

# Ornament in Architecture: Symbol & Representation

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## Abstract

This study aims to provide a new framework for the position of ornament by examining the link between ornament and "the body" as well as its interaction with decorative arts. In this sense, Ernst Cassirer's concepts of symbol and representation which follow Immanuel Kant transcendental philosophy and Kant's dichotomy of free and adherent beauty, are investigated. Within the scope of the article, theorists who discuss ornament with artistic expression are divided into two groups; in the first, Ruskin treats ornament and the body relationship as a "symbol", while others, such as Louis Sullivan and Gottfried Semper, use the combination of both as if it is a "symbol". As Sullivan and Semper reveal, a symbol reflecting the highest artistic creation also requires a process of reinterpretation and abstraction of the figural ornamentation.

As emphasized, the position of ornament in the relationship of architecture to other arts has always been complex and has been unable to be identified with a definite framework since the Renaissance. Leon Battista Alberti, an Italian humanist, architect, and the primary developer of Renaissance art theory, achieves the perfect whole, expressing the highest artistic creation, via the reinterpretation and abstraction of figured forms. However, Alberti's humanist approach differs from John Ruskin's holistic view to the relationship between figural arts and architecture. Although, Alberti and Ruskin disagree in theory, it is shown that Alberti's harmonious geometric whole, somehow corresponds to Kant's purposefulness based on his transcendental scheme. It is concluded that the theoretical conceptualization of figural ornamentation with a metaphorical understanding of the human body expresses Cassirer's symbol / perfect whole, which can only be obtained by achieving perfect mathematical unity between part and whole.

**Keywords:** Free and Adherent Beauty, Ornament, Representation, Symbol, The Body.

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## INTRODUCTION: THE THEORY OF DECORATIVE ART

The necessity of ornament with the shifting aesthetic understanding with the machine era, uncovered the controversial position of ornament in other arts. Isabelle Frank categorizes theorists in the relationship between ornament and decorative arts by correlating them with function, material and production (Frank, 2002, p.1-2). The importance of this classification is that it enables ornament to be associated with a holistic approach of artistic beauty that refers to both fine and decorative arts, as Frank reveals. Among all these names included in Frank's classification, the article discusses John Ruskin, Louis Sullivan, Gottfried Semper, as noteworthy names. Their approaches provide a fusion between ornament and structure. This article aims to reconceptualise the relationship of ornament with decorative arts and body by examining the artistic thinking of these names through Cassirer's concept of symbol, which expresses an embodied system. In this sense, John Ruskin is discussed under the title of "**ornament as a symbol**". Louis Sullivan and Gottfried Semper who attempt to integrate the part into the whole are discussed under the title of "**ornament as if a symbol**" in part and whole relationship. Such names as Alois Riegl and Owen Jones are not included in the scope of the article since they deal with just representation, a decoration unrelated to the structure. However, before delving into the cases, the concepts of Immanuel Kant and Ernst Cassirer are introduced in depth.

### Kant's Transcendental Philosophy: Free and Adherent Beauty

Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher pioneer, develops a transcendental philosophy that provides a basis for the integral relationship between object and subject. Kant deals with the subjective order of knowledge corresponding to 'transcendental' that is necessary to constitute the object in this philosophy (Kant, 1998, p.133). He mentions a priori knowledge that differs from experimental (Kant, 1998, p.137). Based on this, the reason category also differs from intuition and understanding, which belong to experimental (Kant, 1998, p.152,155). The 'transcendental schema' ensures the integrity between these pure and experimental categories, transforming pure knowledge into empirical (Kant, 1998, p.272).

Kant mentions the synthetic unity of the different forms of knowledge (Kant, 1998, p.231) and synthetic a priori judgements (Kant, 1998, p.146). While investigating the transcendental system of forms of knowledge in different fields, he also inquires how transcendental system emerges in aesthetic experience. In Critique of the Power of Judgement, Kant also emphasises two crucial terms: purpose and purposiveness. The term purpose refers to the term concept that is the cause belongs to object. If the concept does not belong to object and there appears to be no purpose, this is referred to as purposiveness, i.e., causality does not stem from object (Kant, 1987, p.220-221). Following that, Kant distinguishes free beauty that reflects purposiveness without purpose and adherent beauty. In Analytic of The Beautiful he explains these two thoroughly:

"There are two kinds of beauty, free beauty (*pulchritudo vaga*) and merely accessory beauty (*pulchritudo adhaerens*). Free beauty does not presuppose a concept of what the object is [meant] to be. Adherent beauty does presuppose such a concept as well as the object's perfection in terms of that concept (Kant, 1987, p.229-230)."

Kant exemplifies adherent beauty with the human being or horse and building while expressing free beauty through pure forms such as flowers, birds and even pure synthetic objects as decorative wallpapers deprived of any superficial meanings (Kant, 1987, p.230). An aesthetic judgment reflecting the feeling of the power of the presentation on the subject rather than the object's purposefulness (Kant, 1987, p.229) can be associated with the free beauty, which is formed independently of a concept. In this sense, free beauties are not about representation of the object, but about the subject's limitless imagination (Kant, 1987, p.230).

In contrast to Kant's reflection on free beauty on natural and pure forms of integrity, adherent beauty indicates a kind of judgement in which part and whole connection are considered simultaneously. As a result, he refers to adherent beauty as "uniting taste with reason" (Kant, 1987, p.231). The aim of searching for the manifestation of nature's absolute wholeness also connects to different interpretations of adherent beauty. According to Allison, Kant's free and adherent beauty distinction refers to on 'its own' or as part of a larger connection (Allison, 2001, p.142). On the other hand, Kant also reveals combination of part and whole when he says, "complete power of presentation that gains when the two states of mind harmonize" (Kant, 1987, p.231). Kant's critique that ornament is detached from true beauty when it exists only as 'merely attached'

to whole (Kant, 1987, p.226) supports these two models of free and adherent beauty differentiation.

In summary, Kant's contrast between 'free beauty' and 'adherent beauty' in aesthetic judgment refers to a new interpretation of the separation between pure artistic production and impure creations as building, painting, sculpture, music, and poem. This issue of aesthetic judgment arose as a result of historical shifts in the hierarchy of arts (Figure 1). In Greek and Latin, the term decorative art corresponded to a comprehensive concept of art related to the craft or sciences, encompassing both the arts and the fine arts (Kristeller, 1951, p.498). In Medieval, the humanistic concept follows late antique, and there is a distinction between high and low arts. Liberal arts are higher-level arts with more scientific and philosophical content, such as mathematics, geometry, astronomy, rhetoric, and language. Mechanical art comprises different forms of art related with crafts or human activities that were formerly not separated from architecture and sculpture (Kristeller, 1951, p.507-508). Throughout the Renaissance, visual arts such as sculpture, painting, and architecture were separated from other arts and were not related with the concept of holistic artistic beauty and aesthetics (Kristeller, 1951, p.510). This split between the visual arts in the Renaissance serves as a watershed moment for philosophers such as Kant, who offers a new theoretical foundation for artistic beauty.

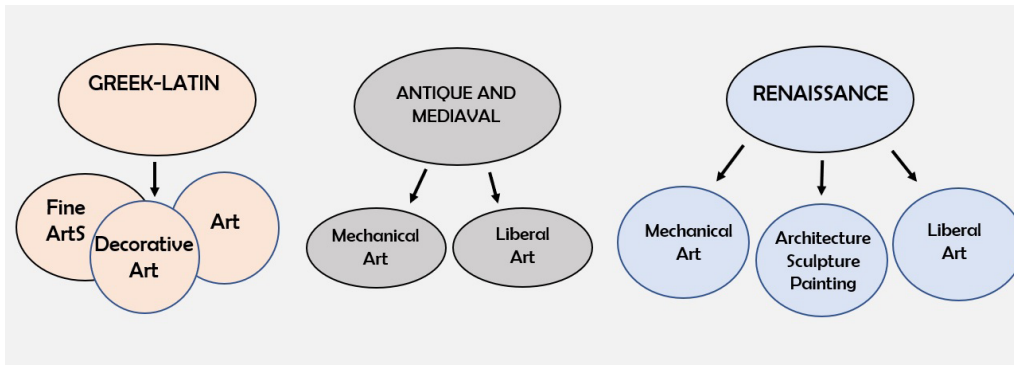


Figure 1. Differences in the classifications of the arts (generated from Kristeller, 1951)

### Ernst Cassirer's Transcendental Philosophy: Symbol & Representation

Cassirer, a part of the Marburg school, follows the works of names such as Hegel and seeks to build his symbolic form theory based on Kant's transcendental schema (Coskun, 2007, p.240-241-242). Cassirer focuses on the human mind's integrity in relation to the object form constructed by the human mind; this is how knowledge takes shape. In this sense, there is no distinction between the human mind and the object (Cassirer, 1955, p.38). Each person's individual production of meaning expresses the main starting point of Cassirer's theory of symbolic forms (Schilpp, 1949, p.14) based on transcendental philosophy. Therefore, instead of a ready-made object, the human mind produces its own symbolic form, a whole. As Cassirer points out, symbolic forms are "the sources of real light, the prerequisite of visualization and the wellsprings of all formation" (Cassirer, 1953, p. 93). According to Cassirer, the concept of purposiveness, in which each piece is arranged according to the synthetic unity, reflects the formation of geometric forms as well as natural (Cassirer, 1981, p.288). Cassirer's statement as "the general expression for every harmonious unification of the parts of a manifold" (Cassirer, 1981, p.287) indicates the harmony between the parts and the whole and their reciprocal inseparable relationship. Beauty is a reflection of the perfection that can be attained via the complete union of the human intellect and the object.

Cassirer explains the concept of symbol and representation in his philosophy (Table 1). The former corresponds to a term very different from the meaning of the symbol that can be defined as representation. Instead of ready meaning, the symbol, which is reflected as the perfection of the mind's shaping, discloses new meaning discoveries (Cassirer, 1953, p.50-51). Cassirer emphasizes this symbolic structure of human mind by using the phrase 'symbolic animal' (Cassirer, 1953, p.65). Although symbol reflects the indivisible completeness of all components, representations do not depict the inseparable link between part and whole (Cassirer, 1953, p.103). Symbols mirror reality, whereas representations express 'arbitrary' additions that conceal the truth (Cassirer, 1953, p.49,52). Representations with pre-given meanings are independent of personal experience exploration and they just refer to exact imitations. They limit the imagination of person by preventing the production of new meanings (Cassirer, 1953, p.51,53). In the symbolic form system expressed by Cassirer, the concept of symbol refers to a comprehensive whole that is not only based on the unity in nature, but also based on the unity in forms of culture (Cassirer, 1953, p. 52, 53, 56). As a result, a symbol, which

expresses a perfect whole from which no part can be taken, also should express integrity that includes all geometric forms.

SYMBOL/ TRUTH	REPRESENTATIONS
THE WHOLE/INTEGRAL	CONSISTS OF PARTS
AUTONOMOUS/PERSONAL	UNIVERSAL
ALLOWS MEANING	READY-MADE MEANING-DON'T ALLOW EMOTIONAL MEANING
NO REPRODUCTION OF THE READY	REPEATED WITHOUT MAKING SENSE
MIMETIC TO ANALOGICAL	

Table 1. The distinction between symbol and representation

As previously said, Kant, in accordance with transcendental philosophy, emphasises on the reflection of transcendental structure in aesthetic perception. Cassirer derives his theory of symbolic form from this transcendental schema of Kant. According to Cassirer, the manifestation of the holistic form in nature becomes an issue in cultural sciences (Cassirer, 2005, p.61-62). It is represented in Kant's definition of free beauty as a free expression of 'ornament' like the shapes in nature, but also as pure aimless manmade creations. A free beauty is a symbol in a perfectly pure system in which parts and wholes are not separated. The beauty is an intrinsic component of structure. Adherent beauty, on the other hand, can relate to beauty in the arts such as architecture, painting, sculpture, music, and poetry when a specific goal stands out. The integrity of part and total in order to produce pure artistic expression becomes an issue in this system. If the pieces are easily detachable from the structure, the danger of matching to a pure representation exists. However, when there is complete oneness of parts and total, an adhering beauty can also be a symbol.

### ORNAMENT AS A "SYMBOL": JOHN RUSKIN

John Ruskin, a well-known art and social critic, reconceptualizes architecture's connection with function and beauty. Ruskin distinguishes 'architecture and construction' by qualities such as 'mental health, power, and pleasure. Only when architecture is constructed to appeal to these qualities can it be considered art (Ruskin, 1889, p. 8). According to Ruskin the value of artwork is initially related with 'thought and moral purpose' followed by 'technical skill' and 'bodily industry' (Ruskin, 2009a, p. 411). Ruskin strives to discover a means to combine spiritual and aesthetic ideas in a hybrid approach. In this manner, Ruskin conceptualizes ornament in a holistic perspective of art by focusing on human power and beauty via abstraction. In *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, he concentrates on various functions that bring artistic labour and craft to the maximum degree that makes architecture art; makes ornament art by focusing on Gothic. Ornament is a magical notion that unites all of these values. So, Ruskin's "ornament as art" argument creates a new hierarchy in which ornamentation appears as 'the principal part of architecture' (Ruskin, 2007, p.59).

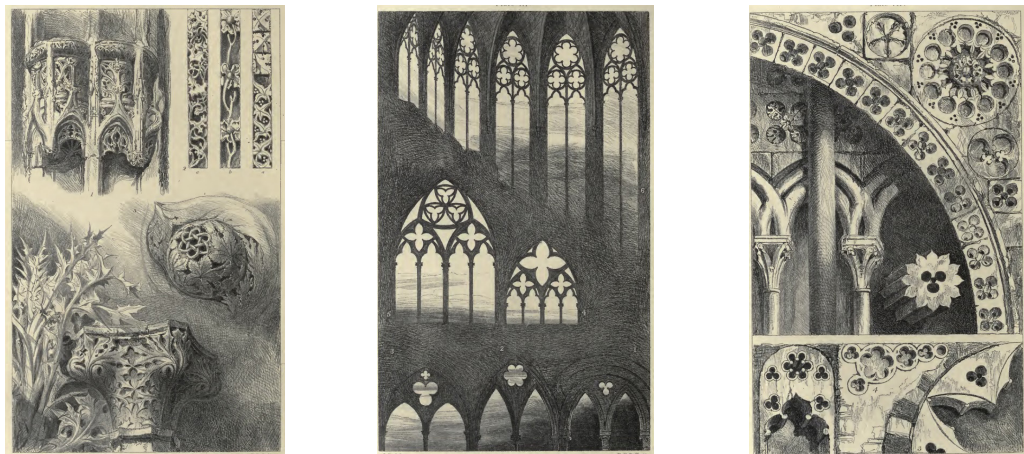


Figure 2. Pure abstract expressions of Gothic (Ruskin, 1889, p.27-58-94)

In respect to imitation, Ruskin does not specify the particular shape of the ornament. Based on his integrative theoretical approach, Ruskin clearly expresses 'what is not ornament' (Ruskin, 1889, p.117). According to Ruskin, additional representations; decorations, as 'curtains, pictures, and sculptures,' cannot be used to depict architecture (Ruskin,

2009a, p.405). In this sense, 'painting or sculptures', that can be easily isolated from the whole, will never match to the notion of 'architectural ornament' (Ruskin, 2009a, p.237). While sculpture portrays the risky form of imitation, the architect's major concern is the precision and purity of natural lines (Ruskin, 1889, p.135-136). In this sense, 'abstraction' is the crucial word, together with 'proportion', to discover a solution to the ornament's placement (Ruskin, 1889, p.117, 124). The main concepts that constitute the ornament are the beauty that arises from the perfection of abstract forms and the expression of the 'sense of human labor' (Ruskin, 1889, p. 53) (Figure 2). Therefore, he insisted that the ornament was never redundant, and 'ornament and beauty' linked to the same concepts to stress his holistic approach. This holistic perfection requires no additional representation; it refers to a purely closed system in which parts cannot be added or removed (Ruskin, 2009a, p.405). "Nobody wants ornaments in this world, but everybody wants integrity" (Ruskin, 1889, p.54-55), he says of this holistic system's strength. While the notion of beauty inspired by natural laws produces architecture by human power in the Seven Lamps of Architecture, the God spirit is also power that arranges it (Ruskin, 1889, p.72). The part, according to Ruskin's spiritual viewpoint, links to a bigger total as a mirror of a transcendental notion; it is related with divine energy. Art, he says in *Modern Painters*, conveys a completeness that depicts the relationship between 'God and Man' (Ruskin, 2013, p.154). While Mallgrave explains Kant's purposefulness with the 'transcendental brain,' he deals with the object's reflection of this circumstance with several classifications (Mallgrave, 2010). Ruskin's brain creates the whole by reflecting it with a new concept of integrity. Through the free beauty of Gothic, Ruskin precisely concentrates the greatest perfection level of purposefulness. The spiritual relationship completely turns into 'sympathy' in building (Ruskin, 1889, p.72), which reflects Ruskin's holistic system argument; a symbol where no component can be added or removed from. As Lars Spuybroek also argues, the distinction between ornament and structure disappears in Gothic architecture that depicts a pure closed system (Spuybroek, 2011, p. 48). The ornament's free expression manifests itself in structural relations, and ornament transforms into whole structure, as Ruskin and Worringer demonstrate in *Abstraction and Empathy* (Spuybroek, 2011, p.11). Ruskin's concentration in *Nature of Gothic* is not on a single part, such as a pointed arch or a flying buttress, but on the wholeness of these members, which brings Gothic expression to life (Ruskin, 2009b, p.152).

Ruskin conceptualizes the integrity of abstract invention and body through the essential, common principles of the Gothic Spirit. Ruskin desires to find the greatest unity as a symbol; in the irregularity of free abstract Gothic expression instead of a rigid geometric and symmetrical order. He explains 'Gothicness', the uniqueness of Gothic character, in a way that is comparable to Worringer's idea of abstract expression, with six features as savageness, changefulness, naturalism, grotesqueness, rigidity, and redundancy. The 'savageness' coupled with the approach of lawlessness generates the Gothic expression's profound religious character. The divine expressiveness is seen in the 'imperfection' of the parts in Gothic (Ruskin, 2009b, p.160). This imperfection, according to Ruskin, demonstrates the excellence of the thing made by the human hand. Worringer's remark of the Northern Gothic feeling that aiming to dominate the part forcefully (Worringer, 1920, p.123) definitely reflects Ruskin's principle of 'savageness' or 'rudeness.'

'Changefulness' or 'variety' is another keyword to conceptualize the holistic genesis of Gothic, as he points out with 'perpetual variety' and shows his antipathy to a classical order (Ruskin, 2009b, p.173, 176). Ruskin refers to a non-repeating irregularity, similar to the rhythm of poetry (Ruskin, 2009b, p.174). Ornament creates a whole system that is always changing, with no symmetry or recurrence, in opposition to a strict fragmented order. Based on the free expressional nature of Gothic, the craftsman expresses his own spirit in his creation without being constrained by any rules. This continual shift is about the 'perpetual novelty' that is the basic characteristic of the Gothic spirit (Ruskin, 2009b, p.176). Ruskin underlines the merging of the artist's imitation skill with a spirit in Naturalism by referring to the purity of forms in nature (Ruskin, 2009b, p.185).

Rigidity is an essential concept in Gothic that clearly expresses the holism, the fusion between ornament and structure. The term 'active rigidity' refers to the 'peculiar energy' of the entire system that produces Gothic free beauty and the excellence of structural relations (Ruskin, 2009b, p.203). Ruskin again highlights 'sympathy', which refers to the coherent relationship between part and whole (Ruskin, 2009b, p.205). The energy of Gothic ornament pervades the entire composition, activating it and dissolving the hard expression of Gothic stone elements. The same energy manifests itself in all bones (Ruskin, 2009b, p.203). In the Gothic hybrid formation, the sympathy generated by combining all elements highlights the symbol attitude. Ornament and purposefulness are intertwined in this system, as ornament **determines** the whole system's relationships (Figure 3). Mallgrave's (Mallgrave, 2010) 'animistic brain' categorisation for Gottfried Semper, which recognizes

the distinction between ornament and structure, emerges as a whole in Ruskin's overly animistic argument. He shows a symbol as the pinnacle of artistic perfection, revealing that the human brain constitutes the entirety of the architectural body.



Figure 3. Holistic expression of Gothic as a symbol, photo by Gary Ullah (URL-1)

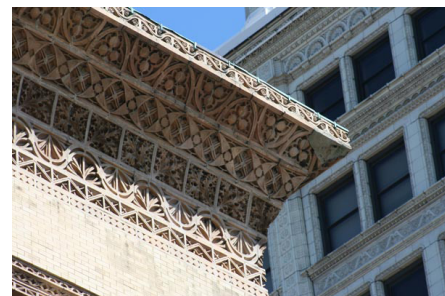
## ORNAMENT 'AS IF' A SYMBOL: HENRY LOUIS SULLIVAN AND GOTTFRIED SEMPER

### Henry Louis Sullivan: Organic Way of Thinking

As indicated by Ruskin's argument that dissolves the distinction between ornament and structure, there is an inseparable relationship between aesthetics and general architectural concept that appears in the holistic symbol attitude of Gothic architecture. However, as Ameri points out, Ruskin's suggested hierarchy, by making ornament the primary concern of architecture, exacerbates the problematic position of ornament. By losing its limits, ornament is unable to locate a specific location (Ameri, 2005). Ruskin builds castles in the sky by elevating ornamentation to the greatest degree of the aesthetic hierarchy via abstraction. In this regard, determining how ornament might connect to the entire as an addition can help to resolve its confusing position. Louis Sullivan, a pioneer of modern architecture, deals with the attachment of the part to whole through creative expression, as opposed to Modernism, which lacks artistic soul and isolates the part. Sullivan's idea supports a new poetic and organic style of thinking, based solely on spontaneous artistic creation (Sullivan, 1979, p.50-51). Sullivan, like Ruskin, explores nature as a phenomenon in his search for a symbol. He argues that the differentiation of energy of all forms in nature can provide a reference to a creative artistic production (Sullivan, 1979, p.56-57). He aims to reveal his own unique artistic production by employing different ornamental forms in the form of organic thought he follows. Sullivan presents a vast ornamental treasure, ranging from stylized plant motifs to organic and geometric shapes (Figure 4). His idea of ornament, in which 'organic and geometric' hybridize (Sprague, 1969, p.178) in a poetic abstraction way of thinking, is the pinnacle of his artistic expression.



Figure 4. Sculptural motifs of Louis Sullivan, Union Trust Building (URL-2)



Sullivan expresses an original piece of art while rendering a fully emotionally animated whole. This emotional purposiveness pervades all parts of the structure. In this sense, his entire artistic endeavour, down to the smallest detail, reflects an emotional purposefulness. This creation process is based on ensuring the continuity of an 'organic' basic concept. According to Sullivan, 'decorative system' and 'mass composition' are manifestations of the same poetic purpose in architecture, which seeks poetic integrity in the same way that music does (Sullivan, 1979, p.188). Sullivan promotes his organic system, in which the

part and the whole are in 'sympathy' (Sullivan, 1979, p. 189). In his sculptural whole, which he defines as '*functionates in all of its parts*' (Sullivan, 1979, p.160), ornament emerges as an inseparable concept of this living system. In this sense, the continuity of function and form embodies Sullivan's idea of poetic purposefulness. Through articulating the part to the surface, the sympathy appears with permanence between the ornament and the body. In this sense, Sullivan conceptualizes ornament more with a transition function, mainly in transition to roofs and column capitals. The artistic desire manifests itself in the whole organic system, beginning with the joints where ornamentation is integrated into the structure. The Guaranty Building, built-in 1896, is one of the outstanding instances of the reflection of fusion of artistic beauty and structure (Figure 5).

Sullivan's strategy of pursuing his own artistic motif with hybrid figural forms and his endeavour to merge ornamentation and body, set him apart from his contemporaries. The animation of the ornament with the use of joints and its articulation to the surface was a reflection of his poetic and emotional brain. Gottfried Semper sheds light on a theoretical concept for another way of artistic thinking about ornament while conceiving artistic creation with a broader collection of events.



Figure 5. Structural integration of ornament and detail of Guaranty Building (URL-3)

### Gottfried Semper: Textile Theory

Gottfried Semper explores an alternative theoretical approach to unify ornament and structure, to reach a symbol with artistic expression developed from the artform and core form concept that Karl Bötticher based on Greek tectonics. Although Bötticher and Semper are both associated with an 'animistic' way of thinking, Semper's debate takes on a distinct shape (Mallgrave, 2010, p. 68). In Bötticher's distinction, while the structural form is based on Gothic architecture, the art form expresses the Greek symbolic dress that emphasizes mechanics (Mallgrave, 2005, p. 112). Based on Greek tectonics and the law of nature, he reflects the purposiveness as the emergence of decorative act in "the organism of the whole as well as of the parts" (Mallgrave, 2010, p.66). The fact that Bötticher mentions only just added representations (Werner, 1993, p.379) and only focuses on a symbolic reading of the just structural lines causes him to leave Semper. Bötticher's approach cannot go beyond existing reality and refers to representation of materiality (Hvattum, 2004, p.63). In Semper's theory, his animation, based on Greek tectonic imitation to form the whole, took on a different form. Semper focuses on how art form 'comes into being' (Semper, 2004, p. 71) and seeks a new manner of forming: a new way of ornament.

According to Semper, while architecture follows the rules that constitute the unity in nature, achieving the harmonious wholeness is the result of the act of embellishing (Semper 1984, p.219). In this sense, architecture appears as a 'cosmic art', it is the ornamentation itself. Semper emphasizes this process of artistic way of thinking of a perfect composition which manifests itself in cosmic arts like as music, dance, and architecture. Semper focuses on these branches of fine arts as a reflection of cosmic order that is not 'imitative' (Semper, 1984, p.220). In this sense, his understanding of art actually corresponds to a specific form of imitation, namely 'mimesis of praxis'. It appears as an imitation of human 'actions' rather than nature in Aristotle's concept (Hvattum, 2004, p. 75). Therefore, in line with this artistic understanding, Semper focuses on the various human activities that shape the form rather than the just form (Semper, 2004, p.72). In this sense, forming a building stems from textile art as a concept of art in its broadest sense for Semper (Semper, 2004, p.247). He seeks Kantian purposiveness, which expresses the search for reflection of the human mind's integrity on an object for a symbol.

The variety of motifs belonging to textile art emerged as a reflection of Semper's holistic search. For instance, in his theory with dressing, the mask does not represent an 'added' representation. As Mallgrave also argues, Semper's dressing becomes different from just superficial covering (Semper, 2004, p.50). Dressing corresponds to a metaphorical understanding that refers to carrying the current form beyond reality in order to attain a

poetic spirit that emerged on the whole form (Semper, 2004, p.379). Semper emphasizes the poetic spirit of art formed by human acts with the 'destruction of reality,' which Semper employs for all arts to reveal the artistic spirit to reach a harmonious whole (Semper, 2004, p.439).

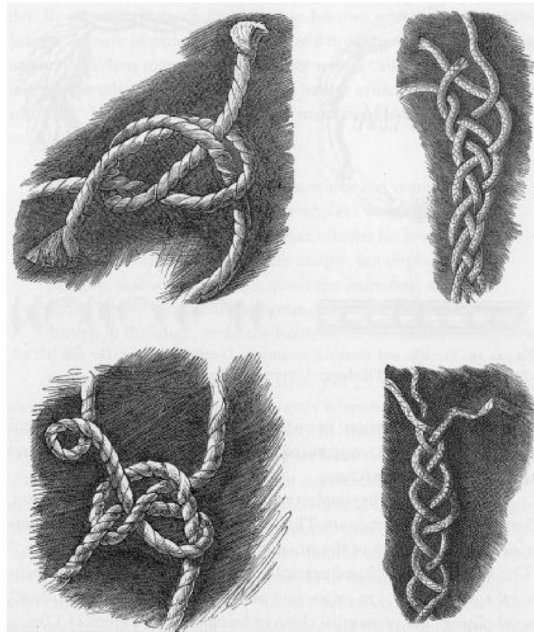


FIGURE 20. Knots and braids. Gottfried Semper, *De Stil* (2nd ed. 1878), vol. 1, pp. 169-72. Edinburgh University Library.

Figure 6. Knot as a structural approach (Hvattum, 2004, p.68)

Semper's theory's comprehensive reflection of the mimetic approach has clearly manifested itself with the transformation of architectural elements into ornaments. In his 'animistic' approach, artistic expression captures the architectural element and transforms it into a living form. This can be seen in Semper's 'knot', which refers to the 'structurally active' concept, reflecting the connection between artistic expression and technical issues (Semper, 2004, p.156) (Figure 6). The structurally necessary elements 'become organisms' with artistic spirit. Semper defined even a column by exceeding its structural function with artistic conception (Semper, 2004, p.728). Thus, the ornament becomes an inseparable part of the structure with artistic expression. Also, Semper points out colour as an integrated significant element of the whole system (Semper, 1834, p.350) to get a symbol. This poetic inseparable link between ornament and structure may be found in Dresden Opera House, which was completed in 1842 (Figure 7). It clearly demonstrates Semper's ornamental thinking approach in which all parts relate to each other and reflects harmonious relationship, as Hermann also emphasises (Hermann, 1984, p.5).

As Gombrich emphasizes, while Semper is less impassioned than Ruskin's powerful expressionist approach (Gombrich, 1984, p.47), Semper has a secret desire to seek for a melodious composition. Semper sought poetic harmonic expression of all actions of human life. With the mimetic process based on textile theory, as Hvattum displays, Semper

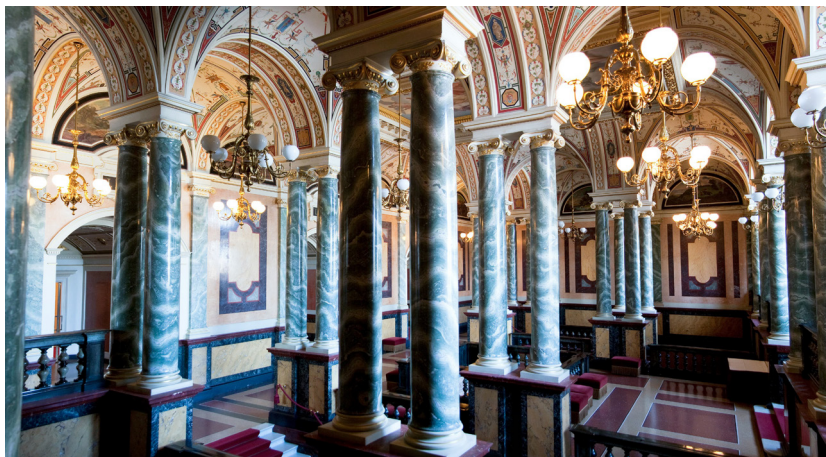


Figure 7. The holistic expression of ornament and structure, Dresden Opera of Semper, Photo by Maros Mraz (URL-4)



reveals “art as the poetic configuration of human world” (Hvattum, 2004, p.83). Semper's holistic search of mind in textile theory transforms artistic motifs from mere representations into a living organism; structural elements form an ornament. In his ‘animistic’ approach, the transcendence of reality and the focus on poetic tone in artistic creation formed his search for unique symbol. Semper's ambition is to construct Kantian purposefulness and its reflection as Cassirer's symbol.

## CONCLUSION

As stated, Kant's free beauty that corresponds to pure system in which there is no extrinsic part refers to Cassirer's symbol. On the other hand, in adherent beauty, it also becomes possible to obtain inseparable relationship of part and whole that reflects a symbol despite the risk of external parts being pure representations detached from the structure. Ruskin, Sullivan and Semper revealed this relation of symbol and representation with free and adherent beauty while discussing the relationship between decorative arts and ornament with artistic creation and structure in diverse ways. Ruskin, as revealed, pushes for a connection with an artistic spirit, and explores an embodied holistic expression of ornament, a symbol, with abstraction. He rejects extrinsic component as a representation. The separation disappears in the relationship between ornament and structure based on nature's order of irregularity. In this sense, Ruskin's holistic attitude is based entirely on abstraction and he expresses a symbol of free beauty while associating ornament with different values through Gothic architecture. In its relationship to imitation, Ruskin completely separates the ornament from the notorious sculpture and therefore he sticks to the holistic expression of Gothic to highlight the problematic position of the ornament. However, Ruskin's ‘animistic’ approach has certain characteristics with Sullivan and Semper, who recognize the distinction between ornament and structure. In Sullivan and Semper's approach, the part does not remain just merely an artificial representation isolated from the structure; instead, it pretends to be a symbol by being integrated to the whole. In this sense, the artistic creation process, in which Sullivan and Semper integrated artistic motifs into the structure and the representational motifs turned into sculptural forms, is a key stage for obtaining a symbol that corresponds to adherent beauty. On the other hand, Sullivan's abstraction by using geometric and organic hybrid artistic forms at the joints of the structure and transforming artistic motifs into an organism, and Semper's poetic interpretations are simple indications of their efforts to reach a symbol. So, despite the lack of coherent narrative that provides the relationship between this part and the whole, the transformation of the ornament from a representational artistic motif into a sculptural form has assured a rethinking of the connection between figural arts and architecture.

The animation of ornament with a sculptural form, bring us back to the Renaissance and Alberti, a watershed moment in ornament's relationship with the metaphor of the human body. In Renaissance, the symbolic whole is achieved by incorporating figurative ornaments into the whole in various ways by using different surfaces and joints of the building parts (Figure 8). The way the representation motifs, which emerged with an artistic creation, turned into ornaments and their relationship with whole body reveals the relationship of ornament with the metaphor of the human body in Renaissance. In *On The Art of Building in Ten Books as De Re Aedificatoria*, Alberti seeks for an embodiment whole. The metaphor of the human body emerges as parts of a supporting skeleton that corresponds to all parts of the structure, and ‘skin’ can be defined as a concept that completes and connects this whole system (Alberti, 1991, p. 71, 81, 180) and brings it to life. Payne refers to this as ‘anthropomorphism’ which alludes to Alberti's human body concept (Payne, 2017, p.148) in order to reframe the strategy of ornament through figural arts. This artistic unification based on metaphorical approach also offers a reading of an intersection in the cultural journey of ornament (Payne, 2017, p.155). Payne shows a process that integrates ornament into structure emphasizing the intersection of this process with the decorative use of some superficial representations, a process in which materials and construction techniques and certain figural reliefs are integrated into the surface. Alberti's metaphorical understanding of the human body is emphasised by the links between figural ornamentation and bodily joints. The figural forms that refer to ‘humanoid’ and ‘zoomorphic’ used at the joints were also part of this metaphoric approach utilised to bring these forms to life. The hybridizing power of the bodily approach emerges here (Payne, 2017, p.151,) laying the groundwork for presenting a perfect geometric system in which art and science coexist.

Alberti's classification of painting, sculpture, and architecture in the same artistic category, as well as the bodily relationship he establishes on proportions suggest an approach that may lead to artistic fusion (Payne, 2017, p.149-150). He distinguishes between ‘ornament’ and ‘beauty’ by using Vitruvius's analogical approach to human

body measurements to provide a clear foundation for a geometrically holistic system comprised of the harmonious unity of parts (Mallgrave, 2010, p.13-14). According to Alberti, beauty is expressed by an 'inherent' concept derived from this holistic system, rather than by a 'something attached or additional' ornament (Alberti, 1991, p.156). He associates ornament with very different concepts such as 'stucco' or a 'mosaic work' and even statue (Alberti, 1991, p.164, 240). He also expresses the concept of 'concinnitas', which states that all elements generated in this sequence interact with one another (Alberti, 1991, p. 302). As a result of 'concinnitas', ornamentation and all the parts that make up the building's skeleton emerge as an expression of a spiritual forming concept that goes beyond just bodily analogy (Mallgrave, 2010, p. 17). The concept of 'concinnitas', which defines Kant's purposefulness, determines the relations in the whole and reflects in the whole artistic soul (Mallgrave, 2010, p.55), which also appears in the approach of Semper 'skin' and thoughts of others. Semper's animated reading of 'dressing' theory, which completes the relations between the part and the whole, is reminiscent of Alberti's metaphor of 'skin' (Mallgrave, 2010, p.69). In this sense, Alberti's 'humanistic brain' is a holistic understanding of form-giving that allows for the manifestation of the links between the part and the whole. Therefore, only by integrating mimetic process and science in humanist thought, it is possible to define a perfect geometric system as a symbol.



Figure 8. The detail of figural ornament, pulpit from Renaissance, Photo by Matteo Vannacci (URL-5)

Overall, Alberti's harmonious geometric whole, which embodies the integrity of the human mind in the object, somehow corresponds to Kant's purposefulness based on his transcendental scheme (Mallgrave, 2010, p.55), despite the fact that his humanist approach, which reflects the geometrical metaphorical order of a divine understanding, differs from Ruskin's holistic approach. In this sense, as Sullivan and Semper reveal, a symbol reflecting the greatest artistic creation also necessitates a process including the figure's reinterpretation and abstraction. As Payne exemplifies through Gallacini's mathematical approach, the abstraction that follows the movement understanding of the joints of the human body in the construction of the structure enables the inseparable relationship of science and art (Payne, 2017, p.153-154). So, when the pursuit of artistic motif's perfection and perfect harmony between the part and the whole are merged, a mathematically perfect geometry, a symbol, can be achieved. This inseparable link provides a solution to ornament's problematic place among other arts, as well as its relationship with structure.

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