, *The Siege and Conquest of Tartu, 1223*, copper engraving.
Part of the series F. L. von Maydell, Fünfzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands nebst erklärendem Text. Vol. 2. Dorpat: Kluge, 1842.
Art Museum of Estonia, G 1435.

9.
River Narva has been the symbolic borderline between the East and the West for centuries, with fortifications on both banks.
Theodor Gehlhaar together with Johannes Hau, *View on Ivangorod and Narva*, coloured aquatint (1828).
Art Museum of Estonia, G 6510.

by taking national identities to be the basis of general history (of art).[23] As a former resident of Livonia, Herder's work had a profound influence on Baltic authors in the late nineteenth century. Neumann, for instance, specifically mentioned Herder as one of the originators of the new prosperity and intellectual awakening of the German culture.[24]

Not wanting to feel inferior to German culture, the Baltic German authors were similarly haunted by the opposition between the universal canon and the local heritage or, more provocatively, the grandeur of the architecture in Western metropolises and the (poor) aesthetic value of Baltic architecture. This often took the form of a contrast between 'high' and 'low'. Although on a local scale, when compared to the vernacular culture of Estonians/Latvians, the Baltic Germans themselves were the representatives of 'high art', on a broader scale they could be considered mere inheritors of the German culture. This might have been true inside the discourse of art history, but this was not the only framework within which Baltic German authors of the era operated. Often ideological need was a stronger driving force than the standards of the forming discipline. The Estonian cultural historian Ea Jansen has convincingly shown how the whole notion of 'Baltic' began to be loaded with politicised content from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, expressed not least in the title of a new journal, the *Baltische Monatsschrift* (1859–1934), which quickly became one of the central periodicals of the Baltic German community.[25]

All this created the opportunity for the Baltic Germans to turn the local antiquities into a suitable resource for their identity construction. This was widely practised among the Baltic German authors, although not always consciously. More than elsewhere, the two-fold tasks and skills of art historians became visible in the *Baubeschreibung* type of art history[26] in focus here: objects of architecture that often serve a public function (and are visible to everyone even when private) tend to easily lead to ideological interpretations. In Germany, too, nationalist aspirations had come to play a stable role in art historiography ever since the *Heimat* movement (*Heimatbewegung*)[27]. One of the most extreme examples of a renowned author demonstrating these opposing tendencies was Georg Dehio, who had precise, extensive and connoisseur-like knowledge of art history, but who also practised openly nationalist subjectivism, using the history of art to promote contemporary political ideals. I will now take a look at the ways the early art historians in the

23 See A. Hein, 'Et kellelgi ei peaks…', pp. 150, 152; U. Kultermann, The History of Art History [1966]. New York: Abaris Books, 1993, p. 76.
24 W. Neumann, Lübecks künstlerische Beziehungen zu Alt-Livland. – Mitteilungen des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde. Vol. 13 (6). Lübeck, 1918, p. 107; W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 412.
25 E. Jansen, 'Baltlus', baltisakslased, eestlased [I], pp. 37, 40–42.
26 S. Muthesius, Lokal, universal – europäisch, national: Fragestellungen der frühen Kunstgeographie im späten 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert. – Die Kunsthistoriographien in Ostmitteleuropa und der nationale Diskurs, pp. 69–70. In Central Europe, this at times led to clashes between the self-taught *Lokalforscher* and the first wave of highly educated professional art historians.
27 See W. Speitkamp, Heritage Preservation, Nationalism and the Reconstruction of Historical Monuments in Germany during the Long Nineteenth Century in this volume; W. Speitkamp, Die Verwaltung der Geschichte. Denkmalpflege und Staat in Deutschland 1871–1933. (Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft 114.) Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996.

Baltics phrased their ideas when discussing the heritage and historical situation of the area.

Baltic or German heritage?

The first writings about art in Estonia to which scholarly qualities have been attributed[28] limited themselves to Tallinn (Reval). With his *Ueber die kirchlichen Bauwerke Revals und deren Alterthümer* (1858),[29] Gotthard von Hansen (1821–1900) was among the first Baltic authors to implement the nationalist interpretations of the gothic style. He was convinced that it originated in Germany, seeing no problem or contradiction in presenting Baltic heritage as a derivation of northern German heritage. Defining Baltic art was one of his goals, for which the means was proving the close relationship with German art. At the same time, Hansen was certainly in favour of showing the Baltic area as a separate entity. The emotional statement in his closing sentence is a case in point: 'May the kind reader … be guided by the same love for his Baltic *Heimath* as was the author in the preparation of this monograph.'[30] Considering that the true geographical (and national) origins of gothicism, either German or French, had been debated since the early nineteenth century,[31] were Hansen's statements simply ignorant of the contemporary heated discussions? Or was he, on the contrary, trying to show support for his German colleagues, starting with Franz Kugler? Either way, Hansen clearly thought gothicism to be the expression of the German character: 'Also the shrines of Reval were executed in the so-called gothic construction style, displaying itself across the whole European world with a focal point precisely in Germany.'[32] He felt that the *Spitzbogen*, being the central element of gothic architecture, found its true and ultimate form in German interpretation (although born out of the Islamic tradition), where 'it quickly began to flourish, and it cannot be absent in any region where the German spirit has spread'.[33] Hansen was thus proud to declare that the pointed arch had also come to decorate the best structures of the Baltic *Heimat*.

The focus on the gothic also increased in the contemporary Baltic architecture and monument conservation, and the most visible effect of these was indeed the excessive use of the pointed arch. In the 1820s re-gothicisation of medieval structures

28 S. Karling, Kunsthistorische Forschung in Estland. Eine Übersicht. – Beiträge zur Geschichte der baltischen Kunst. Ed. E. Böckler. Giessen: Schmitz, 1988, p. 13.

29 G. von Hansen, Ueber die kirchlichen Bauwerke Revals und derer Alterthümer. Reval, 1858. Its extended second edition was published as G. von Hansen, Die Kirchen und ehemalige Klöster Revals. Reval, 1873.

30 *Möge der freundliche Leser … von gleicher Liebe zur baltischen Heimath geleitet sein, wie es der Verfasser bei der Abfassung dieser Monographie war.* (G. von Hansen, Die Kirchen und ehemalige Klöster Revals, p. 106.) Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

31 See U. Kultermann, The History of Art History, pp. 67–75; M. Rampley, Contested Histories: Heritage and/as the Construction of the Past: An Introduction. – Heritage, Ideology, and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe: Contested Pasts, Contested Presents. Ed. M. Rampley. Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012, pp. 1–2; J. Jokilehto, A History of Architectural Conservation. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999, pp. 112ff.

32 G. von Hansen, Ueber die kirchlichen Bauwerke Revals…, p. 5; G. von Hansen, Die Kirchen und ehemalige Klöster Revals, p. 2.

33 *hier in raschen Schritten zu ihrer Blüthe, und in allen Ländern, wo deutsches Wesen Eingang fand, da durfte sie nicht fehlen* (G. von Hansen, Ueber die kirchlichen Bauwerke Revals…, p. 5).

began to be practised, the most notable examples being the Tallinn town hall (fig. 5) and the Great Guild, whose authentic early-fifteenth-century appearance would presumably obtain a more 'gothic' character after the mid-nineteenth-century reconstruction,[34] perfectly exemplifying the contemporary illusions of medievalism.

Wilhelm Neumann, writing a couple of decades after Hansen, did admit the French roots of gothicism, the *opus francigenum*,[35] but in general his position was that the earliest architectural activity in the Baltic provinces was during the late twelfth century, when the Germans were thought to have made the first attempts at Christianisation of the Baltic region: 'They had the privilege of uniting the lands under a political entity and transplanting the culture of their home country here.'[36] Neumann made it clear that, although the oldest sacral structures in Estonia date from the Danish rule in early thirteenth century, no stylistic nuances reflect this, 'as Denmark itself was under foreign influence'. Instead, the churches of Tallinn allegedly demonstrated a Westphalian provenance.[37] Most of all, Neumann highlighted the impact of northern Germany[38], e.g.: 'Lübeck became the powerful outpost of the Hanseatic League, and its art held the leading position in the whole Baltic Sea area, including the distant Baltic.'[39]

In order to detect the direct lineage from German art, Neumann suggested comparative analyses of contemporaneous monuments constructed in Westphalia, northern Germany and the former territories of the Teutonic Order.[40] The counterparts he introduced were by no means typical or even well-known. In the case of the choir of St Olaf's church (Oleviste; fig. 3 and 4) in Tallinn, for example, he mentioned the influence of Prussian *Ordensbaukunst*, and in the case of the Bridgettine Pirita convent, the influence of the Cistercian Amelungsborn abbey in Lower Saxony. Another example shows how approaches differed from author to author: during the 1880s three men wrote about the cathedral ruins in Tartu (Dorpat;

34 See A. Hein, 'Et kellelgi ei peaks…', pp. 156–157, 170–171; A. Hein, On the Early History of the Restoration and Protection of Architectural Landmarks in Estonia. – Centropa 2007, vol. 7 (1), pp. 24–28. Cf. M. Mintaurs, A Heritage for the Public? The *Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* in Riga and the Protection of Architectural Monuments in the Baltic Provinces, 1834–1914 in this volume.
35 W. Neumann, Der Dom zu St. Peter und Paul in Dorpat. – Sitzungsberichte der Gesellschaft für Geschichte und Altertumskunde der Ostseeprovinzen Russlands aus dem Jahre 1913. Riga: Häcker, 1914, pp. 8–9.
36 *Ihnen sollte es vorbehalten sein, die Lande zu einem staatlichen Körper zu vereinigen und die Kultur der Heimat hierher zu verpflanzen.* (W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte der bildenden Künste und des Kunstgewerbes in Liv-, Est- und Kurland vom Ende des 12. bis zum Ausgang des 18. Jahrhunderts. Reval: Kluge, 1887, p. 1.)
37 *als Dänemark selbst unter fremdem Einfluss stand* (E. von Nottbeck, W. Neumann, Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval. Vol. 2. Reval: Kluge, 1904, pp. 35–36). The chapters were divided between the two authors, leaving those on architecture to Neumann and those on the general history to Nottbeck.
38 W. Neumann, Lübecks künstlerische Beziehungen zu Alt-Livland, especially pp. 93, 106. Also the title of his book on Riga is telling in this regard: W. Neumann, Das mittelalterliche Riga. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der norddeutschen Baukunst. Berlin: Springer, 1892.
39 *Lübeck entwickelt sich zum mächtigen Vorort des Hansabundes, Lübecker Kunst wird die führende im ganzen Ostseegebiet, bis in die entfernten baltische Lande hinein*. (W. Neumann, Der Dom zu St. Peter und Paul in Dorpat, pp. 8–9. Quoted via the anthology J. Keevallik, R. Loodus, L. Viiroja, Tekste kunstist ja arhitektuurist, p. 111.)
40 W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. v.

fig. 6), which had gone through major reconstruction from 1804 onwards.[41] Whereas Neumann talked of the influence of the Lübeck Marienkirche[42], even of the interior's resemblance to the St Barbara church in Kutná Hora (Kuttenberg) and the Franciscan church in Salzburg[43], the architect Reinhold Guleke saw the influence of the Chartres cathedral as predominant, along with some German examples[44], and the historian Friedrich Amelung (1842–1909) mentioned the Laon cathedral, referring to Dehio[45].

In Neumann's eyes, the relationship between German and Baltic German art was clearly hierarchical. His main opus, *Grundriss einer Geschichte der bildenden Künste und des Kunstgewerbes in Liv-, Est- und Kurland* (1887; fig. 2), began by stating that the styles had been adopted belatedly and had a longer duration in the Baltic provinces 'due to the remoteness from leading art centres and the conservative nature of local residents'.[46] Neumann repeated variations of this point in all of his major publications, e.g.: 'The processes unfolding in the political, literary and artistic fields there [in Germany] will always find more or less strong echoes here, and completely naturally the local artistic endeavours go back to the *heimathliche* tradition, or connect with the general movement directly.'[47] Moreover, according to him, the best examples of art in the Baltics not only followed German examples, but were designed and realised by itinerant native German architects and masters.[48] However, after submissive introductory remarks – which seem to indicate that he was well aware

41 See T.-M. Kreem, Oma aja laps. Tartu ülikooli kiriku ehitusplaanidest 19. sajandi kohalikus ja rahvusvahelises kontekstis [Child of his age: On the construction plans of the church of the University of Tartu in the nineteenth-century local and international context]. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2005, vol. 14 (4), pp. 81–114; T.-M. Kreem, Johann Wilhelm Krause fenomen ja aeg [The phenomenon and era of Johann Wilhelm Krause]. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2013, vol. 22 (1/2), pp. 208–218; Alma Mater Tartuensis. Tartu Ülikool ja tema arhitekt Johann Wilhelm Krause / Die Universität Tartu und ihr Architekt Johann Wilhelm Krause / Tartu University and Its Architect Johann Wilhelm Krause. Eds. J. Maiste, K. Polli, M. Raisma. Tallinn, 2003; Johann Wilhelm Krause 1757–1828. 3 vols. Eds. J. Maiste et al. Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 1999–2011.

42 W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. 42; W. Neumann, Lübecks künstlerische Beziehungen zu Alt-Livland, pp. 106–107.

43 W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 325.

44 R. Guleke, Das Modell der Dorpater Domkirche. – Neue Dörptsche Zeitung 8 August 1883. See also Aus der Geschichte unserer Domruine. – Neue Dörptsche Zeitung 26 August 1883. For more details, see W. Neumann. Der Dom zu St. Peter und Paul in Dorpat. – J. Keevallik, R. Loodus, L. Viiroja, Tekste kunstist ja arhitektuurist, pp. 109–110.

45 508. Sitzung der Gelehrten Estnischen Gesellschaft am. 4. (16.) April 1884 [F. Amelung, Der Dorpater Domkirche]. – Sitzungsberichte der gelehrten estnischen Gesellschaft zu Dorpat 1884. Dorpat: Mattiesen, 1885, p. 109.

46 *infolge ihrer Abgelegenheit von den tonangebenden Kunstmittelpunkten und des konservativen Charakters ihrer Bewohner* (W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. iv).

47 *Die dort sich auf politischem, literärischem und künstlerischem Gebiet abspielenden Vorgänge finden hier stets ihren mehr oder minder starken Widerhall, und völlig naturgemäß greift die hiesige Kunstübung auf die heimathliche Tradition zurück, oder schließt sich der allgemeinen Bewegung unmittelbar an.* (W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 320.)

48 See W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, pp. 329ff, 411ff. Curiously enough, a new approach was launched in the inter-war era, when Estonians had come to own this heritage 'alien' to them, trying to overcome it by means of asserting their essential contribution, i.e. having provided the labour in erecting these structures (H. Kompus, Eesti ehituskunsti teed [The ways of Estonian architecture]. – Eesti kunsti aastaraamat. Vol. 2, 1926. Tallinn: Eesti Kultuurkapitaali kujutavate kunstide sihtkapitaal, 1927, p. 48; A. Vaga, Eesti kunsti ajalugu, pp. 5–6; V. Vaga, Eesti kunst. Kunstide ajalugu Eestis keskajast meie päevini [Estonian art: The history of arts in Estonia from the Middle Ages to the present day]. Tartu, Tallinn: Loodus, 1940–1941, pp. 5–8). Lately it has been questioned if it is not the continuous effect of Baltic German historiography that the early medieval heritage is still exclusively associated with the German contribution, disregarding the natives' role (see H. Bome, K. Markus, Karja kirik – kõige väiksem 'katedraal' [Karja church – the smallest 'cathedral']. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2005, vol. 14 (4), pp. 9–46.)

of his possible opponents' criticism – he always returned to the (modest) contribution of Baltic art:

> By the time the romanesque style (–1220) showed its first unadorned blossoms in Livonia, which in their severity and simplicity still carried almost the character of the eleventh century, the style had reached its finest elaboration in Germany. But a few decades later an epoch of high artistic creation also began in the remote Baltic area, and there are works that bear comparison with the similar creations of other countries.[49]

Despite defending the 'close relationship with the motherland',[50] Neumann acknowledged the different national agenda of Baltic art. Its roots might have been German, but he certainly did not regard Baltic heritage as synonymous with German heritage:

> Of course, whoever takes a superficial glimpse at this area might argue, with a pitying smile, that there never was a Baltic art. But whoever looks more closely, whoever is not led astray by the rough inconspicuous appearance and the wreckage, whoever examines the modest features lovingly and without bias will reach a different conclusion. Although compared with the marvels of the highest artistic creation in the former mother country, the art here does appear humble, like wild flowers by the path that leads to the neighbour's rose garden. But wild flowers also have their charm.[51]

Neumann was more reserved in his evaluations – compared to Friedrich Amelung's collected articles *Revaler Alterthümer* (1884), for instance. Already in the opening address Amelung expressed high admiration for the architecture in Tallinn as follows: 'Through its vast abundance of artistic antiquities Reval presently holds the undisputed first place among the Baltic cities and falls behind only a few highly praised German towns, such as Nuremberg.'[52] Was this because Neumann was simply better acquainted with the Western art-historical tradition? Or was he simply trying to maintain objectivity as an academic quality?

49 *Während **der romanische Stil (–1220)** in Livland seine ersten schmucklosen Blüten treibt, die in ihrer Strenge und Einfachheit fast noch den Charakter des 11. Jahrhundert tragen, hat er in Deutschland seine höchste Durchbildung erreicht; doch wenige Jahrzehnte später beginnt auch in dem entfernten Ostseelande eine Epoche hohen künstlerischen Schaffens und es entstehen Werke, welche sich den gleichartigen Schöpfungen anderer Länder ebenbürtig zur Seite stellen dürfen.* (W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. 5.)

50 E. von Nottbeck, W. Neumann, Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval, p. 38.

51 *Freilich, wer oberflächlichen Blicks dieses Gebiet streiste, der mochte mit mitleidigem Lächeln behaupten, daß es eine baltische Kunst nie gegeben habe. Aber wer etwas näher zusah, wer sich durch das rauhe unscheinbare Aeußere und die Trümmer nicht irre machen ließ, wer liebevoll und ohne Voreingenommenheit den geringen Spuren folgte, dem zeigte sich auch bald ein anderes Bild. Verglichen allerdings mit den Wunderwerken höchsten Kunstschaffens im einstigen Mutterlande, erscheint die Kunst hier bescheiden, bescheiden wie Feldblumen am Rain des Weges, der an dem Rosengarten des Nachbars vorüberführt. Aber auch Feldblumen haben ihren Reiz.* (W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 320.)

52 *In der Gegenwart behauptet Reval durch den reichen Schatz seiner Kunstalterthümer unbestritten den ersten Platz unter den baltischen Städten und steht selbst nur hinter wenigen hochberühmten Ortschaften von Deutschland, wie Nürnberg, viel zurück.* (F. Amelung, Revaler Alterthümer. Reval: Kluge, 1884, p. 52.)

Furthermore, was there a difference in approach between the 'insiders' and 'outsiders'? Neumann certainly took advantage of the fact that he fell in between these categories. Being a German, born in Mecklenburg, and having moved to the Baltics as a child, Neumann had resided in the area for decades and principally become a Baltic German himself. Still, his background resulted in certain outstanding differences. His rendering of the term *Heimat* (homeland) is an illuminating example of how personal experience and expression can shape the connotations of abstract concepts. Speaking of the medieval sacral structures in Tallinn, Neumann concluded:

> They reflect not only the useful and practical sense of a German citizen under the circumstances of combat and danger, far from the *Heimat*, in the middle of founding a new home and searching for a new field of activity, but also the pride of having established a self-made and free pedigree.[53]

While the tsarist empire was generally considered the fatherland (*Vaterland*) by the Baltic Germans, Germany was the motherland (*Mutterland*) and the Baltic region itself the *Heimat*.[54] Yet Neumann also tended to use *Heimat* to refer to thirteenth-century (and sometimes even contemporary) Germany: 'What they [the crusading monks] had achieved in their western *Heimath*, they also transplanted into the virgin soil of Livonia, whereby they maintained a close connection to the artistic aspirations of their *Heimath*.'[55] Germany certainly represented home to Neumann in a manner quite different from his colleagues whose families had inhabited the Baltic region for centuries. In fact, existing research has occasionally regarded the nineteenth-century German newcomers as the first true Baltic Germans, because many Baltic Germans residing in the area preferred to think of themselves as simply Germans – shifting between a German and a Baltic German identity was commonplace.[56]

It is clear that, in naming Germany the previous *Heimat*, Neumann was oriented towards cementing the sovereignty of Baltic art, but it can be difficult to distinguish the two modes of defining the national character of Baltic art. Or is it rather a regional identity that they were after? At times authors appeared to be content with the notion of Baltic German art as a part of German art, regarding this as sufficient to interpret it as national or at least regionally significant. In other cases, distinct features going beyond German art were attributed to the local Baltic art, making it national in another respect. But does this mean more national? The first view is not

53 *Gleichzeitig aber spiegelt sich in ihr nicht nur der auf das Nützliche und Praktische gerichtete Sinn des sich unter Kampf und Gefahren, fern der Heimat, ein neues Heim gründenden und ein neues Thätigkeitsfeld aufsuchenden deutschen Bürgers, sondern auch der Stolz eines auf sich selbst gestellten freien Geschlechts.* (E. von Nottbeck, W. Neumann, Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval, p. 38.)

54 See U. Plath, *Heimat*: Rethinking Baltic German Spaces of Belonging in this volume.

55 *Was diese in ihrer westlichen Heimath erreicht hatte, verpflanzten sie in den jungfräulichen Boden Livlands und blieben dabei im engen Anschluß an die Kunstbestrebungen ihrer Heimath.* (W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 321.)

56 U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased': eestlased saksa koloniaaldiskursis, 1770–1870 ['Europe's last savages': Estonians in German colonial discourse (1770–1870)]. – Rahvuskultuur ja tema teised. Ed. R. Undusk. Tallinn: Underi ja Tuglase Kirjanduskeskus, 2008, pp. 38–39.

simply replaced by the latter one; rather, the situation is more diverse, involving several parallel discourses. One thing is beyond doubt: comparison with German examples was ever present in Baltic art historiography of the era.

Baltic nature – Baltic character

One suitable model found to narrate the history of Baltic art was considering the appearance of architecture to be determined by nature: the region's rough climate, mineral resources, natural construction materials, etc. The nationally motivated art-historical conceptions of the Baltic German community can perhaps be best exemplified by this approach that came to be the most popular rhetorical tool of Baltic art historians, in spite of being nothing essentially new: already Vitruvius had left the door open for difference deriving from natural conditions. Its importance lay in making it possible to give the heritage of the Baltic *Heimat* its distinct features, compared to the German counterparts.

When Goethe stated that his primary interest was the Germanness of particular examples, rather than their gothicness, he ended up reviving a native tradition.[57] Setting the idea of a regional character (often equated with national value) of German architecture to be the primary criterion, instead of beauty and aesthetic appearance, Goethe had created the 'door' that enabled others to start interpreting gothicism (or its German adaptation) as the authentic German style in the first place.[58] In addition, the simple and somewhat robust forms of Baltic church structures were – through this shift – no longer seen as a failure to conform to the highest building standards of Western European cathedrals, but as a decisive attempt to differ, to be functional in the local context, to take advantage of the local limestone in northern Estonia, etc. The crudeness and massiveness of the Baltic structures – as opposed to the elegance and lavish decor of some Western European edifices – was thereby made into their virtue. Precisely these distortions of a style and the inevitable adaptations of the initial German examples were believed to distinguish the local heritage and determine its specifically Baltic character.[59] Baltic architecture that did not exactly fit into the traditional aesthetic canon was turned into a positive agenda, making it possible to leave the dominant narrative of belatedness behind. It could thus even be categorised under what Alois Riegl termed *Neuheitswert*[60], valuable for its formal 'innovation'. Attributing the Balticness of architectural works to

57 See J. W. von Goethe, Von deutscher Baukunst. Leipzig, Dessau: Rauch, 1941, chapter 4.
58 U. Kultermann, The History of Art History, pp. 68, 75.
59 See K. Markus, Kultuuriregiooni probleem Eesti vanema kunsti uurimisel. Rootsi ja Saksa kunstiajaloolaste seisukohtade erinevusest 1920.–1940. aastatel [The problem of cultural regions in the research on older art in Estonia: On the differing standpoints of Swedish and German art historians from the 1920s to 1940s]. – Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Toimetised. Humanitaar- ja Sotsiaalteadused / Proceedings of the Estonian Academy of Sciences: Humanities and Social Sciences 1993, vol. 42 (3), pp. 302–303; K. Kodres, Our Own Estonian Art History: Changing Geographies of Art-Historical Narrative. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2010, vol. 19 (3/4), p. 12.
60 A. Riegl, Der moderne Denkmalkultus. Sein Wesen und seine Entstehung. Vienna, Leipzig: Braumüller, 1903, pp. 46–58. See W. Speitkamp, Die Verwaltung der Geschichte, pp. 86ff.

local nature[61] can also be associated with a disciplinary direction that took root at the end of this very period: the geography of art[62], which developed into a method of research after World War I.

It seems problematic that all of the fundamental shifts that had taken shape during the long nineteenth century have often been attributed to Neumann alone. This concerns not only the whole existence of academic research on art in the Baltic provinces, but also the identity constructs. Instead, the earliest manifestation of the idea of a geographically conditioned architecture in the Baltic context probably is Hansen's book. In describing how gothicism appeared in various forms in different parts of Europe, depending on the natural construction materials as well as other criteria, he concluded that 'the material could not have been the only decisive [factor], and we are entitled to assume that different living conditions had an influence'.[63] Hansen named the environment and the nature of the landscape as the primary sources for the specifically Nordic appearance of local gothicism. Amelung, too, clearly wrote of the climatic and geographical influences on architecture. In his description of the arrival of gothicism in the Baltic provinces, he asserted that the churches in Tallinn looked different from the German counterparts largely because they had been constructed of the malleable Estonian limestone.[64] Neumann's conclusion was the same: Estonian limestone 'is not solid and weather resistant enough to be used for finer stone carving'.[65] However, one has to agree that he went into greater detail, providing an ample technical explication of the visual difference from northern German architecture. Paying respect to Hansen's and Amelung's work,[66] Neumann elaborated on the construction materials more systematically than had his predecessors, describing the various types of limestone and their specific qualities, extraction and processing:

> As in northern Germany, Livonia also lacks the presence of suitable masonry stone and therefore became reliant on brick, which is also consistently used in large monumental buildings. Most smaller rural churches and nearly all of the castles are built of fieldstone, which makes richer architectonic design and ornamentation out of the question.... In northern Estonia, where large limestone and sandstone strata supplied construction material, also monumental buildings were constructed entirely of this material, but in

61 On romanticising the Baltic landscape, see K. Jõekalda, Baltic Heritage and the Picturesque Ruins: 'Inventing' the Local via Visual Art. – Eesti Kunstimuuseumi toimetised / Proceedings of the Art Museum of Estonia 2015, vol. 5 (10) [forthcoming].

62 See T. D. Kaufmann, Toward a Geography of Art. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004, pp. 4–10; S. Muthesius, Lokal, universal – europäisch, national, p. 68.

63 *Das Material kann aber nicht allein nur das Entscheidende gewesen sind, und wir sind zur Annahme berechtigt, dass verschiedene Lebensverhältnisse Einfluss hatten...* (G. von Hansen, Ueber die kirchlichen Bauwerke Revals..., p. 6.)

64 F. Amelung, Revaler Alterthümer, p. 52.

65 E. von Nottbeck, W. Neumann, Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval, p. 35. This resembles John Ruskin's principle that the peculiarities of local construction materials should determine the style suitable for executing architectural embellishments (J. Ruskin, The Seven Lamps of Architecture [1849]. London: Allen, 1897, pp. 352–353, chapter VI, § XVII).

66 W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte..., p. v.

> their appearance the same simplicity and rigour prevailed that determined the look of the brick buildings in the southern areas.[67]

Neumann made efforts to make his points comprehensible for German readers, and placed even general descriptions into this context. This was part of his way of demonstrating the richness of Baltic art to the German-speaking (professional) readership, raising their awareness of the value of Baltic art. In the case of the sculpture work in the interior of the Karja (Karris) church on the island of Saaremaa (Ösel; fig. 7), he wrote:

> The sculptures are clumsy … as if they were cut out of dough, and yet precisely through this naivete the works make … a pleasant impression. Their execution on the whole is reminiscent of the clay sculpture of northern German brick buildings. The reason probably lay in the material used, the local limestone. Taken fresh from the quarry, it is very soft and can be cut with a knife just like air-dry clay.[68]

Reasoning the adaptations to gothicism that came with using different construction materials, Neumann claimed: 'The more the architect liberates himself of the French influence, the more this simplification of form progresses into an independent treatment of the available construction material.'[69] And even more straightforwardly: 'Of the church structures following the gothic style, those in the city of Reval have obtained a characteristic status. The uniqueness of Reval's buildings, determined by the natural construction material, immediately strikes the eye….'[70]

Counting geographical factors as the determinants of the characteristic appearance of Baltic heritage might seem to be a perfect solution to the centre–periphery dialectics, but the problem is that setting the European value system as a standard (even when opposing or trying to overcome it) automatically brings about peripherisation and self-marginalisation, even a sort of self-colonialisation (a problematic term[71] in itself). This was not the case in the Baltics alone: in 1879 the Polish

67 W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. 6.

68 *Die Skulpturen sind unbeholfen … wie aus Teig geschnitten und dennoch machen die Arbeiten gerade durch die Naivität … einen angenehmen Eindruck. Die ganze Ausführung erinnert an die Tonplastik der norddeutschen Ziegelbauten. Das hat seinen Grund wohl in dem verwendeten Material, dem örtliches Kalkstein, der frisch aus dem Bruch kommend sehr weich ist und wie der lufttrockene Ton mit dem Messer geschnitten werden kann.* (W. Neumann, Die mittelalterliche Kirchen auf Ösel. – Heimatstimmen. Ein baltisches Jahrbuch. Vol. 3. Reval: Kluge; Leipzig: Hartmann, 1908, pp. 274–275.)

69 *Vereinfachung in den Formenbildung schreitet fort, je mehr die Baumeister sich von dem französischen Einfluss befreiend, zu selbstständiger Behandlung des ihnen zur Verfügung stehenden Baumaterials vorrücken.* (W. Neumann, Der Dom zu St. Peter und Paul in Dorpat, p. 9.)

70 *Unter den Kirchenbauten gothischen Styls nehmen die der Stadt Reval eine eigenartige Stellung ein. …fällt auch bei den Reval'schen Bauten eine durch das gegebene Baumaterial bedingte Eigenart sofort in's Auge.* (E. von Nottbeck, W. Neumann, Geschichte und Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Reval, p. 35.)

71 See T. Hennoste, Postkolonialism ja Eesti. Väga väike leksikon [Postcolonialism and Estonia: A very small lexicon]. – Vikerkaar 2003, no. 4/5, pp. 85–89; T. Hennoste, Post-colonialism and Estonia (interview by E. Epner). – Estonian Art 2011, no. 1, pp. 10–15, http://www.estinst.ee/est/estonian-art/article/estonian-art-1-2011/view/gb/. Cf. A. Kiossev, The Self-Colonizing Metaphor. – Atlas of Transformation, http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/s/self-colonization/the-self-colonizing-metaphor-alexander-kiossev.html (both accessed 12 June 2014).

commission for the study of the history of art, for instance, proclaimed that Poland sadly has no 'first rank masterpieces'.[72] The monographs on 'peripheral' art often started with an apologetic statement like this – to avoid the threats to the national self-esteem.[73] Despite the unassuming attempt at an alternative perspective, the indulgent acceptance of inherent centre–periphery and East–West hierarchies meant making their position even more inferior. Stating one's difference from the 'grand narrative' indicated coping with the universal narrative, and a willingness to find a place within this narrative. But perhaps this was precisely what the Baltic authors were hoping to achieve, from a quite different angle.

Colonial nature of Baltic heritage?

Most famously the visual difference of Baltic art has been associated with the colonial situation by Georg Dehio. In his three-volume *Geschichte der deutschen Kunst* (1919–1926) Dehio even wrote about a *koloniale Neudeutschland*.[74] Despite his Baltic background, having been born in Tallinn, educated in Tartu and appointed as professor in Königsberg (later Kaliningrad), Dehio touched upon the heritage of Eastern Europe in rare occasions, focusing his research clearly on (western) German high art.[75] Most prominent among his papers on the matter were *Livlands Leistung für Deutschland* (1918) and *Vom baltischen Deutschtum* (1927)[76].

His contemporary Neumann had expressed the same attitude several decades earlier, however, widely propagating the idea of the *koloniale Charakter Alt-Livlands* – in spite of looking for distinctly Baltic features in the local heritage.[77] The following fragment clearly exemplifies his style: 'The art in Old Livonia – this old term is preferred here, designating the Baltic provinces of Livonia, Estonia and Courland – was colonial in character, i.e. it never became a giver, but remained a receiver until recent times.'[78] What might have been Neumann's motives in expressing the specifically colonial nature of Baltic art, going beyond the opposition of the centre and the periphery? Again one might ask if it was his German descent, the view of an 'outsider', or did his agenda include more direct political motives. Trying to find a particular ideological agenda that the writing of art history followed during the

72 Sprawozdania Komisyi do Badania Historyi Sztuki w Polsce [Reports of the commission for the study of history of art in Poland]. Vol. 1. Kraków, 1879, p. 1. Cited from (and translated by) S. Muthesius, Lokal, universal – europäisch, national, p. 70.

73 Cf. the cases of Alfred Woltmann or Johann Rudolf Rahn in this volume, respectively in M. Filipová, Writing and Displaying Nations: Constructing Narratives of National Art in Bohemia and Austria-Hungary; and H. Locher, The Idea of Cultural Heritage and the Canon of Art.

74 See G. Dehio, Geschichte der deutschen Kunst. Vol. 2, Das späte Mittelalter von Rudolf von Habsburg bis zu Maximilian I. Die Kunst der Gotik. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1921.

75 See S. Muthesius, Lokal, universal – europäisch, national, pp. 75–76.

76 Both published in G. Dehio, Kleine Aufsätze und Ansprachen. Mannheim, 1930, pp. 40–42 and 74–77, http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/dehio1930 (accessed 28 August 2014).

77 W. Neumann, Lübecks künstlerische Beziehungen zu Alt-Livland, pp. 94–95.

78 *Die Kunst in Alt-Livland – diese Bezeichnung als die ältere für die baltischen Provinzen Liv-, Est- und Kurland genommen – war eine koloniale, d. h. sie ist nie zu einer gebenden geworden, sie blieb bis in die jüngste Zeit eine empfangende.* (W. Neumann, Lübecks künstlerische Beziehungen zu Alt-Livland, p. 93.) More or less the same idea can be found in W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 321.

nineteenth century, the discursive groundwork comes into play. The purest example of this is how the accounts of local history became embellished with colonialist terminology.[79]

Hansen, for example, repeatedly and somewhat strikingly used the term 'colony' for the Baltic provinces.[80] Amelung even spoke of a German 'occupation' in the Baltic region: writing on the early history of Tallinn and the Danish rule, he asserted that, nevertheless, some of the most significant urban developments in Tallinn 'fall right into the first decade of German occupation'.[81] At first glance, these might seem unexpected terms to be found in the nineteenth-century Baltic context, but the rhetoric of violent conquest appeared often in texts, even when they were hidden behind seemingly neutral positions. At the same time, it is clear that these concepts carried quite different connotations back then, and as researchers we ought to be careful not to overburden them with our contemporary understandings. The denotations of earlier romantic concepts such as *Vaterland*[82] and *Patriotismus*, too, had completely altered by the late nineteenth century.

The term *Kolonie* had multiple parallel meanings in German, ranging from the neutral, resilient, entrepreneurial sense ('mastery over nature') to the imperial sense of an economically etc. exploited territory. It is therefore essential to differentiate between material (including political, economic and cultural) colonisation, and 'discursive colonisation'. In her studies on Poland Kristin Leigh Kopp has defined the discursive colonisation as 'a historically situated process that repositions a specific relationship between self and Other into colonial categories',[83] a model that seems highly relevant for my own case. Writing about Baltic history, Ulrike Plath has similarly argued that in the case of Baltic German identity constructions, especially in early scholarly writings, reality was overwhelmed by the imaginary, fantasy and discourse: all three constructed according to the same formula.[84] The 'boomerang effect' of this escapism is the simultaneous construction of a reality. The physical remains of medieval architecture are a perfect example, as they were constantly constructed both literally (via conservation or reconstruction) and by means of art-historical writing that shaped the approaches and value systems in relation to them.

Research on Baltic art history was centred around medieval art and architecture from the very start, not least to commemorate the arrival of the Baltic Germans in their Baltic 'homeland'. This made it possible to describe the 'Baltic crusade' of the early thirteenth century (the generally accepted starting point for the Middle Ages in Estonia) as the liberation of the local people from pagan darkness, i.e. the

79 See U. Plath, Esten und Deutsche…, pp. 12–14; U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', p. 49.
80 E.g. G. von Hansen, Ueber die kirchlichen Bauwerke Revals…, p. 6.
81 *Gerade innerhalb der ersten zehn Jahre deutscher Occupation fallen … bereits einige der bedeutungsvollsten städtischen Gründungen in Reval.* (F. Amelung, Revaler Alterthümer, p. 63.)
82 See R. Prange, Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte, pp. 64–71 (chapter *Die Naturgeschichte der Kunst und der Enthusiasmus des Vaterlandes*).
83 K. Kopp, Germany's Wild East, pp. 2–3, 6. Cf. J. Lotman, On the Semiosphere [1984]. Trans. W. Clark. – Sign Systems Studies 2005, vol. 33 (1), pp. 205–226.
84 U. Plath, Esten und Deutsche…, pp. 10, 14–15; U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', pp. 55–56. Cf. J. Undusk, Kolm võimalust kirjutada eestlaste ajalugu [I], p. 723.

'beginning' of civilised history, led by Germans as the *Kulturträger*.[85] The same view had been propagated by the painter and printmaker Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell (1795–1846) in his volumes of *Fünfzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands* (1840; fig. 8), which set the standard for the visual depiction of the early history of Estonia, as well as for several German albums of history that followed.[86] According to Plath, 'the Baltic colonial discourse … developed in the middle of the nineteenth century as a regional branch of the German colonial discourse and became the cornerstone of Baltic Germandom'.[87] But how did the German colonial discourse itself develop?

The *Ostkolonisation* was commonly referred to as the first act of European colonialism both in the Baltic area and in Germany. Whereas the Baltic Germans tended to conceive of Germany as the centre, the Germans themselves were not as sure of their position in comparison to other European imperial powers. Prior to 1870, Plath suggests, the appropriate term would be 'colonial fantasies', rather than a fully developed colonial discourse.[88] Even after the unification of Germany, casting a colonial shadow over Eastern Europe made it possible to compensate for the colonial deficit of the young German nation-state, nourishing vigorous constructions of a strong national identity and reinventing the medieval trade relations, settlement and migration as acts of 'colonisation'.[89] Borrowing the conceptual means and vocabulary from the European colonial paradigm, the previous German narrative of having no colonial history to be ashamed of was compromised. It not only became in Germany's interest to show the Baltic region as an integral part of German migration history, but also as the prototype for all later European colonies. The colonial metaphor was used as a positive characteristic in the Baltic case, somehow more noble than the overseas colonies.[90] This tendency occurred as early as the 1840s when the German historian and geographer Johann Georg Kohl wrote in his

85 See K. Kukk, The Genesis and Narratives of National History Writing from the Beginning of the 19th Century up until World War II: Estonia in Comparison with Other Non-Dominant Nordic and Baltic Nations. – Scandinavian Journal of History 2013, vol. 38 (2), pp. 135–153.

86 F. L. von Maydell, Fünfzig Bilder aus der Geschichte der deutschen Ostsee-Provinzen Russlands nebst erklärendem Text. 2 vols. Dorpat: Kluge, 1839, 1842. See the extensively commented translation: Friedrich Ludwig von Maydelli pildid Baltimaade ajaloost [Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell's Baltic history in images]. Eds. L. Kaljundi, T.-M. Kreem. Tallinn: Eesti Kunstimuuseum, 2013, pp. 29, 66. See also A. Hein, Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell Tallinna Oleviste kiriku taastajate hulgas 1828–1840 [Friedrich Ludwig von Maydell among the renovators of St Olaf's church in Tallinn, 1828–1840]. – Neli baltisaksa kunstnikku / Vier deutschbaltische Künstler: Carl Siegismund Walther, Freidrich Ludwig von Maydell, August Georg Wilhelm Pezold, Gustav Adolf Hippius. Ed. A. Lõugas. Tallinn: Eesti Kunstimuuseum, Saksa Kultuuriinstituut Tallinnas, 1994, pp. 39–47.

87 U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', p. 39.

88 U. Plath, Esten und Deutsche…, pp. 12–14; U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', pp. 47–49. See S. Zantop, Colonial Fantasies: Conquest, Family, and Nation in Precolonial Germany, 1770–1870. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.

89 K. Kopp, Germany's Wild East, pp. 3–4, 7–9, 11–12, 17.

90 U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', pp. 47–49.

travel book about 'the colonies that the Germans established on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries'.[91]

Probably the most remarkable example of the contemporary German comprehension of the Baltic area as a colony is the German geographer and cartographer Paul Langhans, who started issuing his *Deutscher Kolonial-Atlas* in 1893,[92] mapping the history of the German colonial 'civilising' mission in the vast periphery. While present research on Germany's colonial past is often limited to overseas colonies,[93] Langhans included what he called 'German colonisation in the East'. Despite concentrating on Poland, this section of the atlas incorporated – with evident nationalist undertones – the 'trade colonies of the German Hansa'. Langhans argued that the German colonial experience differed from that of other European cases, and that the whole definition of colonialism needed to be revisited. In the introduction, Langhans claimed that the title of the 'colonial atlas' was carefully chosen, 'because we have repeatedly found it necessary to insist that the German Empire's current colonial project did not just suddenly appear, but that it is instead framed and contextualized by centuries of colonial activity'.[94] Coming back to the different connotations of *Kolonie*, Kopp has proposed that it was generally the neutral sense of the term that was used for Poland and the Baltic region, whereas Langhans tried to politicise the term and only talked about the imperial sense of the word. Even though the atlas's inclusion of neighbouring areas created controversies among his contemporaries, this is an exemplary case of how the Baltic 'colony' was conceived of in late-nineteenth-century Germany.

Also the above-mentioned early-nineteenth-century debates over the value of German art in the wider European context did not derive from within the field of art history alone, but were affected by general (especially political) history. From early on, attempts were made by German art historians to stretch their range as far as the Baltic. During the early nineteenth century, members of the influential Berlin School of art history, Karl Friedrich von Rumohr[95] and later Franz Kugler[96], supported acknowledging Baltic art and other 'peripheral' phenomena as parts of German art history. From the German point of view, this attitude was naturally in the service of demonstrating the vast spread of German culture, in order to grant it

91 *Die Colonieen, welche die Deutschen im zwölften und dreizehnten Jahrhunderte an den östlichen Küsten des baltischen Meeres stifteten* (J. G. Kohl, Die deutsch-russischen Ostseeprovinzen oder Natur- und Volkerleben in Kur-, Liv- und Esthland. Vol. 1. Dresden, Leipzig: Arnold, 1841, p. iii. See E. Annus, P. Peiker, L. Lukas, Colonial Regimes in the Baltic States. – Interlitteraria 2013, vol. 18 (2), pp. 545–554, ojs.utlib.ee/index.php/IL/article/viewFile/IL.2013.18.2.19/1222 (accessed 20 August 2014); L. Lukas, 'Who Holds the Right to the Land?' The Colonization Narratives in Estonian and Baltic-German Literatures. – 'Fugitive' Knowledge: The Preservation and Loss of Knowledge in Cultural Contact Zones. Eds. A. Beer, G. Mackenthun. Münster: Waxmann, 2013, pp. 123–125).

92 P. Langhans, Deutscher Kolonial-Atlas. Gotha: Perthes, 1893–1897.

93 See K. Kopp, Grey Zones: On the Inclusion of 'Poland' in the Study of German Colonialism. – German Colonialism and National Identity, pp. 33–44; K. Kopp, Constructing Racial Difference in Colonial Poland. – Germany's Colonial Pasts, pp. 76–96.

94 Cited from (and translated by) K. Kopp, Germany's Wild East, p. 2. See I. J. Demhardt, Paul Langhans und der Deutsche Kolonial-Atlas 1893–1897. – Cartographica Helvetica 2009, no. 40, p. 19, http://www.kartengeschichte.ch/ch/def-index0.html#40 (accessed 20 June 2014).

95 See the chapters on Rumohr in R. Prange, Die Geburt der Kunstgeschichte, pp. 111–124.

96 F. Kugler, Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte. Stuttgart: Ebner & Seubert, 1841–1842. About Kugler's national perspectives on art-historical narratives, see H. Locher, The Idea of Cultural Heritage and the Canon of Art in this volume.

a more prominent position in the general history of art. Rejecting the superiority of Italian or French architecture was by no means secondary here. During World War I the eminent French art historian Émile Mâle, among many others, still expressed doubts about the sovereign nature of medieval German art, and questioned any possibility of the German origins of gothicism.[97]

Was this 'motherly' attitude of German art historians welcomed by the Baltic German intellectual community? Neumann's comprehension of Baltic history of art was most probably primarily fashioned by the dominant Western (or German) perspective on art history, and less by the emerging discourse of colonialism. But stepping outside the colonial discourse was also difficult to achieve. I argue that the early Baltic German art historians did not try to instrumentalise the history of art for the necessities of contemporary German eastward expansion or the endeavours to establish Germany as a colonial power. Although there are exceptions to this, most Baltic authors mentioning the colonial relationship to Germany were not trying to express any criticism of the thirteenth-century crusade, but used the 'neutral' sense of the word.[98] I find it likely that when they wrote about Baltic art as a derivation of German art, they were rather aiming to demonstrate the value of Baltic art through this very relationship. In the emphasis on the continuing close relationship with Germany, they tried to show that the Baltic culture was not belated and provincial, but was current with the Western history of ideas.

From the Baltic German point of view the reason behind this was primarily the tense relationship with the Russian 'fatherland'. The Russification[99] of the Eastern provinces of the empire during the 1880s and 1890s made things even more schizophrenic, further intensifying the identity-seeking and national awakening processes of both the Baltic German elite and the local ethnic communities of Estonians and Latvians.[100] Opposing the tsarist regime, the Baltic Germans sought to demonstrate the Germanness, Europeanness and Protestantism (Lutheranism) of the area. A quote by Neumann illustrates this point quite directly: 'This drive towards the West is still common for Baltic art, and this is how it must stay, as culture is to be found only beyond the western border.'[101] In these conditions, as stated above, 'Baltic' was given a more ideologised meaning in the middle of the nineteenth century,[102] and here the discursive colonialism, or the colonialist rewriting of local history, lent a helping hand.

97 E.g. E. Mâle, The Gothic Image: Religious Art in France of the Thirteenth Century [1899]. Trans. D. Nussey. New York: Harper, 1958, pp. x, 398–399. See also B. Störtkuhl, Art Historiography during World War I: *Kunstschutz* and Reconstruction in the General Government of Warsaw in this volume.

98 See also L. Kaljundi, K. Kļaviņš, The Chronicler and the Modern World: Henry of Livonia and the Baltic Crusades in the Enlightenment and National Traditions. – Crusading and Chronicle Writing on the Medieval Baltic Frontier: A Companion to the Chronicle of Henry of Livonia. Eds. M. Tamm, L. Kaljundi, C. S. Jensen. Farnham: Ashgate, 2011, pp. 409–456.

99 See Vene impeerium ja Baltikum: venestus, rahvuslus ja moderniseerimine 19. sajandi teisel poolel ja 20. sajandi alguses [The Russian Empire and the Baltic: Russification, nationality and modernization in the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century]. 2 vols. Eds. T. Tannberg, B. Woodworth. Tartu: Eesti Ajalooarhiiv, 2009, 2010.

100 See A. V. Wendland, The Russian Empire and its Western Borderlands.

101 *Dieser Zug nach Westen ist der baltischen Kunst geblieben bis auf unsere Tage, er mußte ihr bleiben, wohnte doch nur jenseits der Westgrenze die Kultur*. (W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 321.)

102 E. Jansen, 'Baltlus', baltisakslased, eestlased [I], pp. 37, 40–42.

German, Baltic German and Estonian art history

Both German and Estonian scholars have long avoided topics related to *Ostkolonisation*, but this pained avoidance adds value to the few examples that do exist.[103] Although the concept of postcolonialism has not generally been applied in studies of nineteenth-century Estonian art history[104], several case studies of history and (Baltic German) literature[105] have tested the applicability of postcolonialism to the Baltic context and related difficulties. Strictly speaking, the colonial situation in the Baltics ended in the sixteenth century with the fall of Old Livonia and the Hanseatic League, whereas it was only thereafter that the first European overseas colonies came into existence.[106] Moreover, as the Estonian literary scholar Epp Annus has remarked: 'The imagined colonialism of the Baltic German culture was based on an unusual political situation that can be called colonialism without an empire',[107] in which the Baltic Germans could be seen as the mediators (who always tend to have their individual interests) between the natives, and both the Russian Empire and Germany. Despite evident controversies, several authors have mentioned the positive effects of borrowing concepts from postcolonial vocabulary, seeing the Baltics as a way to further the research on (and the whole conception of) postcolonialism, rather than a problematic and unsuitable example.[108]

In addition to the German-centredness arising from the historical situation in the Baltics, including the German heritage of the area, another kind of (self-) colonisation[109] can be seen in the field of historiography, because art history as a whole was to a great extent a German 'invention'. Did the German roots of the discipline bring about an 'othering' gaze and make it possible to speak of a double colonisation? The awareness of international and particularly German disciplinary developments certainly affected the activity of Baltic researchers (less in the early nineteenth century, but most certainly in the early twentieth century). Whereas in the case of Hansen and other early authors it is not always possible to detect where their perspectives on art history derived from, Neumann was well acquainted with contemporary German research. He was clearly inspired by Kugler and in

103 U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', p. 37.
104 In Soviet (visual) studies, the discussion has been more lively, e.g. J. Kangilaski, Lisandusi postkolonialismi diskussioonile [Additions to the discussion of post-colonialism]. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2011, vol. 20 (1/2), pp. 7–21; M. Doerring, Thinking Art History in East-Central Europe. – Kunstiteaduslikke Uurimusi 2010, vol. 19 (3/4), p. 149; Postcolonial Approaches to Eastern European Cinema: Portraying Neighbours On-screen. Eds. E. Mazierska, L. Kristensen, E. Näripea. London: Tauris, 2014.
105 See P. Peiker, Postcolonial Change: Power, Peru and Estonian Literature. – Baltic Postcolonialism. Ed. V. Kelertas. (On the Boundary of Two Worlds: Identity, Freedom, and Moral Imagination in the Baltics 6.) Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006, pp. 105–137; A. Dunker, 'Wir stiften eine Colonie' oder 'Cultivons notre Champ!' August von Kotzebue in postkolonialer Sicht. – Von Kotzebue bis Fleming. Literatur-, Kultur- und Sprachkontakt im Baltikum. Eds. M. Tarvas et al. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2012, pp. 13–29. See also I. Ijabs, Another Baltic Postcolonialism: Young Latvians, Baltic Germans, and the Emergence of Latvian National Movement. – Nationalities Papers: The Journal of Nationalism and Ethnicity 2014, vol. 42 (1), pp. 88–107. I thank Baiba Tetere for the latter reference.
106 See M. Saagpakk, Koloniale Identitätskonstruktionen in den Erinnerungen einer deutschbaltischen Adeligen aus dem 20. Jahrhundert. – Postkoloniale Lektüren. Perspektivierungen deutschsprachiger Literatur. Eds. A. Dunker, A. Babka. (Postkoloniale Studien in der Germanistik 4.) Bielefeld: Aisthesis, 2013, pp. 91–92.
107 E. Annus, Postkolonialismist sotskolonialismini [From postcolonialism to soc-colonialism]. – Vikerkaar 2007, no. 3, p. 70.
108 T. Kirss, Rändavad piirid: postkolonialismi võimalused [Travelling boundaries: The potentialities of postcolonialism]. – Keel ja Kirjandus 2001, no. 10, pp. 675, 679; U. Plath, 'Euroopa viimased metslased', p. 56.
109 See T. Hennoste, Post-colonialism and Estonia; A. Kiossev, The Self-Colonizing Metaphor.

immediate contact with many contemporary German art historians, most intensively Wilhelm Lübke.[110] With regard to Neumann's style, it did not seem to deviate depending on the audience: the same approach was used in his publications issued in either Germany or Tallinn/Riga. His high esteem among German art historians[111] was probably no coincidence, and it did not originate from his academic achievements alone: declaring Germany as the 'motherland', and the Baltic region as a receiver must have pleased his German colleagues. Neumann's work in the East can even be viewed as an extension of their own activity.

Although the role of Neumann as the single 'star' of Baltic historiography is an over-estimation, he did carry the work of his predecessors further in many aspects. Neumann not only presented more detailed accounts, but he also sought to systematise the existing fragments of research. His *Grundriss einer Geschichte…* was remarkable for including all three Baltic provinces in an attempt to provide a comprehensive overview of art and architecture throughout the time span of their existence and in all their multiple forms. Moreover, he placed Baltic art in an international context, estimating the exact lines of influence of German art. His travels and contacts must have had a strong impact on this effort. Hansen and Amelung could not have competed with Neumann's productivity and vast range of topics. Their studies on the (medieval) architecture in Tallinn – despite not being their only contribution to local art history – earned them the title of the first scholarly art historians in Estonia, but simultaneously constituted the culmination of their activity as art historians. To Neumann, however, artworks in Tallinn were never the focus of his wide-ranging art-historical research. His studies revolved around the (Baltic) German heritage in the widest sense, whether medieval or contemporary, from goldsmiths to architects, both temporally and geographically. Creating typologies and summarising general tendencies, his perspective was indeed broader and more elaborate than those of Hansen, Amelung or others.

Ever since the nineteenth century, national perspectives have provided the framework for writing art history.[112] From the viewpoint of history of local art history, the primary importance of Neumann can be associated with the fact that most subsequent art history, up to the present, has almost exclusively dealt with antiquities defined by their location in Estonia, i.e. the territory of the later Republic of Estonia. This local discourse – a self-restraint to which Neumann himself provided the key – has been taken further by the sensed obligation to devote oneself to local and native matters, because otherwise they would not be (properly) researched at all. In the foreword to his *Grundriss einer Geschichte…*, Neumann asserted that

110 W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. iv. On Neumann's role models see also J. Keevallik, Kunstikogumine Eestis 19. sajandil. Kunstiteadus Eestis 19. sajandil [Art collecting in Estonia in the nineteenth century. Art history in Estonia in the nineteenth century]. Tallinn: Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Ajaloo Instituut, 1993, pp. 156–171; J. Kaljundi, Baltimaade kunstiajaloo isa; K. Kodres, Our Own Estonian Art History, p. 14; S. Pelše, Creating the Discipline, p. 28; Э. Клявиньш, История искусств в Латвии с точки зрения методологии. – Meno istorijos riboženkliai / Landmarks of Art History. Eds. N. Lukšionytė, A. Kulvietytė-Slavinskienė. (Meno istorija ir kritika / Art History & Criticism 7.) Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo Universiteto leidykla, 2011, pp. 138ff.

111 See K. Jõekalda, Art History in Nineteenth-Century Estonia?

112 See also M. Rampley, The Construction of National Art Histories and the 'New' Europe. – Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks. Eds. M. Rampley et al. Leiden: Brill, 2012, especially pp. 242–244.

> so far a historically coherent and chronologically ordered presentation, or even a brief discussion of preserved monuments and artworks with regard to their position in art history, has been lacking, and this seems to be the reason why the most significant German works on art history fail to mention what is preserved in the Baltic provinces.[113]

This was probably meant to give the impression that he was both aware of current trends within the discipline and fulfilling the mission of a populariser of art history, not least among the German readership, following the best traditions of German art-historical handbooks:[114] not an easy combination, but a highly typical one of late nineteenth century. In the Baltic provinces no particular 'division of labour' had taken place by then: multiple tasks rested on the shoulders of single authors, Neumann himself being both the first truly professional art historian and a productive populariser, not to mention his activities as an architect.

Conclusion

Throughout the long nineteenth century, the debates over Baltic art can be characterised via a dual relationship towards Germany. There were attempts by German (or German-minded) authors to demonstrate the cross-European range of German culture, stating that art in the Baltics was only a poor replica of true German art. At the same time, many Baltic authors sought to prove the autonomous character of Baltic art, contributing to the search for a specifically Baltic German identity. Displaying the similarities and discrepancies is a common tool for identity construction, and none of the authors concerned with art history could escape the issue of German artistic influence, even if the intensity of this claim varied.

Most often these contrasting directions – demonstrating either Germanness or the independence of Baltic German culture – were present in the writings of one and the same author, sometimes even in a single text. This included Wilhelm Neumann, who saw *baltische Kunst* as having no particular nature of its own, but nonetheless as worthy of the attention of both researchers and the general public, possessing a certain hidden charm. The question why Baltic heritage looked different, or somehow more 'primitive', when compared to examples of German high gothicism, for instance, was explained with the idea of architecture as the representation of local nature. In this way, the 'periphery' would have something to offer to the centres-focused narrative of the general history of art, despite not stepping very far from the original role models. This conception became commonly utilised

113 *Es fehlte an einer historisch zusammenhängenden und chronologisch geordneten Darstellung, sowie an einer, wenn auch noch so kurzen Besprechung der erhaltenen Denkmäler und Kunstwerke in Bezug auf ihre Stellung zur Kunstgeschichte und scheint dieses auch der Grund zu sein, weshalb man selbst in den bedeutendsten kunstgeschichtlichen deutschen Werken einer Erwähnung des in den baltischen Provinzen Erhaltenen nicht begegnet.* (W. Neumann, Grundriss einer Geschichte…, p. iii.)

114 See H. Locher, Das 'Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte': Die Vermittlung kunsthistorischen Wissens als Anleitung zum ästhetischen Urteil. – Memory & Oblivion. (Proceedings of the 29th International Congress of the History of Art, 1996.) Eds. W. Reinink, J. Stumpel. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1999, p. 70.

to express the Balticness of local architecture, employed by Neumann, as well as Gotthard von Hansen and Friedrich Amelung before him.

The fact that the colonial narrative was keenly used not only by German authors, but also by their Baltic German colleagues, seems somewhat surprising. Curiously, the colonial self-consciousness was the means via which Neumann and others sought to establish the specific character of Baltic art. The constant reinvention of the object in colonial terms clearly serves the political demands of the present. Given the efforts of the Russian Empire, as well as the native Estonians/Latvians, it is not unexpected that the Baltic Germans were willing to accept their heritage as that of a colony of the 'German lands', whose art was unequivocally connected with the 'high art' of the Western – and especially German – centres. Inhabiting the borderland of Europe and Russia (fig. 9), the constant display of European roots was an inseparable part of the Baltic German identity; even their greater historical mission.[115] Legitimating their existence in an area where ethnic national cultures had begun to emerge, while the tsarist empire and Germany were trying to enhance their positions in Europe, the hidden agenda behind carrying out scholarly research on these topics was to win credibility for their nationalist cause, even when art historians were not always aware of this. Constructing a master narrative of Baltic art history was not yet common in the mid-nineteenth century, when the earliest art-historical monographs were published; whereas by the end of the nineteenth century, inventing the Baltic German past had become a major goal of the Baltic German community. The desperate need for a stable anchor made them cling to their cultural and geographical identity, intensifying the ever-increasing interest in the local past. Heritage of art and architecture was their opportunity to provide a solid identity to the Baltic Germans – it was one of the central resources that the Baltic Germans possessed and used to demonstrate their position in both the local history and the contemporary society.

There were several parallel reasons why the medieval architecture turned out to be a suitable cornerstone of Baltic German identity. It was the most visible and prosperous part of Baltic heritage, both in terms of quantity and aesthetic value. Furthermore, the Middle Ages had been the beginning of German mighty colonial history in the Baltic region. Another – and perhaps the most essential – reason why emphasising this German 'layer' within the Baltic history of art was quite natural originated from the dominant discourse of art history of the era: luckily for the Baltic Germans, their privileging of medieval art found support from the stylistic hierarchy within the emerging discipline of art history.

Nevertheless, my original hypothesis that during the latter nineteenth century the image of a mere German province no longer corresponded to the 'demand' of the Baltic German community was not verified. One might reason that the idea of a single German heritage throughout the German 'diaspora' in (Eastern) Europe was thought to diminish the contribution of the centuries during which the Baltic Germans had developed their own stylistic nuances etc., but in reality the texts

115 E. Jansen, 'Baltlus', baltisakslased, eestlased [I], pp. 42–44.

examined indicate that it was precisely the other way round. The most fertile, professional and successful art historian in the Baltics, Wilhelm Neumann, working at the very end of the period, was the most devoted follower of the idea of a colonial character of Baltic art. Rather than strengthening the position of Germany as a colonial power, the motivation for this derived from the local contested identities. Even if Neumann admitted that many would doubt the existence of a 'Baltic art', interpreting this phenomenon at best as a lower-rank replica of German art, both peripheral and colonial in character, his whole activity as an art historian was oriented at demonstrating that 'whoever examines the modest features lovingly and without bias will reach a different conclusion'.[116] The contemporary political situation did not bring about a distancing from the idea of a German heritage, instead the German link was increasingly stressed and benefited from.

116 W. Neumann, 700 Jahre baltischer Kunst, p. 320.