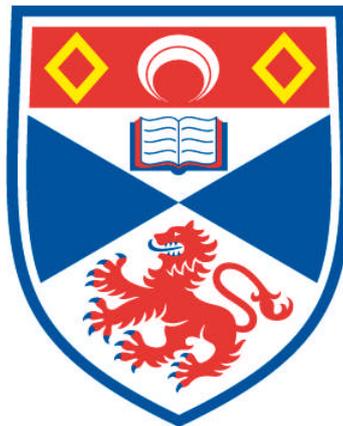


**WORDS AND DEEDS:
NATIONAL STYLE VERSUS MODERNITY IN
FINNISH ARCHITECTURE, 1890-1916:
THE WRITINGS OF VILHO PENTTILÄ AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

Volume 1

Charlotte Ashby

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



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CHARLOTTE ASHBY

Submitted in application of the degree of Ph.D in the University of
St Andrews, 4th September 2006.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the question of the extent to which the concept of a National Style dominated architectural production in Finland between 1890 and 1916.

The thesis maintains that National Style ideas should be understood as one of a number of impulses emerging in Finnish architecture in the 1890s. This point is explored through analysis of the writings of the architect, journalist and Finnish nationalist Vilho Penttilä. His writings reveal that alongside the National Style he was also concerned with the general question of architectural reform in Finland. This thinking included new ideas on the role that materials, construction and new technology should play in shaping architectural design. Alongside this ran interest in the development of a new language of architectural ornament capable of expressing the character of the building and the society who used it. International architecture was frequently referred to as a model in relation to the National Style and architectural reform in general. Comparison is made to other writings within the Finnish architectural press.

The thesis is tested through the examination of a case study: the buildings of Penttilä for the National Joint-Stock Bank [KOP] and the architecture of financial buildings in general, with further comparison made, where relevant, to the broader architectural field. This allows for the comparison of the work of a large number of architects and prestigious projects throughout the country. The study reveals that, just as was indicated through the analysis of architectural journalism, National Style ideas were explored alongside other concerns related to architectural reform. National Style features began to disappear in the mid-1900s, subsumed within the drive to find new architectural forms to reflect the modern age and Finland's hopes for the future. This was found to be the case even in relation to Penttilä's work for KOP, where both the architect and the institution were committed to the Finnish nationalist movement.

CONTENTS

	Acknowledgements	i
1.i	INTRODUCTION	1
	Terminology	12
1.ii	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The Development of Finnish Nationhood and Nationalism	16
	Ethno-linguistic Nationalism – Fennomania	17
	Svecomania	19
	Russian Nationalism and Russification	20
2.i	NATIONAL STYLE: THE VERNACULAR MODEL: Penttilä’s Writings for <i>Suomen Teollisuuslehti</i> and the Development of National Style Thinking in Finland.	26
	The Vernacular Paradigm and the National Style in Finland	42
	Karelianism	56
2.ii	THE CREATION OF NATIONAL STYLE FORMS: A Finnish Style	62
	The Paris Pavilion	70
2.iii	URBAN ARCHITECTURE: PROGRESS AND REFORM: A New Style for a Modern Age	85
	Noble Building Materials, Structural Clarity and a New Style of Ornament	91
3.i	BANKING ARCHITECTURE IN FINLAND: The Head Offices and Penttilä’s work for KOP	117

	Ludwig Bohnstedt, <i>Bank of Finland</i> , 1878-1883	118
	Onni Tarjanne, <i>Kansallis-Osakepankki</i> , 1889-1892	126
	Gustaf Nyström, <i>Suomen Yhdyspankki</i> , 1896-1898	131
	Waldemar Aspelin, <i>Pohjoismaiden Osakepankki</i> , 1898-1900	137
	Penttilä as a Bank Architect	141
	Vilho Penttilä, <i>Oulu KOP</i> , 1898-1900	144
	Vilho Penttilä, <i>Viipuri KOP</i> , 1900-1901	154
	Vilho Penttilä, <i>Kuopio KOP</i> , 1903-1904	166
3.ii	THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRANCH BUILDING: THE CASE OF TAMPERE	170
	Gustaf Nyström, <i>Tampere SYP</i> , 1901	172
	Birger Federley, <i>Tampere POP</i> , 1901-1902	179
	Gesellius-Lindgren-Saarinen, <i>Tampere Savings Bank</i> , 1900-1903	183
	Birger Federley, <i>Tampere Joint-Stock Bank</i> , 1904-1905	187
	Vilho Penttilä, <i>Tampere KOP</i> , 1905-1907	192
	Interior Design: A Comparison of <i>Tampere KOP</i> with the <i>Private Bank</i> and the <i>Helsinki POP</i>	195
4.i	THE NEW DIRECTION: Evolution within the Finnish New Style	206
	Suomen Teollisuuslehti and the New Direction	211
	Lars Sonck, <i>Mortgage Association Building</i> , 1907-1908	222
4.ii	VILHO PENTTILÄ AND THE NEW DIRECTION: THE LATER KOP BUILDINGS	229

	The <i>Kotka KOP</i> , 1908-1910	229
	The <i>Iisalmi KOP</i> , 1910-1912	234
	The <i>Lahti KOP</i> , 1911-1913	238
	The Development of the Branch Bank Model	246
	The <i>Turku KOP</i> , 1912-1914	251
	The <i>Hämeenlinna and Jyväskylä KOP</i> buildings, 1913-1916	259
4.iii	NEW STYLE CLASSICISM IN HELSINKI IN THE 1910s Change and Continuity	270
	Tarjanne and Lindgren's <i>Suomi Building</i> , 1909-1911	271
5.	CONCLUSION	285
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	291

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1.i INTRODUCTION

“We are no longer Swedes. We do not wish to be Russians. So we must be Finns.”¹

This famous quote by the Finnish nationalist philosopher Adolf Ivar Arwidsson in the 1820s illustrates one of the core challenges facing those who strove to formulate and promote Finnish national identity in the nineteenth century. A backwoods province of the Swedish crown since the fourteenth century, ceded to Russia in 1809, Finland had little in the way of heroes or illustrious history to draw upon in the creation of national pride and identity.² Arwidsson’s quote reveals that it was easier to define Finland in terms of what she was not, rather than what she was. And yet, Arwidsson’s vision, ‘we must be Finns’, was realised and an independent Finnish state came into existence for the first time in 1917. Much of the labour of developing Finnish national consciousness was played out in the cultural sphere. Writers, artists, architects and composers made vital contributions, making tangible the ephemeral reality of being Finnish.

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, scholarly examination of the nation’s cultural history and appreciation for Finnish creative ingenuity has formed an important part of developing national consciousness in Finland.³ Following the trauma of the First and Second World Wars the role of the arts and design in re-enforcing a shared sense of national identity and pride remained important. The cultural flowering that accompanied rising national consciousness in the 1890s and 1900s became regarded as a golden age and the work of Akseli Gallen-Kalela, Jean Sibelius, Eino Leino and others became understood

¹ **Adolf Ivar Arwidsson** (1791-1858) was a politician, journalist, author, poet and historian and part of the circle of Romantic-minded, Finnish nationalists based in Turku (Åbo in Swedish) in the early nineteenth century.

² This absence of a glorious historic past is one of the reasons for the great significance the *Kalevala* legends, collected and composed in 1830, in the project of nation building in Finland. The *Kalevala* is discussed further on pages 39-40.

³ S. Ringbom, *Art History in Finland before 1920*, Helsinki 1986.

as examples of the synthesis of nationalist aspirations and creativity known as National Romanticism.⁴

Interest in turn-of-the-century architecture in Finland began to rise in the 1960s and 1970s, in parallel with rising European-wide interest in the movement known as Art Nouveau. During the 1980s and 1990s a significant body of Finnish scholarship on turn-of-the-century architecture developed.⁵ Some of this research was published in English.⁶ Finnish researchers have also made an active contribution to international research projects looking at Art Nouveau, and strong contacts are maintained with Scandinavian and Baltic colleges working in this field, which have resulted in various collaborative publications and conferences.⁷

The interest of English-language scholarship in Finnish architecture and design from the period around 1900 can be dated to the publication of John Boulton Smith's 1976 book *The Golden Age of Finnish Art: Art Nouveau and the National Spirit*.⁸ Following on from this publication were further English books, articles and exhibitions focussed on Finnish art and architecture.⁹ This interest was related both to the revival of interest in the Art

⁴ This current in art history is exemplified by the work of Onni Okkonen, who was a leading Finnish art historian of the period.

⁵ Exemplified by the work of Ritva Wäre (nee Tuomi), Marika Hausen, Anna-Lisa Amberg, Paula Kivinen, Ville Lukkarinen, Sixten Ringbom, Pekka Korvenmaa, Eeva Maija Viljo and Leena Ahtola-Moorhouse.

⁶ Architectural surveys, such as J. Moorhouse, et al., *Helsinki Jugendstil Architecture 1895-1915*, Helsinki 1987, architectural monographs, M. Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen: Projects 1896-1923*, Helsinki 1990; P. Korvenmaa, *Innovation Versus Tradition: The Architect Lars Sonck*, Helsinki 1991; V. Lukkarinen, *Classicism and History: Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century: Jac. Ahrenberg and Gustaf Nyström.*, Helsinki 1989, and conceptual histories such as S. Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth: The Vogue for Natural Stone in Nordic Architecture 1880-1910*, Helsinki 1987 and P. Korvenmaa (ed), *The Work of Architects: The Finnish Association of Architects 1892-1992*, Helsinki 1992.

⁷ Finland is part of the Réseau Art Nouveau Network and Pan-Baltic co-operation has resulted in the following publications: S. Grosa (ed), *Art Nouveau: Time and Space: The Baltic Sea Countries at the turn of the 20th Century*, Riga 1999, the exhibition and book J. Howard (ed), *Architecture 1900: Stockholm, Helsinki, Tallinn, Riga, St Petersburg*, Tallinn 2003 and the international seminar and publication A. Kurtila (ed), *Architecture 1900: In a New Light*, Stockholm 2005.

⁸ J. Boulton-Smith, *The Golden Age of Finnish Art: Art Nouveau and the National Spirit*, Helsinki 1976.

⁹ J. M. Richards, *800 Years of Finnish Architecture*, Newton Abbot 1978, included a chapter on Finnish National Romanticism. In 1979 there was an exhibition of Finnish Art Nouveau at the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, corresponding with the release of a special edition of John Boulton-Smith's book. In 1982 the RIBA hosted an exhibition on Lars Sonck devised by the Finnish Museum of Architecture. This was accompanied by articles on Sonck and Finnish Architecture in the *Architectural Review*, 1982, by Rory

Nouveau movement and to interest in the phenomenon that became known as National Romanticism.

Art Nouveau, as a multifaceted, European and American design movement, has always proved difficult to define. In general it is characterised by driving aspirations for cultural renewal and reform, enthusiasm for the possibilities offered by new materials and new technology and a desire for authenticity, both in terms of materials, construction and craftsmanship, and more abstractly, in terms of fidelity to the character of the modern age, the function of the building and its national location. National Romanticism was a trend within Art Nouveau, in which this last concept was expressed with particular force. It can be understood as the urge to make architectural design worthy of and expressive of the national identity of the people for whom it was built. This vision of a National Style emerged in particular in countries and regions where the native people were subject to another, usually imperial power, and developed alongside nationalistic movements in literature and music and sometimes emancipatory political movements also. In these regions Art Nouveau thinking on design reform and the search for new and vital modes of expression in vernacular culture and the natural world were seized on as a means of stylistic renewal in which the character of the people and the character of the national landscape could also be expressed. Within these peripheral European nations, traditionally slow to react to new artist currents from the main cultural centres of Europe, the National Romantic variant of Art Nouveau found rich expression.

Within the field of research into National Romanticism, the case of Finland has been particularly well represented in English language scholarship. This is partially a reflection of the fact that, unlike many of the nations of interest to scholars of National Romanticism, Finland did not fall behind the iron curtain at the end of the Second World War. Her scholarly and cultural institutions were therefore not subject to the repressive regimes that

Spence 40-49 and J.M. Richards 88-94. In the same year the journal *Apollo* ran a special issue on Finnish Art Nouveau and National Romanticism in vol. 115. In 1986 Finnish turn of the century painting was represented in the Hayward Gallery, Arts Council exhibition and catalogue "Dreams of a Summer Night: Scandinavian Painting at the turn of the Century".

shaped post-war culture and scholarship in the so-called Eastern Block countries. Finland was able to maintain contact with the rest of Western Europe and domestic research in the fields of art and architectural history was similarly able to continue uninterrupted. Finnish art and architecture, as an example of the peripheral reception of Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts ideas, has been included in a large number of studies.¹⁰ Finnish material has also been included in works dealing specifically with National Romanticism.¹¹

This approach has led to a tendency to focus attention specifically on those aspects of Finnish architecture and design that can be identified as exploring uniquely and idiosyncratically Finnish themes. This is particularly true of international, rather than Finnish, scholarship in this area. Emphasis has been placed prominently on key projects that can be characterised as National Romantic, such as the *Finnish Pavilion* (1900), the *Pohjola Building* (1900-01), *Hvittrask* (1901-03), *St John's, Tampere* (1899-1905) and the output of the Iris Factory (1897-1902). Whilst the value of these works is beyond dispute, consistent focus upon them has tended to obscure their significance and meaning within the larger picture. In particular, the extent to which the urge towards the expression of national identity and character in design governed artistic production within Finnish Art Nouveau is made difficult to assess within this approach.

Finnish scholars, Ritva Wäre in particular, have sought to re-evaluate National Style thinking as simply one of a number of impulses shaping Finnish architecture and design in the years before and after 1900. Wäre's most significant work on this subject, her 1991 thesis, *Making Architecture Finnish: Nationalism in architecture and architectural writings*

¹⁰ E. Cumming and W. Kaplan, *The Arts and Crafts Movement*, London 1991; K. Livingstone and L. Parry (eds), *International Arts and Crafts*, London 2005; J. Howard, *Art Nouveau: International and National Styles in Europe*, Manchester 1996; P. Greenhalgh (ed), *Art Nouveau 1890-1914*, London 2000; G. Fahr-Becker, *Art Nouveau*, Köln 1997; K.-J. Sembach, *Art Nouveau*, Köln & London 1999; S. Escritt, *Art Nouveau*, London 2000.

¹¹ N. G. Bowe (ed), *Art and the National Dream : The Search for Vernacular Expression in turn of the century Design*, Dublin 1993; P. Krakowski and J. Purchla (eds), *Art Around 1900 in Central Europe: Art Centres and Provinces*, Cracow 1999; B. M. Lane, *National Romanticism and Modern Architecture in Germany and the Scandinavian Countries*, Cambridge 2000.

in Finland at the turn of the last century, sadly remains only available in Finnish.¹² This thesis presented a survey of architectural production and cultural journalism in Finland from 1890-1910, examining the extent to which the expression of nationalism dominated the output of this period. The findings of the thesis, that nationalism was an influential, but not dominant factor in the development of architecture in Finland in this period, provided the foundations for the research that makes up this present thesis. Wäre's thesis generated a revision of how the architecture of this period was approached by Finnish scholars, leading to a broader understanding of the national and international impulses and influences at work. The work included a summary in English and its findings have been referred to in many of the later articles in English by Finnish scholars, including Wäre herself.¹³ However, in the absence of the strong primary evidence, available only in Finnish, the full import of her research has not been absorbed by international scholarship.

This thesis seeks to test Wäre's conclusions through the examination of a case study which will include evidence of both architectural production and architectural thinking in Finland in the period 1890-1916. It is hoped that this study will clarify further the question of the significance of national expression in this period. Among the points to be explored in this enquiry will be the nature of the relationship between National Style impulses in design and nationalist, patriotic political beliefs or ideology. How far did the nationalistic view of architects direct their aesthetic judgement in this period? Leading on from this is the question of what other factors and ideals were involved in the shaping of architects' understanding of their work and the appearance of architecture and design in this period? Two approaches are taken to answering these questions. Architectural discourses within the Finnish press will be looked at to illuminate questions of motivation and key areas of concern for architectural practitioners of the period. Secondly a selection of buildings

¹² R. Wäre, *Rakennettu Suomalaisuus: Nationalismi viime vuosisadan vaihteen arkkitehtuurissa ja sitä koskevissa kirjoituksissa [Making Architecture Finnish: Nationalism in architecture and architectural writings in Finland at the turn of the last century]*, Helsinki 1991.

¹³ R. Wäre, 'How Nationalism was Expressed in Finnish Architecture at the Turn of the Last Century' in Bowe (ed) *Art and the National Dream: The Search for Vernacular Expression in Turn of the century Design*, Dublin 1993; R. Wäre, 'From Historicist Architecture to Early Modernism' in Norri, Standertskjöld and Wang (eds) *20th Century Architecture: Finland*, Helsinki 2000; R. Wäre, 'National Romanticism in Finnish Architecture' in Becker and Melchior (eds) *Now the Light Comes From the North: Art Nouveau in Finland*, Berlin 2002.

from the years 1890-1916 will be analysed to place the expression of National Style impulses within the context of general developments in architecture over this period. This study will help reveal a clearer picture of the ideologies behind developments in Finnish architecture and place National Style ideas within a broader perspective.

It would not be possible within the boundaries of a thesis such as this to completely survey the field of architectural journalism and practice for the years 1890-1916. For the purposes of this thesis therefore artificial parameters have been set. The question of the significance of the National Style will be looked at principally through an examination of the architectural writings of Vilho Penttilä in the *Suomen Teollisuuslehti [The Finnish Industrial Gazette]* and its supplements, and his work as an architect for the Kansallis-Osakepankki [National Joint-Stock Bank] or KOP. Penttilä's buildings will be put in perspective through an examination of the architectural type of the bank and financial institutions in general. The context of how these writings and building fit into the broader picture of architecture in Finland during these years will also be addressed through references to other authors and to significant building projects, outside of the sphere of financial architecture where necessary. All translations are the author's, unless otherwise noted.

This decision was made for a number of reasons. Vilho Penttilä was the architectural journalist identified by Wäre as one of the few more consistent exponents of a Finnish National Style. His architectural journalism also reveals his other concerns and architectural interests. Coupled with this is the significance of his work for the KOP bank. KOP was established in 1889 and was the first bank in Finland to operate in Finnish. It was established by businessmen who sought to promote Finnish-language interests in culture, politics and economics. Their ideological position, known as Fennomania, will be discussed in more depth later. Penttilä designed ten bank buildings for KOP across Finland. The expression of National Style impulses, and more significantly the lack of such expression, in the designs of a Fennomane architect working for a Fennomane client institution, is particularly illuminating.

Vilho Penttilä is a relatively little-known architect of the period, despite the fact that the firm within which he operated from 1895 to 1908, Usko Nyström – Petrelius - Penttilä, was one of the largest in Helsinki and his private practice which operated from 1908 till 1918 was also prosperous. His posthumous anonymity is partially explained by his relatively early death in the Civil War in 1918, at the age of fifty. It is also related to the fact that the success of his private firm and that of Usko Nyström – Petrelius – Penttilä was based primarily on private and commercial clients rather than monumental state commissions. Apart from his success, in partnership with Usko Nyström, in the public competition for the Viipuri Town Hall and third prize in the competition for the National Museum, Penttilä was not involved in any prestigious public commissions.

More recent scholarship in Finland has begun to explore the work of architects whose careers have long been overshadowed by the giants of turn-of-the-century Finnish architecture, Eliel Saarinen and Lars Sonck. Wäre included Penttilä as one of the eight writers on architecture highlighted in her thesis. This work focussed on Penttilä as a writer, rather than as an architect and made relatively little mention of his architectural production. Wäre mentioned Penttilä and the UN-P-P firm and its work for KOP in her article of ‘From Historicist Architecture to Early Modernism’.¹⁴ Eija Rauske’s 2004 thesis, *The Stones Speak: The Apartment Buildings of the Usko Nyström - Petrelius - Penttilä Architectural Office in Helsinki 1895-1908*, is the first study to focus attention on Penttilä as an architect.¹⁵ Rauske’s thesis was focussed on the Helsinki apartment buildings designed by the firm between 1895 and 1908 and made only a brief reference to the firm’s work for KOP. This thesis presents Penttilä as both an architect and a writer for the first time and the material on the ten branch banks designed by him for KOP are similarly collected together and presented for the first time.

¹⁴ Wäre, ‘From Historicist Architecture to Early Modernism’, 31.

¹⁵ E. Rauske, *Kivet Puhuvat: Arkkitehtuuritoimiston Usko Nyström - Petrelius - Penttilä asuinkerrostalot Helsingissä 1895-1908* [*The Stones Speak: The Apartment Buildings of the Usko Nyström - Petrelius - Penttilä Architectural Office in Helsinki 1895-1908*], Helsinki 2004.

The architecture of banking and financial institutions was selected as a particularly appropriate case study for this thesis because the sector included a number of prominent Fennomane institutions, as well as those with different political allegiances. This presented the opportunity of assessing the extent to which avowed Fennomane beliefs were expressed in architecture and how this compared or contrasted with the architecture of other institutions. Another factor informing this choice of building type was the prolific amount of bank building that went on in the period. Between 1890 and 1916 more than sixty buildings, branches and head offices were built for Finnish banks and other financial institutions. Moreover, these institutions were wealthy and the vast majority of these buildings were on prominent sites and comparatively grand in terms of scale and materials. This factor is significant when compared to the majority of the Finnish built environment and architectural production, which continued to be dominated by small, one- or two-storey wooden buildings throughout the period. Bank buildings can be found in the oeuvres of all the leading architects of the period. They therefore provide a way to sample the designs of a large number of architects, including those prominent within the profession and those more obscure. They provide this study with examples of a single architectural type, with common requirements in terms of function and expression of wealth and status. The financial institutions were in the unique position of using private funds to build buildings with a significant public presence. They therefore differ from municipal projects in terms of funding and from speculative commercial projects in terms of the significance given to the designs as public monuments and expressions of institutional identity. They also allow exploration of the architectural milieu across the country, thereby avoiding the Helsinki-centric approach common to studies of Finnish architecture. Apart from the 1991 thesis by Tiina Lehto on the banking architecture of Valter Thomé, this is the first study of Finnish bank buildings as an architectural type.¹⁶

The temporal parameters of 1890 to 1916 have been selected to cover the period from the beginning of the 1890s until independence and the Civil War that followed brought

¹⁶ Lehto, T., *Valtar Thomé: Pankkitalosuunnitelmia 1900-1917 [Valtar Thomé: Banking House Design 1900-1917]*, Pro gradu thesis, University of Helsinki, 1991.

architectural production to a standstill in 1917. The abolition of the independent Finnish postal service in 1890 was the first blow struck in the struggle between the Finnish Grand Duchy and Russia that makes up the political background to the creativity of these years.¹⁷ 1890 was also the first year of operation of the KOP bank, founded in 1889.

This thesis starts with an evaluation of the development of National Style ideas in Finland, primarily through Penttilä's writings. In particular, Penttilä's interest in international National Style models and the significance of native vernacular architectural models in the development of a National Style are examined. This is followed in chapter 2.ii by the introduction of some of the early expression of these ideas in Finnish architecture and design. This expression was primarily limited to wooden architecture and craft objects. The *Finnish Pavilion* is introduced as a key point in the development of a Finnish National Style. The design opened the way for the development of National Style ornament and form in stone and providing the starting point for the development of the National Style within urban architecture. Chapter 2.iii explores the development of an urban National Style and developments in urban architecture in general, through the lens of Penttilä's architectural journalism. National style impulses are shown to be paralleled by interest in the handling of architectural materials and structure and the need for the development for a new language of architectural form and ornament, following increased dissatisfaction with the hegemony of Historicism. The desire for architectural design and ornament to reflect the character of the country within which it was to be executed was closely related to the desire to express the function of the building and the nature of its construction. As such, National Style impulses were a facet of the broader New Style architectural reforms of the 1900s.

In the second part of the thesis these ideas are explored in more depth through the case study of Finnish banking architecture. Chapter 3.i considers the development of banking architecture in Finland, showing the decline of Neo-Renaissance modes and the evolution of new approaches to materials, structure and ornament. This chapter also introduces the

¹⁷ The political situation in the 1890s is documented in further detail in the following chapter.

early banking architecture of Penttilä and relates these buildings to Penttilä's architectural theories and the broader context of architectural development already discussed. Chapter 3.ii looks at the case of bank architecture in the Central Finnish town of Tampere, examining the diversity of architectural expression within the microcosm of a single city centre between the years 1900-1905. This period overlaps the production of the key National Style monuments already listed above. In Tampere the translation of these impulses into commercial architecture are assessed alongside the other impulses linked to architectural reform, materials, form and ornament. The impulse towards reform, progress and innovation is presented as central to this period.

In the final section of this thesis the study is extended to cover the decade that followed, in which the architectural themes associated with the National Style were abandoned and discussion of the need for a National Style disappeared from architectural discourse. The debate surrounding the Helsinki Railway Competition will be examined as indicative of this turning point, after which features associated with the National Style fell from favour. This debate and discussion in architectural journalism of the new direction taken by architecture in the 1910s will be examined in chapter 4.i. This is followed in chapter 4.ii by analysis of Penttilä's later series of banks for KOP. These buildings of 1910-1916 relate to the new course taken by the New Style in Finland in the 1910s, which has been underrepresented in scholarship, as it falls between the two stools of the New Style architecture of 1900 and the Nordic Classicism and Functionalism of the 1920s and 30s. The analysis of Penttilä's later KOP buildings, and of other financial architecture of the 1910s in chapter 4.iii, will further illuminate this trend, which drew on the authority and monumentality of Classical traditions, and married it to the commitment to innovative form and ornament, expression of function and sensitivity to site of the New Style. The fact that the leading exponents of the New Style Classicism were the same architects who had crafted the principal monuments and disseminated theories on the National Style gives further credence to the argument that the creation of a National Style was not the key driving force behind architectural innovation around 1900. Rather it was concerns about architectural reform and the perceived need for progress and a new architectural style for

the modern age that drove this development. The National Style, New Style and the New Style Classicism of the 1910s were all propelled by these concerns.

Penttilä's passionate early writings, as well as monuments such as the *Finnish Pavilion* and the *Pohjola Building*, stand as evidence of the strength of the desire among Finns to develop an architectural language suitable for and expressive of the Finnish environment and people. This thesis does not seek to deny this, but to present this impulse as a facet of the more general New Style drive for design reform. As part of this drive Finnish architects sought to respond to the challenges faced by architects across Europe around 1900 and to develop solutions that were both sensitive to the national character, culture and environment and responsive to new thinking on the role of materials, construction, ornament, function and site. Interest in a National Style in Finland had been awakened when European-wide architectural thinking was concerned with what could be learned from national traditions and what architecture had lost through over reliance on pan-European Classicism. The fact that the patronage of Fennomane institutions and practice of Fennomane architects was not tied consistently to forms recognisable as National Style in intent, further supports the assessment that National Style impulses were regarded primarily as an architectural mode. This mode appealed to those who held Fennomane political beliefs, but it was a position fundamentally related to questions of aesthetics, rather than a direct translation of a political position into architectural expression. As such, this facet of the National Style could be overtaken by other concerns, as it was in the late 1900s and 1910s, without this being any direct reflection of the political ideology of the patrons or architects. The decline of interest in the National Style and renewed interest in Classical principles paralleled the growing interest in the architectural centres of Europe in the role of new technologies in shaping the architectural future and the contribution Classical principles could make to this.

Ultimately architectural reform in this period did not come down to simple dichotomies between national and international. The urge to rediscover national forms as sources of new modes for modern architecture was an international phenomenon. The influence of

international culture in Finland was presented in the architectural press both as evidence of progress, when related to the ideas of New Style design reformers from Ruskin to Van de Velde, and as evidence of degeneration, when related to the adoption of alien Neo-Classical and Neo-Renaissance models and cheaply mass-manufactured imported goods. Similarly, Finnish culture was viewed by Finnish critics both as uniquely rich, in relation to vernacular heritage and native creativity, and as peripheral and underdeveloped in comparison to Europe's cultural and industrial centres. The complexities of the many cross currents that shaped the period, the desire to look to the past and to the future, to native heritage and to the forefront of international design reform, made this period of cultural history uniquely rich and fraught with contradictions. Vernacular and medieval sources were turned to in the 1890s and 1900s, just as Classical sources were turned to in the 1910s, with the desire to discover new architectural modes through which the architect's desire for forms that could respond effectively to the challenges posed by new demands, new materials and a new understanding of architecture beyond style that emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century. Though the National Style looked to the past for national forms and models, it was essentially one of the many paths via which architects sought to create a new and modern architectural style.

Terminology

The use of the terminology of styles, such as New Style and National Romanticism, to denote the different modes of architecture commented on within this thesis is problematic. To begin with the very concept of 'style', as an applied language of architectural dress, was viewed with increasing suspicion during this period. Architects were beginning to strive to approach their buildings as a whole and develop their designs informed by a more holistic concept of architectural construction. However, at the same time, the idea of 'style' had not been shed from the intellectual consciousness and was the standard term used in the architectural press when discussing design reform and describing architecture. Further evidence of the lingering conceptual division between architectural form and dress was the fact that, in Finland, it was still relatively common to follow the older, nineteenth century

practice of separating the tasks of plan design from façade design. For example, the *Pohjola Building*, the *Helsinki Railway Station* and the *Suomi Insurance Building* were all commissioned as façade designs for buildings whose plans had been devised by other architects. The period was therefore one of transition, where architects actively sought and discussed the possibilities for the development of new styles, while at the same time recognising that the whole concept of architectural style was becoming increasingly redundant. Where stylistic labels have been used, the intent is to indicate a building's affiliation to a particular mode of building, rather than to designate a strict and narrow language of façade dressing. For example, the term Neo-Renaissance has been used to refer to buildings that can be regarded as part of the broad trend of historicist plaster facades of the 1870s, 80s and 90s, recognisable for the richness and pomp of their profuse plaster ornament derived from the Classical and Renaissance traditions. These buildings were described as Neo-Renaissance by contemporary Finnish critics, though the term indicated more a general approach, than strict adherence to Renaissance principles or models.

The concept of a new style for contemporary architecture in Finland was one that reached beyond ideas of dress towards an entirely new architectural approach or mode of building. This mode can be understood as part of the international phenomenon denoted by the terms Art Nouveau or New Style. In Finland such ideas were referred to as 'new style', 'new art' or 'modern style'. The term Art Nouveau was not used in Finland, except in reference to examples of the French variant of the New Style. Similarly, the term Jugendstil was used only in relation to German New Style works, though in the 1970s it became common in Finland to refer to Finnish New Style work as Jugend. In this thesis I have chosen to use the term 'New Style' to refer to the European-wide design reform movement, which sought a new style for art, architecture and design at the turn-of-the-century. I have chosen 'New Style' because it succinctly conveys the core urge to find a new style, which is consistent with Finnish understanding of the period and does not carry the implied French heritage of the term Art Nouveau. New Style is used to indicate the guiding principles of design based on fidelity to materials, construction and craftsmanship and fidelity to the spirit of the age and the nation, rather than consistency of outward appearance. Indeed,

the principles themselves and the experimental nature of this mode of building resulted in great diversity between designs, both within Finland and across Europe.

The terms National Romantic and National Style are similarly problematic to apply. As my thesis argues, the urge to express national identity within architectural design was one facet of the broader New Style reform movement within Finland. All of the buildings in which national expression was an important factor in shaping the design were also influenced and shaped by other impulses from within the broader New Style. Within this thesis the term National Style has been used specifically to denote the concept of architectural design that represented ideas of national character and identity. As such, it is principally used as a term to identify elements or ideas within a larger design that can more generally be understood as New Style in approach. Even buildings, such as the *Finnish Pavilion* of 1900, in which the expression of national identity was a vital part of the design, were so closely bound up in other ideas of design reform relating to materials and new languages of ornament etc., that to term it National Style, distinguishing it from the broader current of the New Style, is unhelpful.

National Romanticism is a term largely synonymous with National Style. The key difference being that it was a term used retrospectively and conveys evaluative rather than purely descriptive meaning. During the 1890s and 1900s architects and critics in Finland referred to the question of national identity in architecture in terms of a 'national style' or 'Finnish style'. However, by the 1910s, when such ideas had fallen from favour, the term 'national romantic' came into use. The 'romantic' element of the term was used as a counterpoint to the 'new classicism' and 'rationalism' of the 'new direction in architecture'; as such it carried critical connotations of fancifulness and irrationality. The term National Romanticism, as used by scholars today, can be useful in conveying the trend's intellectual links with the Romantic Nationalism of the nineteenth century and the appearance of Romantic visual elements, picturesque silhouettes and imaginative and expressive form and ornament. In general, however, I have favoured the term National Style to denote, more simply, the expression of national identity through design.

Apart from direct references to the writings of Friedrich Schinkel, Carl Bötticher, Rudolf Gottgetreu and Hermann Obrist, Penttilä made no direct references in his published writings to the sources of his ideas. All Penttilä's papers were destroyed by his widow and it is therefore impossible to accurately trace the origins of Penttilä's thinking on architecture. The tenor of much of his thinking shares points of similarity with many of the theorists, such as John Ruskin, Alois Riegl and Gottfried Semper, who will be mentioned in this thesis, but there is no surviving evidence of the extent to which he was familiar with these authors. It is impossible to say whether he knew of their writings at first hand, through secondary texts or through arts journals, though all were available to him. Similarly, though there are undoubted parallels between Penttilä's work and the work of other architects across Europe there is no way to verify the extent to which he was familiar with the work of these architects and to what extent similarities were based, not on knowledge, but were simply reflections of common ideals, influences and goals, the spirit of the period. International art journals were certainly closely followed in Finland, and this opens up the field of practitioners and theorist Penttilä and other Finnish architects may have been familiar with. In absence of concrete evidence however all that can be said is that much of Penttilä's thinking on the importance of identity, form, materials and the New Style in architectural design can be related to the Europe-wide flourishing and ferment of ideas on these topics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. This thesis is not concerned with tracing the precise intellectual and inspirational origins of National Style and New Style thinking in Finland, rather it seeks to explore how this thinking played out in the field of architecture and the particular balance struck in Finland between the competing impulses of the period.

1.ii HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Development of Finnish Nationhood and Nationalism

An understanding of the development of Finnish nationalism and nationhood is helpful when approaching the culture of the turn-of-the-century; a period when political pressures caused an upsurge of popular nationalism that was expressed across all cultural fields. Finland's position in the nineteenth century was unusual. Firstly, Finland never existed as an independent sovereign state prior to independence in 1917. Swedish political influence over the territory of Finland began in the eleventh century, and from the mid-fourteenth century onwards Finland was part of Sweden and administered from Stockholm. Finland remained in Swedish hands until 1809 and the four and a half hundred years of Swedish rule significantly shaped Finnish culture. Swedish was the language of law and education, and spoken by the elite and educated classes.

In 1809 control of Finland was ceded to Russia. At the Diet of Porvoo in 1809, in an effort to secure the co-operation of the Finnish people, the Tsar, Alexander I, promised to uphold the ancient laws and freedoms of Finland, maintaining the systems of Swedish laws and governance. It is helpful to understand the political development of the nation because nationalistic thinking, particularly by the 1890s, was closely bound up with the Finn's understanding of their political and legal existence.

Under the Tsar, Finland was ruled by a Russian Governor General and the Imperial Senate of Finland, made up of Finns and based in Helsinki. The decrees of the Russian Senate had no power in Finland until they were ratified for Finland by the Tsar. Finland and the Finns were therefore subject directly to the Tsar, bypassing the machinery of Russian central administration.¹⁸ Laws for the Grand Duchy were enacted by the Finnish Diet. Every law the Tsar permitted the Diet to enact in accordance with the 1809 constitution represented a tacit acknowledgement of Finland's special status.¹⁹

¹⁸ O. Jussila, et al., *From Grand Duchy to Modern State: A Political History of Finland since 1809*, London 1999, 22.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

The idea that Finland became a nation in 1809 was one that was applied retrospectively by Finnish nationalists defending Finnish autonomy around the turn-of-the-century. The concept of Finland, as a nation, arose as a response to the significant differences in society, culture and language that existed between Finland and the Russian Empire, of which she had become part. This situation prompted Finnish intellectuals to examine their sense of identity, resulting in the desire for a new Finnish identity distinct from both the Swedish and the Russian, exemplified in the quote by Arwidsson with which this thesis was introduced.

Ethno-linguistic Nationalism – Fennomania

Prior to the 1890s and the attacks made on the autonomous status of Finland, Finnish nationalism, or Fennomania, was primarily a cultural movement. Efforts were directed towards the development of the Finnish language and culture rather than on the achievement of an independent state. The Fennomane movement emerged as part of the development of linguistics and ethnology as academic disciplines in the early nineteenth century. These disciplines provided evidence for, and conferred status upon, the native Finnish people as a distinct race, with a distinct language. Ethno-linguistic nationalism was also largely influenced by the theories on nationhood and its relationship to language and culture formulated in Germany by Gottfried Herder, Wilhelm von Humboldt and Friedrich Schlegel.²⁰ These ideas were introduced to Finland by Gabriel Porthan and closely followed, especially by early Finnish national theorists in the Åbo Akademi, such as Arwidsson.²¹ Arwidsson sought to free the Finnish language from Swedish dominance. He asserted that only as long as their mother tongue survived could Finns feel themselves to be a nation:²²

²⁰ A. Kemiläinen, 'Initiation of the Finnish People into Nationalistic Thinking' in Väisänen (ed) *Nationality and Nationalism in Italy and Finland*, Helsinki 1984, 106.

²¹ **Henrik Gabriel Porthan** (1739-1804) was a Fennomane professor at the Åbo Akademi. Though most of his writings were published in Swedish, he considered Finnish to be his 'mother tongue' and as the first academic researcher into the fields of Finnish history, language and folklore his teaching laid the foundations for the Fennomane movement.

²² A. D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples: Sacred Sources of National Identity*, Oxford 2003, 191.

When the language of its forefathers is lost, a nation too, is lost and perishes. All speaking the same tongue naturally form an indivisible whole; they are bound together internally by ties of mind and soul, mightier and firmer than every external bond. For language forms the spiritual, and land the material, boundaries of mankind; but the former is stronger, because the spirit means more than the material.²³

From the 1840s onwards the leading theorist of the Fennomane movement was J. V. Snellman.²⁴ Snellman had theorised that in the circumstances of Finland's new status as part of the Russian empire, only Finnish national awareness, based on the Finnish native language, could save Finland from complete absorption as a minority race within the Russian empire.²⁵ As such, Fennomane energy was focussed primarily on the status and development of the Finnish language.

Fennomane concerns to promote the Finnish language at the expense of Swedish corresponded neatly with the Russian desire to promote the severing of ties to the old mother-land, in favour of loyalty to Russia. The Fennomanes succeeded in securing a series of language concessions through the course of the nineteenth century, improving the status of the Finnish language.²⁶ Private Finnish-language High Schools were founded and by 1889, enrolment in Finnish-language secondary education matched that in Swedish-language High Schools.²⁷ This saw the emergence in the 1880s and 1890s of a Finnish-speaking intelligentsia.

The Finnish Literature Society was founded in 1831 with the purpose of promoting and furthering the development of a Finnish-language literary culture. The publication of the

²³ E. Jutikkala and K. Pirinen, *A History of Finland*, Helsinki 2003, 310.

²⁴ **Johan Vilhelm Snellman** (1806-1881) was a Fennomane philosopher, writer, economist, journalist, academic and statesman. He maintained it was the duty of the educated classes to learn Finnish and spearheaded a number of campaigns to secure new legislation favouring the Finnish language over Swedish.

²⁵ Y. Blomstedt, 'National and International Viewpoints of the Finnish Upper Class in the 19th Century' in Väisänen (ed) *Nationality and Nationalism in Italy and Finland*, Helsinki 1984, 23.

²⁶ In 1858 Finnish was made the language of local self government in those communes where it was spoken by the majority of inhabitants. The 1863 Language Edict gave Finnish an equal status alongside Swedish in Government Offices and Courts of Justice that had direct dealings with the public, though the edict did not come into full force until 1884. The Second Language Edict of 1886 meant Finnish could also become the internal language of government, at the discretion of each office.

²⁷ Jutikkala and Pirinen, *A History of Finland*, 340-341.

Kalevala was of particular importance in this respect because it legitimised claims for the existence of a Finnish-speaking high culture, by indicating that such culture was not artificial, but was based on an ancient artistic culture of a high standard.²⁸ The Finnish Club was founded in 1876 and was an important locus for Fennomane thinkers and activists. It sought to promote the Fennomane position in culture, politics, society and the economy. The Finnish-language Theatre, KOP, the Suomi Insurance Company, the Pohjola Fire Insurance Company and the Otava Publishing House were all set up under the auspices of the club.

The institutions and societies of the Fennomane movement were of central importance within the Fennomane movement.²⁹ These societies facilitated the rapid development of a modern, Finnish-speaking society, advancing the use of Finnish within different professions and industries, within education and business, slowly chipping away at Swedish-speaking cultural and economic hegemony. These societies also facilitated the development of a network of contacts among active Fennomanes, magnifying the power they could wield.

Svecomania

The Fennomane campaign to raise the status of Finnish at the expense of Swedish did not go without opposition. The Pro-Swedish-speaking or Svecomane position maintained that the development of culture in Finland had always been dependant on the superior influence of Swedish culture. They also believed that future cultural development in Finland could only be achieved through continued adherence to the Swedish-language tradition. Politically, the movement adhered to the Western European doctrine of liberalism, hostile to Tsarist absolutism and defensive of Finnish law and constitutionally enshrined freedoms. Within the Svecomane movement there was a smaller school of

²⁸ M. Klinge, *Let us be Finns: Essays on History*, Helsinki 1990. The *Kalevala* is discussed in further depth on pages 39-40.

²⁹ Other Fennomane societies included, for example, the Kotikielen Seura [The Mother-tongue Society], Suomen Naisyhdistys [The Finnish Women's Union] and other specialists societies in the arts and industry.

thought who maintained the superiority of Swedish on ethno-racist grounds; linking the Swedes with the superior Aryan group and denigrating the Finns as one of the 'base' Mongol races.

It is important to remember that this cultural division between Fennomane and Svecomane concerned only the intelligentsia, who made up less than 2% of the population.³⁰ Even by the 1890s only about 36,000 people in Finland had received more than an elementary education.³¹ Until the 1880s the intelligentsia, both Svecomane and Fennomane, were Swedish-speaking. The majority of the social and bureaucratic upper strata remained Swedish-speaking and Svecomane in affiliation.

Russian Nationalism and Russification

Through much of the nineteenth century Russian liberals had looked to Finland as a possible model for reform that could be applied throughout the empire. Liberal minded ministers had therefore defended Finnish status against more conservative nationalists. By the 1890s Finland however was the only surviving remnant of the zone of autonomous territories, Poland, the Baltic States and Bessarabia, which had arisen on the Russian periphery.³² The Governor General of Finland and the Finnish State Secretary increasingly struggled to assert themselves over the other Russian ministers with whom they clashed. As the power of the Tsar became increasingly dependant on the loyalty and support of Russian nationalist ministers the idea of the Empire as a unified Russian state grew stronger. The presence of Finland, in which the people enjoyed greater individual freedoms, where Russian citizens had no rights, where the Russian language was not spoken, became a focus for Russian nationalist indignation. A clash of interests was inevitable as ministers in St Petersburg sought to undermine the Finnish freedoms they found so offensive. In 1890 the independent postal service of the Grand Duchy was

³⁰ Kemiläinen, 'Initiation of the Finnish People into Nationalistic thinking', 109.

³¹ Y. Blomstedt, 'National and International Viewpoints of the Finnish Upper Class in the 19th Century', 19.

³² O. Jussila, 'Finland's progress to nation statehood within the development of the Russian empire's administrative system', in Maija Väisänen (ed.) *Nationality and Nationalism in Italy and Finland*, Helsinki 1984, 100.

abolished. The Finns retaliated with special black 'mourning stamps', which had no postal value, but were placed next to the official Russian postal stamps, especially for letters going abroad. This was the first step in the process of dismantling the independent state systems, which the Finns believed to have been enshrined by the Tsar's promise at the Diet of Porvoo. The Finnish markka, which had been made independent of the Russian rouble in 1865, was tied back to the rouble in 1893, causing rapid inflation.

The full absorption of Finland into Russia required firstly the inclusion of Finland within the pan-imperial legislative process and secondly the incorporation of Finnish armed forces into the Imperial Army. It was recognised that the Finnish Diet would never agree to pass laws to this effect so a manifesto was drafted, placing matters of direct interest to the Empire as a whole, outside of Finnish jurisdiction and into the hands of the Tsar. The Diet was to have only a consultative role and no veto over such matters. As such the rule of law established in 1809 and considered by the Finns to be sacrosanct was overridden. Without the legal protection offered by the 1809 Diet of Porvoo, only the Tsar's goodwill stood between the continued existence of the Independent Duchy and complete absorption within the Russian Empire. The manifesto was proclaimed in February 1899 and was met in Finland by disbelief and outrage.

Finnish opposition to the Manifesto was centred primarily on the historical legalistic concept of Finnish identity. The constitution and Finland's laws were represented as the core of the nation's identity. This is illustrated by Eetu Isto's allegorical painting *Attack*, of 1899, in which the storm-tossed Maid of Finland attempts to defend the Book of Law from the attack of the two-headed Russian eagle. [Fig. 1.1] The previously conspicuously loyal Finns became rapidly politicised in the face of what they saw as a great betrayal. The first response to the February Manifesto was the so-called Great Petition, the collection of signatures from households across Finland. The impact of the petition in Russia was minimal, but it was an important element in raising the political consciousness of the Finnish people and in severing their loyalty to the Tsar, in favour of loyalty to the Finnish state. Appeal was also made to the international community and again the emphasis was

placed on the legal basis for Finland's special status. A publication, in English, was composed, presenting what the Finns regarded as the legal evidence of the lawlessness of the February Manifesto:

The Form of Government of 1772:

"The Grand Duke shall not make a new law or abolish an old law without the knowledge and consent of the Diet."

The Constitution of 1869, ordains that: "Fundamental laws can be made, altered, explained or repealed only on the representation of the Emperor and Grand Duke and with the consent of all the Estates."

FINAL CONFIRMATION OF THE CONSTITUTION GIVEN BY ALEXANDER II.

Besides which We maintain Our right as it is guaranteed in the "Form of Government" of Aug. 21st, 1772, as well as in the "Act of Union and Security" of Feb.21st and April 3rd 1789 and has not been changed by any express wording in the present Constitution, We graciously approve and ratify this Constitution as an unchangeable fundamental law. In witness whereof, We have hereunto set Our Imperial Hand, at St Petersburg this 3/15 day of April, 1869.

THE PRESENT GRAND DUKE OF FINLAND NICHOLAS II. HAS RATIFIED THESE FUNDAMENTAL LAWS IN A DECLARATION OF ASSURANCE WITH THE FOLLOWING WORDING.

As WE through the will of Providence, have come into hereditary possession of the Grand Duchy of Finland, We have hereby desired to confirm and ratify the religion, the fundamental laws, the rights and privileges of every class in the said Grand Duchy in particular, and all its inhabitants, high and low, in general, which they according to the Constitution of this country had enjoyed, promising to preserve the same steadfastly and in full force.

Livadia, this 6th day of November, 1894.

NICHOLAS.³³

The reaction of the international community to this legal argument was largely positive, as can be seen by the international petition of leading European intellectuals collected in protest at the February Manifesto and by the warm reception of the Finnish pavilion at the 1900 Exposition in Paris. Though the February manifesto undermined Finnish autonomy, it still recognised Finland as legislatively distinct from the rest of the empire. No attempt

³³ *The Rights of Finland and the Manifesto of the Tsar of February 15, 1899: A Few Leaves from the History of the Life-struggle of a Little Nation*, Stockholm 1899, 2-5

was made to abolish the Finnish statute book, as had happened in Poland.³⁴ The February manifesto was followed in 1901 by a new conscription law, handed down by the Tsar. This new law did not conform to the 1878 Conscription Act, and, as it had not been passed by the Finnish Diet, was widely regarded in Finland as illegal. Nicholas II became known throughout Finland as 'The Oath Breaker'. Passive resistance to the conscription laws resulted in three-fifths of the young men of conscription age failing to report for duty. Among politically aware university students the proportion was as high as five-sixths.

These events lead to the politicisation of Finnish nationalism and increased political and national awareness on the part of the general population. Though dismay at these events was almost universal in Finland, the response of the political elite was split. Svecomane Liberals, Social Democrats and Young Finns all opposed this attack on the Finnish constitution, and became known as 'Constitutionalists', many resigned or were forced to leave their posts. The older elements of the Fennomane movement, known as the Old Finns, continued to see loyalty to Russia as necessary in the defence of Finnish-speaking rights and hoped that demonstrative loyalty to Russia would eventually result in a reinstatement of Finnish freedoms. Their stance became known as 'Compliance'. The Finnish language demands of the Fennomanes were supported by Russian nationalists on the basis that Finnish was an undeveloped, primitive language and the weakening of the hegemony of Swedish would result in the emergence of Russian as the natural language of government. The 1900 Language ordinances improved the status of Finnish further, but resulted in Russian becoming the language of the Senate and of central and provincial government by 1905. The Constitutionalists resigned from the Senate, leaving their posts to be filled by the Compliant Old Finns faction. One by-product of this action was the Fennicisation of the administration as government and civil service posts were taken over by Finnish-speaking Old Finns and the Swedish language never regained its former administrative hegemony.

³⁴ O. Jussila, 'Finland's progress to nation statehood within the development of the Russian empire's administrative system', in Maija Väisänen (ed.) *Nationality and Nationalism in Italy and Finland*, Helsinki 1984, 100.

Resentment of the Old Finns, who were seen to have benefited in terms of advancement from the expulsion of Constitutionists from public life, ran high. Resistance to Russification did however serve to demonstrate to many the futility of the Language Conflict in the face of this much greater threat. Russian concessions following the weakening of the state's position in the wake of defeat in the Russo-Japanese War and the 1905 General Strike, gave Finland a brief respite. By 1910 however it was clear, even to those of a Compliance persuasion that the Russian administration was determined to eradicate Finnish autonomy and the future looked bleak. It was only the advent of the First World War that prevented the ultimate destruction of the infrastructure of independence in Finland. Tellingly, by 1914 the Finns were no longer considered loyal enough to be armed and so were thus spared the hardships of the Russia Front. Independence was seized in 1917, following the Bolshevik coup in St Petersburg, in a desperate bid to preserve the existence of Finland.

The period of time covered by this study, 1890-1916, saw the development of Finnish nationalism and Fennomania from a primarily cultural position to one in which political independence was sought and won. The heady nationalism of the years around 1900 when a large proportion of the population was mobilised in defiance of what was perceived as illegal and oppressive legislation from Russia formed the background to the development of National Style thinking. However, the connection can not be drawn too closely, as the decline of National Style ideas in the 1910s did not correspond with the abatement of political pressure. The assured monumental architecture of the 1910s was constructed against the background of continuing political insecurity and conflict. A sour relationship with Russia through the 1900s and 1910s had also contributed to the re-orientation of focus towards the West, where political support and new economic ties were sought. This may have contributed to the readiness with which new cultural modes, from Sweden, Germany, Britain and elsewhere were explored and adopted. Alongside the political background, Finland's economic growth through the period was a significant factor in the generation of cultural confidence.

2.i NATIONAL STYLE: THE VERNACULAR MODEL

Penttilä's Writings for Suomen Teollisuuslehti and the Development of National Style Thinking in Finland

Vilho Penttilä was born on Suursaari, a large island in the Gulf of Finland, on the 6th of October 1868. His father, Anton Penttilä was a merchant. He attended the Viipuri Finnish-language Modern High School and then went on to study architecture at the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1887-1891.³⁵ Upon graduation Penttilä followed in the footsteps of many other architectural students and worked as an assistant for the General Board of Public Buildings under Sebastian Gripenberg, the leading Fennomane-minded architect of the period.³⁶ In 1894 Penttilä left the Board to form an architectural office with his friends Usko Nyström and Albert Petrelius, a partnership which lasted until 1908.³⁷ In 1894 he married Rosa Eudora Snellman, the daughter of a minister. The marriage remained childless. Penttilä was a devout Evangelical Christian and active in the NYKY (the Finnish YMCA) from 1893 until his death in the Civil War in 1918.

³⁵T. P. Union (ed), *Matrikkeli sisältävä elämäkerrallisia tietoja Teknillisen reaalikoulum, Helsingin polyteknillisen koulum ja Suomen polyteknillisen opiston opettajista ja oppilaista 1849-1897 [Matriculation and Biographical Information on the Teachers and Students of the Technical College, the Helsinki Polytechnical School and the Finnish Polytechnical Institute 1849-1897]*, Helsinki 1899. The Helsinki Polytechnic was founded in 1849 and was made a Technical University in 1908.

³⁶ **Sebastian Gripenberg** (1850-1925) came from a Fennomane-minded family. He initially trained for a military career, but changed course in 1874, attending the Helsinki Polytechnic to study architecture. He graduated in 1878. He practised as a private architect in Helsinki from 1879-1908. In 1887 he was appointed as director of the General Board of Public Buildings, where he served until 1904. He was active in Fennomane circles throughout his life. He was a member of the Finnish Club, an important Fennomane society, from 1880 onwards. He contributed to the founding of *Suomen Teollisuuslehti* in 1882 and the Finnish Engineers Union. He was active in pushing through plans for a Finnish Theatre and for a National Museum. He himself designed a number of buildings for Fennomane institutions. These included the *Helsinki Finnish-speaking Modern High School* (1880), the premises for the *Finnish Club* (1890) and the *Suomi Insurance Company Building* (1893).

³⁷ **Usko Nyström** (1861-1925) attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1885-1888. He gained work experience during his student years in the office of Josef Stenbäck. In 1890 he won a travel stipend and went to study in the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris until 1891. At the same time he travelled through France, Southern Germany, Northern Italy and Austria. From 1892 onwards he taught at the Polytechnic, alongside his architectural career.

Albert Petrelius (1865-1946) qualified as a Master Builder in 1886 and went on to the Polytechnic where he qualified as an architect in 1890. From 1891-92 he furthered his studies at the Royal College of Technology in Berlin. He was the editor of *Suomen Teollisuuslehti* from 1893-94. From 1893 onwards, alongside his work for the firm, he worked for the Pohjola Fire Insurance Company as an expert on fire safety and prevention. He continued to work for the company for the rest of his career.

The *Suomen Teollisuuslehti* [*S.T.*], the Finnish Industrial Gazette, had been founded in 1882 by the architects Josef Stenbäck and Gripenberg, with Stenbäck as editor.³⁸ It was the only Finnish-language journal in the field of industry and construction and aimed to disseminate the latest information on technology and industrial processes. The journal was aimed at Finnish-speaking practitioners within this field, particularly members of the Helsinki Crafts and Industry Union. Though the journal was not focussed on architecture in particular, a number of Finnish-speaking, Fennomane-minded architects were drawn to it and contributed articles. Petrelius became editor in 1893, and in the same year Penttilä began his own journalistic career, contributing a lengthy article to the journal. He took over the role of editor himself in 1895.

Penttilä was passionately committed to the project of *S.T.* He believed strongly in the Fennomane cause and the necessity of raising the status of the Finnish language and of Finnish-speaking people in Finland. *S.T.* made technical information and theoretical knowledge available that would otherwise have remained inaccessible to its Finnish-speaking readers. Alongside this educative mission, Penttilä founded the Finnish Engineers Union in 1896, which was joined by all the leading Fennomane-minded architects of the day.³⁹ The principal aim of the society was the development of a Finnish technical vocabulary. Up to this point all technical discussion was dependant upon the use of Swedish or German terms. The newly devised vocabulary by Hugo Nyberg was published in *S.T.* through 1898-99, alongside the Swedish, German and English terms currently in use. This arrangement reveals the cultures from which the majority of Finnish technical information and equipment was derived at this time.

³⁸ **Josef Stenbäck** (1854-1929) attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1873-1877. He was one of the first Finnish architects to be able to study and qualify as an architect in Finland. Stenbäck had furthered his studies at the Stuttgart Polytechnic from 1878-80, during which time he travelled in Germany. He practised as a private architect from 1880 onwards. He was also a teacher, working in the Helsinki School of Master Builders from 1881-83. He founded a school for master builders in Kuopio in 1883. He lectured on building construction in the Helsinki Technical High School from 1886 onwards. He was editor of *S.T.* from 1883-1890.

³⁹ The board of the union was made up of Penttilä, Gripenberg, Onni Tarjanne and Yrjö Sadenius. The initial membership included the architects Yrjö Blomstedt, Emil Gustafsson, Leander Ikonen, Alfred Petrelius, Werner Pólon and Jostef Stenbäck. By 1906 the architects Gustaf Asp, Berndt Blom, Jalmari Kekkonen, Usko Nyström, Eliel Saarinen, Georg Schreck, Alfred Stenfors, Johan Viktor Strömberg, Gustaf Sundelin and Aksel Vikström were also members.

In 1901 Penttilä founded a supplement to *S.T.*, *Rakentaja* [The Builder], to specialise in architectural developments and in 1902 he founded another supplement, *Kotitaide* [Home-Art], to carry articles on all aspects of craft and interior design.⁴⁰ He oversaw the publication of *S.T.* and its supplements until 1907, contributing forty signed articles. Penttilä's work for *S.T.* provides an excellent window onto the development of architectural thinking in Finland from 1893 onwards, as Penttilä sought to pass his understanding of these developments onto his Finnish-speaking readership. The material covered in *S.T.* did not present an exhaustive picture of architectural production in Finland. The content was determined by Penttilä, based on his own concerns and interests. This selection was usually Helsinki-centric, except in regards to the representation of his own firm's architectural production, and the choice of architects and buildings covered and in what depth they were covered varied somewhat idiosyncratically.

The content of *S.T.* was primarily focussed on technical and engineering information, with content as diverse as discussion of the construction of the Manchester ship canal, dyeing in the fur industry, fire alarms and saddle making. Penttilä's contribution, however, was focused upon architecture; in particular the course of the development of New Style thinking on architecture in Finland can be traced through his writings. This thinking can be divided into two key strands. On one hand there were ideas related to authenticity in construction; the idea that the appearance of a building should reflect how it was built, the materials with which it was constructed and the nature of the human activities it was built to house. On the other hand, extrapolated from this, was the more abstract idea that architecture should reflect the character of the society that produced it; thus it should represent faithfully the spirit both of the times in which it was built and the people by whom and for whom it was built. Much of this thinking was related to dissatisfaction with contemporary architectural conditions and the perceived need for thorough reform in architectural practices.

⁴⁰ In 1902 Penttilä also oversaw the creation of the supplements *Sähkö ja Voima* [Electricity and Power] and *Seppo* [Smith], on iron working, though he did not directly contribute to or manage the contents of these supplements.

The reform and development of architecture in Finland was Penttilä's principal concern. The model for this reform he turned to most frequently during the 1890s was vernacular architecture. Within the field of vernacular architecture Penttilä traced a paradigm in which material, constructional approach and ornament were handled with the integrity sought by the New Style movement. Alongside this the vernacular craftsman was faithful to his own spiritual identity, his culture and the land on which he built, resulting in buildings with true national character. The vernacular could therefore be turned to for guidance both on the development of architecture in line with European-wide New Style thinking and on the development of a Finnish Style.

This reasoning was repeated across Europe in the 1880s and 90s, as architects, particularly those working in regions or countries subject to dominant alien imperial powers, turned to their vernacular traditions as models for New Style reform and the development of a language of architecture that spoke clearly of their national identity. In Finland the vast majority of the built environment, not just that which could be characterised as vernacular, was constructed from wood rather than brick or stone. Wooden architecture therefore played a dominant role in the development of ideas on architectural reform in Finland in the 1890s. In his three part article of 1894, 'A Look at the History of Building in Wood', Penttilä presented a brief survey of the history of European wooden architecture and notable European vernacular traditions, concluding with some remarks on the state of wooden architecture in Finland.⁴¹

The selection of vernacular traditions he covered, those of Switzerland, Norway, Russia and Germany, was influenced by his familiarity with German language scholastic tradition in the field of vernacular architecture research. In particular the article was indebted to the section on the historical background of wooden architectural construction in the second volume, *Die arbeiten des zimmermannes* [The work of carpentry] 1882, of Rudolph Gottgetreu's series *Lehrbuch der Hochbau-Konstruktionen* [A textbook of Building

⁴¹V. Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten historiaan [A Look at the History of Building in Wood]', *S.T.* 1894, 38-39, 50-53, 62-63.

Construction].⁴² The history of research into vernacular buildings in Germany, Switzerland and Norway in particular reached back to the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴³

By contrast, in Finland interest in vernacular architecture did not develop until the late 1860s. One of the leading figures in this field of research was the ethnologist A.O. Heikel, whose doctoral thesis, *Rakennukset Teremisseillä, Mordvalaisilla, Wirolaisilla ja Suomalaisilla* [Buildings of the Cheremissians, Mordvinians, Estonians and Finns], was published in 1887.⁴⁴ Heikel's interest in the ethnographic study of the building practices of the Finnic peoples had close links with the academic disciple of Finno-Ugrian linguistic and folklore research. Such research, delving into the origins of the Finnish language and people, had lain at the heart of Fennomane movement, first at the Turku Academy and later at the Imperial Alexander University in Helsinki.⁴⁵ The Finno-Ugric Society had been founded in 1883, as an off-shoot of the Finnish Literature Society. Its aim was the

⁴² R. Gottgetreu, volume II, 'Die Arbeiten des Zimmermannes', in *Lehrbuch der Hochbau-Konstruktionen 1880-1890*, Berlin 1882.

⁴³ In 'Die Arbeiten des Zimmermannes' Gottgetreu cited the most significant texts in this field: Johan Christian Dahl, *Denkmale einer sehr ausgebildeten Holzbaukunst aus den frühesten Jahrhunderten in den innern Langschaften Norwegens*, Dresden 1837; E. G. von Gladbach, *Die Holz-Architektur der Schweiz*, Zurich 1867; Viollet-le-Duc, *L'art Russe: Ses origines, ses éléments constitutifs, son apogée son avenir*, Paris 1877 and Georg von Moller, *Denkmäler der deutschen Baukunst*, Darmstadt 1845. J. Hochstetter's *Sweizerische Architektur*, Karlsruhe 1857, was also well known.

⁴⁴ A. O. Heikel, *Rakennukset Teremisseillä, Mordvalaisilla, Wirolaisilla ja Suomalaisilla* [Buildings of the Cheremissians, Mordvinians, Estonians and Finns], Helsinki 1887. Cheremis is another name for the Mari people, a middle Volga based ancient Finno-Ugrian people. The Mordvin people are also of the Finno-Ugrian family and based around the Volga, though they are also spread across Russian and Siberia.

Axel Olai Heikel (1851-1924) came from a Fennomane-minded family. He gained a masters in Scandinavian archaeology from the Imperial Alexander University. After graduation he was able to take part in an expedition to Karelia to collect ethnographic material with which to illustrate a new edition of the *Kalevala*, which lasted from 1883-85. This was one of the first expeditions to Karelia funded by the Finnish Literature Society. He was a member of the Finno-Ugrian Society. In 1893 he was appointed curator for the collection of antiquities that were to form the basis of the National Museum. Heikel contributed much of his own collection to the museum. In 1909, following the model of Artur Hazelius' Skansen Open-air museum in Stockholm, he founded the first open-air ethnographic museum in Finland on the island of Seurasaar, outside Helsinki.

⁴⁵ T. Vuorela, *Ethnology in Finland Before 1920*, Helsinki 1977, 15-16. The Åbo Akademi [Turku Academy] was renamed the Imperial Alexander University when it was moved to Helsinki, following the Turku Fire in 1827. It is now the University of Helsinki.

promotion of knowledge of the Finno-Ugric peoples through the study of their languages, archaeology, ancient history and ethnology.⁴⁶

Another important institution was the Finnish Antiquarian Society, founded in 1870. Its formation followed the pattern of similar societies in Scandinavia, furthering the study of the history of the nation's art and architectural heritage.⁴⁷ The society organised expeditions to document monuments of national importance, primarily Finland's medieval churches and seventeenth and eighteenth century manor houses. The society also supported research into vernacular architecture. As early as 1869 the Finnish Artist's Society had proposed a survey of Finnish vernacular architecture and objects, with a view to investigating the existence of national characteristics that might serve as a basis for a National Style.⁴⁸ The Antiquarian Society funded the ground breaking research into vernacular material carried out in the 1890s by the ethnologist Theodor Schvindt and the architects Victor Sucksdorff and Yrjö Blomstedt.⁴⁹ The work of the society was instrumental in raising awareness of the nation's architectural heritage within the architectural profession and laying the foundations for art and architectural history in Finland.

Many Finnish artists were also drawn to vernacular source material around this time as inspiration for the development of a Finnish Style in painting and design. The most important expedition was that undertaken to the region of Karelia by the painter Akseli Gallen-Kallela and Count Louis Sparre in 1890.⁵⁰ The material they uncovered on this

⁴⁶ Heikel's fieldwork was partially funded by grants from the society. *Ibid.*, 25.

⁴⁷ For example the National Antiquities Commission, set up in Denmark in 1807, The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, founded in Copenhagen in 1825, the Gothic League founded 1811 and the Society for the Preservation of Norwegian Antiquities, founded 1845. O. Klindt-Jensen, *A History of Scandinavian Archaeology*, London 1975.

⁴⁸ The minutes of the society, published in *Helsingfors Dagblad* 19th May 1869. Membership of the Society of Finnish Artists included the nationalist writer Zacharias Topelius and the director of the General Board of Public Buildings, Axel H. Dalström.

⁴⁹ This research led to the important publications, T. Schvindt, *Suomalaisia koristeita - Finnische Ornamente [Finnish Ornament]*, Helsinki 1894 and Y. Blomstedt and V. Sucksdorff, *Karjalaisia rakennuksia ja Koristemuotoja*, Helsinki 1900.

⁵⁰ **Akseli Gallen-Kallela** (1865-1931) was born Axél Waldemar Gallén, but fennicised his name in 1906. He attended drawing classes at the Finnish Art Society School in Helsinki from the age of eleven. He became a full-time art student in 1881. From 1884 to 1889 he studied at the Académie Julian in Paris, where he met his

expedition was instrumental in the development of Gallen-Kallela's design work and his famous, powerful and stylised paintings on *Kalevala* themes, and Sparre's work for his design company, the Iris Factory. From 1892 onwards the painter Pekka Halonen also travelled extensively through Eastern Finland and Karelia.⁵¹ Halonen's and Gallen-Kallela's self-designed studios in Ruovesi and Järvenpää were both highly influenced by their familiarity with Karelian vernacular architecture. These two buildings will be discussed later.

Penttilä's writings should be understood as part of this wider body of interest in Finland's vernacular heritage and its significance for contemporary architecture and design. His key contribution was the dissemination of this new field of knowledge to a wider audience of Finnish-speaking architects, builders and craftsmen. The scope of Penttilä's writings in the 1890s reflected the general orientation of Finnish thinking in this field. Despite decades of rule from St Petersburg, Finnish intellectual and cultural currents continued to be orientated towards Sweden and Western Europe rather than Russia. This reflected the opinion of Swedish-speaking intellectual establishment on the superiority of Swedish scholarly traditions and the idea of the barbaric East. In practical terms personal and institutional ties with Sweden remained strong. Until 1873, when it became possible to qualify as an architect in Finland, almost all architects practicing in Finland trained in Stockholm. Frans Anatolius Sjöström (1840-1885) was the first Lecturer in Architecture appointed to the Helsinki Polytechnic and had himself studied architecture in the Royal

friend Louis Sparre. He won a silver medal with his *Aino Triptych* in the World's Fair exhibition of 1889. The subject of the work was drawn from the *Kalevala*, which remained an important source of inspiration for Gallen-Kallela's work over the following decades. In 1890 he married Mary Slöör and their honeymoon took the form of an expedition through Karelia, accompanied by Sparre.

Louis Sparre (1863-1964) was a painter and designer and came from an aristocratic Swedish family. He met Gallen-Kallela in Paris and accompanied him to Finland for the first time in 1889. He returned there in 1890 when they made their exhibition in Karelia. Sparre's photographs taken on the trip aroused great interest in Finnish artistic circles. Sparre remained in Finland and married the Finnish artist and sculptor Eva Mannerheim. The couple remained in Finland until 1908, when they moved to Sweden.

⁵¹ **Pekka Halonen** (1865-1933) was from a peasant family in Central Finland. In 1885 he travelled down to Helsinki and enrolled himself to study art at the Finnish Art Society School. His time there was difficult as he had little money and was an outsider among the other Swedish-speaking students. He graduated in 1890 and travelled to Paris and studied at the Académie Julian. He returned to Paris in 1892 and in 1894 and studied at the Académie Colarossi and at Gauguin's Académie Viti. In the summers he returned to Finland and made extended expeditions through the Finnish wilderness.

Academy in Stockholm. The architectural profession in Finland maintained significantly stronger ties with colleagues in Stockholm than in St Petersburg, particularly following the souring of relations with Russia in the early 1900s. This western orientation was also reflected in the dominance of Swedish and German literature, supplemented with English, in most academic fields.

The interest of Finnish architects and artists in the vernacular heritage of the country was inspired in a large part by the example of vernacular research in Scandinavia, Germany and Switzerland and what this research had contributed to the development of contemporary culture. For architects in particular, the development of well-known National Styles of architecture in Norway and Switzerland, based on vernacular sources, was a path they were particularly keen to emulate. The dominance of Norwegian and Swiss vernacular models in the development of Finnish National Style thinking in the 1890s was a reflection of the high profile of these two National Style traditions.

In 'A Look at the History of Building in Wood', Penttilä presented Norway, Switzerland, Germany and Russia as "forested regions...where wooden architecture has been most successful and where it has often risen to great heights of artistic worth."⁵² His approach was conditioned firstly by his understanding of these wooden buildings as part of unique national traditions, whereby each nation imparted to its buildings a unique character. Secondly, he understood them aesthetically and architecturally, as buildings whose response to function, material and environmental factors and employment of ornament he admired. His very brief comments on these various wood traditions served only to indicate the presence of diverse and admirable national wood traditions across Northern and Central Europe, with a view to suggesting further research into Finnish wooden architecture. The article was neither illustrated nor accompanied by citations other than the mention of the name of "Prof. Gottgetreu". Penttilä was therefore either supposing sufficient familiarity with this material on the part of his readers, or his outline, first of the developmental history of wooden architecture and then of more contemporary wooden

⁵² Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', 52.

architecture, was intended only to inform his audience, in a broad sense, of the depth and richness of the wood building traditions of Europe.

Penttilä first looked at stave churches as a special Norwegian development. [Fig. 2.1] The medieval stave churches were an architectural tradition unique to Norway, notable as being particularly sophisticated and monumental within the arena of vernacular wooden architecture. Their distinctive silhouette had made them a beloved element of the Norwegian landscape and brought them to the attention of the landscape painter Johan Christian Dahl, who had founded the Society for the Preservation of Norwegian Antiquities in 1845. Their construction was based on a system of upright posts and boards rather than the horizontal, interlocking log system, which was the more common mode of wooden construction across Northern Europe. Penttilä commented both on the structural innovations particular to stave churches and on the inventiveness of the carved ornament found there: [Fig. 2.2]

They are constructed by means of a wooden frame and boarding and usually contain three aisles. Peculiar to them is the gallery running round the outside, like a passage, which provides protection for the congregation before the start of the service.

Decoration in these [churches] is generally used richly and is born of a lively imagination, giving rise to many amusing carvings, winding garlands, birds, fish and snakes, animal heads, dragons and boat decorations – all these give the buildings their particular character, just as they are also evidence of the Norwegian's great skill at carving.⁵³

The focus on unique structural solutions and ornament as the key definable essences of the national architectural traditions he commented on ran throughout the article. This reflected Penttilä's understanding of what constituted the two essential elements of architectural design. This understanding provided the foundation for his thinking on both on the National Style and more general architectural reform.

⁵³ Ibid., 52.

Following the stave churches, Penttilä went on to briefly mention vernacular buildings in Silesia that were erected of a similar timber frame construction.⁵⁴ He noted that “undecorated and simple as these buildings appear, they are, however, prettily proportioned and unpretentiously grouped, thereby making a charming impression.”⁵⁵ This comment indicates the degree to which picturesque concerns were a facet of his appreciation of vernacular architecture.

Penttilä also presented the contrasting case of the wooden architecture of the German towns in the North German region of Harz, to the east of Hannover.⁵⁶ He used this half-timbered architecture, originating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as an example of the use of wood in public, urban architecture, such as town halls, indicating the high level of sophistication it was possible to achieve. Again, he pointed out “the special peculiarity of these buildings”. In this case he singled out the high, storied facades, projecting out over the street, supported by decoratively carved bracket beams.⁵⁷

In relation to Russian wooden architecture, Penttilä briefly noted the abundance of rich surface decoration, “often very gaudily painted” and the special feature of the covered stairway, or *kryltso*,⁵⁸ which provided access to the raised, accommodation storey.⁵⁹ Penttilä did not specify which area of Russia he was referring to, but it was probably the wooden tradition of Northern Russia, which is characterised by particularly intricate carved decoration and original structural forms including elaborate porches.⁶⁰ Penttilä’s

⁵⁴ He was probably referring to the German region of Western Silesia, where timber frame buildings were common. These rural buildings often included a cow house under the same roof as the dwelling. The pitched roofs were usually shingled, again making them comparable to the Norwegian stave church tradition. P. Oliver (ed), *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture of the World*, Cambridge 1997, entry on Silesia, 1320.

⁵⁵ Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', 52.

⁵⁶ This region lies in the state of Saxony-Anhalt and the towns referred to, though not named, probably included Braunschweig, Hildesheim, Goslar and Halberstadt, which have notably rich wooden buildings dating largely from the eighteenth century.

⁵⁷ He was referring to the tradition of town house architecture, comprising of large timber frame *fachwerk* buildings, with three or four jettied stories to the eaves and a further three or more storeys beneath the pitched roof. Oliver (ed), *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture*, entry on Germanic vernaculars, 1349.

⁵⁸ “The whole complex of a porch with its associated roofed stairway(s)” in A. Opolovnikov and Y. Opolovnikov, *The Wooden Architecture of Russia: Houses, Fortifications, Churches*, London 1989, 252.

⁵⁹ Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', 53.

⁶⁰ Oliver (ed), *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture*, entry on Russia: North, 1413-1414.

comments were brief and did not reflect the complexity of the field of vernacular material he commented on. Again, he was primarily concerned with the idea of the structural forms and ornament unique to each region he mentioned.

He gave most prominence to the wooden architecture of “the Alpine mountainsides and lake shores of free and independent Switzerland.”⁶¹ [Fig. 2.3] He noted in particular the interlocking log construction, with exposed log ends, and the projecting roof, supported by brackets. He concluded with a long quote from Gottgetreu:

These are works in wood that have complete design accuracy as well as artistic forms of the highest calibre. Nowhere else occur such original and at the same time functional joints as the ones used by the Swiss joiner and carpenter for supporting his beams and uprights, which are arranged so thoughtfully and employed so practically. One can trace the joy of creativity and the striving towards beauty in these works. In numerous towns the opinion is widely held that all constructive parts should be suitable and sure and decorative forms should respond to materials, so that mere handicraft has risen through its own strengths to great heights and created works of art, which merit enduring comparison to that of other nations.

Special forms in Swiss wooden architecture, the small as well as the large, appear beautiful, through their sublime, harmonious relationships and fine taste. To this is added striking colour effects, decoration by living flowers and plants around the windows and porches – all of these reveal the striking idea that they are all born of nature, national life grown to health as an expression of true, fresh nationality. It is work expressive of intelligence and joy which expresses the self-assertion of a free national tribe.⁶²

Gottgetreu and Penttilä were referring primarily to the ornate and colourful wooden architectural tradition of Bernese Oberland, where rural prosperity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries allowed the construction of imposing and richly decorated farmhouses.⁶³ The idea of these buildings as the expression of a national creative temperament ignores their essentially regional, bourgeois nature.

⁶¹ Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', 53.

⁶² Ibid., 53. The quote was taken from Gottgetreu, 'Die Arbeiten des Zimmermannes', 23-24.

⁶³ Oliver (ed), *Encyclopedia of Vernacular Architecture*, entry on Bernese Oberland, 1241-1242.

This quotation emphasised the union of functionality and an unfettered creativity that was held by Penttilä to be the mark of true architectural achievement, and which he identified as a characteristic of vernacular architecture. In his first article for *S.T.* in 1893, entitled 'On Beauty in Buildings', Penttilä had presented the emergence of wooden architecture from the primitive practices of providing shelter, as the birth of Art. After the cave, where primitive man found shelter, and the tent, with its wooden frame and skin of fir-branches for covering, that provided shelter for the nomadic peoples, a new and crucial stage of development was reached. This stage was one in which people settled and started farming the land and at this point the wooden hut was developed. This third stage of development was presented by Penttilä as being accompanied by man's release from the most pressing demands of pure survival. At this point, man's mind was able to turn towards more elevated thoughts and so it was in wooden buildings that the expression of man's true creative spirit was first realised. According to this model, architecture, the first of all the arts, emerged initially in the area of wooden building. The turning point, as Penttilä presented it, was not one of technical advancement alone, but the addition of that indefinable element of human creative expression, inspired by the beauty of God's creation.

Man is then free from the necessities of nature and turns to work more and more in the arena of the spiritual life. That same nature, which clothed man, raw and coarse, in the first hard struggle for his existence, begins now to appear beautiful, the Creator's masterpiece. Now work is not done only with the hands, but also with the spirit, work becomes a reflection of [man's] spiritual ideals...It is now a joint result of physical work and spiritual activity – it is the mark of the human spirit, stamped on the work of the hands – it is a work of art.⁶⁴

For Penttilä therefore wooden vernacular architecture could be seen to continue a tradition of artistic expression, fused with sound construction, stretching back to the earliest days of history. The central section of 'A Look at the History of Building in Wood' focused on early wooden building, with sources drawn from biblical and classical architectural history. Emphasis was placed on the scale and magnificence achieved in this early wooden architecture, from the Temple of Solomon, to the battle ship of Archimedes and the bridges

⁶⁴ Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', 39

of the Roman generals. This again followed the content of Gottgetreu's 'Arbeiten des Zimmermannes' and relied on the brief descriptions of these structures found in the Bible and in Classical texts rather than on archaeological evidence. Penttilä also echoed the Vitruvian notion that the stone forms of Greek temples had their origins in earlier wooden structures and he placed wooden architecture, both historical and contemporary vernaculars, at the heart of architecture and of art.

Penttilä's admiration for the nationally distinct wooden traditions of Norway, Germany, Russia and Switzerland and his interest in wooden architecture in general was based on his perception of the close relationship between design, ornament, function, climate and materials found among these buildings. Vernacular craft sources therefore could be seen to offer architects an alternative model of design ethics, in which form was determined by functional and environmental factors, and reflected the structure of the building within. The relationship between ornament and structure, in particular, in which creativity was unhampered by prescribed style rules, but was intimately related to the building or object's construction and function was strongly admired.

Penttilä gave very few indications of the sources for the development of his ideas on architecture. The question of the relationship between style, construction, materials and ornament was, however, a key area of theoretical enquiry in the late nineteenth century. The formulating of a new relationship between structure, materials and ornament had been central in the architectural theories of many leading nineteenth century theorists, and Penttilä's ideas appear to have been influenced by a first or second hand familiarity with these ideas.

Carl Bötticher, one of the few theorists Penttilä directly referred to, presented the development of both style and ornament as dependant upon architectural construction, itself dependant on the physical qualities of the materials used. In his study of the structural principles of Greek architecture he related the entire development of Greek architectural culture to the rational, structural demands of the stone and post and lintel

construction used.⁶⁵ The development of this trajectory of thought had led him in 1846 to maintain that only the advent of a new architectural material, and he suggested iron, could lead to the development of a new style.⁶⁶

A similar view on the relationship between style and materials, as well as a suggestion that iron construction would be the key to a new architectural style, can be found in the writings of Owen Jones. Jones' idea that design practices could be reformed through the study of the model of early or so called 'savage' cultures was one with direct relevance to the interest in vernacular architecture. Jones' work, presenting design from many different cultures and periods, was a direct challenge to the hegemony of the Antique paradigm. The value of what could be learned from the relationship between materials and design in these cultures lent a similar authority to the lessons offered by vernacular models. Jones's work was also known in Finland.⁶⁷

The theories of John Ruskin had become well known across Europe and America around the turn-of-the-century, in part due to the widespread admiration for British Arts and Crafts architecture and design, believed to have been guided by his principles.⁶⁸ Ruskin presented the Gothic paradigm as the model for reform. His theories included both the idea of truthfulness in materials, honesty of construction and representation:

VI. Architectural Deceits are broadly to be considered under three heads:-

1st The suggestion of a mode of structure or support other than the true one....

⁶⁵ Carl Bötticher, *Die Tektonik der Hellenen*, Potsdam 1843–51.

⁶⁶ C. Bötticher, 'Das Prinzip der hellenischen und germanischen Bauweise hinsichtlich der Übertragung in die Bauweise unserer Tage [The Principles Of The Hellenic And Germanic Ways of Building With Regard To Their Application To Our Present Way Of Building]', *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1846 in translation in W. Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build? The German Debate on Architectural Style*, Santa Monica 1992, 147-168.

⁶⁷ A. O. Heikel compared the research work of Schwindt to Jones' ground breaking *Grammar of Ornament* in his 1894 review of Schwindt, *Suomalaisia koristeita*, in the cultural periodical *Valvoja*, in 1894. He presented Jones' work as the foundation for modern, 'scientific' research into textile patterns and traditions. A. O. Heikel, 'Theodor Schwindt: Suomalaisia koristeita', *Valvoja* 1894, 476.

⁶⁸ Ruskin's theories were discussed in European arts journals and selections from the works of Ruskin were published in translation in German in 1895, Hungarian in 1896, Swedish in 1897 and Russian in 1899.

2nd The painting of surfaces to represent some other material than that of which they actually consist..., or the deceptive representation of sculptural ornament upon them.

3rd The use of cast or machine-made ornaments of any kind.⁶⁹

And also the idea of rational construction, dictated by function:

For in one point of view Gothic is not only the best, but the only rational architecture...

...it is one of the chief virtues of the Gothic, builders that they never suffered ideas of outside symmetries and consistencies to interfere with the real use and value of what they did. If they wanted a window they opened one; a room, they added one...⁷⁰

A sense that architectural ornament had become fatally severed from the core of architectural form was one of the principal criticisms made of contemporary architecture at the turn-of-the-century. Design that revealed structure and ornament that complemented it were seen as the model to be returned to. "Building will generally be the noblest, which to an intelligent eye discovers the great secrets of its structure..."⁷¹ These ideas can also be traced in the work of the French architect and theorist, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. His concept of Gothic architecture was based on an understanding of its constructional rationalism, in which architectural form was dictated by the requirements of construction and materials.⁷² The work of Gottfried Semper was also widely influential across Europe in the late nineteenth century.⁷³ He had applied a comparative method and a system of classification, based on the scientific method of the great biologist Baron Georg Cuvier, to architecture and design. He drew on sources from diverse cultures and historical periods to develop a theoretical foundation for the discipline of architecture. His theory included the distillation of architecture into four principal constructional/symbolic elements, the hearth, the roof, the mound and the enclosure. These ideas were influential

⁶⁹ J. Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, Orpington, Kent, edition of 1880, reprinted New York 1989, 35.

⁷⁰ J. Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, London 1851-53, edited and abridged by J.G. Links, New York 1960, 168.

⁷¹ Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps*, 35.

⁷² E. E. Viollet-Le-Duc, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XI au XVI siècle*, Paris 1858-63.

⁷³ G. Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten*, Frankfurt and Stuttgart 1860-63.

in the development of New Style architectural thinking, in which construction, materials and purpose dictated design.

These areas of thought emerged as key ideas in Penttilä's architectural writings and were features he identified in vernacular architecture. Penttilä could read German and there are good indications he could read English also.⁷⁴ The appreciation among vernacular revival theorists of the approach of folk craftsmen was similar in a number of ways to Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc's appreciation of the Gothic and the medieval craftsman. They shared an admiration for the responsiveness to local conditions and materials, for the handling of the building's appearance, unhampered by conventions of style and for the personal, spiritual response to the task, perceived in these traditions of practice.

The model of folk craftsmanship provided an example of design and manufacturing unity, where the designer, maker and user were one and the same man. Penttilä idealised this in his introductory editorial to the first issue of *Kotitaide* [Home Art], the new handicrafts supplement to *S.T.* in 1902:

When the man of the people hewed his axe shaft, or some other utensil, into a pleasing form that fitted best to his hand, he also modelled it according to his own inner sense of beauty; until it was transformed into such a suitable and charming form that it gave him complete satisfaction. He made up decorative motifs, carved little decorations, always in accordance with his own taste. And when it was finished he admired it and he knew that it was his own creation and it revealed his personality, his own taste and his own individuality.⁷⁵

This example of personal creativity, inextricably bound to the practice of practical manufacture rather than the service of prescribed models, was contrasted with the state of modern manufacturing:

⁷⁴ He certainly read English by 1906 when he quotes from the English language guide books he used during his travels abroad. It is likely that he read English earlier than that. His vocabulary and constructions are indicative of English sources when he is trying to explain ideas that stretched the Finnish language, still in the relatively early stages of its development.

⁷⁵ V. Penttilä, 'Silmäys *Kotitaiteen* syntyyn [A Look at the Birth of *Kotitaide*]', *Kotitaide* 1902, 2.

We go to styles of our age (Renaissance, Gothic, Empire, Rococo, etc.) said to be the hackneyed tyranny of our century, which mercilessly order the severe boundaries within which forms must yield. Careless of practical requirements, careless of rational laws, it is directed by the taste of the factory and marked by the machine, which makes our furnishings so stiff and dead and our decorative forms so cold.⁷⁶

Vernacular architecture and craftsmanship provided a directly contrasting paradigm to that of soulless, modern mass-production and the profuse application of meaningless ornament to disguise weaknesses in the materials or construction. These views were shared by many of the architects and designers who turned to vernacular materials. The Austro-Hungarian ethnologist Michael Haberlandt wrote in Charles Holme's special issue for *The Studio*, 'Peasant Art in Austria and Hungary':

Educated people have something to learn from the sobriety and restraint of peasant art. The lesson that it teaches is that art is not to be desired at any price, but only when it is prompted by a vital motive or some special occasion. It is then, perhaps, that peasant art may serve as an example and model for a really living and personal exercise of the artistic faculty.⁷⁷

The Vernacular Paradigm and the National Style in Finland

Penttilä ended his article on the history of wooden architecture by focussing on the question of wooden architecture in Finland. He pointed to the similarities of topography between Switzerland and Norway and Finland and suggested that the wooden architecture of Finland might also be worth exploration.⁷⁸ In this he reflected the growing interest of artists, architects and ethnologists in Finland's vernacular culture, commented upon above. He spoke of the location of the Finnish cottage among the ancient pines and asked, rhetorically, if the Finns had not also been able to produce architecture that could be compared to that of Switzerland or Norway. He answered himself in the negative:

⁷⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁷⁷ M. Haberlandt writing in C. Holme (ed), *Peasant Art in Austria and Hungary*, London 1911, 30. Michael Haberlandt was born in Hungary and was co-founder, with Wilhelm Hein, of the Austrian Museum for Folklore Studies in 1895.

⁷⁸ Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', 62.

Unfortunately this has not happened. The reasons for this are easy to find. The struggle here has been with stern, grey-bearded frost, the plough has driven too heavily through the poor soil and many more adversities than this – the contest for mere existence has been too hard. Our nation has become melancholy. Songs are better suited to express this than the visual arts; by singing was the Sampo created.⁷⁹

His excuse is somewhat spurious as the environmental conditions of Norway and Switzerland are not significantly more clement than in Finland. It was, however, a generally accepted idea in Finnish cultural circles, that Finland's harsh climate had, until recent decades, precluded the development of art in the region. The first art historical survey of Finland by Eliel Aspelin in 1891 began:⁸⁰

Such land and climate as has been given to Finland are not conducive to the production of art. Here, where winter's gloom and darkness prevails over most of the year and where even during the short summer, when day seems to have chased away night for ever, the air is rarely completely clear, completely translucent, and the eye is not accustomed to seeing the shape of objects in the same manner as in Southern countries. Within such a country the people's observational ability turns to look at phenomena from the internal rather than the external aspect, and if the nation has a natural talent for artistic output, then poetry is closer to its soul than those art forms where shape, correct outlines and harmony are the main characteristics.⁸¹

Aspelin was referring to visual culture in general, not simply architecture. It is interesting to note that both authors implied the existence of a national temperament. Penttilä ascribed to the people a melancholy, brought on by the hard conditions of existence in the region. This character, he stated, found expression through song, just as Aspelin indicated the inward-looking, poetic soul of the Finnish people. The melancholy character of the Finns was an idea primarily established through the poetry of Johan Ludwig Runeberg, in

⁷⁹ Ibid., 62-63.

⁸⁰ **Eliel Aspelin** (1847-1917) was Lecturer of Aesthetics and Modern Literature at the Alexander University from 1883 onwards. He was made a professor in 1901. His 1882 thesis on medieval altar triptychs was the first Finnish-language art historical thesis and he lectured only in Finnish, though he could also speak Swedish. This was in line with his Fennoman principles. He was acquainted with leading Fennomans, such as Snellman, Lönnrot and Runeberg. He was a member of the Finnish Literary Society and sat on the board of the Fennoman Kansallis-Osakepankki [National Joint-Stock Bank].

⁸¹ E. Aspelin, *Suomalaisen taiteen historia pääpiirteissään* [*Finnish Art History: An Overview*], Helsinki 1891, 1.

which the romanticised Finnish peasantry were presented as poetic, religious, tenacious and melancholy.⁸² Runeberg's poetry was widely popular and made an important contribution to the development of ideas of Finnish identity and national character.⁸³ Penttilä also had made an oblique reference to the oral tradition of the *Kalevala*: "by singing was the Sampo created." It is likely that Aspelin was also referring to the tradition of *Kalevala* and later poets, such as Runeberg, in his comment on poetry.

The *Kalevala* was devised from extensive field research carried out by Elias Lönnrot into the indigenous oral tradition of Finnish speaking peoples in the region of Karelia, on both sides of the Russian-Finnish border.⁸⁴ This oral tradition was based on sung poetry. Within the tale of the *Kalevala*, heroes wield power through song and sung spells. The Sampo was a magical object that generated wealth and was created by the master smith, Ilmarinen. The *Kalevala* legend is not melancholy in character; it appears rather that Penttilä was attempting to balance his negative assessment of the Finnish visual culture by referring to the Finnish poetic tradition, which was internationally respected.⁸⁵

The *Kalevala* tales were a cornerstone of Finnish national consciousness. The link between the *Kalevala*, the idea of the national character and art in the 1890s are revealed in the following quote by the critic Birger Brunila, writing in 1910:⁸⁶

⁸² **Johan Ludvig Runeberg** (1804-1877) studied classical languages at the Åbo Akademi. His poetry, written in Swedish, focussed primarily on Finnish rural life and the nobility of the Finnish character and beauty of the Finnish landscape. His poem *Vårt Land* [Our Land] was first performed as the Finnish national anthem in 1848.

⁸³ One of the early aims of the Fennoman movement was the translation of Runeberg's poetry into Finnish, making it part of the Finnish literary canon.

⁸⁴ **Elias Lönnrot** (1802-1884) was a doctor and philologist and on leaves of absence from his medical practice he made extensive exhibitions across Northern, Central and Eastern Finland, recording oral traditions. He published his findings in a number of books, the most important being the *Kalevala*, which was first published in 1835.

⁸⁵ The *Kalevala*, as a Finnish language literary epic, became a keystone of Fennoman ideology, as evidence of the sophistication and uniqueness of Finnish culture. The *Kalevala* had also been well received abroad. It was published in a Swedish translation in 1841. It was admired by Jacob Grimm, who presented it as a new epic, to be compared with ancient Greek and Scandinavian mythologies. By the 1860s it had been translated in German, French and English and was an established masterpiece within the genre of folklore studies. J. Y. Pentikäinen, *Kalevala Mythology: Expanded Edition*, Bloomington & Indianapolis 1999.

⁸⁶ **Birger Brunila** (1882-1979) was born near Kotka, to a Swedish-speaking family. He attended the Helsinki Polytechnic between 1900 and 1905. Upon graduation he worked as an assistant in the office of Gustaf Nyström. In 1907 he helped arrange the First Finnish Architecture Exhibition. He wrote for *Arkitekten* and

“The Kalevala”, which also gave spirit to Jean Sibelius’ beautiful music, gave to Akseli Gallen-Kallela the subjects for his symbolist paintings of legend, so full of ancient feeling and mysticism. His work, which was deeply poetic, illustrated the soul of the Finnish people and most beautifully expressed the character of Finnish nature. Nature, which gave the exhortation to art to follow new paths and seek out the primary source: our own nature, people and their history. Our country’s unhappy political position became at this time an intense incentive to art to free itself, become independent and by this means address the world, and state that here there existed our own culture, which was worthy of notice.⁸⁷

Penttilä’s concept of national character and its expression in art was one that had its roots in theories revolving around Herder’s idea of national genius, in which each nation possessed its own way of thinking, acting and communicating. From this sprang the idea of both a national character and a national culture, evidence of both of these being found in the nation’s art, folklore and language.⁸⁸ A similar concept can be seen to be expressed in the quote above, where the author explicitly referred to art being used as a political tool, as evidence of a unique national character, in the conflict over Finnish autonomy and the 1899 February manifesto.

In his 1893 article, ‘On Beauty in Buildings’, Penttilä referred repeatedly to the idea of architecture’s value to the nation. His position on Finnish architecture was somewhat contradictory. On one hand he acknowledged and excused the limited nature of Finland’s architectural heritage, as exemplified in this passage:

For a nation that struggles for its existence in a freezing climate and ploughs for its bread on the barren heaths of the North, the pressure of the living conditions necessarily direct its activity mainly to the service of materialism and the gratification of natural needs. We do not find the spiritual stamp, which in more southerly regions is expressed by the ruins of antiquity. Artistic production and

later *Arkitehti*. He also travelled extensively. In 1906 he travelled through Scandinavia, England, Holland, France and Belgium, studying architecture, in particular the housing question and the organisation of residential districts.

⁸⁷ B. Brunila, ‘Uudempi rakennustaide [Newer Architecture]’, *Oma Maa: Tietokirja Suomen kodeille* 1910 612.

⁸⁸ J. J. Herder, *Concerning the Origin of Speech*, Berlin 1772 and *Outline of a Philosophical History of Humanity*, Berlin 1776. See also F.M. Barnard, *Herder on Nationality, Humanity and History*, Montreal 2003.

development...requires freedom from the limited parameters of materialism. We need not go that far back into the past to find the birth of the Finnish visual arts; a couple of decades only, and we find it still in its cradle.⁸⁹

Just as in 'A Look at the History of Wooden Building', he emphasised Finland's harsh climate and poverty as constraints to artistic development. Whilst on the other hand, in the same article, he puts forward Helsinki's *Senate Square* as an example of architecture that Finns "need not be ashamed of being compared with the best in the world."⁹⁰ The perceived value of Engel's monumental civic design and architecture of the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s was also reflected in Aspelin's assessment that, though Engel was a foreigner, his contribution to Finnish architecture placed him "among the ranks of our great men."⁹¹ It would appear that Penttilä's approach to his nation's artistic heritage was both tinged with a sense of inferiority, which had to be excused, as well as a fierce pride. This insecurity can be understood in the context of the significance he placed on architectural heritage, as a mark of cultural development and national genius:

I cannot end without saying a few words about architecture's significance in the lives of nations. It is claimed that it is essential for human harmony and for overall development. All works of art can, with the passage of time, disappear, be forgotten, but a building stands for centuries. It reflects the nations' whole artistic spirit, their way of looking at things. The clearer the world vision of a nation, the clearer are the forms assumed by both architecture and the other arts. Bötticher and Schinkel say "Only in architecture can we see revealed the true reflection of a nation's spiritual greatness and its level of civilised development."⁹²

As was Penttilä's custom his use of citations was extremely informal and his supposed quote from Bötticher and Schinkel functions to indicate the body of scholarship from which he was drawing rather than as a reference to a specific text.

Penttilä, as noted above, was prepared to comment on the relative poverty of the Finnish architectural tradition, compared to the rich and well-known wooden architecture of

⁸⁹ V. Penttilä, 'Kauneudesta rakennuksissa [On Beauty in Buildings]', *S.T.* 1893, 65.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁹¹ Aspelin, *Suomalaisen taiteen historia*, 49.

⁹² Penttilä, 'Kauneudesta rakennuksissa', 99-100.

Switzerland and Norway. He also did not shrink from criticising the tendency of contemporary Finnish wooden architecture to deviate from the character of “true wooden architecture”.⁹³ This ‘true’ character was presumably exemplified by the admirable wooden architecture he had discussed earlier and by the principles he had admiringly identified, in which form reflected internal construction and the qualities of the material. In place of this he observed what he scathingly described as:

...stuck together, joinery boxes, in which decoration is smoothly spread across the façade surface to conceal the all the inner inanity and clumsiness. The reflection of the organic throughout the exterior, which is a necessary condition of all true beauty, is generally lacking altogether from these buildings.⁹⁴

This description applies to the manner of wooden building that became known as the ‘Carpenters’ Style’, which developed in Finnish towns in the eighteenth century and spread from there to rural architecture, throughout the nineteenth century. [Fig. 2.4] Carpenters’ Style architecture was characterised by the addition of weather-boarding, and various, more or less elaborate, areas of carved wooden ornament around windows, doors and eaves. The language of ornament was based on a coarse interpretation of Classical Historicist motifs, such as pediments and pilasters. Penttilä specifically decried the use of such forms borrowed from historical, stone architecture:

The rule that outer form is always clearly developed to reflect the construction of the interior and the character of the material is too often ignored. Everywhere there can be found examples of wooden buildings that have been derived from alien forms.⁹⁵

He described the use in these wooden buildings of vaults, antique cornices and architraves, as “absolutely ridiculous”.⁹⁶

Carpenters’ Style houses tended to be rectangular, with low pitched or hipped roofs, and symmetrical facades, hence Penttilä’s habit of referring to them as box-like. The

⁹³ Penttilä, ‘Silmäys puurakennusten’, 62.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 63.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 62.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 62.

construction beneath of interlocking logs was completely concealed. By the 1890s the Carpenters' style was widely regarded in Finland as a debased architectural style, which had regrettably overtaken Finland's older, indigenous wood building practices. One- or two-storey, weather boarded houses with carved Classical ornamental features continued to appear in small towns and villages until the early twentieth century. Such was Penttilä's disgust with this trend that in 1903 he organised an architectural competition for cottage designs, in an effort to provide alternative, New Style, models for builders in rural areas.

However negative Penttilä was about some aspects of Finnish wooden architecture, he remained optimistic that some remnants of a distinct, national tradition in wood would be discovered, offering the hope of the development of a more admirable, distinctly Finnish wooden style:

However, there can be found in some places distinct modes of wood building and also characteristic decorative forms and when all this is joined together and gathered from throughout the country, then perhaps there may be brought forth a whole which may be of value – and perhaps furthermore may bring forth a Finnish style.⁹⁷

It is only here, at the end of his article, that Penttilä made explicit the link between vernacular national wooden architecture and contemporary national styles. However, his treatment of the distinct national traditions of his study made such a development logical.

The mid-nineteenth century crisis of style had had a significant effect on the way architectural history was approached. Architectural theorists had begun to look to different traditions and cultures to develop a deeper understanding of architecture as a scientific discipline, in the hope of devising solutions for the problem of style. The work of Jones, Semper, Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc has already been mentioned. This desire to distil valid architectural principles from the past rather than rely on unconsidered copying of motifs is reflected, for example, in the writings of Carl Bötticher:

⁹⁷ Ibid., 63.

...it follows that we must not make use of tradition for its own sake; through scholarly research we must penetrate its spiritual and material qualities in order to arrive at an apprehension of the essential nature of tradition and an understanding of its forms. Only then will we be able to decide what part of tradition ...//...is valid for all future generations, and therefore must be accepted and retained by us.⁹⁸

One of the key trajectories of thought that emerged from this field of architectural research was the idea of the relationship between national identity, the character of the age and architectural expression. Ruskin had presented the adherence to Mediterranean Antique architectural styles as an anathema to the modern Englishman: “Do you seriously imagine, reader, that any living soul in London likes triglyphs? ... You are much mistaken. Greeks did : English people never did, -never will”.⁹⁹ The *kunstwollen* theories of the Viennese theorist, Alois Reigl, gave credence to the idea of art and ornament’s role in reflecting an age’s or a nation’s unique response to the world around them.¹⁰⁰ The German architect and theorist Albert Rosenthal drew a specific correlation between German identity, Christianity and Gothic architecture. His writings formed part of the mid-century debate on style in Germany, initially sparked by Heinrich Hübsch’s book of 1828, *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?*, in which the merits of Gothic, Classical and other architectural traditions were examined with the aim of discerning the appropriate style for German architecture in the nineteenth century.¹⁰¹ Rosenthal favoured the Gothic model and characterised Gothic architecture as ‘The Germanic Style’:

This style [the Germanic style] is closer to us [than the Greek style] in time, national character and religion. Our needs, if not the same, are very similar; we create buildings for the same climate and use the same materials.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ C. Bötticher, ‘Das Prinzip der hellenishcen und germanishcen Bauweise hinsichtlich der Übertragung in die Bauweise unsere Tage’ [The Principles Of The Hellenic And Germanic Ways of Building With Regard To Their Appliation To Our Present Way Of Building] in *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 1846. In translation in Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build?*, 147-167. Quote: 151.

⁹⁹ Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, edited by J.G. Links, New York 2003, 36.

¹⁰⁰ A. Reigl, *Stilfragen: Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik*, Berlin 1893.

¹⁰¹ H. Hübsch, *In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?*, Karlsruhe 1828. In translation in Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build?*, 63-101.

¹⁰² C. A. Rosenthal, ‘In welchem Style sollen wir bauen?’ [In What Style Should We Build?], in *Zeitschrift für praktische Baukunst*, 4, 1844, 23-27. In translation in Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build?*, 113-123. Quote: 120.

His position also reflected the view that architecture, of all the arts, most directly revealed the spirit of the nation:

[Architecture's] tasks derive directly from the manners and customs, from the life and inner essence, of the nation; and climate and the material available must also be considered. Architectural works will therefore express the character of the nation, of the period and of the country more clearly than do any of the other arts...¹⁰³

The close relationship Rosenthal drew between architectural creation and the environment that created it prefigured in some ways the ideas of Hippolyte Taine. Taine's theory of race, milieu and moment as the key factors determining artistic and literary creativity was widely influential.¹⁰⁴ The idea that national character, alongside the cultural and political milieu and the character of the age would shape art and architecture could be used to support the argument that distinct national characteristics should be discernable in the cultural output of a nation. This argument was used to support the idea of a National Style and to attack the use of adopted, international languages of style, such as those found within Classical Historicism.

There is also a clear link in the ideas above between the abstract idea of national character and the more concrete concerns of architecture's response to local climate and materials. These two ideas were seen to converge in the realm of vernacular architecture, where both a recognisable national stamp and unfettered rationality of form and materials could be identified. By approaching the vernacular buildings of a certain region architects could understand the unfettered practicality and expressive ornament of such buildings. These buildings also provided models for a sympathetic handling of locally available materials and responsiveness to local climate and geographical conditions. Such forms expressed an unimpeachable local provenance and local vernacular traditions could be studied for recognisable national style traits.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 114.

¹⁰⁴ H. Taine, *Philosophie de l'art*, Paris 1865. This work was translated into English and German shortly after publication and knowledge of Taine's theories spread quickly across Europe.

English Arts and Crafts architecture of the late nineteenth century provided an example of the successful re-working of local architectural traditions, into a modern, nationally distinctive architectural mode. The work of Richard Norman Shaw, Charles Voysey, William Richard Lethaby and Mackay Hume Baillie Scott was well known through the wide circulation of *The Studio* and proved inspirational for designers across Europe.¹⁰⁵ The progressive Finnish architect and critic, Gustaf Strengell, in his essay of 1903, *Finnish Building Art of Our Day*, outlined the rise of the new style in England: “It is characteristic that this change of course came from England, from the practical British nation, from that country of convenience.”¹⁰⁶ ¹⁰⁷ He cited Norman Shaw and Voysey as examples of reformers in architecture and John Ruskin and William Morris as important theorists, particularly in the advancing of the handicrafts as a discipline.

The example of Norway and Switzerland as countries with which to compare Finland in ‘On the History of Building in Wood’ was not coincidental. In both countries a strong native vernacular tradition had given rise to internationally recognised National Styles. The Swiss chalet was recognised as a distinct regional architectural type early in the nineteenth century. Its association as holiday accommodation for the many tourists who visited the Alps had led to the development of the Chalet Style or Swiss Style. [Fig. 2.5] Largely an international rather than a purely Swiss development, this wooden style was used for railway stations, summer and suburban villas and other forms of recreational buildings across Europe in the 1860s, 70s and 80s. *Adeline’s Art Dictionary’s* (1891) entry for ‘Chalet’ described it not as a Swiss vernacular but as “A rustic house with balconies and

¹⁰⁵ Hermann Muthesius’ evaluation of English domestic architecture in various articles after 1900 and in his famous book *Das englische Haus*, Berlin 1904-05, cemented the English domestic architecture’s influential position on the continent. Muthesius’ exhortation to German architects to similarly engage more actively with German artistic traditions and habits, can be seen as an example of how one country’s vernacular revival could be admired internationally and could serve as a model for another country’s attempts at a national style.

¹⁰⁶ G. Strengell, ‘Suomen rakennustaide meidän päivinäme [Finnish Architecture of Our Day]’, *Valvoja* 1903, 20.

¹⁰⁷ **Gustaf Strengell** (1878-1937) had been born in Kotka in a Swedish-speaking family. His father was a doctor. He attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1896-1902. During his studies he gained practical experience in the G-L-S office and in Lars Sonck’s office. In 1902 he and Frosterus formed an architectural partnership. He worked as an assistant for Charles Harrison Townsend from October 1903 to the spring of 1904.

galleries of carved wood, built in imitation of Swiss houses of planks and trunks of trees and covered with a roof that projects over the façade.”¹⁰⁸ The *Schweizerhaus* became a common model for suburban villas in Central Europe by the 1870s and 80s.¹⁰⁹ It was also used in suburban villa developments across Scandinavia, including Finland, in the villa community on Ruissalo island, outside Helsinki. [Fig. 2.6] Though based on a specific regional vernacular, the Swiss Style quickly became a part of international Western culture, used without specific national implications, across Europe and America.

In Norway a National Style was developed, using motifs and modes of carved ornament found among the stave churches. [Fig. 2.7] This style was called *dragestil* [the Dragon Style], after the dragon-shaped ridge poles that contributed to the distinctive silhouette of the stave church. The Dragon Style in architecture was in fact a conscious attempt to give a more Norwegian character to the basic form of the Swiss-style, or *Sveitserstil* as it was known in Norway, whose use, particularly in developments associated with the growing Norwegian tourist industry, had become widespread.¹¹⁰ An example of this is the *Frognerseieren Restaurant* by Holm Munthe, one of the most well known practitioners of this style. [Fig. 2.8] Norwegian architects and designers were inspired by the model of the Swiss Style’s use of vernacular rather than historicist sources and turned to cultivate a National Style from their own unique vernacular forms. By the 1890s, when the popularity of the Swiss Style was on the wane, architects in many other countries, developing on from, and often in reaction to, the model of the Swiss Style, worked to develop their own language of contemporary wooden architecture in a National Style. The Zakopane Style developed by Stanisław Witkiewicz in the 1890s used the forms and motifs of the distinctive *Górale* [Highland] culture of the Podhale region as a starting point. Part of the impetus behind the creation of the style had also been the fear that the Swiss Style buildings

¹⁰⁸ J. Adeline, *Adeline’s Art Dictionary*, London 1891, entry for ‘chalet’.

¹⁰⁹ Á. Moravánszky, ‘Magic Mountains: Constructing the Geography of Modernity’ in Purchla (ed) *Vernacular Art in Central Europe*, Cracow 2001.

¹¹⁰ S. Tschudi-Madsen, ‘Norsk arkitektur 1870-1914’ in Berg (ed) *Norges kunsthistorie*, Oslo 1981.

that had sprung up in the wake of the area's development as a health resort would quickly destroy the indigenous architectural tradition.¹¹¹

The extent to which Penttilä knew of the various vernacular revival and national styles developing across Europe in the 1890s is difficult to ascertain. It is clear that Penttilä hoped for something of a similar nature to happen in Finland and that he was confident that its advent only awaited the discovery of a sufficiently distinctive Finnish vernacular style. In his article of January 1894, 'Observations on Finnish Loft-buildings', he discussed the 'un-loved' out-buildings, known as *aitta* buildings, in the yards of old Finnish rural houses. [Figs 2.9 & 2.10] He suggested that within these forms could be discerned "the basic forms of a Finnish building style – Finnish architecture's essential features, if in general the existence of such a thing can be spoken of."¹¹² He briefly outlined some of the characteristics of such buildings from Southern Finland and the Häme region.

On the ground level are situated storerooms, often three next to one another, the central one an open storage space, which forms a covered gateway into the estate yard. On the upper floor is the actual loft, with rooms corresponding to those on the ground floor, which was intended as summer accommodation for the young people and also as a store for clothing and textiles.¹¹³

His main concern was with the form of the upper external gallery that connected the first floor sleeping rooms, beneath the pitched roof, which can be seen in figures 2.9 and 2.10. This element, its variations and decoration were presented as a particularly Finnish development. Through this emphasis Penttilä can be seen to be attempting to identify a unique or characteristic feature of Finnish vernacular architecture, just as he noted such features within the Swiss, German, Russian and Norwegian architecture as discussed above.

¹¹¹ Witkiewicz' friend and colleague Stanisław Eljasz-Radzikowski wrote in 1901, recalling the situation in the 1880s: "Zakopane was already covered with the homes of the squirearchy and drab cosmopolitan homes in a Swiss style. It seemed that the native Górale cabin would disappear because many of them built homes quickly, and in speculation, in the style of the gentry" in S. Eljasz-Radzikowski, *Styl Zakopiański*, Towarzystwa Wydawniczego we Lwowie, Cracow 1901, 17., quoted in translation in D. Crowley, *National Style and Nation State: Design in Poland from the Vernacular Revival to the International Style*, Manchester 1992, 18.

¹¹² V. Penttilä, 'Havaintoja suomalaisista luhtirakennuksista [Observations on Finnish Outbuildings]', *S.T.* 1894, 2-3.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 3.

The *aitta* form is closely related to the loft or *stuga* form of Swedish and Norwegian storehouses, but simplified in structure and ornament and always orientated to face inwards onto a yard area. [Fig. 2.11] Penttilä made no mention of the possible relationship to the Swedish architectural tradition. It was important for him to identify the *aitta* as uniquely Finnish type:

The observations here presented are quite incomplete and more detailed future research will show that the Finnish nation also – despite the disadvantages of existence with which it has lived – has developed forms which deserve wider general attention.¹¹⁴

The use of the *stuga* form in Swedish and Norwegian National Style architecture is an indication of how readily such vernacular forms were adopted and adapted by architects during this period. The *stuga* form can be discerned in numerous wooden buildings of the period, including Carl Curman's *Storstugan II villa*, Stockholm 1880 and Holm Munthe's *Frognersesteren Restaurant*, 1891. See figures 2.8 and 2.12. The use of such forms also reflected a life-style ideal that looked with nostalgia at rural communities whose way of life, ties to the land and to nature, were being inescapably eroded. Penttilä's description of the *aitta* building included picturesque, non-architectural elements, indicating how the idea of the lifestyle of the peasants was intrinsically bound up with his understanding of this vernacular material:

...The young women of the house saw to it that the interiors of the rooms were pleasant and charming. The clothes kept in these rooms were used for decoration, scattered prettily over the walls and the ceiling beams.¹¹⁵

The use of vernacular features in contemporary architecture also reflected the admiration held for the peasant approach to design and what was perceived as his natural desire to respond the character of the building and to the material beneath his hands. Penttilä identifies such an approach in the design of the *aitta* buildings:

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 3.

It is as if the inner significance of the fact that the loft-building was meant for housing the young people - for the summer, was perceived. It is apparent that the Finnish peasant paid more than usual attention to this, giving to the outer forms the memento of summer, a light and playful aspect.¹¹⁶

Ultimately, the *aitta* form did not form the primary basis for the development of a National Style due to the rise of interest in Karelian forms, which will be discussed below. However, the influence of the pierced openings of the galleries and log construction can be traced in some New Style wooden villa designs. Many of the designs submitted to Penttilä's 1903 competition for rural cottages included outbuildings modelled on the *aitta* form.

Across Europe, particularly in Scandinavia and Central Europe, architects and artists turned to their native vernacular culture as a new model. Within this movement there was a tendency to turn to regions that, for reasons of isolation, primitive conditions, or receptiveness to different cultural influences, had unique local customs and habits of dress and design. This can be seen, for example, in Swedish interest in the region of Dalarna, Norwegian interest in the region of Telemark, Polish interest in the Podhale region and Hungarian interest in Kalotaszeg.¹¹⁷ Such unique vernaculars were more palpably independent from the dominant high culture of the nation and therefore more readily open to interpretation as 'true' remnants of a national culture that had declined in more accessible and essentially more familiar regions. These vernaculars could therefore function simultaneously as national markers and as primitive-exotics, re-enforcing the break with conventional, Classical Western culture. The choice of regions whose folk culture stood outside of the mainstream national folk culture reflected an understanding of these regions as more primitive and was closely related to interest in so-called primitive

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹¹⁷ Dalarna is a region in Central Sweden, with numerous mountains and lakes. Telemark is a mountainous region in South-Eastern Norway. Podhale is a mountain region at the foothills of the Tatra Range in Southern Poland, now part of Slovakia, known as 'the Highlands'. Kalotaszeg is a region in Transylvania, now part of Romania, but then part of Hungary. All these areas were distinguished by unique folk cultures, dialects and traditions.

culture outside of Europe, from which cultural models, free from the influence of European Classicism, were sought.¹¹⁸

The vernacular revival movements were national, in that their selection of sources was based on a conscious perception of what constituted ‘authentic’ national culture. They were also international, in that it was a cultural movement that was pursued simultaneously in numerous countries and practitioners within the movement were inspired by the progress made in other countries. Vernacular revival movements can also be seen to be based on a perspective that was modern and forward looking as well as nostalgic and traditional, though the balance between these impulses was drawn at different points within different National Style movements. They looked to the future, in that they sought a new approach to building, going beyond conventional questions of style, to look at the relationship between form and appearance and identity within architecture. They also looked to the past, often with an idealised notion of traditional societies and their design practices. These apparent contradictions all resonated with the turn-of-the-century sense that the world was changing and that new forms had to be found to reflect a new way of life. The anxiety that this sense of dislocation produced was one of the reasons designers and others looked back to social models that seemed to exemplify a simpler, more harmonious existence.

Karelianism

In Finland, in the 1880s and 1890s, the region of Karelia became the main focus for vernacular cultural research by both ethnologists and artists and architects. In the far east of the country, Karelia was a relatively poor and underdeveloped region, with its own dialect and distinctive folk traditions. Finnish researchers explored the region, which lay on both sides of the border with Russia, and stretched from the Eastern shore of the White Sea and Lake Onega down to the Gulf of Finland, from the mid-nineteenth century

¹¹⁸ Examples of this trend include the research of Jones and Semper into non-European cultures. In the fine arts, Gauguin’s fascination with Brittany and Tahiti and Picasso’s study of African artefacts can also be related to this impulse.

onwards. The *Kalevala* had primarily been composed on the basis of the oral tradition of this region. Researchers came to believe that, due to the isolation of the forested region, Karelian culture had remained free from foreign influences and had preserved the essence of the culture of the ancient Finnic peoples.

The idea of Karelia as the ethnic homeland of the Finns and the idea of the territory as the mythical-historical homeland of the *Kalevala* heroes became conflated. Karelia became the region where the *Kalevala* still lived, the 'Land of Song'. This idea was held in both academic and artistic and cultural circles. Heikel's first publication in 1885 was issued by the Finnish Literature Society to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary publication of the *Kalevala*. It was titled *An Ethnographical glossary with illustrations: A brief introductory attempt to explain some of the objects mentioned in the Kalevala*.¹¹⁹ [Fig. 2.13] The book historicised the *Kalevala* epic and presented Karelian artefacts as remnants of the culture represented within the tale. By the 1890s Karelia was increasingly understood as a region in which vernacular heritage and heroic history were fused. The wild beauty of the Karelian landscape was closely bound up in this.

Increased research into Karelian culture in the 1890s and the discovery of the rich wood-working tradition of the region, made available for Finnish designers a new and distinctive source material from which a Finnish National Style could be developed. Artists and architects visited the region, seeking remnants of ancient Finnish culture.¹²⁰ The most influential study of the region for architects was carried out in 1894 by the architectural students Yrjö Blomstedt and Victor Sucksdorff.¹²¹ The trip was funded by the General

¹¹⁹ This publication was the result of the expedition to Karelia Heikel took part in following his graduation in 1883. A. O. Heikel, *Kansatieteellinen sanasto kuvien kanssa: Vähäinen alkukoetus muutamia Kalevalassa mainittujen esineiden selittämiseksi [Ethnographical glossary with illustrations: A brief introductory attempt to explain some of the objects mentioned in the Kalevala]*, Helsinki 1885.

¹²⁰ Following in the footsteps of Gallen-Kallela, Sparre and Halonen, the sculptor Emil Wikström, the writers Juhani Aho, Eino Leino and Ilmari Kianto, the composers Jean Sebelius and P. J. Hannikainen and the photographer Into Konrad Inha, were among those who travelled to the region seeking inspiration and an understanding of its culture.

¹²¹ The architect Lars Sonck was to have been the third member of the party, but had to give up the trip upon securing the commission for *St Michael's, Turku*. Instead, they were accompanied by the State Archaeologist, J. R. Aspelin. Blomstedt and Sucksdorff were both from Helsinki, from middle class, educated, Swedish speaking families.

Board of Public Building and the Finnish Antiquarian Society.¹²² In 1895 an illustrated article by Sucksdorff outlining some of the findings of the expedition was published in *Suomen Teollisuuslehti*. [Fig. 2.14] In 1900 the findings of the expedition were finally published in book form. It appeared as two volumes, a book of illustrations (1900) and an accompanying text by Blomstedt with further illustrations (1901). The first part, entitled *Karelian Buildings and Decorative Forms*, was promoted by an article of the same title by Penttilä in *S.T.* in the same year. A German language version of the publication, in one volume, was produced in 1902.¹²³

Blomstedt's struggle to bring the book to publication, despite financial difficulties, was motivated by his belief in the value of the material to contemporary designers. It made a wide range of Karelian visual material accessible for the first time. The first volume contained 80 illustrations, including photographs and drawings of farmstead layouts, houses, churches, chapels and graveyards. [Figs 2.15 & 2.16] These included illustrated details of various carved elements, such as pillars and bargeboards, supplemented by smaller craft objects, sewing patterns, iron work, distaffs etc. The second volume with Blomstedt's text added a further 131 illustrations, making the work a significant visual resource. The artefacts were presented as representing "the Karelians' sensitive sense of form, lively imagination and great ingenuity, as well as an artistic and independent developmental ability."¹²⁴ The greatest emphasis was placed on the Karelian language of ornament, which was considered most interesting and most Finnish.

Yrjö Blomstedt (1871-1912) graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1895. Following the 1894 expedition, Blomstedt lectured on design and handcrafts at the Jyväskylä Teachers' Seminary.

Victor Sucksdorff (1866-1952) graduated from the Polytechnic in 1891. In 1896 he made a further art historical expedition, surveying the churches of Pohjanmaa, in Western Finland. Following the expeditions he practised as an architect, primarily in Oulu.

Johan Reinhold Aspelin (1842-1915) was the father of archaeology in Finland and professor of the chair of Nordic Archaeology at the Imperial Alexander University (now the University of Helsinki). He was the brother of Eliel Aspelin, the art historian.

¹²² V. Sucksdorff, 'Rakennustavasta ja puutyylistä Venäjän-Karjalassa [Building Practices and the Wooden Style in Russian Karelia]', *S.T.* 1895, 217.

¹²³ German was the favoured language for publishing Finnish-language scholarly material, aimed at a wider audience, at this period. Schvidt's work on Finnish ornament was published simultaneously in German as were a number of Heikel's works.

¹²⁴ V. Penttilä, 'Karjalaisia rakennuksia ja koristemuotoja [Karelian Buildings and Decorative Forms]', *S.T.* 1900, 2.

Sucksdorff's earlier 1895 article had presented a summary of the material collected on the expedition, including a description of the Karelian approach to building, carved decoration, utensils and furniture and textiles. The article ended with a confident assertion of the unique Finnic contribution to culture presented in these buildings:

What then is really the style of those, so-called Novgorodian buildings, with their strange special features and beautiful hand tools? Did the Slavic people create them or can one perhaps find in them some influence from the ancient Scandinavians, or should we look for their inception amongst the earliest inhabitants of Northern Europe, the Finnic peoples. We will be able to get a complete answer to this question some time in the future. All we can say here is that, although plenty seems to have been borrowed both from the East and the West, never the less when we differentiate them from one another, some of it at any rate will appear to have been produced by the people who have also created such beautiful additions to another form of art.¹²⁵

It was important to establish the Karelian style and practices of building as distinct from the Russian and Scandinavian wood traditions in order to strengthen Finnish claims to nationhood on the basis of a discrete culture as well as a discrete language from its neighbours. A craft tradition that was sufficiently separate from those of neighbouring countries would also be able to provide the foundation for further development of a modern National Style. The value of the material in the quest for a Finnish style had always been an important factor for the architects who had organised the trip. In their grant application to the Finnish Antiquarian Society, the architects had emphasised the originality and distinctive character of early Finno-Ugrian architecture and suggested that by “adapting classical and modern architecture in the same spirit” a unique Finnish Style could be created.¹²⁶

¹²⁵ V. Sucksdorff, 'Rakennustavasta ja puutylistä Venäjän-Karjalassa [Building Practices and the Wooden Style in Russian Karelia]', 230. I believe that the reference to 'beautiful additions to another form of art' is an oblique reference to the creation of the *Kalevala*. The use of the term 'Novgorodian' to describe the Karelian material of the study is confusing. The Karelian buildings are quite dissimilar to those of the Novgorod region. It is likely that Sucksdorff intended it as synonym for Russian, as part of his argument that these buildings owed more to Finnish culture than to Russian.

¹²⁶ Finnish Antiquarian Society archives, quoted in Wäre, 'National Romanticism in Finnish Architecture' 62.

The published volumes and Penttilä's article in 1900 were direct in emphasising the value of the primary material in terms of what it offered to the development of a contemporary Finnish Style. Penttilä's article gave this question of a National Style particular significance in the context of the contemporary political climate: "Now, when our nation's independence is threatened, delving into the foundations of its existence is especially important."¹²⁷ Penttilä was referring to the escalating campaign of political Russification in the 1890s.¹²⁸ For Penttilä, evidence of a distinct national culture, both in the past and the present, would provide the Finns with yet more ammunition with which to defend the nation's existence:

...so that from her bosom may be presented new and fresh pieces of evidence, which can show the world and our enemies that the Finnish nation has created [culture] freely as a nation. As a matter of course it has developed its own characteristics.¹²⁹

Karelia was clearly presented as the repository of lost, ancient Finnish customs and culture: "Remote Karelia has more unbroken and more freshly preserved our national origins, the products of the spiritual life of the ancient Finns."¹³⁰ Karelia was also represented as the region from which "our world renowned *Kalevala*" was drawn.¹³¹ This relationship and fusion of the ethnic and mythic homeland was also made explicit in Blomstedt's text for *Karelian Building and Decorative forms*, which included frequent quotes from the *Kalevala*, in which building and crafts were mentioned. The ancient 'Finnish' traditions of Karelia were also presented by Penttilä as models for modern design:

...from the region's furthest corner, from Eastern Karelia there springs forth material, which we recognise as *Finnish*. But this raises a question: is it not possible that in the area of architecture, and not only in the area of the industrial arts, there may be born something independently Finnish – *A Finnish Style?*¹³²

¹²⁷ Penttilä, 'Karjalaisia rakennuksia ja koristemuotoja', 2.

¹²⁸ See discussion in chapter 1.ii, pp. 20-25.

¹²⁹ Penttilä, 'Karjalaisia rakennuksia ja koristemuotoja', 2.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 2.

¹³¹ Ibid., 2.

¹³² Ibid., 2.

The idea of material being ‘recognised as *Finnish*’ was a subjective one. The Karelian peoples were closely linguistically related to the Finns, but predominantly lived in territories that had been subject to different cultural and political influences. For example, the majority of the Karelian peoples were Russian Orthodox rather than Lutheran in faith and the Karelian regions were in the most part less developed and economically prosperous than the rest of Finland. Leaving aside the complex question of the true ethnographic provenance of Karelian culture and customs, Karelian material was approached by Finns, at this time, as Finnish. In particular it was embraced by young architects from both the Swedish and Finnish speaking cultural groups. It fulfilled a need for an ancient, distinct and exotic folk heritage, to express the emerging identity of the Finns as a unique and ancient race and culture. This highly decorative wood and textile tradition appealed to architects who were in the process of seeking a new approach to ornament, and whose tastes had been trained in the profuse decoration of the Neo-Renaissance styles. The richer decorative tradition of the Karelian people was new and more exciting than the sparser and more recognisably Swedish influenced decorative work of more westerly Finnish peasants.

Penttilä’s comments on the need for a Finnish style and the important role the original artefacts of Karelia could play in its development were echoed by Blomstedt and Sucksdorff. Their views were reproduced in his article in an extended quote:

“We would like to point out to our dear public” write the authors, “that in this illustrated work the main focus is placed on the buildings of the Finnish national tribe, and on their decorated tools.... Research into national building has become very popular (for example in Germany, Switzerland and Norway); therefore we hope, through our work, to have done a service to our country, in which ethnography already has a firm tradition, by presenting these imaginative and decoratively rich Karelian woodwork products, from the birthplace of the Kalevala.

Perhaps our work may also be of some significance to our characteristic Finnish building and carpentry-based creative works. We have thought of it as a road sign for future research

and as some kind of direction for the clarification of a 'Finnish Style'.¹³³

The quote again indicates the extent to which the advances made in vernacular architecture research in countries such as Switzerland and Norway were inspirational to those working to develop knowledge of Finnish vernacular architecture. The quotes above reveal how new and unfamiliar Karelian material was still regarded in 1900. Even Penttilä, who was deeply interested in Finnish vernacular research, only published one article on *aitta* buildings in 1894 and two on Karelian material in 1895 and 1900, reflecting the limited nature of material available. The relatively underdeveloped state of the field of research into Finnish vernacular material in the 1890s was another reason for the continued significance of Swiss and Norwegian models. Coupled with this, until knowledge of Karelian material became more widespread, there were still doubts that the Finnish vernacular tradition, characterised by simple one or two storey wooden buildings and lacking in novel architectural forms or notably rich decorative features, was sufficiently distinguished to provide models for a National Style.

The quotes above have also continuously illustrated how closely research into vernacular Finnish material was tied to the idea of the formulation of a contemporary National Style. The practice of formulating this style and the various design trends that followed out of it will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹³³ Ibid., 3.

2.ii THE CREATION OF NATIONAL STYLE FORMS

A Finnish Style

In his article 'Karelian Buildings and Decorative Forms' in 1900 Penttilä represented the publication of Blomstedt and Sucksdorff's book as a turning point for the development of a Finnish national style. He suggested that the limited success of previous endeavours in the 1890s to develop a Finnish style had been due to the lack of Finnish material and forms to draw on:

In the area of furniture there have been some developments in which an independent Finnish character can be observed. In some wooden architecture likewise, some of our younger architects have made attempts to pursue a Finnish style, but always they meet with the same obstacle... [the lack of knowledge of Finnish visual forms]. Karelia, where such knowledge can be found in the most substantial quantities, has been too far away to be practically at the disposal of architects.¹³⁴

The real significance of the expedition and publication are difficult to assess. The earlier 'Finnish style' developments Penttilä referred to in furniture design and wooden architecture certainly drew on Karelian motifs prior to the 1900 publication. The developments in furniture, mentioned by Penttilä as occurring prior to 1900, probably refer to the trend set in motion by the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts [Suomen Käsiönyöstävät]. This organisation had been founded by Fanny Churberg in 1879 with the aim of researching, preserving and promoting the use of Finnish textile traditions.¹³⁵ The characteristic geometric patterns of woven work and embroidery practised in Eastern Finland and Karelia in particular were believed to be of unique Finnish origin. The society's initial conservationist approach to design modified through the 1880s to include the devising of new designs and patterns, inspired by folk art material.¹³⁶ Schvindt's 1894 book on Finnish textile ornament referred to the work of the society in preserving and

¹³⁴ Ibid., 2.

¹³⁵ **Fanny Churberg** (1845-1892) had trained as a landscape artist in Düsseldorf and Munich in early 1870s and was also one of the first Finnish artists to seek training in Paris. She gave up painting in 1880 and concentrated her energy on the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts and on promoting the position of women artists.

¹³⁶ T. Sarpaneva, et al., *Finnish Design 1875-1975: 100 Years of Finnish Industrial Design*, Helsinki 1975, 40-42.

disseminating traditional patterns.¹³⁷ Heikel's review of Schvindt's book, published in *Valvoja* in 1894, also referred to the hope that research into such ornament would rejuvenate the field of textile design and embroidery in Finland.¹³⁸ He also reproduced Schvindt's acknowledgement of the support of the Finnish Literature Society for his work:

“The Finnish Literature Society, who have always considered one of their important tasks to be the collection and publishing of products that have come into being through the ideas and imagination of the Finnish people, have decided to publish these decorations and styles that have been created by the women of Karelia through their sense of beauty.”

We welcome this work with enthusiasm as it will bring honour to the Finnish people, the author of the book and to the Finnish Literature Society.¹³⁹

This quote gives an indication of the Fennomane vision shared by many researchers into Finnish vernacular culture, and organisation such as the Finnish Literature Society, the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts and the Antiquarian Society. What lay behind all of them was the drive to research and to educate the public and the belief that Finland's heritage was important for her future.

In 1894 the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts organised a competition for furniture to be designed in a Finnish style. It was felt that the success of the society in promoting the use of traditional Finnish textile designs was undermined by the fact that such textiles were still used in conjunction with furniture that was “foreign” in design.¹⁴⁰ It is worth noting that the first and second prize winning suites of furniture were both designed by men who had personal experience of Karelian material. First prize was awarded to Victor Sucksdorff, who was preparing for his research field trip to Russian Karelia. [Figs 2.17 & 2.18] Second prize went to Sparre. [Figs 2.19 & 2.20] Sucksdorff's design utilised the intricate geometric carved woodwork decoration characteristic of Karelian wooden artefacts and was particularly praised by the judges for its success in terms of its ‘Finnish style’. No mention

¹³⁷ Schvindt, *Suomalaisia koristeita*, 2-3.

¹³⁸ Heikel, '*Theodor Schvindt...*', 478.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 478.

¹⁴⁰ V. Penttilä, 'Suomen Yleisen Käsateollisuusyhdistyksen huonekalukilpailu [The Finnish General Handcraft-Industry Society's Furniture Competition]', *S.T.* 1898, 278.

was made of Karelia. Instead, the judges noted the influence of the Southern Pohjanmaa region, in Western Finland, “in which Finnish furniture design is subject to Swedish influence”.¹⁴¹ Certainly the low backed form of the wooden sofa, seen in figure 2.18, can be related to the influence of Swedish late-eighteenth-century Gustavian Classicism in Finnish furniture design. However, the judges went on to say that “both the main points of the design and the decoration feels authentic and in accordance with a Finnish style.”¹⁴²

The criteria by which the judges arrived at this assessment are difficult to judge, but can be further illuminated through an analysis of their comments. The chair by Sucksdorff was considered too light and delicate to fit the suite, whilst the chair by Sparre was considered better. On the other hand Sucksdorff’s table was “both solid and beautiful and also Finnish.”¹⁴³ Clearly they approved of the reworking of the medieval single leg strut table, which was chosen by both prize winning designers. Conspicuous solidity of construction was one of the features approved of by the judges and associated with this idea of Finnishness. The matter of decoration was also commented upon. The chest in Sparre’s suite was most admired for its closeness to Finnish sources.¹⁴⁴ The notch-work carving can be directly related to Karelian traditions, illustrated by the barge-boards of figure 2.14. The inclusion of the chest in the suite of furniture also struck an intentionally archaic note, as the chest as an item of furniture was largely obsolete by the late nineteenth century, but had been an important article in the past and chests from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were among the artefacts collected by the Finnish Antiquarian Society. Both suites of furniture shared a rustic character, in which areas of rich decoration were balanced with self-consciously sturdy construction. For example, both designs employed large peg-joints, endowing the pieces with a sense of simple, traditional, craftsman-like manufacture. The use of such joints was symbolic and selective, since elsewhere the more sophisticated hidden joints of modern furniture manufacturing were used, see figure 2.17.

¹⁴¹ 'Suomen käsityön ystäville! [To the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts!]', *S.T.* 1894, 111.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

An anonymous article published in *S.T.* in 1894 on the results of the competition examined the question of a Finnish National Style further, asking “What is the Finnish style?”¹⁴⁵ The article suggested that this was a question on the minds of many. The author pointed out the challenges facing those seeking to develop such a style:

To achieve on one hand the production of something artistically whole, beautiful and practical and on the other hand something Finnish, whose appearance and character are such that these may be felt to be Finnish.¹⁴⁶

The suggestions put forward in this article reflected similar ideas to those held by Blomstedt and Penttilä. The author presented folk ornament and the practical, yet artistic, forms of craft objects, from boats and skis to furniture, as the starting point from which to develop a Finnish Style:

How then to design furniture in a style that does not exist anywhere, but in the artist’s imagination, in which case it could certainly be manifested very differently! It was not an easy task for those who had hoped to make a success through participation in the competition. The difficulties were two-fold: to achieve, on one hand, the production of something artistically unified, beautiful and practical and on the other hand something Finnish, so that in appearance and character it may be felt to be Finnish.

The only thing that could be directly used were Finnish patterns. It might have been thought possible, by means of these, to give at least some sort of characteristic stamp to the pieces, but in the case of the frames themselves, it was necessary to create independent forms. This was the real problem. Were these forms discussed? Hardly. An axe handle, the prow of a boat, a toe of a peasant boot, the back of a ski, and numerous other objects demonstrate the existence of Finnish forms. It is only a question of using them sensibly. Besides there already exists plenty of finished furniture and household objects, collected and preserved by archaeologists, which in many cases may provide a suitable starting point for the imagination’s creative development. So, primitive and simple as these objects often are in themselves, they are, nevertheless, the foundation for a Finnish style of furniture, they are the point we must set out from.

¹⁴⁵ "Suomalainen tyyli' ja Suomen käsityön ystävien huonekalu-kilpailu [The 'Finnish Style' and the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts Furniture Competition]', *S.T.* 1894, 110.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 110

It was necessary in a sense to penetrate antiquity to the heart of folk traditions and there lay a foundation. Then armed with materials, by shaping forms, smoothing out irregularities while maintaining constant development we must, through our imagination, step into the present and subordinate ourselves to its demands and levels of development.¹⁴⁷

By turning back to this simple, rugged heritage, the author hoped designers would be able to throw off the somnambulant influence of Classical Historicism and cease to be led astray by what was novel and foreign. What the author implied was a re-education of taste, in which the true beauty of old carved objects, however rough, was revealed as superior to the artificial flashiness of modern design. Again, vernacular material was presented as a source and a means by which to renew degenerate artistic practice, as well as to endow it with national meaning. This approach, of deriving furniture forms from different craft objects, was one explored in a number of National Style movements across Europe. For example, Witkiewicz used the carved forms of the back of sleighs in his Zakopane style furniture of the 1890s.

The development of furniture designs and, still more, of architectural forms from craft objects such as carved axe handles would obviously involve a lot of extrapolation of character and imaginative input on the part of the designer. 'Primitive and simple' were adjectives often used to describe Finnish artefacts and simplicity and a primitive spirit came to be key characteristics of early Finnish Style experiments. Beyond the use of a few authentic patterns, it was the application of the spirit of Finnish traditions that was to create a modern National Style.

Relatively few buildings were actually designed in anything that could strictly be called a Karelian style. Those that were, notably Gallen-Kallela's *Kalela* studio (1895) and Halonen's *Haloseniemi* studio (1900-02), were both designed by artists rather than architects. The appearance of these two villas, shown in figures 2.21 and 2.22 can be compared to the Karelian farmhouse form, illustrated in figure 2.23. In particular the

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 110.

construction from squared logs and the unified masses of the building, beneath the dominant form of the pitched roof, can be seen to derive from the Karelian model. Both artists drew on their first hand experience in Karelia rather than depending on Blomstedt and Sucksdorff's findings. It is also important to note that both artists had lived and worked in Paris and maintained close contacts throughout the European and Scandinavian art scene. Their rustic studio villas can be compared to similar buildings built for and by artists in Sweden and Norway.¹⁴⁸ The influence of Karelian forms and decorative material was equally matched by international design influences such as English Arts and Crafts architecture and the Art Nouveau concept of the Artist's House and total work of art, which were circulating in Europe at this time. The idea of the medieval hall that lay behind the development of the central hall-living space in arts and crafts architecture was one that fitted particularly well with Finnish designers' wishes to evoke something of a more primitive and simple folk existence. The hall-studio-living spaces that occupied the core of both the *Kalela* and *Haloseniemi* buildings and both exhibit medieval-inspired, Arts and Crafts features such as minstrels' galleries and recessed dining or withdrawing spaces that were not part of the Karelian tradition. [Fig. 2.24] These hall spaces, increasingly popular in Finnish domestic architecture, were also related to the idea of the Norse feasting hall that influenced Swedish and Norwegian architects.¹⁴⁹ This is illustrated by figure 2.25, which shows the interior of Munthe's *Frognerseteren Restaurant*, where the exposed logs and beam, open fire and chandeliers made from moose antlers create a powerful archaic and Nordic feel.

In the field of wooden architecture, the National Style developments by younger architects, referred to by Penttilä in 1900, would have included the work of Lars Sonck.¹⁵⁰ The early

¹⁴⁸ Examples of the northern artist's studio, fusing vernacular and contemporary domestic design include: Erik Werenskiöld's studio, *Gilje* (1895-96) and Gerhard Munthe's studio, *Leveld* (1898-9), both in the Lysaker area, near Oslo and the studios of Anders Zorn and the Larssons' studios in Dalarna, constructed from restored and extended vernacular properties through the 1890s.

¹⁴⁹ Lane, *National Romanticism*, 28-32.

¹⁵⁰ **Lars Sonck** (1870-1956) graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1894. In his final year as a student he won first prize in the nation-wide competition for *St Michael's, Turku* and in 1894 he made a tour of Germany, studying Church architecture as preparation for undertaking the commission. Sonck became one of the most successful architects of his generation. His practice included villa designs and churches, as well as numerous private and commercial buildings in the heart of Helsinki.

years of his practice as an architect included a series of wooden villas, designed in a round-log, rustic style that was welcomed by critics as appropriately Finnish.¹⁵¹ Sonck's friendship with Blomstedt and Sucksdorff and his initial intention to take part in the Karelian expedition indicate that he was both interested in Karelian vernacular design and had had some exposure to it. It is likely that he also had access to his friends' findings prior to the 1900 publication. His *Villa Hällberg* (1896), for example, had a round-log construction, a dominant pitched roof and simple geometric carving and notch-work around the window frames and elsewhere that can be read as Karelian in inspiration.¹⁵² [Fig. 2.26]

However, there are various other influences discernable that revealed the real fusion of ideas, drawn from across the field of both vernacular and contemporary wood architecture, which made up such early experiments in the Finnish Style. The massive stone foundations, exaggerated ridge poles, wooden arcades and wooden shingling can be related to similar villa designs in Sweden and Norway, which drew on local vernacular traditions.¹⁵³ It is impossible to separate elements which might suggest a Norwegian *stuga* form, a Swiss chalet or an *aitta* building form. The whole design was overlaid by a sense of exoticism and a dramatic silhouette that has led some authors to suggest the influence of Japanese design.¹⁵⁴

Despite this exoticism the villa was welcomed in *S.T.* with the statement that "It shows throughout the pursuit of original Finnish style forms."¹⁵⁵ This indicates the essentially

¹⁵¹ Sonck's extensive series of log villas started with his own summer house in his childhood area of Finström in the Åland Islands, *Lasses Villa* (1895) and was followed by *Skogshyddan villa* (1896), *Villa Hällberg* (1896), *Pirttiniemi* (1902), *Finnvilla* (1902) and *Ainola* (1903-04). For more information see P. Kivinen, 'Early Period - National Romanticism 1894-1907' in Piironen (ed) *Lars Sonck 1870-1956: Arkkitehti/ Architect*, Helsinki 1981, 13-28.

¹⁵² The villa was designed for Dr Victor Hällberg in the town of Maarianhamina in the Åland Islands. Sonck's family had moved to this Swedish-speaking island when he was a boy and he remained deeply fond of the area.

¹⁵³ See, for example, the copy of the Ornöstuga, which was bought by King Carl XV of Sweden after its exhibition in the Paris World's Fair 1867 and re-erected in 1869 in the park of his summer palace at Ulriksdal and furnished as a summer villa for the King's physician, or Curman's first villa at Lyskil, *Storstuga I*, 1873, and his subsequent villa designs.

¹⁵⁴ Kivinen, 'Lars Sonck', 19.

¹⁵⁵ 'Kuvaliitteiden johdosta' [Account of the Supplementary Illustrations], *S.T.* 1896, 118.

ambiguous position of the Finnish Style at this time. There was little beyond the nationality of the architect and the provenance of the materials that could be characterised as unambiguously Finnish and discrete from developments elsewhere. The reception of such buildings as Finnish Style rested therefore primarily upon the idea of a Finnish character rather than the direct application of undeniably Finnish motifs.

Penttilä's own design for the *Hollola Parish House* (1902) a community hall for the village of Hollola, near Lahti in Southern Finland, demonstrated his own attempt to apply his theories on the National Style.¹⁵⁶ [Figs 2.27 & 2.28] The rectangular building had a large, steeply pitched shingled roof, broken only by a gabled porch. The dominant form of the roof can again be compared to the Karelian architectural tradition, in which the living space and store-rooms and stables were all incorporated beneath one large roof. This practice was prevalent across Karelian and North Western Russia, where the harsh winter climate made it expedient to conserve heat and minimise the necessity of going outside. The round-log construction, with exposed log-end corners, and the wooden shingle roof were part of the same self-conscious return to traditional, 'simple' construction methods that was seen in furniture design. The technique was admired for the honesty with which both the material and the structural construction were made visible.

The notch-work carvings on the pronounced barge-boards of the roof and porch gables were conspicuously Karelian in inspiration.¹⁵⁷ The cut-away recess of the porch was similar to those in Sonck's villa designs and drew on *aitta* forms, as well as the contemporary architectural interest in the fluid linking of interior and exterior spaces. In Penttilä's short review of the *Hollola Parish House*, he made no mention of the Karelian

¹⁵⁶ The Parish House was intended for community use, but fears of overuse led to this being restricted to use by parishioners only. The parish controlled activities in the building, prohibiting certain forms of entertainment and commercial activities. The building was the centre for parish affairs and church administration. It also housed the parish library. In the 1970s a portion of the building was given over to a café and in the 1980s the whole building was renovated and converted into a restaurant. The original exterior was preserved. S. K. Pesälä, 'Hollolan Kunnantupa [The Hollola Parish House]' in Mantere (ed) *Päivät-Hämeen tutkimusseuran vuosikirja*, Lahti 1985, 75-90.

¹⁵⁷ A variation on such barge boards, known as 'wings' *kyl'ia*, was also characteristic of northern and central Russian vernacular architecture. A. Hilton, *Russian Folk Art*, Bloomington 1995, 21-22.

inspiration behind the decoration.¹⁵⁸ Instead, he emphasised how the building had been designed to belong to its location, in close proximity to the medieval stone and brick church of Hollala. [Fig. 2.29] He described the new building as existing in harmony with the rugged form of the church.¹⁵⁹ The single pitched volume of the roof does echo the monolithic pitched roof of the stone church.

The primitive Gothic form of Finland's medieval churches had evolved in the fourteenth-fifteenth-centuries, under Swedish rule, as a simplification of European Gothic forms to suit the limited means and rough materials of the Finnish province. The Karelian forms and details of the parish house, by contrast, had been derived from an Eastern-Finnish, wood-working tradition. The divergent source material was not regarded as at odds with each other, and was in fact described by Penttilä as being like mother and daughter. This indicates how subjectively those pursuing the National Style approached their sources. The medieval stone churches were embraced as Finnish because their simple rugged forms were felt to be a sufficiently Finnish variant on the Swedish model to be free from imperial associations. The qualities of ruggedness and simplicity were frequently cited as characteristic of Finnish design. Similarly, Karelian material was adopted because appreciation of the linguistic and folkloric heritage of the region had led to such enthusiasm for the area as the repository of ancient Finnish culture.

The Paris Pavilion

The *Finnish Pavilion* at the Paris World's Fair in 1900 has long been regarded as a key point in the development of a Finnish National Style. It launched the careers of the architects Herman Gesellius, Armas Lindgren and Eliel Saarinen, who were to have a huge influence on the Finnish architectural scene through the 1900s and 1910s.¹⁶⁰ Within the

¹⁵⁸ It was not unusual for architects to write the reviews of their own buildings. V. Penttilä, 'Hollolan Kunnantupa [The Hollola Parish House]', *Rakentaja* 1902, 6.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.6.

¹⁶⁰ **Herman Gesellius** (1874-1916), **Armas Lindgren** (1874-1929) and **Eliel Saarinen** (1873-1950) all graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1897 and immediately formed their architectural partnership. Whilst he was a student, Gesellius had worked in the office of Gustaf Nyström from 1895-97. He made a

pavilion design the foundations for a Finnish Style for stone architecture can be traced. This development made it possible to take National Style impulse beyond the realms of furniture and wooden villa design, into the urban architectural arena. The pavilion also gave an indication of the new path Finnish architecture was to take in the 1900s, above and beyond questions of a National Style. The significance of the pavilion for Finnish architecture was recognised by contemporaries very quickly and it was frequently referred to in studies of Finnish architectural history as the starting point of a new trend.¹⁶¹

The competition for the pavilion had been organised by the Finnish Board of Industry in 1898. The jurors were Robert Runeberg, an engineer and the commissioner in charge of Finland's entry to the World's Fair; E.G. Sammark, from the Board of Industry, and the architects Sebastian Gripenberg, Theodor Höijer, Jac Ahrenberg, Gustaf Nyström and Magnus Schjerfbeck.¹⁶² The architects on the jury were the foremost architects of their day.

study trip to Germany in the spring of 1898 and to Italy in 1899. Lindgren had worked as a student in the offices of Josef Stenbäck and Gustaf Nyström. He maintained a lifelong interest in Finnish architectural history. In the summer of 1896 he took part, as a draftsman, in an expedition organised by the Antiquarian Society through the region of Pohjanmaa and worked on the restoration of the medieval church of Inko. He made a study trip to Scandinavia, Scotland, England and Holland in 1897 and another trip, from the summer of 1898 to the spring of 1899, through Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France and England. Saarinen also worked, whilst he was a student, in the office of Gustaf Nyström. He made a study trip through Sweden and Germany in 1898-99 and also oversaw the construction of the *Finnish Pavilion* in Paris in 1899. The office of G-L-S operated until Lindgren left in 1905. Gesellius continued to collaborate with both Saarinen and Lindgren for the next few years.

¹⁶¹ "The first building in which this new tendency was, as it were, presented to the European world – earning considerable notice – was the Finnish exhibition pavilion for the 1900 Paris World's Fair." O. Okkonen, *Suomen Taiteen Historia [The History of Finnish Art]*, Helsinki 1945, 230. An extensive list of the reviews and presentations of the pavilion can be found in Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen*, 258-259.

¹⁶² **Theodor Höijer** (1843-1910) studied under the architect Theodor Chiewitz in Turku from 1861-62 and then at the Royal Academy in Stockholm from 1863-68. For more information on Chiewitz see footnote 454. Until Sjöström was appointed to the Polytechnic in 1873, the majority of Finnish architects trained in Stockholm. Höijer worked for the General Board of Public Buildings from 1870-72. He struggled to get established as an architect at first, due to the slow economy following the depression of the 1860s. His breakthrough came in 1876 when he was appointed as architect for the Helsinki Art and Industry exhibition. From then his career progressed rapidly and he established a network of clients in industry and property development, as well as important national commissions, such as the 1887 *Ateneum Art Academy*.

Jac Ahrenberg (1847-1914) trained at the Royal Academy in Stockholm from 1869-73. He worked for the General Board of Public Building from 1886 until his death. He was a writer and critic in the field of architecture throughout his career, contributing to *Finsk Tidskrift*, *Teknikern* and *Tekniska föreningens förhandlingar*. He was Svecomane-minded and believed that adherence to the Western, Swedish Classical cultural sphere was necessary for Finland's cultural development and he rejected ideas of a Finnish National Style.

Gustaf Nyström (1856-1917) was another of the first generation of Finnish architects to be able to train in Finland. He graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1876 and furthered his studies at the Technical

That they were all on the competition jury indicates how seriously it was taken. It is interesting that with all these prominent architects on the board, the competition entries would perforce come from the ranks of younger and less established architects.

The Board of Industry had stipulated strict parameters for the building. It was to be forty meters long, ten metres wide and seven metres tall. It was to be constructed of an iron frame, clad in gypsum, but given the appearance of stone. It was also stipulated the design incorporate two natural stone portals, one of granite and one of soapstone and that the interior should contain a long gallery.¹⁶³ The decision to make the building of stone in appearance allowed for the display of the stone portals as a promotion of the Finnish stone industry. This was also done to avoid comparison with the Russian tradition of Pavilion architecture, which had an established convention of drawing on Russian round-log vernacular architecture.¹⁶⁴ The possibility of such a comparison being made had already been anxiously discussed in the editorial of the main Swedish-language daily, *Hufvudstadsbladet*, on the same day as the call for designs was published.¹⁶⁵

The winner of the competition was the design *Isidor*, entered by the firm of Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen, [G-L-S]. [Fig. 2.30] The building was long and low, with a central crossing beneath a short tower. [Fig. 2.31] There were entrances to either side of the crossing, another at the far end of the building and a smaller exit door in the round apse, above the crossing. The goal behind the design was to represent Finland to the world and promote understanding and sympathy for the nation at a particularly politically sensitive

College in Vienna. He began to teach at the Polytechnic in 1879, he took over as principal Lecturer on Architecture on the death of Sjöström, and was made Professor of Architecture in 1896. His teaching was based on the study of historical models, largely from the antique and Renaissance sphere, but he also brought in elements of Scandinavian and Finnish architectural history. He was made an academician of the Imperial Academy in St Petersburg in 1893. Alongside his teaching he ran a private architectural office.

Magnus Schjerfbeck (1860-1933) graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1882. During his student years he worked as an assistant in the office of his teacher Sjöström. Even before graduation he began working in the General Board of Public Building, where he remained for the rest of his career.

¹⁶³ *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 26th June 1898.

¹⁶⁴ Round log pavilion buildings, drawing on vernacular motifs, were presented at international exhibitions from Paris 1867 onwards. This tradition was continued, for example in I.P Ropet's *Russian Pavilion* in Paris 1878 and in 1900 by Konstantin Korovin's *Russian Village*.

¹⁶⁵ *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 26th June 1898.

time.¹⁶⁶ The success of the pavilion and other Finnish contributions in garnering notice and praise by the international community gave it unrivalled significance as a cultural event in Finland.¹⁶⁷ The importance of this achievement was all the greater for the political tensions in Finland that had been whipped up by the events surrounding the 1899 February Manifesto and the tensions surrounding Finland's participation in the Fair at all.¹⁶⁸ The inauspicious site at the rear of the Quai D'Orsay was only secured at all after a diplomatic struggle and in the face of Russian objections.¹⁶⁹

Penttilä attended the Fair in Paris in 1900 and published an extended review of the *Finnish Pavilion* and its contents in *S.T.* that autumn. The review commented on the international reception of the pavilion as well as presenting Penttilä's own impressions. The tone of the review was overwhelmingly celebratory. The pavilion was highly decorated inside and out and Penttilä represented it as a triumph of co-operative creativity on the part of Finnish architects, painters and sculptors. He lamented that such a co-operative approach was so rare in modern building practices and stated that it enabled the achievement of greater beauty and more perfect harmony, giving the example of the *Acropolis* of Ancient Greece.¹⁷⁰ This point reveals the influence of *gesamtkunstwerk* ideas, championed by writers on the Gothic such as Ruskin and Viollet-le-Duc, which became a prominent aesthetic within the New Style movement. The reference to a Classical masterpiece also illustrates how the Classical paradigm retained a prominent position in Penttilä's

¹⁶⁶ The national pavilions were intended to represent the nations' culture, history and way of life in the broad sense, whilst fine art and industrial production were displayed in the relevant common exhibition halls. Reference to the task of the pavilion as the representative of the nation was made in the competition announcement and in reviews of the competition results and the pavilion itself.

¹⁶⁷ The sculptor Ville Vallgren won the *grand prix*. The artists Akseli Gallen-Kallela and Eero Järnefelt and the sculptor Robert Stigell won gold medals.

¹⁶⁸ See the discussion in chapter 1.ii, pp. 20-25.

¹⁶⁹ The Finns had not initially been allotted a site of their own and only persistent lobbying by Senator Leo Mechlin, in charge of Finnish industry's participation, Robert Runeberg and Albert Edelfelt, Finnish Art Commissioner for the Exposition, secured one. See P. B. MacKeith and K. Smeds, *The Finland Pavilions : Finland at the Universal Expositions 1900-1992* Helsinki 1993, 14-15. and K. Smeds, *Helsingfors -Paris : Finlands utveckling till nation påvärldsutställningarna, 1851-1900 [Helsinki - Paris: The Development of Finland as a Nation at the World's Fairs 1851-1900]*, Helsinki 1996.

¹⁷⁰ V. Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maalimannäyttelystä 1900: Suomen paviljonki [Images of the Paris World's Fair 1900: The Finnish Pavilion]', *S.T.* 1900, 205.

architectural thinking, alongside newer ideas such as the significance of the vernacular paradigm.

Penttilä described the form of the pavilion as church-like:

Its ground plan, which has already been published in this journal, is a longish rectangle with one rounded end. From between the central part and the rounded apse there rises a tower. This is how it gets to be reminiscent of a church's overall form, which the actual finished designs show to be intentional. Often foreigners have described our pavilion as a copy of a Finnish rural church. The arrangement of the interior is also influenced by church forms, as you can see in the interior photographs. The shingled roof adds still more to the memories of our own ancient rural stone churches.¹⁷¹

The pavilion was undeniably church-like in form, but the similarity to Finnish medieval churches was not exact. The pavilion was long and low, with a tower, in contrast to the tall, single volume masses of the medieval churches, such as the Hollola church, illustrated in figure 2.29. However, the interior murals by Gallen-Kallela, in particular the ribbed vaults, demonstrated a conscious quoting of the medieval paintings found in such churches. This can be seen in the interior photograph, figure 2.32 and the accompanying images, figures 2.33 and 2.34, which also give an indication of Gallen-Kallela's bold stylised approach to painting.

The allusion to the medieval churches of Finland can also be seen as a reference to Finland's heritage as part of the Western rather than Eastern sphere of cultural influence and drew attention to Finland's history under Sweden and her continued affiliation to the Lutheran Church rather than the Russian Orthodox Church. Finland's medieval churches were among the principal monuments of Finland's sparse architectural heritage and held a prominent place in Finnish architectural consciousness in this period. Research into these churches was the foundation stone of art history in Finland and a number of architects were involved in the documenting of these buildings. Alongside Karelian material, the churches were key sources for those looking to develop a Finnish Style, particularly in

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 184.

stone architecture. As the pavilion design indicates, however, the heritage of the medieval churches was freely interpreted. The steeply pitched form of the gables and roofs and the rugged quality of the granite field stone, from which the majority were constructed, were the principal characteristics derived from this tradition.

Alongside the medieval church form, the use of Finnish flora and fauna as the basis for the language of ornament of the pavilion was central in conveying the idea of the building as Finnish, for both the Finnish and the international audience. The invention of new, expressive models for architectural ornament had been one of the principal characteristics of New Style architecture in the 1890s, as will be discussed in the following chapter. The use of nature-based ornament, rather than that derived from historical architectural sources was a common feature and the use of Finnish nature in the pavilion design pointed the way forward for the Finnish Style. The main sculptural features were the stone portals designed by G-L-S and featuring a device of bears' heads on one and squirrels jumping through pine boughs on the other. [Figs 2.35 & 2.36] The four large sculptures of bears at the base of the tower, done in gypsum by the sculptor Emil Wikström, were also striking.¹⁷² Elsewhere, G-L-S's design also included ornament derived from various plants and fire cones as well as frogs with comical faces between the windows, under the eaves.

Penttilä enthusiastically described the ornament and illustrated it throughout his article. He noted how it was derived from Finnish nature and was part of a “new direction in architecture”.¹⁷³ He celebrated the success of the ornamental scheme, crediting it to Saarinen in particular, who had been primarily responsible for the pavilion design:

...they have now, for the first time, been allowed to represent our nature and decorate a Finnish building... – so successfully as in the Finnish pavilion – for that

¹⁷² **Emil Wikström** (1864-1942) left school at thirteen and worked in the Turku Telegraph office. He pursued wood carving as a hobby. In 1881 his work was awarded third prize in the handicrafts section of the Turku Trade Fair. That autumn he was admitted as a student in the Turku Finnish Art Society School. In 1882 he moved to Helsinki and continued his studies at the Finnish Art Society's School there. In 1883 he went to study at the School of Applied Arts in Vienna. Following that he travelled to Paris. In the 1890s and 1900s he developed a National Romantic style, based on Finnish flora and fauna. He lived and worked in Paris from 1897-1902.

¹⁷³ Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maalimannäyttelystä', 185.

we must thank the architects, Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen, and in particular perhaps the latter.¹⁷⁴

The use of Finnish nature ornament was to play a significant role in the creation of urban National Style architecture in Finland, notably in the few years following the World's Fair, as we will see in the next chapter. Penttilä's article indicated that this ornament was understood to function as a national symbol by concluding his discussion of this ornament by noting the other symbolic features of the pavilion:

Alongside the symbolic features of the pavilion already mentioned are the triangles on the tower with their rippling sun-beams - the piercing brilliance of northern summer nights and of our country's hopes for the future. To the roof spires are attached spinning wheels, which could symbolise our country's ancient industrious character. The walls imitate our important building material, granite.¹⁷⁵

The rising sun was a common motif in European National Style architecture around the turn-of-the-century, symbolising, as it did, a new dawn and a new future.¹⁷⁶ The identification of the spire ornaments around the roof as spinning wheels is slightly tenuous, but possible. Penttilä's reference to granite as an important Finnish building material is interesting. Though there had been a number of buildings constructed from granite in the Middle Ages, the first and only modern building to receive a complete façade of Finnish granite before 1900 had been a bank in the centre of Helsinki, designed by Gustaf Nyström and completed in 1898.¹⁷⁷ Penttilä's comment is an indication of how quickly granite captured the imagination of Finnish architects, when the development of the Finnish stone industry made it available. Its importance as an architectural material by 1900 could not have been derived from this single example of its use in Helsinki and this illustrates how the use of granite cladding in contemporary architecture was conflated with its use in historic architecture.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 185.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 185.

¹⁷⁶ For example S. Witkiewicz used rising sun motifs, taken from local vernacular architecture, on the gables of his Zakopane Style villas. F. Boberg also used a rising sun motif on the façade of his Electricity Station building, Stockholm.

¹⁷⁷ The *Helsinki SYP* is discussed in the following chapter and again in depth in chapter 3i.

In contrast to the successful evocation of Finnish identity, through ornament and materials, Penttilä criticised the tower, and especially its spire, as being “unsuccessful and un-Finnish”. He gave no further explanation of how he formed this opinion, but his use of the statement indicated that ‘Finnishness’ was one of the criteria of his evaluation of the design. The initial reception of the pavilion design following the competition held in 1898 had also been critical of the tower: “The clumsy and disproportionate part is the tower itself, which floats above the two portals. In regards to this the competition board have requested its alteration.”¹⁷⁸ In the initial designs, seen in figure 2.30, it had been shorter and stockier than in the final design, seen in figure 2.31.

The round stone arches, which had been described as being based on American models in the 1898 review of the pavilion competition, were not, however, criticised for their lack of Finnishness.¹⁷⁹ This reference to American origins probably referred primarily to the influence of the American architect H.H. Richardson, whose robust granite Romanesque had been studied by Finns, seeking models for their new impulse to work in granite. In relation to the stone portals, it would appear that their Finnish identity, achieved through their execution in native Finnish stone and the application of Finnish nature ornament, was sufficient to eclipse any lingering sense of their borrowed form.

The fusion of Finnish and international New Style elements in the design was commented upon in a number of the reviews of the design. The architect and critic, Gustaf Strengell, summed up the impact of the design in 1903:

With this course - applied decoration based on plant and animal themes – the Finnish pavilion attained its epoch-making significance. Without a doubt, it was an exceedingly beautiful architectural creation. The effect of the painted walls and high, steep roof put one in mind, for the first time, of our old grey granite churches. The integrity of mass and the curved lines expressed unusual consciousness of form and a sure sense. But the emphasis of skill lay, however, in the decoration and it was to this that foreign reviewers devoted the greatest attention. It was, indeed, truly excellent. From our forests were taken pine branches, in which squirrels played and

¹⁷⁸ 'Suomen paviljonki Pariisissa 1900 [The Finnish Pavilion in Paris 1900]', *S.T.* 1898, 217.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 217.

from there also were the formidable bears around the tower. And from our lakes came lilies, between whose leaves amusing frogs peeped. The decorative store of this nature-scheme made the acanthus flowers of the French palaces appear faded and grey.

C'est de l'art nouveau, this is new art – so concluded the usual descriptions in the French papers. And indeed with reason. It was undeniably the new art [New Style], personal, individual, but at the same time, art which has grown from the soil of the homeland.¹⁸⁰

A great deal of the success of the *Finnish Pavilion*, and its subsequent importance for the Finns, was bound up in the unprecedented level of international attention it received, a point not forgotten by Strengell, writing three years later. The significance for Finns of this positive international reception was indicated in Penttilä's review by the amount of space given over to quotes from the press. Penttilä included short, translated extracts from the reviews published in a wide variety of publications: *Frankfurter Zeitung*, *Le Figaro*, *La Plume*, *Echo de Paris*, *Cri de Paris*, *Libre parole*, as well as a long translated extract from the Liberal establishment newspaper, *Journal des débats*. The sections on the contents of the pavilion also included quotes from reviews in *Innen Dekoration* and *Die Kunst*. The response of the international community was clearly important, both in terms of support for Finnish resistance to Russification and recognition of their cultural development as a nation. Finland had never before enjoyed this kind of public attention: "Rarely has the work of Finns achieved such public recognition, throughout the whole civilised world, as it has with our pavilion here at the exhibition."¹⁸¹

The widely held sympathy of the international community for Finland's political plight was a significant factor in the attention the pavilion received.¹⁸² Penttilä himself made the connection between the success of the pavilion and the political struggle to preserve Finland's autonomy. He described the national pavilions of the World's Fair as the representatives of the nations and stated that:

¹⁸⁰ Strengell, 'Suomen rakennustaide', 81-83.

¹⁸¹ Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maalimannäyttelystä', 182.

¹⁸² The Finnish response to the February manifesto of 1899 had included making a great effort to rally international support for the defence of the constitution as they understood it. The success of their efforts can be judged by the international petition of leading European intellectuals put together in the same year.

Such is the Finnish pavilion also. Its contents bear witness to the world that here, on the northern fringes live a distant people, who have had, and have still, their own special task in mankind's great work of civilisation. And this matter is of special significance at this time – when our nation's national mark is being erased by a strong hand. So great that we can not guess at our own pavilions significance.¹⁸³

He gives his argument further weight by asking rhetorically:

Who would notice our country's products, our country's exhibition articles, if they were dispersed throughout the Russian section? How many would know that they represent Finland as an independent people!¹⁸⁴

The role of the pavilion in asserting the existence of the Finnish people as a separate cultural and, by implication, political entity from the Russian Empire was of particular importance at this time. The numerous quotes were presented by Penttilä as evidence of the pavilion's impact: "...the Finnish pavilion as a building has represented our country in a dignified manner, at this difficult time, more successfully than we could ever have expected."¹⁸⁵

An appreciation of the political situation surrounding the pavilion also colours a number of the reviews Penttilä chose to reproduce. Penttilä was clearly keen to show to his readers the sympathy for Finland's political plight expressed in these reviews, as well as their appreciation and assessment of the pavilion's design. The extract from the *Journal des débats* is the most overtly politicised in its appreciation of the pavilion.

The other day it [the Finnish pavilion] opened without fanfare; I don't think that the Finnish heart is, at this time, inclined to rejoice. This moment is for them sad and serious and in the midst of their patriotic mental distress they have carried out

¹⁸³ Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maalimannäyttelystä', 181.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 181. It is not likely that even a committed Fennomane such as Penttilä was thinking in terms of full political independence from Russia at this point. The extent of Fennomane ambitions at this point would have been the re-assertion of Finland as an autonomous Duchy, with its separate constitution and legal system.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 185.

the preparation work on their pavilion, but after all from time immemorial they have been used to struggle. They are lively and vigorous because they have been hardened by adversity and the forces of nature. They carry out their work with the same ardour as they would in peace time, with the same noble confidence. ... I would like to add that, this nation that has imprinted its personality on its pavilion, here near the Quai d'Orsay, and has created this master piece. And subsequently, after the close of the exhibition, which has expressed so much energy and such reserves of energy and vitality that such a people has surely not met its final destiny.¹⁸⁶

Penttilä also noted, how the review dismissed the presence of the two-headed eagle of the Romanoff coat of arms on the tower, stating:

But Finnish, only Finnish is this rural church. It is the ardent faith in their fatherland's future that dresses the whole pavilion in its beauty.¹⁸⁷

It is interesting to note that the photographs of the Finnish pavilion held in the Museum of Finnish Architecture have been manipulated, so that the 'section russe' from the photograph of the main entrance has been partially obscured. The two-headed eagle of the Romanoffs has been excised from the pavilion tower of another photograph.¹⁸⁸ [Fig. 2.35]

The pavilion presented a very coherent image of Finnishness, through both the appearance of the building and its contents. The form of the pavilion was taken by many reviewers to be based on that of 'une modest église de village' and the modest, rural character was maintained through the decoration and contents of the interior.¹⁸⁹ The central crossing, into which visitors first entered, had a high vault, frescoed by Gallen-Kallela, with four panels depicting episodes from the *Kalevala*. [Fig. 2.32] The long gallery contained display cases, in which were exhibited artefacts related to the Finnish way of life, education, crafts

¹⁸⁶ *Journal des Débats*, quoted in Finnish in *ibid.*, 182 and in English in MacKeith and Smeds, *The Finland Pavilions : Finland at the Universal Expositions 1900-1992*, 22.

¹⁸⁷ Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin...', *S.T.* 1900, 183.

¹⁸⁸ It would appear that these manipulated images were preferred in the Fennomane press in Finland. Both Penttilä and Gustaf Strengell illustrated their reviews of the pavilion with the same photograph of the portal where 'section russe' had been obscured. Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maailmannäyttelystä', 183 and Strengell, 'Suomen rakennustaide', 81.

¹⁸⁹ 'Au Pavillon de la Finlande', *Le Soisnnais*, 29th April 1900 and 'Le Pavillon Finlandais', *L'Illustré Soleil*, 14th October 1900. Reproduced in E. Fredrikson, *Suomen Paviljonki: Pariisin maailmannäyttelyssä 1900: Le Pavillon Finlandais: à l'Exposition universelle de 1900*, Jyväskylä 2001, 76-77.

and industry. The walls of the gallery were decorated by paintings, illustrating the Finnish way of life. This was, in part, a ruse to get around the stipulation that the work of Finnish artists be included within the Russia section in the Palace of Art. The pavilion was primarily an artistic and cultural endeavour, masquerading behind its premise as a socio-economic exhibition. Among the artists who contributed were the painters Pekka Halonen, Magnus Enckell, Juho Rissanen, Hugo Simberg, Eero Järnefelt and the sculptors Ville Vallgren, Eemil Halonen, Robert Stigell and Emil Wikström. Almost all of the artworks depicted rural life, or the Finnish landscape, maintaining the theme of rustic simplicity and life lived close to nature.

Finnish design was also represented in the interior. The most prominent example was the *Iris Room* by Gallen-Kallela, which was set up in the apse of the pavilion.¹⁹⁰ [Fig. 2.37] Elsewhere there were displays of furniture by the Finnish General Handicrafts Society. This furniture, designed by Saarinen and Blomstedt, had won first and second prize, respectively, in the 1898 competition organised by the Society for Finnish Style furniture. [Figs 2.38 & 2.39] The work of these three designers gives an indication of how the idea of a National Style was approached in Finnish design at this period. Blomstedt's Karelianist design was very similar to that of Sucksdorff's design for the 1894 competition for Finnish Style furniture. [Figs 2.17 & 2.18] Only two chairs were executed from Blomstedt's suite and placed in an obscure location by the exit in the apse, indicating that despite his success in the competition, by 1900 his vernacularist approach was less admired by the competition organisers.

Saarinen's *Betula Suite* was less rustic in approach. It was made of polished birch, with green wool upholstery and decorative mountings and hinges of wrought iron. The scheme included a high degree of decorative complexity. The sofa back contained a silk appliqué panel depicting a Finnish landscape and the cupboard contained inlaid panels depicting figures in Finnish folk costume.¹⁹¹ Gallen-Kallela's design delivered a fusion of rugged

¹⁹⁰ The suite was commissioned by Louis Sparre, for the Iris Factory and manufactured by the Iris Factory, with textiles executed by the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts.

¹⁹¹ Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen*, 239.

Finnish rusticity with the clean, smooth lines of contemporary international New Style design. The restriction of materials to native wood, ceramics and textiles helped him evoke the primitiveness and simplicity of the traditional approach to craft he sought to evoke. Instead of veneers, dyes and varnishes, materials were left with natural finishes, enlivened with notes of applied ornament. This ornamental work emulated the two dimensional, stylised patterns or natural forms, of traditional vernacular or medieval craftsmanship, applied to the core materials' surface, by means of embroidery, weaving or iron work.

Gallen-Kallela's design scheme was uncompromisingly rustic, with no concessions made to modern life, though with a keen awareness of modern design trends, particularly the English Arts and Crafts movement, which had inspired both Gallen-Kallela and Sparre. Saarinen's design, in contrast, incorporated an iron and copper lamp into the arm rest of the sofa, indicating a willingness to fuse the rustic simplicity vision of Finnishness, with one that embraced new developments in terms of both technology and style. The exaggerated high back of the sofa and the heavy forms of the chairs, lightened by spayed strut-work were both inspired by New Style designers such as Richard Riemerschmid.

Penttilä introduced the *Iris Room* with some comments on the Iris Company itself and the goal of its founder, Sparre, to bring international modern design trends to the industrial arts in Finland:

In other civilised countries there has already long been in use the trend to free furniture forms from the showy Renaissance Style in favour of simpler, more artistic objects. ... The rejuvenation of this spoilt taste started when Count Louis Sparre set aside his painterly brushwork. With a great pace this idea then advanced and the Iris Factory expanded. From across the country, and from abroad also, came many orders.¹⁹²

This quote is illuminating in that it indicates the extent to which Penttilä was conscious of the need for progress in Finland. Even in the midst of celebrating a great Finnish achievement he was aware that in many ways Finland lagged behind developments in more

¹⁹² Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maalimannäyttelystä', 230-31.

'civilised' countries. The Iris Factory had been founded in 1897. Penttilä's perception of its success was not well grounded and the factory failed as a commercial enterprise in 1902. Sparre's aesthetic judgement was superior to his entrepreneurial abilities and the Iris Factory did make a significant contribution to raising awareness of the New Style in Finland. Penttilä clearly admired this initiative and it is interesting that he mentioned 'orders from abroad' as an important indication of the company's achievements, whether or not such orders were made. Penttilä's entire review of the Finnish pavilion placed a huge emphasis on the international reception of the pavilion and this sprang in part from a sharp awareness of how much Finland was still in the process of 'catching up' with the artistically more advanced nations of Europe.

Penttilä, though one of the most vocal proponents of a Finnish National Style, was also acutely aware of the need for progress. He did not view the modernisation of design, inspired by international developments, as contradictory to his National Style goals. Instead, they went hand in hand, within the overall ambition of development of a Finnish New Style. In this sense Penttilä was primarily influenced by his rejection of the uniformity of the Classical Historicist styles and the lack of sensitivity to local concerns, materials, traditions, climate etc., which he perceived within them. The New Style, in contrast to these older modes, was flexible and in its essence responded to the specific needs of the task for which it was employed. The modernity of the style lay in this responsiveness to the manifold influences and concerns of the modern world.

Much of what can be understood as clearly Finnish Style in orientation at this time, the stone bears, the rustic textiles and iron-work, the round-log constructed villas, etc., evoked a Finnish identity that played strongly on the power of Finnish nature and the ancient, *Kalevala*-inspired image of the Finnish people and their ties to nature and the land. This aesthetic could function without much difficulty in the wilderness studios of Halonen and Gallen-Kallela and even in the rural and suburban villas of Sonck. The ease with which the *Hollola Parish House* fitted into the rural landscape and communed with the ancient presence of the church, demonstrated how well this simple, folkish, Finnish Style could be

integrated into a rural landscape that had changed relatively little since the Middle Ages. However, the task of designing urban buildings called for a different expression of Finnish identity, one in which the vernacular model would not prove so central. Here the environment had changed substantially during the nineteenth century, and continued to change dramatically, and the task of architects to integrate their designs with their locations here was intrinsically different.

2.iii URBAN ARCHITECTURE: PROGRESS AND REFORM

A New Style for a Modern Age

In his 1902 opening editorial for *Rakentaja* [The Builder], the new architectural supplement for *Suomen Teollisuuslehti*, Penttilä observed:

Our age demands of us independent development; it demands this of all human endeavours. Such demands are also made of architecture. We must erect our buildings on our own national foundation. They must be born from amongst our own ancient, murmuring pines.¹⁹³

This sentiment expresses the duality of Penttilä's vision for the future. Architecture's task was to respond to the modern world, to be of its time. For this architects would need to keep abreast of the latest international design and technological innovations. Simultaneously architecture was to have its foundations in the unique conditions and traditions of the national locality.

A similar vision was expressed in the inaugural editorial for *Kotitaide* in 1902. Here Penttilä eulogised the virtues of peasant craftsmanship in contrast to mechanical modern design, dictated by foreign styles.¹⁹⁴ He supplemented this by calling for progressive reform:

Let us not forget that perfect artistic wholeness always demands a style and stylistic unity, but let us rather develop a form for our own age, our own style.

The out-of-date taste and art-trends of the previous century are in sure need of profound upheaval and renewal. This has already been inspired and encouraged by many precursors, such as the German, *Obrist*, who has, with biblical truth, proclaimed: "If you do not approach like children you will be unable to enter the realm of the creative arts."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³ V. Penttilä, '[Editorial]', *Rakentaja* 1902, 1.

¹⁹⁴ This article has already been referred to in chapter 2.i, pp. 41-42.

¹⁹⁵ Penttilä, 'Silmäys *Kotitaiteen* syntyyn', 1. It is not clear how or when Penttilä became aware of Obrist's work and theories. Obrist was first acclaimed as a designer following his exhibition of embroideries in the Gallery Littauer in Munich in 1896, which was widely commented upon in the German press. Penttilä visited Germany in 1896 to attend the Berlin Industrial Exhibition and may have become aware of Obrist at this point. He may well have been made aware of Obrist's work through international arts journals, in particular *Dekorative Kunst*, which Obrist also contributed to. A list of Obrist's publications and contemporary articles

It is apparent that Penttilä's understanding of architecture was still shaped by the model of the architectural styles that had informed his artistic education. He was also clearly aware of the new currents of thought from artistic centres across Europe in which the question of style was reconsidered in the light of the requirements of the modern world. This matter of a style for the present day was one that had exercised theorists throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁹⁶ By the turn-of-the-century there was increasing agreement that such a style was not to be found in one of the styles of the past but in a new style. The various New Style movements, known as Jugendstil, Secession Style, Art Nouveau, Modern Style, etc., that sprang up across Europe and America were all part of the same overall attempt to establish what this language of the present, and implicitly of the future, was.

Penttilä's choice of Hermann Obrist, the Swiss designer working in Munich, as the exemplary forerunner of the design reforms he was promoting is interesting. Obrist and other Munich designers had caused a stir with their designs, which Penttilä would have seen at the Paris World's Fair in 1900. As has already been mentioned, the absence of documentary evidence of Penttilä's reading makes it impossible to trace the precise sources to which he was referring. Obrist is a curious choice for Penttilä to present in the context of an article on the development of the National Style in Finland as he advocated neither adherence to style nor national orientations in art. Rather Obrist's message was progressive, calling for the overthrow of outdated historical styles in favour of a new, dynamic, expressive mode of design. The reformist aims expressed in the Program of the Committee of the Section for Decorative Arts of the 7th International Art Exhibition in the

about Obrist can be found in the appendices of D. Rinker, *Der Münchner Jugendstilkünstler Hermann Obrist (1862-1927)*, München 1999/2001.

¹⁹⁶ Given his documented awareness of the writings of Schinkel, Böttischer and Gottgetreu, it is likely that Penttilä was familiar with other German critics and the German mid-nineteenth century debate on style in which the relative merits of the Gothic, the Greek, the Rundbogendenstil and cast-iron architecture were examined in response to the question: In what style should we build? This debate is discussed in M. Schwarzer, *German Architectural Theory and the Search for Modern Identity*, Cambridge 1995 and Herrmann, *In What Style Should We Build?*.

Königlicher Glaspalast, Munich, February 24, 1897, signed by Obrist among others, shares various points of similarity with Penttilä's vision for *Kotitaide*:¹⁹⁷

1. This exhibition of *objects of the new applied art* aims at selecting, according to strict principles, the best that *modern applied art* has accomplished.
2. It therefore places the main emphasis on *originality of invention* and on *the perfect artistic and technical execution* of such artistic objects as fulfil the *requirements of our modern life*.
3. On the one hand, it excludes everything that appears as thoughtless and false copy or imitation of past and foreign styles, that is not abreast of the latest developments in modern technology....¹⁹⁸

The desire for art to abandon imitative and alien styles and to respond instead to the requirements of the present day was a point of view that Penttilä shared. Penttilä's love for Finnish handicrafts and vernacular building may appear to be at variance with these progressive aims. Obrist and the other designers of the Munich *Vereinigte Werkstätten für Kunst im Handwerk*, [United workshops for Art and Handicraft], though influenced by the example of the English Arts and Crafts approach to design, did not privilege hand craft over mechanised production. Again, we come back to the duality of Penttilä's design ideals in which a new approach to design was sought, both by looking back to craft traditions and forwards to the challenges of a new century. His admiration for the craftsman's approach to creation, in harmony with the nature of the task at hand and full of personal expression, can be paralleled with Obrist's paradigm of the approach of a child, free from the preconceptions of style. His admiration of vernacular forms and craftsmanship can therefore be seen to represent for him both work intimately tied to the location, the nation, in terms of materials and traditions, and also a pure, unsullied approach to the creative act.

The sheer variety of expression that arose within the international New Style movement is an indication of the dynamism of the period. What these different movements all shared

¹⁹⁷ The program section was signed by Hans Eduard von Berlepsch-Valendas, Martin Dülfer, Theodor Fischer, Hermann Obrist, Richard Riemerschmid and Friedrich Wilhelm Rolfs.

¹⁹⁸ Abteilung für Kleinkunst der VII. Internationalen Kunst-Ausstellung im Kgl. Glaspalaste zu München, *Programm* [Applied Arts Division of the VII International Art-Exhibition in the Königlicher Glaspalast, Munich, *Program* (Munich, Feb. 24, 1897), translated in the appendix of K. B. Hiesinger (ed), *Art Nouveau in Munich: Masters of Jugendstil*, Philadelphia 1988,169.

was a rejection of the revival styles and the desire to find something overtly new, which responded to the modern world they perceived around them. In his 1902 article on the contemporary architecture of Stockholm, after describing the area of the city built during the 1880s and 1890s, Penttilä called on the city to reject such historicist eclecticism:

Maid of Stockholm! Forget your foreign lovers, forget old dreams. You are beautiful and prettily built. You have vitality and culture which requires nothing of you - but does not allow that you forget yourself. You are Swedish, my girl, and you live in 1900 - refrain from embracing the whole world and all ages, when your own character is full of grace.¹⁹⁹

In this quote we can see again how Penttilä rejected the internationalism and retrospectiveness of the old styles in favour of a new style that was simultaneously of the present and rooted in the national character. A comparison of this quote with that from Munich, however, indicates that the impulse to reject 'foreign styles' was itself an international phenomenon.

Penttilä went on in his article to praise and discuss various new buildings in Stockholm that he admired. The diversity of these modern buildings gives an indication of the experimentation that was a central element of the New Style movement. The buildings he admired included the delicate, expressive stonework of Boberg's *Nordiska Kredit Bank* [Fig. 2.40] and Wickman's dramatic *Skånes Enskilda Bank*. [Fig. 2.41] These buildings exemplified the development of New Style ornament in Sweden, illustrative of function rather than dependent on historical models. Boberg devised an ornamental scheme employing coins and money bags and a device based on the initials of the bank which Penttilä particularly admired for its originality and reflection of the building's function. He included two photographs of the ornamental details of the design and stated that they illustrated "Boberg's ability at developing original ornament, for which he was well known. The scheme acts clearly as a symbol of the building's inner core, of its practical purpose."²⁰⁰ Wickman's design, which Penttilä described as showing "frightening courage" and

¹⁹⁹ V. Penttilä, 'Tukholman uusimmat rakennukset [Stockholm's Newest Buildings]', *Rakentaja* 1902, 65-66.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 68.

“imaginative strength”, used plants and figures in peasant dress from Skåne province to illustrate the regional identity of his bank.²⁰¹ Nature-based ornament featured prominently in both designs. The relation of the ornament to the wall was also interesting, with carved ornament emerging from the wall surface, not restricted to formal ornamental fields.

The decorative scheme of Georg A. Nilsson’s *Matteus Elementary School* was also admired. [Figs 2.42] The scheme was based on materials rather than applied ornament. Penttilä admired the tonal relationship between the grey granite basement, the red brick walls with yellowish pointing and the graphic decorative effect of the limestone window headers, plaster bands on the window dividers, plaster work areas and frieze decorated with brown painted murals depicting proverbs and children playing and the green framework of the cornice. He concluded: “Modern architecture, which aims for simplicity and naturalism, decoration derived from construction itself, is shown to good effect in this building...”²⁰²

What the buildings he admired shared was an ahistorical approach to architectural form and ornament, a non-imitative approach to materials and an originality of vision. Originality was a quality Penttilä praised repeatedly. It can perhaps be deduced from this that original, innovative designs in suitable materials by Swedish architects were also sufficient to satisfy Penttilä’s requirements of contemporaneousness and suitable Swedishness.

These successes in Sweden were presented as a model for Finnish development. Stockholm as one of the geographically closest regional centres and the old colonial capital had long been an important point of inspiration for architectural advances in Finland. Penttilä presented architectural developments in Stockholm, in particular the work of Isaac Gustaf Clason, Erik Lallerstedt, Aron Johansson and Erik Josephson, as sources for Finland’s most recent architectural change of course.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 69.

²⁰² Ibid., 131.

All these show a new age dawning for Stockholm's architecture. And they may have provided an early influential turning point for the latest Finnish architecture also. The fresh artistic phase, which runs like an unbroken channel through these buildings, naturally produces, like electricity, a secondary current on the other side of the Gulf of Bothnia, though it first appeared in obvious copies rather than independent artistic creation. (The already mentioned Bünsow House is copied closely in the Argos House and the Hallwyl Palace is modified in the Wasa Bank in Helsinki).²⁰³

Figures 2.43 and 2.44 show *Bünsow House* (1886-88) and *Argos House* (1896-1897). The Argos House was by a young Swedish architect called John Settergren, who had previously worked with Clason and who had moved to Helsinki and worked as an assistant in the firms of Grahn, Hedman and Wasastjerna. His design was based very closely on Clason's earlier building, employing the same materials of a limestone ground floor and limestone headers and other ornament on a red brick façade and slate-tiled roof. The *Argos House* also closely followed the ornamental scheme of the *Bünsow House* with a similar rounded corner tower and almost identical window headers, gables and tiled ornament.²⁰⁴ Despite being 'copies rather than independent artistic creations' the *Argos House* and the *Vaasa Bank* merited notice because they presented facades of brick and natural stone, rather than plaster imitating stone, and were the first examples of this new trend in Helsinki. The *Vaasa Bank* is discussed further below.²⁰⁵

Penttilä was conscious that Finland had always lagged behind her neighbours in terms of artistic innovation. In his architectural journalism of the period around 1900 he continuously encouraged the development of the New Style in Finland. Without outlining what exactly he meant by it, he called for the development of an architectural language that was both modern and Finnish. The appearances of buildings were changing very rapidly over this period and the question of national identity in architecture was always referred to only in vague terms. Penttilä's opinions on what should constitute the correct course for

²⁰³ Penttilä, 'Tukholman uusimmat rakennukset', 66.

²⁰⁴ Both the limestone and the brick were imported and only the tower received an expensive slate roof, the rest of the roof was clad in grey sheet metal.

²⁰⁵ The *Vaasa Bank* is discussed on page 101 and illustrated in figure 2.53.

new architecture were never programmatically set out. It is really through his reviews of new buildings that a picture emerges of Penttilä's vision for the future.

The first elements in this vision were, as we have established, the rejection of the negative qualities of the architecture of the past, borrowed foreign forms and, in particular, dishonest plaster facades. By contrast, the architectural attributes that Penttilä admired were the use of 'noble' building materials, such as stone and brick, structural clarity, original ahistorical ornament and interior design and the use of new technology. Aspects of his thinking can be related to his interest in National Style ideas, but it is equally clear that Penttilä's vision for urban architecture was progressive and oriented towards the future rather than the past.

Noble Building Materials, Structural Clarity and a New Style of Ornament

The architectural practices that Penttilä was reacting against in Finland were those of the Neo-Renaissance plaster facades of the 1870s, 80s and early 90s. This period had seen the rapid growth of Helsinki and its evolution from a town predominantly of wooden buildings to one with a centre of primarily brick-built buildings. Helsinki's population had only stood at just over 4000 people when it was made the new capital of the Grand Duchy in 1812.²⁰⁶ From this point on the population had begun to grow. By 1850 it stood at 20,745 and accelerated fast. In 1880 it was 43,142 and by 1900 it had reached 93,217 people.²⁰⁷ The devastation of the city by a fire in 1808 had enabled the devising of a new town plan. The re-building project really took off with the appointment, as state architect, of the German architect Carl Ludwig Engel in 1816. The new plan was ambitiously scaled, incorporating long broad promenades, squares and public parks. A Neo-Classical, imperial city was envisaged, with Senate Square as its monumental heart. [Fig. 2.45] After Engel's death in 1844 the city continued to grow and develop.

²⁰⁶ The population in 1810 was 4065. W. Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja: Helsinki Tietosanakirja-osakeyhtiö [Encyclopedia: The Helsinki Encyclopedia Ltd]*, Helsinki 1906-1922, entry on Helsinki.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, entry on Helsinki.

By the 1870s the Neo-Renaissance style had superseded Engel's crisp Neo-Classicism as the city continued to grow and prosper. Carl Theodor Höijer was the most prominent private architect of the period. His grand four- and five-storey brick buildings with lavish gypsum and plaster façades, such as his *Kaleva Building*, changed the face of the city. [Figs 2.46, 2.47 & 2.48] The centre of town began to resemble other important northern European cities such as Stockholm, St Petersburg and Berlin, though the margins were still made up of wooden buildings and the Katajanokka island just to the East was little more than a shanty town. By the mid-1890s, as had happened a decade earlier in Stockholm, younger architects began to question the artistic merits and practicality of the plaster palaces of the 70s and 80s.

Penttilä's rejection of this 'plaster palace' tradition was made clear in his review of the new *Suomen Yhdyspankki [SYP]* bank in Helsinki in 1898. He presented this landmark building as "a turning point for our building art, one that takes us onto new paths."²⁰⁸ The old path, which Penttilä outlined in some depth, was the tradition of plaster architecture:

Until quite recent times we have – as is well known - in our stone buildings proceeded thus: brick walls have been covered with render, by which means the building's appearance, its façade, could be given all the desired forms and marks of character. Sometimes it is pretended that sandstone or limestone is hidden under the surface, at other times granite or even marble blocks. And where render is not capable of reproducing fine marble ornament, then decorative features made of gypsum and cement (especially the former) are used in its place. To these was added fine paint, even gilding, so that one could imitate all manner of noble building materials and mould them into forms as delicate as you could possibly imagine.

Penttilä was explicit in his rejection of this form of artificial façade ornament:

The plaster period has perhaps been architecture's greatest misfortune – a dark side, which has spoilt both public taste and architects' works.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ V. Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä' [The Union bank's new building in Helsinki], *S.T.* 1898, 265.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 265.

These views need to be understood within the context of the Scandinavia-wide and Europe-wide discussion on the merits of natural materials and general criticism of architectural dishonesty. It was in the mid-nineteenth century that ideas of material and structural honesty really began to play a prominent role in European architectural discourse. In Britain A. W. Pugin and John Ruskin's ideas and writings were of central importance in promoting a new understanding of the relationship between appearance and substance in architecture. On the continent various architectural theorists such as the Frenchmen Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand and Viollet-le-Duc, as well as Germans, such as Bötticher, Hübsch and Semper, gave material and construction a defining role within their theories. These theorists turned to the architecture of earlier periods, particularly to local medieval stone architectural traditions, to uncover modes of building in which beauty was achieved through skilled handling rather than the cheap imitation of finer materials or pre-cast sculptural forms.

German discussions on architectural materials were closely followed in Sweden and Norway. Teachers at the Royal Academy and the Technical Institute in Stockholm promoted study of the natural stone tradition in Swedish architectural history from the mid-century onwards.²¹⁰ In Norway Karl Friedrich Schinkel's work for the *Christiania University* in 1838 had demonstrated the possibility of the use of Norwegian granite in architecture. The merits of the use of 'honest' materials were discussed extensively in the architectural and technological press. Initially this discussion revolved around the translation of the writings of German or English theorists, but by the 1880s a lively domestic debate had developed. In particular architects were interested in the possibilities of using native natural stone:

'The principal obstacle to a more general use of masonry is to be sought in its ...absurdly high cost. Is there then no way of making reasonably priced stone available for building construction in order that we might today, as once before, use

²¹⁰ Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth*, 22.

our own considerable stone resources in a manner conducive to the improved solidity and appearance of our buildings?²¹¹

In response to this demand, steps were taken to re-open abandoned quarries and promote the development of the stone industry in both Sweden and Norway. Demand for Swedish and Norwegian building stone in the domestic building industry and also from the German building industry promoted investment and rapid growth.²¹²

In Finland the use of architectural stone was very limited. Granite fieldstone had been used in the construction of medieval churches and castles and its use continued in the foundations of otherwise wooden buildings. Construction in stone and the use of cut and dressed stone, apart from the medieval examples mentioned, was almost unknown in Finland until the late nineteenth century. Specialised stone quarries were very rare and those that existed were small and underdeveloped, primarily consisting of the export of raw, undressed granite and marble blocks from Eastern Finland to St Petersburg. In 1886 the formation of the company 'Ab Granit' stimulated renewed interest and investment in native stone. Representatives of the company were sent to Sweden, Denmark and Scotland to study the granite industries there and new stone working machinery was purchased. In February 1898 the director of Finland's Geological Commission, J.J. Sederholm, gave a lecture entitled "Our Resources of Building Stone" to the Architects Club in Helsinki, in which he outlined the various types of natural stone found in Finland and their suitability for use as architectural materials. At the following meeting of the club, at the suggestion of Sederholm, a commission of architects with prior experience of, or interest in working in stone was set up to investigate further the possibilities for its use in Finland.²¹³

²¹¹ 'Protokoll' of the 1886 Convention of Swedish Technologists, published in *Teknisk Tidskrift* 1887, 138-139. Quoted in translation in S. Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth*, 24.

²¹² Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth*, 29.

²¹³ The architects on the commission were Karl Hård af Segerstad, who went on to use soapstone elements in his architecture the following year, Hugo Lindberg, who had undertaken a study of the Aberdeen granite industry, Selim A. Lindqvist, Alexander Nyström, who had studied stone architecture in Germany and Scotland, Gustaf Nyström, who had just completed the *Helsinki SYP*, and Josef Stenbäck, who had just completed *Eura Church* with a facade of Finnish granite and had lobbied for the use of natural stone in church architecture as early as 1885.

In June 1899 a technological convention was held in Helsinki. As part of this convention Hugo Lindberg, an architect who in 1898 had visited and researched the stone industries of Scotland and Scandinavia, lectured on “How can the use of our natural building stone be promoted?”²¹⁴ Sederholm followed this with a demonstration of various different Finnish stone samples and Hård af Segerstad discussed his work on the *Falken Building* and its ground breaking use of soapstone.²¹⁵ The *Falken Building* was experimental in its approach to materials, employing a basement clad in Finnish granite in a tessellating, rubble-dressed bond separated from the upper façade of red brick by a band of rough-cast. [Fig. 2.49] Ornament of Finnish soapstone was focussed around the doorways and windows. This was the first time Finnish soapstone was used as an architectural material. This point will be discussed further below.

In 1899 *Suomen Teollisuuslehti* opened its March issue with a leader entitled ‘Thoughts on Our Stone Industry’, a rallying call for the development and exploitation of Finland’s stone resources.²¹⁶ It commented on the popularity of Finnish stone in the St Petersburg building industry and the lost opportunity that lay in the Finnish practice of sending off only unfinished stone, when the real money was in finished stone. The article also outlined a plan for the development of a series of quarries, linked by Finland’s internal waterways, which would utilise Finnish resources of granite, porphyry, quartz and marble.

In the same year Lindberg’s extensive article on the stone industry of Aberdeen was serialised in *S.T.* The article was entitled, ‘On Granite Quarrying, Shaping and its Use in Building in Aberdeen’.²¹⁷ It dealt in detail with the granite industry in Aberdeen, the practices, management and equipment favoured, making occasional comparisons to

²¹⁴ H. Lindberg, ‘Huru kunna våra naturliga stenarter finna allmänare användning för byggnadsändamål’, *Tekniska Föreningens i Finland förhandlingar*, 1899, 153-159. *TFFiF* had been founded in 1880 as a periodical devoted to industry.

²¹⁵ **Karl Hård af Segerstad** (1873-1931) studied at the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1891-95. As a student he worked in the offices of Kiseleff and Heikel and Grahn, Hedman and Wasastjerna. He started his private architectural practice in 1896. In 1901 he was appointed state architect for the district of Viipuri and in 1907 he was made the official town architect of Helsinki.

²¹⁶ ‘Mietteitä kiviteollisuudestamme [Thoughts on Our Stone Industry]’, *S.T.* 1899, 49.

²¹⁷ H. Lindberg, ‘Graniitin louhimisesta, muovailusta ja käyttämisestä rakennustarkoituksiin Aberdeenissä [On Granite Quarrying, Shaping and its Uses in Building in Aberdeen]’, *S.T.*, 62-65, 73-75, 86-88, 98-100, 109-111, 122-124.

Finnish or Swedish stone or quarrying practices. The article also looked at the use of granite as an architectural stone, commenting on its durability, using the older buildings of Aberdeen as examples, and on its use in contemporary Aberdeen architecture. Lindberg particularly favoured the treatment of stone that emphasised its qualities of colour and hardness rather than those which dressed it in a profusion of “flower garlands, Corinthian capitals, richly moulded gothic rosettes etc.”²¹⁸ The prevalence of the latter treatment in Aberdeen was a source of disappointment to him. Instead, he concentrated on the dressing of buildings: smooth ashlar or rough rubble-dressing. The article was illustrated by a number of pictures of quarry workings as well as photographs of granite-dressed buildings including J. B. Pirie’s *The Queen’s Cross Free Church* [1881] and *50 Queen’s Road* [1886]; James Matthews’ *Aberdeen Grammar School* [1861-63], and Marshall Mackenzie’s buildings for Union Terrace and the *Commercial Union Building*, Union Street.

Penttilä himself was aware of the Scandinavian discourse on the use of natural materials in architecture. In his review of the new *Helsinki SYP* he pointed out that the phenomenon had not been limited to Finland alone but had also emerged in the architecture of other northern nations. He claimed that these nations had already succeeded in casting aside the use of stone imitative plaster and had already turned to their native resources of building materials, in particular stone:

In Sweden they have been using easily sculpted sandstone and limestone for a long time now; the same is true of Denmark and Norway. Scotland has for a long time used granite as a façade material and recently Sweden has followed the example.²¹⁹

Implicit in this discussion was the idea that Finland should follow suit and throw off her adherence to the tradition of plaster facades and explore instead her resources of natural stone. It is interesting that Penttilä restricted his comparison to these northern nations and did not mention the wider international aspects to the debate on natural stone. The reasons for this may have been his desire to draw parallels between Finland and countries whose architectural traditions, though advanced, were closer in development and scale to

²¹⁸ Ibid., 88.

²¹⁹ Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 266.

Finland's, thus presenting emulation as more viable. That the Scandinavian nations, with whom the Finns identified, had made this advance would have served as a spur for their ambitions. The practical expertise on the development of the Finnish stone industry also came in a large part via contacts and research in these countries.

The use of 'honest', non-imitative, architectural materials was central to Penttilä's ideas on design reform. This was implied in his article on the architecture of Stockholm, in which the brick and sand- and limestone palaces of Stockholm from the 1880s and 1890s were presented as the first exemplary step in the break from plaster architecture:

When one looks at the buildings on Strandvägen, Birger Jarlsgatan and Hamngatan and on the various connecting streets one finds some really overstated ideas. There can still be found plaster architecture, but between these old, worn out, Renaissance forms and congealed decadent architecture there also rises, like the morning sunrise, reform.²²⁰

He cited various works by architects such as I.G. Clason, Ludvig Peterson, Gustaf Lindgren, Aron Johansson and others and describes them as "a new dawn for the architecture of Stockholm."²²¹ The later buildings he admired all had facades either of natural stone or plaster, used in a non-imitative fashion.²²² In fact by 1902 the argument in favour of the use of such materials no longer needed to be made. There was no question that stone-imitation plaster architecture had been left behind. Back in 1898, however, the matter was still of great concern in architectural circles in Finland. The new *Helsinki SYP* bank was the first building in Helsinki to have a façade of natural stone. [Fig. 2.50] Across Scandinavia it

²²⁰ Penttilä, 'Tukholman uusimmat rakennukset', 66.

²²¹ He cited the *Thavenius House* (1884-85), *Bünsow House* (1886-88), *Hallwyl Palace* (1893-98), and *Rosenborg House* (1882-83) by Clason, the *Högnäs Company Building* (1891) and the *Artists' Club* (1896-98) by Ludvig Peterson, *Birger Jarlsgatan 2-4* (1894-95) by Peterson and Ture Stenberg, *Davidson House* (1895-96) by Gustaf Lindgren, the *St John's Church* (1883-1890) by Carl Möller, the *Stockholm's Savings Bank* (1894-97) by Aron Johansson, the *Industry Credit Bank* (1891-93) by Erik Josephson and the *Central Palace Building* (1895-98) by Ernst Stenhammar. *Ibid.*, 66.

²²² He commented upon the *Electricity Station* (1892), the *Mosebacke Water Tower* (1895-97), the *Nordiska Kredit Bank* (1899-02), the *LO Building* (1899-1900), the *Central Post Office* (1898-04) and the pavilions of the 1897 Stockholm Exhibition and 1900 World's Fair by Boberg, the *Skånes Enskilda Bank* (1897-1900) by Wickman, the *St Peter's Methodist Chapel and Apartment Building* (1900-01) by Erik Lallerstedt, the *Matteus Elementary School* (1898-1901) by Nilsson and the *Community Building* (1898-1901) by Ullbrich and Hallqvist.

had been the banks and insurance companies, with their large financial resources, that had been the first to commission such façades.

The *Helsinki SYP*'s façade was not just of natural stone, it was of native Finnish granite. Granite was rediscovered at the end of the nineteenth century as a possible solution to the question of a native stone alternative to the plague of the plaster façade. In his review of the building Penttilä mentioned that granite had been used as a building material in Finland in the past, referring to Finland's medieval churches, and exclaimed that it had taken until the end of the nineteenth century for Finns to see again that "we too have an almost endless supply of the lovely and noble building material that granite surely is!"²²³ The new SYP bank's building was then presented: "As the best demonstration of the suitability of granite and proof of into what varied tones and even fine forms it can be moulded..."²²⁴ The granite façade of the bank was presented as a new dawn in Finnish architecture, one that would facilitate the break with the unsatisfactory 'plaster architecture' of the past in favour of native, natural stone architecture. Granite was presented both as a return to forgotten Finnish traditions, the stone churches, and as a step towards matching the progress made by other northern nations.

Penttilä not only approved of the ground-breaking use of Finnish granite but also the manner in which it was handled. He commented that Nyström's treatment of the materials was "masterly" and that "he has harmonised different colours and differently moulded both fine and course granite blocks."²²⁵ It was perhaps his enthusiasm over this usage of the stone that enabled him to accept a design that was still fairly conservative in its adherence to the Classical tradition. The façade was symmetrically arranged with projecting wings to either side and a *piano nobile* with a colonnade of pilasters across the first floor.²²⁶ The effects achieved by the varied surfaces and colours of the stone struck him particularly strongly:

²²³ Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 266.

²²⁴ Ibid., 266.

²²⁵ Ibid., 266.

²²⁶ The *Helsinki SYP* is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.i, pp. 132-138.

It could be thought that a building of that kind, on a cramped North-facing plot which gets no direct sunlight to create a play of shadows across the surface, might appear monotonous but this is not the case. Look at it at dusk or in the mid-day light and there is always to be found a charming liveliness and pretty colour variations. This is all simply the product of the varied treatment of the granite surface and only partly the product of different coloured granite.²²⁷

He even approved of the classical allegorical statues in the niches above the first floor windows, which he described as adding greatly to the building's artistry. [Fig. 2.51] Penttilä appears not to have noticed Nyström's interesting inclusion of plaques, with reliefs of Finnish plant species, incorporated into the pilaster capitals. These actually marked a turning point for ahistorical ornament, as shall be discussed below. Not all critics were so won over. Bertel Jung warmly welcomed Nystrom's use of Finnish granite but commented that:²²⁸ "...more justice would be done to granite, both technically and aesthetically, if it were treated with more stylistic freedom than is possible within the strict, academic Renaissance system."²²⁹

The idea of the *Helsinki SYP* as a turning point in Finnish architecture was not an exaggeration. In its wake a number of prestigious buildings, often commissioned by financial institutions, were designed with facades of natural stone. The *Vaasa Bank* (1898-99) had a façade of pink Orsa sandstone, imported from Sweden. The head office of the *Kansallis-Osakepankki [KOP]* was built in Viipuri by the firm of Usko Nyström - Petrelius - Penttilä in 1898-1901, with a façade of Finnish soapstone and granite.²³⁰ The *Nyland's*

²²⁷ Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 266.

²²⁸ **Bertel Jung** (1872-1946) graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1895 and started his architectural career working in the office of his friend Lars Sonck. In 1898 he formed his own office with the architects Waldemar Andersin and Oscar Bomanson. Andersin emigrated in 1903 but Jung and Bomanson continued in partnership until 1913. Jung was also active in the field of architectural journalism. In 1899 he began to contribute to *Teknikern*. *Teknikern* had been founded in 1891. It was a Swedish-language journal devoted to architecture, engineering, industry, master builders and mechanics, a very similar field to *S.T.* From 1900-01 Jung and the architect Nils Wasastjerna published a special architecture and design supplement for *Teknikern*. Jung became the first editor of *Arkitekten*, the journal for the Finnish Architect's Club devoted to architecture and applied arts, from 1903-05.

²²⁹ B. Jung, 'Föreningsbankens nya hus i Helsingfors [The Union bank's new building in Helsinki]', *Teknikern* 1899, 219.

²³⁰ This building is discussed in detail in chapter 3.i, pp.155-167.

Students' Union by Hård af Segerstad was built with a façade of soapstone in Helsinki in 1899-1901. [Fig. 2.52] It appears that after the unveiling of the *Helsinki SYP* building in 1898 the possibility of natural stone facades was one that could not be ignored by architects and clients seeking to make a statement.

The *Vaasa Bank* by the firm Grahn, Hedman and Wasastjerna, again probably with the significant input of Settergren, was closely based on the *Hallwyl Palace*, as has already been noted. [Fig. 2.53 & 2.54] The similarities can be seen in the choice of façade material and the smooth dressing of the stone. The *Vaasa Bank* design also displays a similar approach to the wall surface, with the surface of the first, second and third floors left unbroken by courses or other ornament, other than the Venetian Gothic style headers over the second floor windows.

Soapstone was the only soft façade stone to be found in any quantity in Finland. Deposits were found largely in Eastern Finland, around Lake Ladoga in Karelia. It had not been used for architectural purposes until Hård af Sederstadt's *Falken Building* in 1899. The first company formed to utilize the material as a resource was the *Finska täljstens Ab* [Finnish Soapstone Company] which was founded in the same year.²³¹ The soapstone façades of the *Nyland's Students' Union* (1899-1901), the *Pohjola Building* (1899-1901) and the *Viipuri KOP* (1900-1901) indicate the rapidity and enthusiasm with which architects adopted the newly available material. The 1901 review of the *Viipuri KOP* in *S.T.* commented upon this:

Barely half a decade has gone by since the time when only a very few of us knew that soapstone even existed and still fewer thought that it could be used as a building material.

There existed, almost like a fairytale, the knowledge that there was in Norway a church, the cathedral of Trondheim, that was built from soapstone and it was also known that soapstone stoves had been made in Savo since ancient times. But no one foresaw that by 1901 the Pohjola Company's magnificent soapstone palace would be standing in our capital city, that the National Bank in Viipuri would have a

²³¹ Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth*, 44.

soapstone façade and that the Nyland Student Society would have a building in Helsinki in which soapstone is also used as a façade material. (Special supplement XVII)

In 1898 the possibility of using soapstone as an architectural material arose for the first time, with the construction of the Falken Ltd building on the Boulevard. There it was used for window and door frames and also for courses running across the brick surface. There we could already see the suitability of this material as a façade stone.²³²

Penttilä's review of the *Pohjola Building* appeared in *Rakentaja* in 1901. The *Pohjola Building* and the *Viipuri KOP* employed soapstone in very different ways. In his evaluation of the use of soapstone in the *Pohjola Building* he began by suggesting that the original intention may have been to use granite for the façade, following the example of the *Helsinki SYP*. The original competition had indeed specified facades of granite or some other native stone and it is likely that the model of the *Helsinki SYP*, completed the year before the competition and located a little further to the east on the same street, would have proved inspirational. Penttilä suggested, however, that it was the emergence of soapstone as a newly available native façade stone in 1899, which caught the interest of the company board and the decision was taken to use it instead. Penttilä himself was enthusiastic about the new material:

New and purely Finnish is this material that has only recently come into use, and which can be moulded into almost any form nicely and with complete freedom. The use of it is perhaps all an architect would need to achieve his goals.²³³

The discovery that soapstone was suitable as a façade material was indeed something of a liberation for architects, especially those committed to using native materials, as it was far more malleable than granite. It was also a light, handsome material, as Penttilä points out: "Many would not have believed that for so long our country had hidden in the earth a stone material so silver-grey, all had thought it to be darker."²³⁴

²³² 'Kansallispankin talo Viipurissa [The National Bank Building in Vyborg]', *Rakentaja* 1901, 95.

²³³ V. Penttilä, 'Palovakuutusyhtiö *Pohjolan* talo [The Fire Insurance Company *Pohjola's* Building]', *Rakentaja* 1901, 87.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

In contrast to his approval of Nyström's manner of handling the granite of the *Helsinki SYP*, Penttilä had a number of reservations about the treatment of the *Pohjola* façade. His main point was that, though the façade was “magnificent and powerful”, it lacked cohesiveness as a whole. [Fig. 2.56] He commented that the tower, “stately and original” in itself, failed to join gracefully or organically to the façade on either side. “This effect is increased further by the fact that the cupola rests too loosely on the top of the tower proper.”²³⁵ Penttilä's concern with the issue of the visual expression of load-bearing functions appeared also in his evaluation of the stone dressing. He admired the broad rusticated arches of the first floor, describing them as having a “stately, mysterious effect”, but he felt they were spoilt by the smooth, carved stone of the base. In his opinion the smooth ashlar of the basement level of the façade was not visually powerful enough to bear the weight of the rusticated arches above, which he complained hung unsupported. He suggested that the architects had been trying to achieve something like the effect of the weight-relationships found in the *Doges Palace* in Venice. Presumably he was referring to the effect of the airy arcade supporting the mass above, though he characterised their attempt to emulate this as unsuccessful.

Penttilä considered the visual expression of load-bearing construction to be one of the cardinal laws of architectural beauty. He made this point in his article, ‘On Beauty in Building’ in 1893:

The upper part of the building, which also comprises the roof as a supported-element, exists in relationship to the form of the walls which support it. The eye should not see them as carrying more weight than can be supported or vice versa. In the Greek column system such relationships attain their highest flowering.²³⁶

Penttilä's handling of the façade of the *Viipuri KOP* also illustrates his opinions on the visualization of tectonics. [Fig. 2.55] He used rusticated granite on the ground floor,

²³⁵ Ibid., 88.

²³⁶ Penttilä, 'Kauneudesta rakennuksissa', 99.

interspersed with areas of smooth granite ashlar. Above that was a mezzanine level of intricately carved soapstone ornament and the floor above had a surface of smooth soapstone, resolved in an ornamented cornice. Penttilä's choice to develop his façade through a sequence of progressively less textured surfaces reflected his opinions on the appropriate expression of weight in architectural design. His approval of Nyström's *Helsinki SYP* façade arrangement: "The rustic lower level of the building is magnificent, as is the gracefully slim row of ionic pilasters resting on it..." implied the same visualization of the load-bearing relationship between the base and the upper portions of the façade.²³⁷ His choice of granite for the rusticated area of the façade and soapstone for the ornamental details and smooth upper surface was also a reflection of the qualities of the stones themselves. The tough, intractable granite, whose principal characteristic was its strength, was chosen to represent the foundation of the building, whilst soapstone, which was more malleable, was chosen for the more detailed and delicate upper areas.

The issue of the representation of architectural tectonics appeared in another of Penttilä's building reviews, that of the *Lundqvist Commercial Building*. [Fig. 2.57] There the clear expression of structure was incorporated into a discussion of architectural beauty. He represented the achievement of the latter as requisite upon the striking of a balance between practical demands and pure, artistic beauty.

Architecture differs from the fine arts in that it does not possess such wide freedom as its sister arts. Its course is often well sign-posted, through narrow boundaries. *Practicality* is the firm grip which holds back the building-artist's architectural thought and free imaginative flight. Many are the difficulties to be overcome by the architect who seeks to produce work in which real artistic worth can be recognised. Perhaps it is on that account that so few of our buildings are works of art; for these difficulties often bring about a person who has architectural talent but the tendency to betray, due to weakness of character, his holy calling and to surrender to the narrow atmosphere of the mundane.²³⁸

²³⁷ Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 266.

²³⁸ V. Penttilä, 'Kauppiaas Lundqvistin liikepalatsi' [Merchant Lundqvist's business palace] in *Rakentaja* 1901, 77.

The buildings in which architects most often fail to achieve this desired synthesis of beauty and practical demands were, according to Penttilä, business and commercial buildings, particularly when these incorporated residential premises. The central problem thrown up by such buildings, he indicated, was that of resolving the visual contradiction between the large expanses of display window needed on the ground floor with the numerous small windows needed for apartments above:

When one goes as far as, for example, in the Tallberg business palace in Aleksanterinkatu, where the load-bearing columns are lost completely behind panes of glass, it is natural that in these cases artistic requirements and architecture have been put aside and pure everyday necessity alone is dominant.²³⁹

Through his selection of the *Tallberg House* (1899) as a negative example Penttilä again indicated that architectural beauty primarily required the visual expression of the load-bearing function performed by the ground floor of the building. In the *Tallberg House* by Elia Heikel and Stefan Michailow, the entire front of the ground floor was glazed and the stone-clad, iron pillars which supported it were recessed back from the façade, behind the glazing.²⁴⁰ [Fig. 2.58] The ornate and varied plaster façade of the apartments of the upper four floors of the building appeared to float above the signs for the ground floor shops. Penttilä also mentioned in a footnote that the *Tallberg House* façade “has no Finnish origin, but rather it is a direct copy of a certain commercial building in Glasgow.”²⁴¹ Thus he condemned the building both for its lack of artistry and for its lack of appropriate Finnishness. The comparison he had in mind may well have been with the work of the leading Glasgow architect, John James Burnet. Buildings of his, such as *Atlantic Chambers*, 1899, demonstrate the lively interplay of bays and recesses and sculpted ornament that was popular in Glasgow in the 1890s. Similar features can be seen in the work of other Glasgow architects of the period, including John A. Campbell, James Salmon II and Charles Rennie

²³⁹ Ibid., 77.

²⁴⁰ **Elia Heikel** (1852-1917) had trained and worked as a master builder in Helsinki. **Stefan Michailow** (1866-194?) had been born in Russia but moved to Turku as a child and graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1888. He worked for the General Board of Public Buildings from 1888 onwards and was Building superintendent of the district of Hämeenlinna from 1914-34.

²⁴¹ Penttilä, 'Kauppiais Lundqvistin liikepalatsi', 77.

Mackintosh. This comparison also serves to indicate the extent to which architects were familiar with the works of contemporaries across Europe.

Lindqvist's *Lundqvist Building* was, in contrast to the *Tallberg House*, held up by Penttilä as “an architecturally exemplary commercial building”.²⁴² The task of resolving the relationship between the display windows of the ground floor and the greater amount of wall surface above had been achieved: “The supporting columns of the ground floor are relatively slender but they join the architecture of the upper portion in such a way that the ground floor perfectly supports it.”²⁴³ The ground and first floor display windows were set between granite-clad piers, which concealed iron columns. These piers visually supported the red brick upper floors of the building. The strength and apparent mass of the granite served to outweigh the insubstantial areas of glass and provide support for the upper floors. The upper portions of the brick façade were further lightened through being broken up by areas of white plasterwork and decorative panels of majolica tiles.

Penttilä's only reservation about the building was that the different natural materials used in its façade had not, in his opinion, been successfully matched in terms of colour. It is interesting that he did not comment further on the use of these materials, despite his commitment to promoting their use in Finnish architecture. This may indicate that as early as 1901 the arguments in favour of the use of stone and brick no longer needed to be repeated.

In the 1890s Penttilä had repeatedly voiced his desire to see greater use of brick in Finnish architecture. In his review of the *Helsinki SYP* he noted the prevalence of brick architecture in the other Scandinavian countries alongside their use of natural stone. He also commented sarcastically on the unpopularity of brick in Finland, as an alternative to plaster architecture:

²⁴² Ibid., 78.

²⁴³ Ibid., 78.

The only exceptions to this [plaster facades] were the very rare brick facades. Rare - because what house owner would want such 'gloomy', 'dark-coloured' and 'monotonous, ugly brick barracks' beside their neighbours' fine, light and handsome marble palaces – even if they were artificial.²⁴⁴

Indeed, back in 1896, in his review of the building section of the Berlin Industrial Exhibition, Penttilä presented brick rather than natural stone as the material that offered salvation to Finnish architects who sought to abandon plaster façades. Brick had enjoyed an early revival as a façade material in Berlin under the influence of Schinkel through his interest in Germany's brick building tradition and designs, such as the *Berliner Bauakademie*, 1832-35. Penttilä was very impressed by the quantity and quality of the German bricks and ceramic products on display in the exhibition and compared them to the limits of what was available in Finland:

...this particularly draws Finnish attention to the wretched state of our own brick resources back home. When one see these various forms and profiles of brick, many different kinds of façade brick, polished and unpolished, brown and light coloured, yellow and red and all variety of shades and, on the other hand such precision of form and general homogeneity of size, then indeed one notices how paltry our own brick industry still is.²⁴⁵

He suggested that the decorative handling of brick architecture, surface patterns rather than projecting cornices, would be particularly well-suited to decoration based on Finnish textile designs, as both design traditions were based on the use of simple geometric patterns.²⁴⁶ Though we have already noted how vernacular textile patterns were looked to as models for the rejuvenation of modern textiles and how vernacular artefacts in general were drawn on in furniture design, Penttilä was the first to suggest textiles as a model for architectural ornament in Finland.

²⁴⁴ Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 265.

²⁴⁵ V. Penttilä, 'Rakennusosasto Berliinin teollisuusnäyttelyssä [The Building Section of Berlin's Trade Fair]', *S.T.* 1896, 266.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 267.

Despite the poor condition and scant availability of brick in Finland he outlined, Penttilä still believed that it was the material that would enable architects to break away from false plaster forms:

[Brick is] the material with which our architects can seek true artistic integrity, to push aside the false, ubiquitous plaster and gypsum architecture. For indeed we have no sandstone, from which the mind may model various architecturally necessary forms and decoration and the chisel leaves only small, hardly noticeable marks on our solid granites.²⁴⁷

This quote indicates that as late as 1896 Penttilä was yet to learn of the existence of soapstone as an architectural material and that he doubted whether inflexible granite could ever come into general use as a building material. It is clear, however, that he was among those architects seeking an alternative to the plaster clad buildings of the past. His pessimistic description of the Finnish brick industry and of the possibilities offered by native natural stone give some indication of the struggle faced by Finnish architects who wished to abandon plaster. Even in the mid-1890s the Finnish building industry did not appear to offer a realistic alternative to cheap and flexible plaster facades. The enthusiastic reception garnered by the stone facades of the *Helsinki SYP* and *Pohjola Building* can only be understood in the context of the originality and material innovation of the façade solutions they offered.

By the early 1900s the choice of architectural materials had been recognised as a central element within a design. This is indicated by the following quote by Gripenberg from an article on the new *Finnish Theatre*, designed by Onni Tarjanne in 1897-1902.²⁴⁸ [Fig. 2.59]

Lastly we come to the question of in what style the designs have been rendered. Asking the question is easier than giving the answer, but it can be said, however, that the style is modern. It is related to contemporary practices in American and

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 267.

²⁴⁸ **Onni Tarjanne** (1864-1946) graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1885. He immediately returned to teach design and construction for a year, until 1886. With the help of a government travel stipend he studied at the Munich Technical College from 1886-87. After completing his studies he taught on architectural materials at the Turku Technical College and in 1889 he returned to Helsinki to teach architectural construction at the Polytechnic. He was made a professor in 1908.

English granite architecture, following Medieval or Romanesque forms. It should be noted that the main façade is rendered in natural stone and it is formed and handled in accordance with this. In this way the building as a whole is given a stamp of seriousness and strength which should fit in well with the basic character of our nation; and at the same time it makes a dignified and monumental impression...²⁴⁹

This article indicates that the national character of the stone was recognised as important among architects during this period. Tarjanne's design, employing rubble-dressed granite and ornament based on Finnish flora and fauna was one of the key monuments of the Finnish National Style. [Fig. 2.60] This was seen as a suitable reflection of the building's function as the new Finnish-language theatre in Helsinki.

Alongside the importance of noble façade materials, Penttilä also welcomed the development of a new mode of architectural ornament. In his review of the *Finnish Pavilion* he celebrated the appearance of ornament derived from Finnish nature. The lavish and imaginative ornament of the *Pohjola Building* was commented upon even more than the use of soapstone. Penttilä noted a number of times the interest the building had aroused, both in the press and amongst the public.²⁵⁰ He was not alone in this observation. Sebastian Gripenberg, on the occasion of the opening of the building in December 1901, commented: "All the innumerable people who have stopped in front of this exterior to watch, to appreciate, to admire and to criticize, all these people have agreed in saying: "We have never seen anything like this before."²⁵¹ Penttilä ascribes this level of interest partly to the fact that the building was a product of the same architectural office as the much discussed *Finnish Pavilion* and also to the unusual and dramatic handling of the façade.

It was the architectural ornament in particular that caught peoples' attention:

²⁴⁹ S. Gripenberg, 'Suomalaisen teatterin rakennus', *Valvoja* 1900, 109

²⁵⁰ Penttilä, 'Rakennusosasto Berliinin teollisuusnäyttelyssä', 87-88.

²⁵¹ S. Gripenberg quoted in U. J. Pore, *Vakuutusosakeyhtiö Pohjola 1891-1941 [The Pohjola Insurance Company 1891-1941]*, Helsinki 1941, 47-48.

When last spring the Pohjola exterior started to be uncovered from beneath the sheeting and scaffolding, it became a great talking-point with passers-by. Strange forms, twisted faces peered forth...²⁵²

Penttilä's own opinion of this ornament is ambiguous. He stated that it is in the building's details "that we really encounter its architectural greatness. There is created much that is new, strange, original – though not all may consider it beautiful."²⁵³ Just as in the *Finnish Pavilion*, the ornament was derived from native Finnish flora and fauna, which was rendered in stone in a manner Penttilä described as "delicious and so masterful".²⁵⁴ [Figs 2.61 & 2.62] This natural ornament was all described favourably, especially that around the main entrance. [Fig. 2.63] The figural details, forest spirits and gnomes, illustrated, for example, in figure 2.62, were, however, not approved of and Penttilä presents this as the common verdict of all who had studied the building. Interestingly Penttilä indicated he would have been prepared to tolerate them if they had been positioned high up on the façade, partially hidden and mysterious "as in medieval buildings".²⁵⁵ The explanation for this stance may be that in a partially obscured position, and in line with the architectural prototype of the medieval gargoyle, these striking elements would have been more easily absorbed into the sober character of the building as a whole. As they stand, positioned at street level, their eye-catching, comic and irreverent character runs somewhat contrary to the building's character as a financial institution and disrupts appreciation of the building as a whole.

In his review of the new buildings of Stockholm in 1902 Penttilä had singled out Ferdinand Boberg and his inventive architectural ornament in particular. These comments were accompanied by seven pictures of Boberg buildings, four of which were focused on details of the ornament.²⁵⁶ Penttilä admired the way Boberg's ornament reflected the character of

²⁵² Penttilä, 'Palovakuutusyhtiö *Pohjolan talo*', 88.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁵⁶ Penttilä, 'Tukholman uusimmat rakennukset', 65-69. The buildings by Boberg illustrated were the *Nordiska Kredit Bank*, (a detail of ornament, a corner elevation and a detail of the main entrance), the *LO Building* (front elevation), the *Post Office building* (detail of ornament), the *Electricity Station* (detail of main entrance), the *Mosebacke Watertower* (elevation).

the building, the money motif on the *Nordiska Kredit Bank*, the use of electricity-related details in the *Electricity Station* building and the pine and fir-cones scheme of the national *Post Office*. His reservations about the ornament of the *Pohjola Building* may well have been related to the question of their suitability for a financial building. This was certainly a problem for another reviewer, Bertel Jung, who felt that the variety of animals on the façade implied the building was something like a zoological museum, rather than an insurance company.²⁵⁷

Penttilä's stance on architectural ornament can be further illuminated by looking at his comments on the ornament of the *Lundqvist Commercial Building*. His criticism of the twin bronze allegorical sculptures of *The Textile Industry* and *Forest Husbandry* by Robert Stigell [Fig. 2.64], can be contrasted with his appreciation of Walter Runeberg's allegorical sculptures on the *Helsinki SYP*, just a few years previously.²⁵⁸ [Fig. 2.51] These sculptures illustrated the various industries that contribute to the wealth of the nation and, by implication, the SYP itself. At either end of the façade were female personifications of Prosperity and Wisdom and between them were placed Textile Industry, Hunting, Forestry, Commerce, Fishing, Heavy Industry, Mining, Arable Farming and Dairy Farming. This subject matter reflected new desires to ensure that façade ornament reflected the character and function of the building within.²⁵⁹ In 1898 he had described these sculptures as adding greatly to the building's artistry. However, in 1901 he described Stigell's allegorical sculptures as "a failure".²⁶⁰ Instead, he admired the decoration of majolica tiles in the gables and along the top of the façade.

²⁵⁷ B. Jung, 'Bolaget Pohjolas nya hus [The Pohjola company's new building]', *Teknikern* 1901, 171-172.

²⁵⁸ **Walter Runeberg** (1838-1920), son of the national poet, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, studied at the Finnish Art Society School in Helsinki in 1856 and the Finnish Art Society School in Turku 1857-58. He went on to study at the Copenhagen Academy of Art from 1858-62. He lived in Rome from 1862-65, returning there from 1867-72 and 73-76. He also made extensive trips to Paris, in 1876-84 and 1885-93, and Copenhagen, in 1884-85, 1893-96 and in 1900. He was the first president of the Finnish Sculptors' Union from 1904-10.

Robert Stigell (1852-1907) studied at the school of design in St Petersburg and the Finnish Art Society School in Helsinki. From 1872-76 he was a student at the Academy St Luca in Rome and from 1876-78 he studied in the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. He returned to Paris in 1886-87, 1889-91 and 1895-1900.

²⁵⁹ The use of sculptural panels, illustrating the bank's sources of wealth, was a practice that was to become increasingly common in banking architecture in Finland. Penttilä used variations on this idea in his designs for KOP in Viipuri, Lahti and Turku, and also in the interior in Tampere.

²⁶⁰ Penttilä, 'Kauppias Lundqvistin Liikepalatsi', 78.

These comments reveal a growing admiration for ornament that broke from the Historicist tradition of gilt and sculptural ornament and instead played to the strengths of the material. The ceramic majolica tiles complement the flat surface of the red brick and their colourful glazed surface served as a replacement for the ornate cornices of the past. This idea was supported by the observations Penttilä made of the buildings of Stockholm. In terms of Boberg's work, he principally admired the effect of the areas of detailed, original ornament, and their relationship with the large areas of smooth, unbroken wall surface. He noted this arrangement in relation to both the *Electricity Station building* and the *Nordiska Kredit Bank*. The decoration of the *Matteus Elementary School* façade, based on surface variations created through contrasting materials and colours, has already been noted. Penttilä presented this approach to ornament as partly having been necessitated by the tight budget for the project, but also as effective, powerful and innovative.

The appreciation of a similar aesthetic, in which the qualities of the materials themselves came before sculptural ornament or other finery, was discernible in Penttilä's comments on the interiors of the buildings he reviews. He commented that the interior of the *Pohjola Building* was "original and in many places beautiful."²⁶¹ He did have some reservations, just as he had over the facades, but these were mainly practical, relating to the darkness of the spaces and intensity of the decoration which he described as slightly "imprisoning".²⁶² The customer hall of the Pohjola Company was described as being like a large log cabin, with an interior of unpainted old pine and much carving and having an "original folkish feel".²⁶³

[Fig. 2.65]

The contrast between the inventive *Pohjola Building* interior and the grand interior of the *Helsinki SYP* building [Fig. 2.66] was striking and goes some way to explaining Penttilä's emphasis on the originality of the *Pohjola Building* design and the stir that it caused. Whilst the *Helsinki SYP* building hall was described as using French and Belgian marble,

²⁶¹ Penttilä, 'Palovakuutusyhtiö *Pohjolan* talo', 88.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 89.

mahogany, gilt and coloured and etched glass, the *Pohjola Building* customer hall achieved its impact through imaginative carving and arrangement of Finnish pine. From the completion of the *Helsinki SYP* building interior in 1898 and the creation of the *Pohjola Building* interior in 1901 there had clearly been a conspicuous change in the conventions governing the design of important commercial buildings. The Pohjola Company, as a relatively young company founded 1891 and one with declared Fennomane sympathies, would have been more open to embracing new national style currents than the SYP, the oldest of the commercial banks. This should not obscure the profound nature of the change, from the Renaissance palace idiom of marble, gilt and Classical columns to the wood and nature ornament of the *Pohjola Building* interior.

It should be noted, however, that the status conferred by the use of high status materials was not abandoned entirely. The board of directors' office in the *Pohjola Building* had mahogany panelling that Penttilä described as very fine and artistically designed and the main staircase was of marble.²⁶⁴ A greater degree of restraint in the use of rich materials and an increased emphasis on the artistic use of material and applied decoration, rather than simply the lavishness of the arrangement, appeared in formal interiors at this time. Still, the interior of the entrance halls of the *Lundqvist Building* contained a combination of Belgian marble, gilt, polished stucco and majolica, which Penttilä pointedly described as "more splendid than artistic".²⁶⁵ A skilful combination of simplicity and impact was seen as preferable to such glittering spectacle. Boberg's interior of the *Nordiska Kredit Bank* was praised for the "simple but stately" nature of its main themes.²⁶⁶

There was a final element common to all the reviews and much of the content of *S.T.* and its supplements and that was a consistent interest in the technicalities of building and in technological developments in the field. This corresponds to *S.T.*'s original function to serve Finnish-speaking workers in the fields of engineering and industry. Building reviews

²⁶⁴ Ibid., 89.

²⁶⁵ Penttilä, 'Kauppiais Lundqvistin liikepalatsi', 78.

²⁶⁶ Penttilä, 'Tukholman uusimmat rakennukset', 68.

always included details on the construction, materials, firms and equipment employed. Penttilä's inclusion of such information was not simply the fulfilment of his obligation to his readers but part of his commitment to the development of engineering and the building industry in Finland.

Penttilä's review of the building section of the Berlin Industrial Exhibition placed emphasis on what the Finnish building industry could learn from the materials and other equipment and practices on show. The model provided by the superior quality and variety of German brick has already been commented upon above. Penttilä was also enthusiastic about the adjustable scaffolding he saw in general use in Germany, fire-proof brick, hygienic workers' housing and glass-bricks.²⁶⁷

In the review of the new *Helsinki SYP* Penttilä outlined in detail the system of piles and waterproof asphalt layers that made up the foundation of the building, necessitated by the soft, boggy ground and high water table of central Helsinki.²⁶⁸ Many other technical details of the building were included, from the materials and construction techniques used for intermediate flooring to the names of the companies responsible for the lighting, heating, ventilation and furniture. The intension of this list was to publicise the innovative quality of the project and celebrate the fact that such high quality work had been executed, where possible by Finnish companies. This point was made overtly when Penttilä celebrated the Finnish provenance of the small metal-work elements of the building, hinges, window fastenings etc.:

Readers will probably be especially pleased to hear that all hinges, plating, so-called espagnolette fastenings and so forth, which are usually bought from abroad, have for this building been especially manufactured in accordance with the architect's designs in the A. Nyman metal works, in Helsinki.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ Penttilä, 'Rakennusosasto Berliinin teollisuusnäyttelyssä', 266-268, 278-279.

²⁶⁸ Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 266.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 267.

The only foreign company involved with the construction was a Hamburg firm responsible, in partnership with a Helsinki firm, for the heating and air-conditioning system. The reviews of the *Lundqvist Commercial Building* and *Pohjola Building* included a similar, though less detailed description of the buildings' technical and constructional specification. The materials used, particularly in the interiors were described and interesting innovations were noted, alongside the usual information of the master builders who had overseen the projects and what companies provided the heating systems. In regards to the *Lundqvist Building*, Penttilä was particularly impressed by the inclusion of two elevators, which made the upper floors accessible to customers. He also noted the construction of the building; the masonry outer walls and a supporting structure of iron girders, which allowed the non-supporting, internal walls to be freely arranged in accordance with commercial requirements.²⁷⁰

Gustaf Strengell, in his review of Finnish architecture in 1903 commented that the building had been designed:

...completely in accordance with modern business-premises design principles. The Lundqvist building is, in its main form, derived from international sources for its type, which have been developed on the continent and of which the classic and most well-known example is the Wertheim Department Store on Leipzigerstrasse in Berlin.²⁷¹

Strengell was most impressed by the use of cast iron and particularly admired how the iron columns had been left, unconcealed, in the interior, in contrast to the handling of iron structural elements in the *Pohjola Building* customer hall, shown in figure 2.65:

... it impresses [the viewer] as a sturdy, solid, wooden, timber structure, which, together with its iron braces, bears the weight of massive roof joists. But inside the wooden pillar is hidden a support post of iron and the massive joists are in fact also only nailed-on decoration made of thin boards.²⁷²

²⁷⁰ Penttilä, 'Kauppiais Lundqvistin Liikepalatsi', 78.

²⁷¹ Strengell, 'Suomen rakennustaide', 32.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 90-91

In his review of the *Pohjola Building* Penttilä did not comment on this point. He did note the use of glass bricks in the pavement to provide light to the cellar, a new technique that Penttilä had admired back in Berlin in 1896. In his survey of the new buildings of Stockholm he included similar technical details. The arrangement of the interiors and the material used in the buildings were outlined, as well as the costs of the project.

The utility, honesty and creativity that Penttilä observed and admired in the vernacular wooden traditions of Northern Europe, Finland and Karelia share various points of contact with his appreciation of new developments within international and Finnish architecture. At the heart of both impulses lay the perception of the need for reform in architecture, based on a new appreciation of how materials and construction methods should shape the building's appearance as well as its core form. Greater integrity in terms of materials and revealed structure was to be matched by a new language of architectural ornament that harmonised with both those key elements and expressed their character and the buildings' function. The paradigm of the vernacular craftsman offered a model of an approach to design free from preconceived laws for form and ornament. It was able to function particularly effectively in the arena of wooden architecture and furniture, enabling the development of a rich, contemporary Finnish tradition in this field. The paradigm of the international New Style, increasingly available to Finns through contacts, travels abroad and the international arts press, offered new and exciting ways to translate their reform ideals into contemporary, urban architecture.

After 1900 it became increasingly clear that the path for new urban, commercial architecture was not to be found in the forest wilderness of Karelia and non-vernacularist voices increasingly got the upper hand. Writing in 1903, Gustaf Strengell described the reaction to the Karelian material discovered by Louis Sparre and by Sucksdorff and Blomstedt:

And soon everybody knew that now we had a new 'Finnish style'. It was no longer any good that architecture was made in accordance with rules. The industrial arts

also took this new style... and household utensils diligently expressed the same truly Finnish style as furniture.

But why scoff! All this was truly imagined, beautifully imagined; it was a pity that it came to nothing and proved so feeble. //...The reason the so-called 'Finnish style' came to an end was an internal matter, that it was exclusively founded on decorative forms. But it has never been seen that mere ornament would be sufficient for the creation of an architectural style; the foundation of these has always been in a new construction principle or mode of handling spatial relationships.²⁷³

This opinion was widely held. Brunila, writing in 1910 expressed a similar opinion, commenting on how the first promise of a National Style based on Karelian forms was not realised:

...it was not possible to generate a new style, because a new style must be based on changes in constructional principles, not merely on new ornament. The peasant cottage can be a practical example for villas and other small wooden buildings but for stone architecture it is meaningless.²⁷⁴

It was a new response to form and construction that was to become the central characteristic of the New Style in Finland and not the adherence to vernacular models. National Style ideas were not abandoned, but were increasingly subsumed within a drive for progress and modernisation. This process and development is explored further in the field of banking architecture in the following chapters.

²⁷³ Ibid., 76-77.

²⁷⁴ Brunila, 'Uudempi rakennustaide', 612.

3.i BANKING ARCHITECTURE IN FINLAND

The Head Offices and Penttilä's First Buildings for KOP

An examination of banking buildings as an architectural type can illuminate important facts about a given architectural milieu. One of the most crucial facts about banks is their wealth. This is particularly important in relation to a study of the architecture of a relatively poor country, as Finland still was in the nineteenth century. In bank buildings we find an architectural type in which the aspirations of the client and the architect were not so closely fettered by financial limitations. This was a contrast to the majority of building in Finland at this time, where brick buildings and the use of expensive materials were comparatively rare. The buildings were important promotional tools for the institutions that built them.²⁷⁵ As such, they were prestige projects, built on the best available sites, with the best materials by the best architects. An examination of these buildings can therefore tell us what these clients and architects most valued, and this in turn can cast light on the questions explored in the previous chapters: the balance between progressive and National Style impulses in Finnish architecture in this period.

Banking architecture is of course a specific architectural type in which unique features and preoccupations are expressed. Across all the banks examined in this study common features can be traced: in particular the desire to express the institution's wealth, through architectural magnificence, and to express its prudence, through architectural sobriety. The buildings also shared similar functional requirements, good security and fireproofing, well lit working spaces and an imposing central banking hall, as well as the requisite offices for clerks, accountants, managers, etc. These specialised forms were not, however, so unique as to make it impossible to extrapolate from banking architecture indications of the

²⁷⁵ The Histories of the institutions, commissioned by the banks, and other promotional material was often illustrated with pictures of the head office and prominent branch buildings, exteriors and interiors. See for example G. Granfelt, *Förenings-banken i Finland 1862-1912 [The Finnish Union Bank 1862-1912]*, Helsinki 1912; F. Heikel, *Nordiska aktiebanken för handel och industri 1872-1919 [The Scandinavian Joint-Stock Bank for Commerce and Industry 1872-1919]*, Helsinki 1922 and *Kansallis-osake-pankki: 40-vuotias [The National Joint-Stock Bank: 40th Anniversary]*, Helsinki 1930.

condition of Finnish public and commercial building, and even of the wider field of urban architecture in general.

Within the confines of this single architectural type one may explore how Finnish architects in the period 1890 to 1916 dealt with new architectural impulses coming from across Europe and America and how these ideas were adopted and adapted. In the head offices of the principal joint-stock banks, all built between 1889 and 1899, we can see the expression of the new architectural concerns, related to materials and the expression of construction, function and identity, introduced in earlier chapters. In the examination of the numerous branch banks that followed, over forty, all built between 1898 and 1916, it is possible to trace the dissemination of these architectural ideas across the cities and small towns of Finland. [Fig. 3.1] Over the years it is also possible to see shifts in taste and preoccupations, all leading to a deeper understanding of how the interplay between National Style ideas and progressive ideals functioned within the New Style and shaped Finnish urban architecture over this period.

Ludwig Bohnstedt, Bank of Finland, 1878-1883

The starting point for any study of banking architecture in Finland is the *Bank of Finland*, built in Helsinki in 1883. [Fig. 3.4] This building was the prestigious head-quarters and public face of the nation's central bank, which also functioned during this period as a commercial bank. The *Bank of Finland* in Helsinki was the first purpose-built bank to be erected in Finland. In terms of its choice of site, the language of its façade and interior design and the attention paid to its specialised functional needs, it established the idiom and conventions that Finnish bank designs were to draw on over the following decades.

The Bank had been founded in 1811 in the old capital of Turku and in 1819 it had moved to the new capital. Here it functioned first from rooms in *Sederholm House* on Senate Square and then from rooms in the *Senate House* itself. However, by 1867 it was decided by the Senate that the many functions of the bank required a larger, more specialised space.

A plot was reserved for the new bank in the centre of the city plan, behind the *St Nicholas Cathedral* on Senate Square. [Figs 3.2 & 3.3] This choice of site emphasised the bank's links to the centre of government, rather than the commercial centre of the city, the Esplanade and Aleksanterinkatu, though the small scale of Helsinki meant it was not prohibitively far from there either.

The building itself was not completed until 1883. The process of collecting sufficient funds and then securing appropriate plans was protracted.²⁷⁶ By 1872 enough money had been accumulated and the Banking committee of the Finnish Diet decided to go ahead with the project and commissioned the Director of the General Board of Public Buildings, Axel Hampus Dalström, to draw up the plans.²⁷⁷ This decision was in line with the conventions of the day in which the General Board of Public Buildings had a monopoly as designer of public buildings and dominated the field in commissions for other high status buildings. Dalström's designs were quickly finished, but were not accepted by the committee.

Instead the committee and the board of the Bank decided to organise an international design competition, the first of its kind in Finland, which was called in December 1875. This decision signalled an important shift in favour of open competition, which was to change the face of architectural practise in Finland. With the decline of the hegemony of the Board of Public Buildings the architectural field was opened up. The competition system was formalised by the Architects Club in 1893. The majority of competitions were national rather than international and they allowed young and innovative Finnish architects to secure important and prestigious commissions across Finland.

²⁷⁶ The funds raised were largely a result of increased revenues from the growing Finnish timber industry. See E.-M. Viljo, 'Suomen pankin rakennus arkkitehtuuriperinteen murrosvaiheen kuvastajana [The Bank of Finland Building as an Illustration of Dramatic Change in the Architectural Arena]', *Taidehistoriallisia tutkimuksia* 1999, 71-73. The Finnish timber trade grew significantly during the 1870s, in part as a result of demand for timber occasioned by re-building in Europe following the Franco-Prussian War.

²⁷⁷ **Axel Hampus Dalström** (1829-1882) studied architecture at the Stockholm Technical College and also the Royal Academy of Art. He worked at the General Board of Public Buildings from 1848 onwards and was made director in 1869.

The winner of the 1875 competition was the German architect Ludwig Bohnstedt.²⁷⁸ Bohnstedt was a successful architect who had won first prize in the 1872 competition for the German Reichstag. He had also built a number of banks in his home town of Gotha.²⁷⁹ The building work was overseen by Frans Sjöström. Sjöström's contribution was significant, drawing up the working drawings from Bohnstedt's detailed designs, sorting out the constructional and material details and ironing out any errors or problems that arose during the building process. His work was recognised by the fact that of the fees paid to the two architects, Sjöström received the larger.²⁸⁰

Bohnstedt's façade for the *Bank of Finland* used a simple classical form to convey the tandem messages of grandeur and security common to banking architecture. The classical arrangement emphasised the building's close association with other key national institutions: the Senate, the University and the Church, all housed in Engel's classical buildings nearby. [Fig. 2.45] The bank's main façade was arranged symmetrically, with a central row of arched windows on the ground and first floors. The first floor windows were treated as a *piano nobile*, with each window framed by an architrave. This central arrangement was flanked on either side by projecting wings. The wings contained small arched windows at ground floor level and empty niches on the first floor. Though Bohnstedt's original plans showed sculptures in these niches, none were ever commissioned. The coherency and dignity of the façade rested on this simple, balanced composition and on the sober handling of the stucco rendering.

The monochrome stucco walls were a pronounced contrast to the effusive coloured stucco neo-renaissance office and apartment blocks being built in Helsinki the 1880s by architects such as Theodor Höijer, Konstantine Kiseleff and others. [Fig. 2.46, 2.47 & 2.48] Above the grey granite basement the stucco façade was white. If we compare Bohnstedt's façade with

²⁷⁸ **Ludwig Bohnstedt** (1822-1885) studied at the Bauakademie in Berlin. He started his career in St Petersburg. In 1862 he moved to Gotha, where he remained for the rest of his life. He entered numerous international architectural competitions. He won second prize in the 1854 competition for the Hamburg Rathaus and first prize in the 1872 Berlin Reichstag competition, though the design was never executed.

²⁷⁹ The *Gotha Fire Insurance Bank*, 1872-74, the *Gotha First Credit Bank*, 1872-77 and the *Gotha Private Bank*, 1873-77.

²⁸⁰ Viljo, 'Suomen pankin rakennus', 74.

Höijer's façade for *Grönqvist House*, illustrated in figure 2.47 and also built in 1883, we can see how effective the pale, balanced, relatively unornamented, symmetrical façade must have been. Bohnstedt's façade revealed comparatively large areas of wall surface. On wall of the ground floor level the stucco was treated as smooth rustication, with bands of diamond-pointed rustication running along the base, around the corners of the projecting wings and around the window arches. This robust treatment of surface was the only decoration the ground floor received. The smooth rustication of the ground floor above the granite basement had also been a feature of Engel's Senate Square buildings for the Senate and the University. The rustication emphasised the impregnable quality of the walls. The ornamentation of the first floor was also fairly restrained. The string courses, window architraves and an entablature frieze did not detract from the overall emphasis on the smooth, ashlar-effect surface of the stucco wall. The use and choice of site also emphasised the building's special status. It was freestanding on a raised green plot with a sweeping semi-circular path up to the front entrance. This arrangement gave the building more the air of a private palace than commercial premises.

The Renaissance Palace arrangement of the façade was a common feature of European banking architecture of the time. It served to recall the great Italian banking houses of the fifteenth century, as well as more simply alluding to the status and dignity of the institution represented. Johan Fredrik Åbom's *Stockholms enskilda banken*, 1860-63, was the first private bank building erected in Stockholm. As can be seen in figure 3.5, the façade, with its pronounced rustication, central entrance archway, rows of arched windows on the ground floor and aediculated windows above, is similar in many ways to Bohnstedt's. The overall effect of the two buildings is quite different, however, as Åbom's building, built on a cramped site in the heart of Stockholm's Gamla Stan district, was rich in decorative detail in contrast to the somewhat austere appearance of Bohnstedt's bank. A certain austerity was clearly a characteristic Bohnstedt favoured in his bank designs. The three banks he designed in Gotha in the 1870s all shared the stone basement, rusticated ground floor and *piano nobile* arrangement noted in the *Bank of Finland*. [Figs 3.6, 3.7 & 3.8] The banks also displayed large areas of unadorned wall surface. This sober architectural language chosen

by Bohnstedt for his bank designs can be contrasted with the Baroque pomp of his *Reichstag Design* of 1872, indicating how the architect altered his language to suit different projects, though both designs utilise similar symmetrical palatial layouts. Compare figure 3.9 with figures 3.14 and 3.15.

Bohnstedt's interior design contrasted dramatically with the restraint of his façade. Where the exterior spoke of the building's impregnability and controlled taste, the interior spoke of its wealth and grandeur. The principal public spaces, the grand entrance hall and staircase and the main banking hall were lavish on a scale that could only be compared with the ceremonial spaces of the Senate and University. This interplay between forbidding exteriors and lavish interiors was to become a characteristic of Finnish banking architecture over the following years. The street façade stood firm and severe to outsiders, whilst the interior invited valued customers to revel in the wealth of the bank; both aspects served to reassure the customer of the stability, security and wealth of the institution. Bohnstedt's plans included detailed drawings for all the decorative details, panelling, pilasters, coffering and lustre of the interiors. [Fig. 3.10]

Bohnstedt paid particular attention to the key public spaces and the experience of the customer entering the bank. For this he developed a processional arrangement of spaces, leading the customer from the street entrance to the main banking hall. The centre of the ground floor was given over to a grand corridor leading to an imperial staircase at the rear of the building up to the first floor. [Fig. 3.11] The customers progressed along this corridor, up the double staircase to the first floor, turning 180 degrees, and progressing through a glass-roofed atrium to the main banking hall, which stood at the front of the building over the main entrance. This long route served to emphasise and exaggerate the scale of the building. The orchestrating of the public's experience within the building was to be a notable feature of subsequent banking architecture, even within buildings of a much smaller scale, as we will see later. The richness of the interiors was specifically geared towards the public: the private, functional areas of the bank though handsome were not as splendid as the key public areas, although spaces for the bank's directors were fairly grand.

Bohnstedt's entrance corridor was decorated in a lavish Renaissance style, with fluted Corinthian columns and pilasters supporting the shallow, coffered vaults of the corridor ceiling. The interior wall surfaces presented a rich array of fluting, moulding, decorative friezes, gilding and marbled panels. The corridor had almost no sources of natural light, so the customer was drawn along the dim, lamp-lit corridor toward the light of the rear stairwell. At the top of the stairs customers reached the glass-roofed atrium.

The glass roof in Bohnstedt's design was an important innovation and represented the first occasion such a device was used in Finnish architecture. Such imported innovations were one of the key advantages of opening up Finnish commissions to international competition. Glass roofs and light wells had been a feature of banking architecture ever since Sir John Soane introduced the lantern dome to the banking halls of the Bank of England in the 1780s. They were valued as a means of acquiring steady natural light by which to work and also for avoiding the necessity for street-front windows, thus increasing security. Glass ceilings were facilitated by mid-nineteenth century innovations in glass and iron architecture from Britain, which were improved upon as technology advanced.²⁸¹ Advanced industrial countries such as Germany were among the first on the continent to utilise iron and glass constructions in architecture.

Early photographs of the building's interiors show a significant discrepancy between the appearances of the glass-roofed atrium area in the 1890s and Bohnstedt's 1878 designs. There is no surviving documentation to explain this change. From the photographs it is possible to see that initially at least, the main front banking hall was arranged with the counter running parallel to the front of the building in accordance to Bohnstedt's drawing. [Figs 3.12 & 3.15] Other photographs from the 1890s or early 1900s show a different arrangement in which the area between the glass-roofed atrium and the main banking hall has been opened up to form a larger public service space. [Fig. 3.13] The front hall area is now the preserve of clerks and the main counter runs in a U-shape around three sides of

²⁸¹ R. McGrath and A. C. Frost, *Glass in Architecture and Decoration*, London 1961.

the atrium. The whole area has been opened up to allow light to spread evenly from the front windows and from the glass roof. The language of the plaster ornament of the new atrium area is different from Bohnstedt's designs, lighter and more sparing, compared to Bohnstedt's intricate, historicist plaster-work.

The graceful plaster ornament of the revised banking hall area also contained the only symbolic reference to the hall's function. On the pillars supporting the glass roof were reliefs of caducei, the staff of Mercury or Hermes, alluding to his role as, among other things, the God of Commerce. This device was commonly used in the design of bank buildings and halls across Europe. The older front banking hall retained its original Bohnstedt-designed panelling, but was painted over in lighter colours. The hall's appearance is more easily reconciled with the tastes of the late 1890s and early 1900s, rather than the early 1880s, though it is possible that Bohnstedt revised his 1878 designs in a strikingly modern manner. It is more likely that the hall was altered later. It is known that Sjöström's alterations to Bohnstedt's designs during construction were restricted to structural adjustments, based on concerns as to the building's construction, and alterations of room usage.²⁸² At the turn-of-the-century the state treasury moved back to Senate House and the bank became the sole occupant of the building and at this point some alterations were carried out to adapt interiors to new requirements.²⁸³ There is no record of who may have designed these alterations to the banking hall arrangements or of how extensive they were. Extensions into the yard of the building, to house new mint facilities, were designed in the 1890s by Albert Mellin. Gustaf Nyström also worked on a new yard building for the site in 1899. It is possible that either architect may have worked on the interior also. Gustaf Nyström in particular went on to have an extended relationship with the Bank of Finland, designing branches in Viipuri, Kotka, Pori and Turku, and the banking hall is not dissimilar in character to the banking hall for the *Helsinki SYP*, which Nyström designed in 1898. Whoever was responsible, the new banking hall arrangement,

²⁸² S. L. Sundvall, *Arkkitehtuurikilpailut Suomessa: Suomen Pankki*, masters thesis, Helsinki University of Technology, 1978, 11. and H. Elonen, 'Sata vuotta Tallimäellä [One Hundred Years on Tallimäki]', *Pankko* 1987, 10-11.

²⁸³ E. Schybergson, *Finlands Bank 1811-1911 [The Bank of Finland 1811-1911]*, Helsinki 1914.

with its U-shaped counter beneath a barrel-vaulted glass roof supported on columns, was to become a staple of banking hall design in Finland.

The attention Bohnstedt paid to the public's experience of the building was an important aspect of the building's specialisation as a bank. Public confidence in the institution was vital to its continued prosperity. Grand public spaces utilised a significant proportion of the *Bank of Finland* building. The rest was given over to the bank's other functions: meeting rooms for the bank's governing body, offices for the administration of the bank and the nation's finances, printing rooms for the issuing of bank notes, archives and vaults. [Figs 3.14 & 3.15] These offices were arranged along a Palladian system of interconnecting chambers, similar, though on a smaller scale, to Bohnstedt's plan for the Reichstag. This arrangement shows that though Bohnstedt responded to the unique needs of the bank with some thoughtfulness, his architectural approach was still fundamentally governed by his Classicist appreciation of architectural harmony. There was, for example, a high degree of symmetry in the floor plans that was not dictated by function, but rather responded to an abstract architectural ideal, which can be traced throughout his work.

Bohnstedt's design did include a number of details designed specifically to combat the major threats to banking business: fire and theft. The competition announcement had specified that the building was to be constructed in fire-proof materials: brick and iron. Internal walls were also made of fire proof materials. Like Dalström's earlier design, Bohnstedt also situated the furnace for the building's central heating system in a separate building in the rear yard of the plot. In terms of security, details such as the raised ground floor and very small basement windows made access to the building, other than through the main or rear entrances, more difficult. The areas in the basement beneath the ground floor safes was also filled solid to prevent any attempt at burrowing up into the safe from the cellar below.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ Bohnstedt's building is still owned and occupied by the bank of Finland. The interior has been remodelled several times. In 1960 an extension was built out into the rear yard, designed by the architect Harry Schreck.

Legislation authorising the establishment of private commercial banks had been passed in 1862. It had been, in part, the growing competition from new commercial banks that had prompted the Bank of Finland to establish its grand new premises in the 1870s. The three largest of the new commercial banks were *Suomen Yhdyspankki* [The Finnish Union Bank] or SYP, established 1862; *Pohjoismaiden Osakepankki* [The Scandinavian Joint-Stock Bank] or POP, established 1873 and *Kansallis-Osakepankki* [The National Joint-Stock Bank] or KOP, established 1889.

Onni Tarjanne, Kansallis-Osakepankki, 1889-1892

Though KOP was founded later than the other leading commercial banks it grew rapidly, harnessing the economic power of the Finnish-speaking lower middle and working classes from across the country. The rapid success of the bank was based partly on this ability to draw on the financial reserves of sections of society unused to banking their savings and partly on the success of its economic policies and a period of prosperity in the Finnish economy. The bank's initial capital had been raised through a subscriptions campaign, with money pouring in from supporters of the new institution's Fennomane ideals and aims. This support had come from across the country, predominantly from Finnish-speaking people in rural areas.²⁸⁵ The founders of KOP intended to challenge the economic hegemony of Swedish-speaking business in Finland. They planned to make low-interest loans available to Finnish-speaking enterprises. These were often of such a small scale that credit would not have been available from the more conservative, Swedish-speaking banks. Without the established big business clientele of the older commercial banks, KOP was forced to take risks with new businesses or with older businesses that were experiencing difficulties. On the whole though the enterprise was successful and by 1908 KOP had pushed past POP, becoming the second largest commercial bank in Finland in terms of total assets. The 1892 head office building, completed only four years after the bank was founded, was an early expression of the bank's success and its ambition. The new

²⁸⁵ Y. Blomstedt, *Kansallis-Osake-Pankin historia I: 1889-1939*, Helsinki 1989, 10.

KOP headquarters were situated at 42 Aleksanterinkatu, Helsinki, near the bank's first rented premises which had been at 17 Aleksanterinkatu. [Fig. 3.3]

The choice of location was significant. Aleksanterinkatu was an important commercial street, near both Senate Square and the Espanade. Its prime location and grand façade were clearly intended statement of the institution's growing status. The choice of architect was also interesting. Onni Törnqvist, who in 1906 fennicised his name to Onni Tarjanne, was to go on to establish a reputation as a leading Fennomane architect.²⁸⁶ Though well known, he is not an architect who has been studied in any great depth. His Fennomane sympathies can, however, be traced. In 1896 he was a founding member of the Finnish Engineers Union. He was also a member of the Finnish Club and the National Economic Union, which discussed and researched economic and social-political questions from a Fennomane standpoint.²⁸⁷ His Fennomane building projects included the *KOP headquarters*, the *Finnish Theatre* (1902) and the *Salama Insurance Co.* (1913). In 1890, however, having moved back to Helsinki only in 1889, he was at the very beginning of his architectural career. It is likely that there were Fennomane connections involved in his appointment.

In contrast to the innovative New Style of his mature work Tarjanne's early work, including the *Helsinki KOP*, was more conservative and ran in line with the established Renaissance Style conventions of the day. [Fig. 3.16] *KOP's* stucco façade could be compared with the general trends for city centre buildings of the 1880s and early 1890s, exemplified by the work of Höijer. By choosing a conventional architectural language *KOP* chose to identify itself with other established commercial enterprises. A somewhat conservative image may also have been sought to reassure customers as to the reliability and steadfastness of the new financial institution.

²⁸⁶ See footnote 248.

²⁸⁷ S. Haila, *Suomalaisuutta Rakentamassa: Arkkitehti Sebastian Gripenberg Kulttuurifennomanian lipukuntajana [Finnishness in Building: The Architect Sebastian Gripenberg as a Proponent of Cultural Fennomania]*, Helsinki 1998, 55-56 and 122.

The scale of Tarjanne's building also clearly indicated the bank's wealth. It was four storeys high and the façade was symmetrically arranged, with a central bay containing the main entrance, and rows of three windows to either side. The raised ground floor contained the main entrance in the central bay and large, arched windows to either side. The arched passageway on the far right of the ground floor led to a side passage that provided access to the inner courtyard of the block. The wall surface was plaster, presented in imitation of varied stonework. The arched windows were set in niches and the wall between these niches mimicked the effect of alternate blocks of smooth ashlar and diamond-pointed stone. The pointed rustication of the ground floor wall surface suitably indicated the impregnability of the bank, just as it had on the *Bank of Finland* façade. More concrete security measures can also be noted in the façade. The basement windows were covered with stout iron grilles and the raised ground floor made it harder to gain access through the windows. The lower panes of the ground floor banking hall windows were also frosted, to provide privacy and more diffused lighting for the clerks working within.

In contrast to the *Bank of Finland* the plaster surface of Tarjanne's building was much more ornate. The spandrels of the ground floor arches were ornamented with foliated plaster reliefs. Above, to either side of the keystone, ran a course of dentils and above the window niches a series of recessed balusters run across the façade, between the window bays. This gave the suggestion of balconies beneath the first floor windows, though there was no real projection away from the facade. The intricate decorative detail continued up the façade. The first floor windows were arranged directly above the arched windows of the ground floor and were set in ornamental architraves. The plaster wall surface between the windows of the first and second floor was treated with scored lines, imitative of coursed ashlar stone. The second floor windows were composed of paired arches, ornamented with consoles and a projecting header. Above the headers a foliated relief ran across the width of the facade. The fourth floor was treated decoratively as an attic and was separated from the façade below by a projecting string-course. The paired windows at this level were marginally less complicated in their decoration, though effectively of the same size as those below. Though the second and third floors were given over to residential rather than

business use, it is clear that all the floors required a comparable amount of light and space. This demonstrates the transition from a hierarchical allotment of light and space to a more uniform treatment, designed to generate the maximum amount of high-value space within a building. This move was motivated by rising land values in increasingly crowded town centres.

The façade's central bay was arranged with a slight projection out into the street. It broke from the arrangement of the façade to either side, framed with giant pilasters and with windows and courses at odds with the arrangement of the building's storeys. This deviation reflected the presence of the main stairwell in that front portion of the building. In the arch over the window above the main entrance there were two bracketed lamps and the name *Kansallis-Osake-Pankki*. The word *Bank*, in Finnish and Swedish, was also boldly written above the door. This is a contrast to the *Bank of Finland*, where the façade displayed no literal signs of the institution within. The 1890s saw the rise of advertising and commercial marketing, though in comparison to twentieth century developments in this field the sign is quite muted. Businesses that occupied the first floor also advertised their presence on the façade, though these signs were additions, rather than incorporated into the original design. An early photograph shows the first floor offices being occupied by *Pohjola Palovakuutus* [Pohjola Fire Insurance] and *Modemagasin*, a fashion magazine. The central attic header, above the entablature was crowned by a winged helmeted head of Mercury. This was the only ornamental element to make a specific reference to the building's function as a bank. The rest of the profuse ornament drew on the historical language of Classical architecture. The varied window shapes and ornamental details, the projecting courses and bays etc., created the impression of movement and modulated depth across the façade, which was in reality largely flat and ran flush to the street-front of the plot. Again, the rising price of urban plots discouraged design that did not utilise the maximum space available. Pressure of land use was such that by 1920 Tarjanne was asked

to draw up plans for a further attic story above the entablature and for an extension of one wing into the yard.²⁸⁸

There are no surviving drawings of this building's plan and layout. It is apparent from photographs, however, that the banking hall occupied the raised ground floor and was illuminated by means of the large arched windows on the front façade and windows looking onto the rear yard. This form of transverse illumination of the interior space was the standard solution for banking halls, where a glass roof or light wells were not used. Such an arrangement was more easily incorporated into the layout of a smaller plot where light and space were at a premium, as a glass roof necessitated leaving a portion of the plot built up only to two storeys. A transverse lighting solution allowed the architect to design a traditional town house building of three or four storeys, with the adaptation that the banking hall floor would be opened up to allow light to enter from both the front and the rear of the building. Such an arrangement is found, for example, in the banking halls of D.J. Herholdt's *Danish National Bank* in Copenhagen (1865-70) and E. A. Jacobsson, *Skandinaviska kreditaktiebolaget*, in Stockholm (1872-76). [Fig. 3.17] Both these interiors are markedly similar to the one Tarjanne designed for KOP. [Figs 3.18 & 3.19] Herholdt's and Jacobsson's designs differ chiefly in that theirs are situated on the first floor, behind large windows that clearly functioned in the scheme as part of a traditional *piano nobile*, whilst Tarjanne's hall is situated on the raised ground floor. In all three buildings the interior was opened out by replacing supporting walls with cast iron pillars. Service counters run between these pillars and clerks occupy the space behind the counters, where their working area may be illuminated by light from either the front or rear windows. The customers occupy the central portion of the room. Photographs of the *Helsinki KOP* interior show the light from the windows supplemented by electric lights.

In the absence of plans very little can now be deduced of the layout of the banking offices. The bank occupied the ground floor, the first floor was rented out as offices and the second

²⁸⁸ In 1921 a fourth floor was added, designed by Tarjanne. In 1928 the ground and first floor were gutted to create a large new two-storey banking hall with a glass roof. KOP was taken over by Merita, now Nordea bank, in 1995. The building was sold off and now contains retail premises.

and third floors were apartments. There would have been a rear entrance in the yard, accessed through the side passage. Access to the staff areas of the bank was probably via this rear entrance, keeping the spheres of staff and clients separate. Photographs of the banking hall reveal a small stairwell down into the basement. It is likely that this stair led into a vault in the basement, accessible only via the banking hall itself and sealed off completely from the rest of the basement area. Such an arrangement had certainly become commonplace by the late 1890s.

Gustaf Nyström, Suomen Yhdyspankki, 1896-1898

The Suomen Yhdyspankki [SYP] was the oldest and largest of the commercial banks. In 1896 the bank decided to move from its rented premises and commission a purpose-built head office building in Helsinki. It may well have been the appearance and impact of the new *Helsinki KOP* that prompted this development. The new *Helsinki SYP* building was built on the same street as the *Helsinki KOP*, very near the corner with Senate Square. [Fig. 3.3] This prime location placed the building in the commercial heart of the city and close to the prestigious government quarter.²⁸⁹ Like the *Helsinki KOP* the SYP building occupied a mid-block site, with only a single public street-front façade, in contrast to the free-standing *Bank of Finland*. This is an indication of the rapid growth and increased denseness of the urban fabric of Helsinki. Large plots, such as the one allocated to the Bank of Finland in 1867, were no longer available in the town centre. Through the 1890s the majority of buildings built in the city centre extended to three, four or five storeys and occupied an increasingly large portion of each plot.

The broad, imposing street façade of the *Helsinki SYP* was nonetheless able to create a strong impression on the streetscape of the Aleksanterinkatu. [Fig. 2.50] Its most striking feature was the cladding of the entire façade in natural stone. As has been noted earlier, it

²⁸⁹ SYP merged with POP in 1919 and became the PYP, *Pohjoismaiden Yhdyspankki* [Scandinavian Union Bank]. The Union Bank merged with KOP in 1995 forming Merita Bank. Merita Bank merged with the pan-Scandinavian banking group, Nordea, in 1997. Nyström's building was occupied by the bank until 2005. The ground floor was remodelled as shops in the 1960s.

was the first building in Finland to receive such a façade. The façade was executed in red-brown granite and the architect Gustaf Nyström was largely responsible for suggesting and supporting this course.²⁹⁰ Nyström was one of the leading architects of this period and already author of a number of prestigious state commissions, such as the *National Archives* and *The House of the Estates*, both completed in 1890. As Lecturer on Architecture, Nyström was the principal teacher of Finnish architects from 1879 until his death in 1918. The employment of an established figure and architect of important state commissions to design the new *Helsinki SYP* showed a different approach to KOP's choice of an architect in the early stages of his career. SYP were clearly intent on illustrating their status and close relationship with the establishment through their choice of architect.

Nyström's architectural thinking has been analysed in depth by Ville Lukkarinen.²⁹¹ Influenced by his teacher, Sjöström, he believed that study of antique and Renaissance architectural models was the foremost means of gaining an understanding of the principles of architecture. However, he felt that an awareness of modern-day demands and technologies was also necessary. Lukkarinen has summarised his theory thus:

...the architect must work standing on the shoulders of his predecessors, basing himself on their work and developing it further, however, at the same time constantly faithful to the requirements of his own day.²⁹²

Nyström's architectural practise reflected his view of the relationship between the past and the present, as can be seen in his use of historical models for the design for the *Helsinki SYP*. Nyström's design can be compared with that of Bohnstedt in terms of the general symmetrical arrangement of the façade, the flanking wings and the central attic header above the cornice. However, Nyström's design relied more heavily on the lively manipulation of the surface of the façade, not on the balanced arrangement of mass as Bohnstedt, with his free-standing building, was able to do. The arrangement of side piers,

²⁹⁰ Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth*, 121.

²⁹¹ Lukkarinen, *Classicism and History, Anachronistic Architectural Thinking in Finland at the Turn of the Century: Jac Ahrenberg and Gustaf Nyström*, Helsinki 1989.

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 65.

the first floor *piano nobile* with its pilasters reaching up to the entablature and the rusticated arches of the ground floor all served to underplay the essentially flat surface of the façade. Though the overall impression is one of symmetry, with a uniform central bay, Nyström in fact broke the symmetry by having the main entrance to the left of the façade.

The textural variation between rubble-dressed and smoothly dressed stone and the deeply carved courses complemented the lively handling of recessing and projecting ornamental elements such as pilasters, niches, balconies, string-courses and consoles. [Fig. 2.51] The significance of the use of native Finnish natural stone has been discussed earlier. Though Nyström's façade shows greater decorative complexity than Bohnstedt's, the intractable quality of the stone forbade the detailed decorative exuberance characteristic of Neo-Renaissance plaster facades such as Tarjanne's. The foundations of the design lay firmly in the historicist, classical tradition, but the boldness of surface and form prompted by the use of granite resulted in a façade that was a dramatic contrast to the cosmopolitan delicacy of Neo-Renaissance plaster facades.

The extensive use of natural stone was also an unambiguous statement of SYP's wealth. The prominent site, well-regarded architect and expensive materials used throughout were a clear attempt to overshadow competitors such as KOP. The inclusion of eleven allegorical sculptures by Runeberg, would have added to the cost and therefore the cachet of the building. The building's function as a bank was alluded to through the emphasis on security, both real and symbolic, in the façade. The basement windows had thick metal grilles and the ground floor windows were high above street level, discouraging trespass and preventing pedestrians from seeing into the street-front offices. Symbolic security was provided by the solid, imposing squared rubble blocks of the ground floor and the large, polished wood front door. The institution's identity was indicated by the placing of the name of the bank in gold letters on the attic header in the centre of the façade and also on a plaque over the first floor window, above the entrance.

Another interesting detail in the façade was Nyström's move away from a strictly classical approach to ornament in the capitals of the principal first floor pilasters. These were not given classical capitals, unlike the smaller Ionic columns on either side of the first floor windows at either end of the facade. Instead, the plaques contained shallow reliefs of Finnish plants and were capped by odd forms, possibly derived from the pulvins of the Ionic order. The use of native flora and fauna was to be a key trend in turn-of-the-century Finnish design and Nyström's work here can be seen as one of the first attempts to realise a style of specifically Finnish ornament.

Nyström's interior design for the *Helsinki SYP* placed emphasis, just as Bohnstedt had done, on conveying the wealth and grandeur of the institution. Like Bohnstedt, Nyström orchestrated the customer's experience of the interior by means of a processional series of spaces. [Fig. 3.20] On entering the building the customer progressed through a hall, up a grand, but shallow flight of stairs to a round vestibule, with a high ceiling, on the raised ground floor. Here the orientation was altered by 45 degrees and the customer passed through a semi-circular alcove to the left, which led to a square antechamber. This antechamber opened onto the banking hall itself, which ran along the rear of the building parallel with the main façade.

Nyström used the device of a classical sequence of lobbies and ante-chambers to obscure the scale of the building. Though this series of spaces is somewhat similar to the Palladian sequences of chambers used by Bohnstedt, Nyström's layout was not symmetrical and was dictated more by practical requirements than by abstract ideals of symmetry. The front portion of the ground floor, behind the arched, street-front windows, was occupied by the offices of the manager and clerks of the bank. The manager's office was well placed within the arrangement, with access to the banking hall, both the staff and customer sides of the counter, access to the other bank offices, entrance to the safe and direct access, via a private waiting room, to the main lobby.

The floor plan makes very clear which areas of the bank were intended for the public by including the ornate tiled floors intended for these areas, the public vestibules, waiting rooms and the public portion of the banking hall. The entrances for the public and the staff are also separate, with the front entrance giving access only to the public areas of the bank. The clerks entered building via the rear entrance, situated in the yard passage of the adjoining building. The grandeur of the main entrance was clearly intended for customers rather than staff. Access to the first floor offices was via a staircase behind the main vestibule. In the basement there were also a breakfast room, hall and cloakroom for staff.²⁹³ The plans of the bank show a day safe, accessible only from the manager's or chief accountant's office and a spiral staircase within the banking hall leading to the vaults where records were kept and where the chief vault was situated, secure in a sealed area of the basement. Funds for the day's business would be counted up to the day safe and back to the main vault on a daily basis.

The public areas of the bank displayed the wealth of the institution through the use of rich materials and ornament. Polished marble columns, marble wall panelling, mirrors, bronze lamps and gilt plasterwork all contribute to the grandeur and opulence. The emphasis on sobriety and impregnability that characterised the exterior was transformed into an emphasis on wealth and efficiency to welcome and assure the client. This grandeur was a feature of banking halls across Europe, particularly in the nineteenth century, with the development of commercial banking and increased competition between institutions. See, for example, the interiors of the *Allgemeinen kreditanstalt* in Vienna (1889), or in Prague (1896) by Emil von Förster. [Figs 3.21 & 3.22] Though in a smaller vein, Nyström's banking hall followed a similar grand design. [Figs 3.23 & 2.66] The floor of the banking hall was tiled with black and white marble. Polished granite columns rose through the counter of dark polished wood and supported the glass roof. The moulded entablature running around the ceiling was especially ornate and included in gold the monogram of

²⁹³ The basement also contained the boiler and other equipment related to the building's heating and ventilation systems. There were a few further offices for the bank on the first floor and the bank's archive was situated on the second floor. The remaining rooms on these two floors were let out as offices. Penttilä, 'Yhdyspankin uusi talo Helsingissä', 266-67.

the bank, “FBiF” for the Swedish name of the bank, *Föreningsbanken i Finland*, and gilt caducei within wreaths of laurels. The gilt of the entablature was echoed in the yellow acanthus leaf design stained-glass frieze running either side of the barrel of the glass ceiling. This traditional ornament was augmented by ornament more directly illustrative of the bank’s wealth and business: motifs of sheaves of corn and gold coins. This trend was again part of the general late nineteenth development of ornament, less bound to historical templates and more illustrative of function.

The glass barrel roof was the most striking feature of the banking hall. The arrangement was very similar to the one designed for Bohnstedt’s *Bank of Finland*, with pillars supporting a deep architrave and a graceful, shallow barrel-vaulted glass roof. Nyström’s hall was the first in Finland to utilise the site’s courtyard space for a single-storey glass-roofed hall and it probably draws on a number of sources. Ever since his training in Vienna Nyström had followed the work of Otto Wagner and may well have been aware of his banking designs, such as the *Länderbank* on Hohenstaufengasse in Vienna (1883-84). In this building a glass ceiling was used over the banking hall. The ceiling was suspended from a visible lattice of beams and above it was a glass-roofed light well.²⁹⁴ The use of a double ceiling, one ornamental over the banking hall and the other more solidly constructed as the weatherproof roof, was the favoured solution to the lack of insulation offered by glass. Nyström’s construction is also quite similar to that of the *Deutsche Bank, Berlin* (1892), which was one of the earliest examples of the use of the courtyard space as a banking hall, lit by a glass ceiling, protected by a further glass over-construction by the firm of Böckmann and Ende. The *Deutsche Bank* certainly served as the model for double glass-roofed banking halls in Sweden.²⁹⁵ [Fig. 3.24]

Nyström’s approach to design was still driven by an emphasis on the façade as the central element within architectural design. He was skilful in blending modern innovations, such

²⁹⁴ H. Geretsegger and M. Peintner, *Otto Wagner, 1841-1918 : The Expanding City, The Beginning of Modern Architecture*, London 1979, 146-147.

²⁹⁵ F. Bedoire, *En Arkitekt och hans Verksamhetsfält Kring Sekelskiftet: Gustaf Wickmans Arbeten, 1884-1916 [An architect and his field of practice at the turn of the century : the works of Gustaf Wickman 1884-1916]*, Dissertation, University of Stockholm, 1974.

as natural stone and iron and glass structures, with historical forms and traditional architectural thinking. This illustrates the fact that, for him, there was no contradiction in holding a belief in the perpetual laws of beauty to be found in the architecture of the past, and an understanding of the historicity of art and its relationship to the requirements of the present.

Waldemar Aspelin, Pohjoismaiden Osakepankki, 1898-1900

The last of the big three nationwide commercial banks to build a grand head office was the Pohjoismaiden Osakepankki [POP] building, built between 1898 and 1900. [Fig. 3.25] It represented a culmination of sorts in terms of both its scale and appearance. The building was located in Viipuri, the home of the POP bank. Viipuri was the fourth largest city in Finland after Turku, Helsinki and Tampere. It was an important commercial city, situated on the north shore of the Gulf of Finland and also connected to Lake Saimaa and the network of the Eastern Lakes via the Saimaa Canal.²⁹⁶ [Fig. 3.1] As well as sea and waterway trade routes, the town stood on the Helsinki-St Petersburg railway line and on 'The King's Road' from Helsinki to St Petersburg.²⁹⁷ Its location had made the city a natural trading point between east and west for hundreds of years. The majority of goods passing through Viipuri arrived by sea, with the rest coming by rail. These imports included grains, flour and animal feed, exotic goods and spices, metal, machines and machine parts. Exports from the city were primarily made up of raw timber, timber products and paper. The leading destinations for these products were England, France, Germany, Belgium and Alexandria. Primarily a commercial town, Viipuri did not have a large industrial sector. In 1913 there were 4468 people employed in Viipuri's industries, out of a population of about 20,000. These industries included tobacco products, spirit distilleries and breweries, and also candle and soap makers, machine workshops, tailors and textile workshops, bakeries and printers.

²⁹⁶ Constructed 1854-1856. The canal was 36km long, running from Lake Saimaa to the Bay of Viipuri on the Gulf of Finland.

²⁹⁷ The railway was completed in 1870.

Though not an industrial town, Viipuri's pattern of population growth mirrored the expansion of the urban population in Finland, which trebled between 1870 and 1910. In 1850 the population had stood at only 4966, but by 1900 it had risen to 17,365. The town was one of the most cosmopolitan in Finland. In 1900 73.8% of the population were Finnish-speakers, 14.7% spoke Russian, 8.7% spoke Swedish, 1.1% spoke German and 1.7% spoke other languages. Viipuri was one of the oldest towns in Finland. Viipuri castle had been built in 1293 and the town grew up around it. By 1900 the infrastructure was comparatively well developed, with approximately one third of the buildings constructed from brick rather than wood.²⁹⁸

The new head office for POP stood on the corner of the city's main market square, with one façade on the square itself and the other running down Torikatu [Market Street].²⁹⁹ [Figs 3.52 & 3.53] The building dominated the square, standing behind the late-medieval *Round Tower*, and was the largest and tallest building on the square well into the 1930s. The architect was Waldemar Aspelin.³⁰⁰ The two street facades were clad in Finnish grey granite with window columns of polished brown granite, all supplied by the Finnish granite company *Ab Granit*. [Fig. 3.26] As has already been noted, following the example of the *Helsinki SYP*, natural stone became the façade material of choice for institutions, such as banks, who could afford it. Aspelin's façade followed a Florentine palazzo model, which had long been favoured by banks across Europe as an appropriate architectural idiom. There are numerous examples of banks which could have served as inspiration for Aspelin's design. Emil von Förster's *Allgemeine Österreichischen Bodenkredit-anstalt*, Vienna, 1885-87 and Magnus Isæus' *Skandia Insurance Company* building, Stockholm, 1886-89 are both good examples. [Figs 3.27 & 3.28] Their shared characteristics included

²⁹⁸ Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Viipuri.

²⁹⁹ All the street names in Viipuri were altered by the Soviet authorities when the town became part of the USSR following the Second World War.

³⁰⁰ **Waldemar Aspelin** (1854-1923) was a Swede, who had trained at the Borås Technical College in Sweden, though he went on the study at the Helsinki Polytechnic between 1883-86. His architectural career was spent in Finland and he was closely influenced by the leading Finnish architects of the period, his teachers Sjöström and Nyström, and Höijer, whose practice he worked in as a student. He started his own architectural practice in the town of Hamina, though he relocated to Helsinki in 1889. He built numerous apartment and commercial buildings in the heart of Helsinki. His contact with POP may have originated in Hamina, the closest town to Viipuri on the Helsinki-Viipuri road, though it is not known how he secured the commission.

the heavy rustication and deep courses of the façade stone work, the relatively unbroken wall surface with rows of arched windows set flush in the walls and the pronounced, projecting cornices. Förster's building included the high, small rectangular windows for the ground floor seen in the Medici and Strozzi palaces in Florence, increasing both the real and implied impregnability of the building. Both Isæus and Aspelin, however, deviated from the Renaissance model in this respect, with high, broad, arched windows and doors for their ground floors, more suited to the shop premises that occupied this floor.

Aspelin's was not the first bank building in Finland to have a façade derived from the palazzo model. The second purpose-built bank in Finland had been built for the Turku Savings Bank by Sebastian Gripenberg in 1888-1890. [Fig. 3.29] Gripenberg designed a three-storey building, though the board of the bank had only wanted two storeys, and he had to struggle to get them to agree to the increased costs.³⁰¹ Though on a much smaller scale than Aspelin's building and with a plaster, rather than a natural stone, façade Gripenberg's was one of the most impressive buildings in Turku in its day. Built on a corner site, the building closely resembled Förster's arrangement but positioned the bank entrance right in the corner. Corner entrances to banks had become an established convention across Europe, as situating the banking hall in the corner of the building allowed cross lighting from the two street facades, as well as a prominent entrance on two thoroughfares. Gripenberg's plaster façade was deeply coursed, in imitation of Florentine Renaissance stonework. It also included coats of arms of the town and the region and three sculptures by the rising Turku-born sculptor Emil Wikström. These comprised three female figures representing Economy, Trade and Industry, serving an important function: illustrating the ethos of the bank. [Fig. 3.30] The inclusions of similar allegorical sculptures on Nyström's *Helsinki SYP* façade may well have been influenced by Gripenberg's earlier design.

The Florentine form remained fashionable for bank designs through the 1890s. Aron Johansson's 1894-97 building for the Stockholm Savings Bank explored a similar idea. [Fig.

³⁰¹ H. Soiri-Snellman, *Turun Säästöpankkitalo 100 vuotta [The Turku Savings Bank 100 Years]*, Turku 1991, 24-25.

3.31] The building's plaster-faced upper storeys and unbroken rectangular mass was very similar to J. D. Herdoldt's 1865-70, *Danish National Bank* in Copenhagen. All these examples indicate the cosmopolitan effect of Aspelin's choice of facade language. The heavy rustication of the ground floor followed the Renaissance model, but also served to counteract the lightness and openness created by the large display windows of the shops along the ground floor. The apparent symmetry and regularity of the façade was also compromised here and there to accommodate the needs of the different shops, as display windows were alternated with arched doorways. The corner of the building on Torikatu and the Square was emphasised by a corner pier and raised attic headers. This corner pier was also lightly echoed at the opposite ends of the two facades, allowing each façade to present a long bay of windows, flanked at either end by projecting pier elements with attic headers.

The centre of the Torikatu façade was ornamented with balconies on both the first and second floors. [Fig. 3.26] These stone balconies had ornate corbels and balustrades and the first floor balcony included two stone griffins. The rows of windows were enlivened by the use of polished brown granite columns within the window frames. The granite façade of the *Viipuri POP* was completed only three years after Nyström's *Helsinki SYP*. Criticism of Nyström's reliance on classical forms had been muted by the intense enthusiasm reviewers felt for his innovative use of natural stone as a façade material.³⁰² By 1900 extensive use of natural stone was no longer enough to justify the use of what was increasingly perceived as outdated historicism. The art critic and designer Nils Wasastjerna reviewed the building in *Teknikern* in 1902:³⁰³

The ancestors of this building are obviously to be found in Italian Renaissance palaces (Palazzo Strozzi, Palazzo Ricardi and others), but the degeneration is

³⁰² See discussion in chapter 2.iii, pp. 99-101.

³⁰³ **Nils Wasastjerna** (1872-1951) studied architecture at the Helsinki Polytechnic between 1891-92, but left before qualifying. He went on to study at the Finnish Art Society's School and became a designer specialising in furniture and interiors. In 1900 he and Bertel Jung founded and edited an architecture and applied arts supplement for the technical journal, *Teknikern*. Wasastjerna also contributed articles to *Arkitekten*. Between 1904 and 1908 he published his illustrated book on contemporary Finnish architecture, *Finsk Arkitektur*.

unmistakable...the exterior certainly leaves the beholder completely indifferent and unmoved.³⁰⁴

By the early 1900s the stately grandeur of Aspelin's *Viipuri POP* was out of step with the rapid pace of development in Finnish architecture. In Wasastjerna's review, Penttilä's *Viipuri KOP* (1900-01) was held up as an example of the more vital path contemporary architecture was taking. Further comparison of these two buildings will be made below.³⁰⁵

Penttilä as a Bank Architect

The early formation of Penttilä's ideas on architecture has already been discussed. His belief both in the possibility of the development of a Finnish National Style and the development of progressive and innovative architectural practice in Finland were the two central points within his thinking. We have already looked at how the National Style and New Style architecture he admired shared the traits of utility and honesty in construction and materials and a free, creative approach to ornament.

Penttilä practised as an architect for twenty-two years and produced an extensive body of work. For the purpose of this study it is his work as an architect of banks that will be analysed. Penttilä was one of the first architects to have a specialism in the area of bank design. His relationship with the KOP Bank lasted from 1898 until his death in 1918. In the 1900s his work for KOP exemplified the diverse architectural impulses at play during this period, as well as the development of the bank building and banking hall as an architectural type. In the 1910s his long standing association with KOP led to the development of a recognisable architectural style for KOP branches, the beginnings of a commercial architectural identity. Penttilä's work for KOP was carried out in towns up and down the country, making an important contribution to the dissemination of the latest architectural trends from Helsinki and Europe.

³⁰⁴ N. Wasastjerna, 'Reseintryck från Viborg I [Travel Recollections From Vyborg I]', *Teknikern* 1902, 161-163. In translation in Ringbom, *Stone, Style and Truth*, 124.

³⁰⁵ The *Viipuri POP* continues to function as a bank building incorporating retail premises and apartments. It is now owned by the Vyborg Bank, a Russian commercial bank. The interior remains substantially unaltered.

Penttilä's specialism as a bank architect first developed as part of his work within the architectural firm Usko Nyström – Petrelius – Penttilä [UN-P-P]. The first four branch buildings for KOP, in Oulu, Viipuri, Kuopio and Tampere, as well as two wooden Savings Bank buildings in the villages of Sysmä and Virolahti, were all designed under the auspices of the firm. [Fig. 3.1] The research of Eija Rauske into the work of the UN-P-P firm in Helsinki indicates that the majority of the building design projects were divided between Usko Nyström and Vilho Penttilä.³⁰⁶ Albert Petrelius worked primarily for the Pohjola Insurance Company and specialised as a master builder and engineer. The practice within the office was to sign the plans for which one was responsible. Surviving records indicate that Penttilä was the architect within the firm primarily responsible for the bank building commissions. The architectural drawing for the *Sysmä Savings Bank* and the *Kuopio KOP* are lost, though Penttilä is referred to in documents in the archives of both banks as the project architect. The drawings for the *Virolahti Savings Bank* are stamped with the office stamp and signed by Usko Nyström, indicating that this was primarily his work. The drawings for the *Oulu KOP* are signed by Penttilä, beneath the name of the firm. The drawings for the *Viipuri KOP* are stamped with the office stamp and signed by both Nyström and Penttilä. The drawings for the *Tampere KOP* are signed by Penttilä above the name of the firm. Though the documentation is incomplete it is also known that Penttilä visited Sysmä, Oulu, Viipuri, Kuopio and Tampere, in relation to these projects, to meet the clients, assess the site or to check up on the building. Penttilä's work for KOP continued when he set up his own office, after the dissolution of the UN-P-P firm, which further confirms the idea that Penttilä was the principle architect behind the firm's bank designs.

The first bank designed by Penttilä and the UN-P-P firm was a wooden building for the Sysmä Savings Bank. It was designed in 1896 and completed in 1898, with weatherboarding and new paintwork added in 1902. [Fig. 3.32] The *Virolahti Savings Bank* was designed in 1899 and completed 1901. The *Sysmä* and *Virolahti Banks* were both built in

³⁰⁶ Rauske, *Kivet Puhuvat*.

small villages, for banks which serviced the local agricultural economy. Both buildings were wooden, built on prominent sites and of a large scale in comparison to the village infrastructure. [Fig. 3.33] Alongside the buildings' function as banks, they were important community buildings. The *Virolahti Bank* also contained a chemist's shop, a community hall and a couple of apartments. The *Sysmä Bank* contained premises for the post office and a library, reading room and community hall and theatre, as well as one apartment.³⁰⁷ These multiple functions reflected the nature of the Savings Banks as institutions. Set up by local landowners and larger farmers, the Savings Banks had a strong philanthropic aim, to promote the development of the community both economically and socially. Deposits and loans facilitated economic growth, the poor were encouraged to save and could also receive financial support and the community spaces were used for improving community activities, education and celebrations.³⁰⁸

The comparatively modest requirements of the banks housed within these buildings meant that this function did not dominate the designs. In both the banks occupied a comparatively small proportion of the interior space. In *Sysmä*, for example, the bank occupied one small office room with an inbuilt brick-lined safe, and used one of the post office rooms at the front, to do business with the public. Apart from the safe there were no specialist fittings or alterations to the rooms used by the bank. The designs did not relate directly to the development of the banking hall and bank building as a specialised type. Instead, the buildings could be related to the development of wooden architecture in response to new functional requirements in the late nineteenth century: railway stations, hotels and community facilities such as the banks. The steep pitched roofs and much of the ornament of both banks can be compared to the weatherboard architecture developed for the stations of the growing rail network in the 1880s and 1890s. These weatherboard buildings incorporated wooden ornament that drew eclectically on Gothic, Moorish and

³⁰⁷ Banks often included rental space within their buildings and such spaces were let to other 'respectable' enterprises. The post office and chemist's shops were most frequently associated with bank buildings.

³⁰⁸ V. Kare, *Sysmän Teatteritalo: Historiikki [The Sysmä Theatre House: A History]*, Sysmä 1998.

Norwegian Dragon Style forms. See for example, the work of Bruno F. Granholm for the Finnish Railways Board.³⁰⁹ [Fig. 3.34]

Traces of Penttilä's interest in the idea of a Finnish National Style, and in National Styles and vernacular architecture in general, can be found in the *Sysmä Bank*. The arrangement of timbering over the weather-boarded surface recalls the appearance of the timber frame architecture of the Harz region of Germany Penttilä had admired.³¹⁰ This visual allusion to half-timbering could also be linked to the influence of English Arts and Crafts domestic architecture, as could the prominent chimneys. Evidence of Penttilä's desire to break from design conventions based on historical styles can be seen in this free mixture of influences. The rich wooden ornament fused a bold folk art-inspired simplicity with areas of more delicate ornament reminiscent of Sucksdorf's and Sparre's Finnish Style furniture designs of 1894. [Fig. 3.35] The lingering influence of earlier historicist conventions in architecture can also be found. Classically moulded door panels and frames were juxtaposed with boldly, intentionally crude carved post and beams. [Fig. 3.36] Nyström's *Virolahti Savings Bank* followed a very similar path, albeit with the benefit of a further three years exploration of wooden architecture and the new style. Nyström's design included the jutting gable peaks and Dragon Style-inspired ridge headers that Penttilä also used in his *Hollola Parish House* in 1902.³¹¹

Vilho Penttilä, Oulu KOP, 1898-1900

The first of the ten branch buildings Penttilä was to build for KOP was designed for the town of Oulu in 1898. Oulu is the capital of the district of Northern Ostrobothnia in

³⁰⁹ **Bruno Ferdinand Granholm** (1857-1930) graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1882. He was architect to the Finnish Railways Board from 1892-1926. For further information on railway architecture see S. Valanto, *Rautateiden Arkkitehtuuri: Asemarakennuksia 1857-1941 [Railway Architecture: Station Buildings 1857-1941]*, Helsinki 1984.

³¹⁰ See the discussion of Penttilä's article Penttilä, 'Silmäys puurakennusten', pages 33-38.

³¹¹ The *Sysmä Savings Bank* was occupied by the bank until 1936. It was maintained as a community space by the Sysmä conservation society between 1937-1944 and by the philanthropic Bökman Company from 1945-1977. In 1978 it was bought by the Sysmä municipality and extensively renovated. It continues to function as a municipal, community space. The *Virolahti Savings Bank* was demolished in 1982, despite a campaign to save it, when the bank, requiring new premises, was unable to find an alternative site within the town.

North-Western Finland. [Fig. 3.1] The town's population had grown rapidly during the nineteenth century from 3543 in 1815 to 12,665 in 1890. In 1913 the population had risen to 17,337, 93% of whom were Finnish-speaking. Growth on this scale can be traced in all of the towns and cities included in this study. The impact of the Crimean War in the mid-nineteenth century and the famines of the 1860s retarded both population growth and industrialisation. But from the 1870s onwards industrialisation and urbanisation accelerated rapidly. Towns across Finland began to fill-out the grid-based town plans that had been devised in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the 1890s and 1900s Finnish towns began to develop recognisable central business districts, usually of only a few blocks, which would be characterised by 3 or 4 storey brick buildings, replacing the low-rise wooden infrastructure that made up the rest of the town. The banks were key players in the development of such districts. Though growth was dramatic, it must be remembered that the delayed start of Finland's industrialisation process meant that the country remained primarily rural until well into the twentieth century.

Oulu stands on the Eastern shore of the Gulf of Bothnia and spreads over several islands close to the shore in the mouth of the Oulu River. In 1882 a large area of the town was ravaged by fire. Prior to the fire there had been only five brick buildings in Oulu: the Church, the Classical High School and three others. In the re-building that followed a greater number of two- to four-storey brick buildings were built. A postcard of 1906 showing Penttilä's new *Oulu KOP* and the view towards the church along Kirkkokatu [Church Street], however, shows that much of the town infrastructure was still made up of one to two-storey wooden buildings. [Fig. 3.37]

The wealth of the town was based in part on the timber trade, with a number of saw-mills and timber works operating out of the town. Alongside this were diverse other industries, from the shoe and the soap factories to the printing houses and the soft-drinks manufacturer. The town was also an important trading town and harbour. The railway from St Petersburg to Oulu was completed in 1886, making the town an important export point for Russian and Finnish goods to Western markets. Timber and timber products

dominated exports, with finished and unfinished hide and leather goods, fish and fish oil, butter, reindeer meat and berries also important. By 1910 the wealth generated by this industry and trade was looked after by seven banks: branches of the Bank of Finland, SYP, POP, KOP, the Vaasa Bank, as well as two local Savings Banks.

In-line with KOP's intention to extend its operations into the regions as quickly as possible, work was started establishing a network of branches as soon as the bank was founded in 1889. In the same year as the bank started operations, 1890, the first branches were opened in Turku, Hamina, Tampere, Viipuri, Oulu and Kuopio. The choice of these towns for the first wave of branches was based on the high proportion of the bank's start-up capital that had been raised in these areas.³¹² The Oulu branch initially operated from a private house on Länsipitkänkatu [Long West Street], but soon moved to another private house more centrally located, on the corner of Torikatu [Market Street] and Hallituskatu [Government Street]: *Torikatu 10* by Theodor Decker, 1883.³¹³ [Fig. 3.38] On the 30th June 1897 a new plot was bought, in auction, from the Town of Oulu. The plot stood on the corner of Kirkkokatu [Church Street] and Pakkihuoneenkatu [Warehouse Street], which led down towards the harbour. Kirkkokatu was the main commercial street of the town. [Fig. 3.39 & 3.40]

The architectural plans were signed by Penttilä and dated 1898. The building was very large for that period in Oulu, as was noted in relation to figure 3.37. The Pakkihuoneenkatu façade was 46 meters long and the Kirkkokatu façade was 37 meters long. The floor area was approximately 1230 m² on each floor of the three-storey building. Building work commenced in 1898. According to notes in the branch office's minutes Penttilä also acted as works supervisor on the project.³¹⁴ The building was completed in June 1900. [Fig. 3.41]

³¹² Blomstedt, *Kansallis-Osake-Pankin*, 103-107.

³¹³ **Theodor Decker** (1838-1899) studied under Theodor Chiewitz in Turku in 1857 (See footnote 454). He continued his architectural studies at the Stockholm Academy from 1858-63.

³¹⁴ *Branch minutes, KOP archive, Nordea Bank, .*

Penttilä's *Oulu KOP* design is interesting for a number of reasons. It showed him beginning to put into practice some of the architectural principles he had discussed in his writings. In particular the principles related to the honest handling of facade materials in contemporary architecture and the development of New Style architecture, with its rejection of Classical and Neo-Renaissance models. The *Oulu KOP* was also one of the first New Style buildings in Oulu. Some understanding of its impact and innovative qualities can be gained through a comparison with the nearby *Oulu Town Hall* by the firm Grahn, Hedman and Wasastjerna, 1893-94. [Fig. 3.42] In relation to the question of architectural materials, Penttilä had designed a façade of red brick, grey granite and plaster. Though plaster made up the largest proportion of the wall surface it was not used in a fashion that imitated stone. [Figs 3.43 & 3.44] In contrast the *Town Hall* had been clad entirely in plaster, apart from the low, rusticated, grey granite basement. The plaster wall surface on the ground and first floor was handled to resemble stone, scored in imitation of rusticated and smooth ashlar, with decorative quoins and voussoirs.

The *Town Hall* design was based on an eclectic use of historical styles and a fusion of Classical and Gothic details, such as the ashlar stone effects and Venetian arched window arrangements. A comparison of figures 3.38 and 3.42 shows that in terms of the ashlar of the ground floor and the decoration, picked out in white on the painted plaster, the design of the *Town Hall* was closely related to the Neo-Renaissance plaster tradition of the 1880s, exemplified by Decker's *Torikatu 10* next door. In contrast, the *Oulu KOP* made a decisive break from this tradition. Instead, the design made an allusion to the brick and plaster facades of Brick Gothic architecture, associated with the Hanseatic towns such as Lübeck and Danzig. In Finland a simplified version of the style could be found in national monuments such as the fifteenth century *Porvoo Cathedral* and in elements of the thirteenth century *Häme Castle* and *Turku Cathedral*. [Fig 3.45] This visual reference to the Hanseatic League complemented the building's commercial character. But the overall façade design was not dependent on historical models.

Penttilä's design differed from these two earlier buildings in its approach to form, materials and handling of ornament. In terms of form, the verticality, corner tower and picturesque silhouette differentiated the *Oulu KOP* from the more horizontally and symmetrically balanced *Town Hall* and *Torikatu 10*. All three buildings occupied corner plots, but in Penttilä's design this was emphasised by means of the tower and the building's main entrance, placed right in the corner of the building. The corner tower and varied roofline linked Penttilä's building with the latest trends in contemporary urban design such as the *Tallberg House* by the Gesellius, Lindgren & Saarinen firm [G-L-S]. Completed in 1898 this had been one of the first buildings in Finland to completely embrace the fluid forms of the New Style. [Fig. 3.46] In both buildings the tower form was implied by means of a projecting bay, rather than existing as a structural element distinct from the body of the building. The unusual shape of Penttilä's tower roof and spire were in line with the free inventiveness that characterised the New Style approach. In some ways it can be seen as a dramatic exaggeration and elongation of the central gable and roof arrangement used on the *Town Hall*. The swooping corner tower roof of Isæus's *Norstedt Printing House*, Stockholm, 1882-91 is another possible source of inspiration. [Fig. 3.47] The pitched roofs, tower and gables, chimneys, tourelles and dormer windows all placed a lively decorative emphasis along the roofline of Penttilä's *Oulu KOP*.

The treatment of the wall surface and ornament in Penttilä's design was also innovative. The stone elements of the ground floor and the brick details along the upper part of the façade clearly functioned as decorative additions to the façade, rather than structural elements. The rubble-faced, grey granite of the basement and ground floor performed some of the same function as the incised plaster ashlar of the ground floors of both the *Town Hall* and *Torikatu 10*, but without implying stone construction. It gave the ground floor greater visual weight than the upper floors, complying with Penttilä's belief that the appearance of the building should convey the tectonic solidity of the construction.³¹⁵ The rough grey stone of the basement and the band courses of stone running round the façade in contrast with the pale, roughcast plaster created a bold, graphic, decorative effect based

³¹⁵ See the discussion on page 103-106.

on contrasting colour and materials. This effect complemented the decorative red brick elements of the upper portions of the façade. The surface pattern created by the granite and the brick ensured these more expensive additions to the façade had maximum impact.

The decorative handling of the granite and brick, as well as the plaster ornament, did not obscure the integrity of the plaster surface of the walls. In contrast, the complex arrangement of ornamental columns, arches and headers of the second floor of the *Town Hall* obscured the surface of the wall entirely. Despite the profusion of plaster and brick ornament on the upper two floors of the *Oulu KOP*, large areas of wall surface remained visible, as can be seen in figure 3.43. Penttilä also employed a new decorative language. This represented an attempt on Penttilä's part to put into effect the new approach to ornament he had called for. The ornament he used was free and inventive, in the manner of the New Style. The granite voussoir elements reaching down from the main band course over the ground floor windows echoed the convention of the voussoirs of arches, but in a playful manner, free of strict historical models. Similarly, the headers of the first floor windows echoed the form of consoles and architraves, but were moulded of a single smooth plaster shape and ornamented with brick feet and key-stone type plaques bearing caducei of Mercury. The graphic brick decoration of the eaves line and gables was effective primarily as surface ornament. This concentration of graphic ornament along the eaves line can be compared to the work of Odön Lechner in Budapest, for example his *Museum of Applied Arts*, 1892-96. Penttilä was very likely to have seen this building on his visit to Budapest on the occasion of the Millennial Exhibition in 1896. It is interesting to note that Lechner's language of ornament was in part derived from Hungarian folk textiles and in 1896 Penttilä had also mentioned the possibility of developing decorative brickwork patterns from Finnish textile traditions.³¹⁶ This is another example of an area on which, given the loss of almost all documentary material on Penttilä, it is impossible to say whether he was directly or indirectly influenced by Lechner, or whether, in the spirit of the inventiveness of the period and subject to the influence of similar intellectual currents, he developed a similar idea at a similar time.

³¹⁶ See page 107 and Penttilä, 'Rakennusosasto Berliinin teollisuusnäyttelyssä', 1896.

The idea of the National Style, which Penttilä returned to frequently in his journalism during this period, is not particularly easy to trace in this design. Penttilä's journalism approached the National Style ideal primarily in relation to wooden architecture and with reference to native wood traditions. The decorative brick patterns on the façade may be derived in part from Finnish textile patterns, but they are not immediately recognisable as such and therefore can not really be seen as National Style elements. They are not substantially different from, for example, the brick Gothic decoration of Hård af Segerstadt's *Helios House* (1898). [Fig. 3.48] The allusions within the *Oulu KOP* design to the Hanseatic brick tradition, with its Pan-Baltic associations, can be seen as an attempt to find a new architectural language more attuned to the architectural and cultural history of Finland. It certainly represents a break from the Neo-Renaissance model, which Penttilä regarded as an alien and inappropriate tradition for Finland.³¹⁷ It can only tenuously be regarded as a National Style however, as Finnish territories were only peripherally involved in the Baltic Hanseatic trading network and the Hanseatic, Brick Gothic building tradition never dominated in Finland as it did in true Hanseatic towns.

The use of Finnish granite in architecture was a phenomenon that had been warmly welcomed by Penttilä and others who sought a more nationally specific mode of building and saw the use of local materials as likely to further this goal. However, this appreciation had also been strongly related to the desire for honesty in the use of façade materials, irrespective of National Style concerns. It is difficult to disentangle the impulses in favour of a National Style and in favour of the honest use of façade materials and for reform in the language of ornament and the relation of such ornament to the wall surface.

The *Oulu KOP* can also be understood as the first step in Penttilä's development as a specialist in the field of banking architecture. The design functioned as a bank on two levels: symbolically and literally. Among the largest buildings in the town when it was built, the building made a statement about the newly established bank; another example of

³¹⁷ See the discussion on pages 41-42.

KOP's inclination to build on a grand scale, proving its financial confidence. Practically, the building provided purpose-built premises for the bank. These premises in fact occupied only the corner portion of the ground floor. [Fig. 3.49] The rest of the ground floor contained seven small retail premises with rear storerooms and four stairwells leading to the apartments on the first and second floors. There were three large and one small apartments on each floor. The space occupied by the bank was thus comparatively small: 260 m² of the 1229 m² of the ground floor. It comprised of a long banking hall, a manager's office, a safe, a customer's and a staff cloakroom and a passage out to the rear yard. The small size of the bank premises in comparison to the scale of the building indicates that whilst the needs of the new branch were quite modest, the intention had been to build a large building to confer prestige and to provide income through rent. The large building would also accommodate future expansion of the branch.

Symbolically, Penttilä's design responded to the building's identity as bank architecture to a greater extent than was seen in the wooden Savings Bank designs. The choice of a Hanseatic Brick Gothic model in the design could be seen as a nod towards the building's function as a place of trade and commerce. There was an established association between a Hanseatic style and commercial operations. This can be seen, for example, in the warehouse buildings further down Hallituskatu, nearer the harbour, built by Finn Helge Ranckein in 1884. [Fig. 3.50] More specific references to the building's function could be found in the headers over the first floor windows, which contained small plaster reliefs of the caducei of Mercury. The plaster medallions set in the eave-line brickwork also contained alternating reliefs of caducei of Mercury, laid over a cog and a device of the KOP initials interwoven, which can be seen in figure 3.43. The addition of the cog to the medallion device symbolised the alliance of commerce and modern industry. The use of the bank's initials as a logo within the ornamental scheme had already been seen in Nyström's use of the "FBiF" initials in the interior of his Helsinki SYP. The name of the bank was also displayed in the brickwork of the tower and the word 'Bank' appeared on a plaque over the entrance.

Alongside these visual representations of the bank's function there were more practical features. Just as in Tarjanne's *Kansallis Osake-Pankki*, the street-facing windows of the area occupied by the bank were set higher than those of the shops to increase the privacy and security of the bank interior. The basement windows beneath the bank were protected not just by railings, as all the basement windows were, but by stout iron grilles also. As has already been noted, customers entered the bank via the doorway on the corner, beneath the tower. They entered straight into the banking hall. This was a long room, oriented with two large windows along Pakkihuoneenkatu and one along Kirkkokatu. [Fig. 3.51] The counter ran lengthwise down the room, with clerks and the cashier working with their backs to the two large Pakkihuoneenkatu windows. Their working area was thus well illuminated, whilst the customer side of the counter received its primary light through the Kirkkokatu window.

The middle of the counter area on the clerks' side was occupied by the glazed cashier's booth. The glass panels provided protection for the cashier, while at the same time allowing the manager to monitor all activity within the booth. Bank robberies were very rare and as such the security arrangements in most banks in Finland were fairly rudimentary. In Oulu the bank could be entered via the front street entrance and via an entrance in the rear yard. The cellar area beneath the bank was sealed off from the rest of the cellar space, though access was via one of the communal stairwells. There was only one safe on the ground floor, not a day safe and principal vault as in Nyström's *Helsinki SYP*. The area beneath the safe was completely bricked up, as was usual practice for all safes not already located in the basement of the building. There was a cast iron spiral stair leading from the main banking hall down into the cellar beneath, to facilitate quick and secure access to records stored there. The manager's office at the rear of the banking hall was arranged to allow him to monitor and control all aspects of the bank's business. Two doors opened onto the banking hall, one on the staff side and one on the customer side of the counter. The door to the safe was located in this office and there was also a doorway to the rear passage, the staff WC and the yard door. Customers had access to their WC facilities via a short passageway off their side of the banking hall.

Only a single image from 1910 survives to give an indication of Penttilä's interior design for this bank. Just as on the façade, Penttilä broke with Neo-Renaissance style conventions in his interior design. The large services counter dominated the hall, creating a barrier between the area of the hall used by staff and that used by the customers. The counter was of polished wood, with ornamental panel dividers on the front facing the customers. These panel dividers took a delicate stem-like form and the panels between them were of lighter wood. In the middle of the counter was the glass cashier's booth. The wooden frame of the booth was also delicately carved, with tapering uprights, fluted at the base and culminating in squared bud forms and fine stave-like struts. The frames between were moulded in shallow curves.

This organic New Style ornament was continued in the iron railings that protected the top of the spiral stair down into the cellar. The iron work was based on delicate arabesques and floral forms. This motif was also echoed in the light fittings, in which five flower-shaped glass shades sprang from an ornate pendant. The end wall between the two doors into the manager's office was dominated by a large wall-mounted, long-case clock in an elaborate carved wooden case. The Thonet-style bent-wood chairs, also seen in the Oulu interior, are another example of Penttilä's enthusiasm for practical modern New Style design over more opulent, imposing furniture and the sinuous forms of the bent wood complemented the floral forms elsewhere.

The walls were smoothly plastered, with a painted frieze of swirling leaf forms around the top. The frieze was punctuated by shields with various designs, including a curly monogram devised from the bank's initials. The other designs are difficult to make out. They appear to include winged forms; these may well be winged caducei or other forms associated with Mercury, or they may be bird designs of some kind. These shields were set amid arabesques of foliage. The ceiling was heavily panelled, with carved beams and geometric panel work, which added a note of sobriety to the sophisticated interior. The panelling of the ceiling and the panelling of the doors were recognisable from more

conventional Neo-Renaissance interior designs, but the absence of cornice moulding or wall mouldings ensured that the overall effect remained free from historicist associations.

Penttilä's *Oulu KOP* was notable for its freedom from the historicist, Neo-Renaissance conventions which had dominated Finnish architecture for many years. It also exhibited the latest approaches to design in terms of materials and handling of ornament. As such, it can be associated with the most advanced architecture appearing in Helsinki at the same time, such as the *Argos House* (1897), Nyström's *Buoberg's Swedish-language High School* (1895) and Hård af Segerstadt's *Helios House* (1898). See figures 2.44 and 3.48. This illustrates well how the architecture commissioned by the national commercial banks, such as KOP, contributed to the dissemination of the latest architectural practice throughout the country. The building also exemplifies Penttilä's readiness to apply the ideas he preached in his writings wherever he got the opportunity.³¹⁸

Vilho Penttilä, Viipuri KOP, 1900-1901

The link between Penttilä's architectural beliefs, expressed through his journalism, and his architectural practice can be further examined in his next building for KOP, the *Viipuri KOP*, which was designed by Penttilä and Usko Nyström in 1900.³¹⁹ [Fig. 2.55] This branch building was a more prestigious project than that in Oulu. Viipuri was a more important town and there was more direct architectural and commercial competition from the other banks. POP's grand head-quarters by Aspelin were under construction there, as was a SYP branch building designed by Nyström in 1898. See figures 3.25 and 3.79. The Viipuri branch of KOP had also been among the first five KOP branches established in 1890. Like the other branches, it operated out of rented premises until sufficient capital had been accumulated to purchase a plot of its own. The plot eventually purchased was on

³¹⁸ The demands of growth and modern banking meant that the old office became too cramped and the building was demolished in 1959. A new bank was designed by Aarne Ervi and completed in 1961.

³¹⁹ The drawings are signed by both architects, implying they both contributed to the project. The minutes of the Viipuri Branch of KOP, however, refer only to dealings with the architect Penttilä, so it is likely that he was substantially responsible for the design and building work. It is possible that for such a prestigious commission Usko Nyström, as the most senior architect of the trio, signed to drawings to indicate his approval.

Torkkelinkatu, the street the bank already operated from, and one of the principal streets of the city. The plot occupied the corner of Torkkelinkatu and Fredrikinkatu [Fredrick Street].³²⁰ [Fig. 3.52 & 3.53]

The architectural drawings were submitted to the city in August 1900. The drawings were comprised of two sections. One part, occupying the Torkkelinkatu and Fredrikinkatu corner of the plot, was to be the bank premises, with offices and apartments on the first floor and further apartments on the second. The other section, running down Torkkelinkatu, was to have retail premises on the ground floor, offices on the first and apartments on the second and third floors. [Fig. 3.54] Work on the first section started immediately and the bank branch was opened in 1901; the second section was never built. There are references in the minutes of the branch to Penttilä's visits to Viipuri to oversee the work in progress and the building was credited to him in his obituary in *Arkitekten* in 1918.³²¹ ³²² These two facts point to Penttilä having been the principal author of the project.

The *Viipuri KOP* was Penttilä's first opportunity to work with a façade of natural stone. This fact is significant, given Penttilä's interest in reform in the use of façade materials. It followed only a few years after his 1898 review of Nyström's *Helsinki SYP*, in which he celebrated the use of natural stone as the way forward for Finnish architecture. He made the most of the opportunity offered by KOP, designing a building that combined a basement and ground floor of granite with upper floors clad in soapstone. In the *Rakentaja* review of the *Viipuri KOP*, the building was grouped with the only two other buildings in Finland yet to use soapstone as a cladding material: *Nyland Students' Union* and the *Pohjola Building*.³²³ The three facades were presented as evidence of the value of this newly discovered façade stone:

³²⁰ The remains of the building, which was badly damaged by bombs during the Second World War, still stand. The cupola was destroyed and the interior was gutted and is now flats.

³²¹ *Branch minutes, KOP archive, Nordea Bank, .*

³²² K. S. Kallio, 'Vilho Penttilä', *Arkitekten* 1918.

³²³ The review was anonymous, but it appears to have been written by someone from the UN-P-P office, if not by Penttilä himself. This is indicated by the quote: "We are too closely associated with the project to judge

The handsome and charming effect which the soapstone has in these façades is undeniable, particularly where it is given a smooth surface. Its suitability as a façade material can no longer be a matter of any doubt.³²⁴

As well as using two types of stone, Penttilä experimented with different manners of dressing the stone and of handling the carved ornament. [Fig. 3.55] This reflected his enthusiasm for the new materials and his commitment to exploring the possibilities they offered. In particular, the design showed Penttilä's belief in the need to develop practices in which the handling of the façade was sympathetic to the character and construction of the building and of the materials used.

The granite of the basement was arranged with contrasting areas of rubble-dressed coursed ashlar around the windows and smooth ashlar piers between the windows. The massiveness of the blocks and keystones and the projecting feet of the piers visually affirmed the load-bearing function of the base of the building. The ground floor, above the basement piers, which reached about four meters up the façade, was clad in rubble-dressed coursed ashlar. The termination of the piers was marked by a string course of diamond-pointed stone. Other than this and some more detailed decoration around the main entrance that will be discussed later, the texture of the stone itself made up the only ornament on this portion of the façade. By doing without carved ornament Penttilä's design acknowledged the qualities of the granite used: hard-wearing and capable of precision dressing, but difficult to carve in detail. The contrast between smooth and rough surfaces and different sized blocks created variety at this level of the façade. The high, deep-set windows and the rugged handling of the stone also created a slightly forbidding, impregnable appearance, reflecting the sober character of the business functioning within. The treatment of the granite, in particular the coursed rubble, revealed the influence of Scottish granite architecture in the early years of the use of granite in Finland. This has

how successful these facades are and we leave this to our readers..." ['Kansallispankin talo Viipurissa', 96.] Alongside Penttilä and Usko Nyström, a number of the architectural assistants within the office contributed articles to *S.T.* and its supplements.

³²⁴ 'Kansallispankin talo Viipurissa', 95.

already been commented on in relation to Lindberg's long article on granite in Aberdeen in *S.T.* in 1899.³²⁵ This mode of rubble-dressed stone was described by Strengell as "English-American rubble dressing" in his article on Finnish Architecture in 1903, relating such handling to the influence of H. H. Richardson in particular.³²⁶ This comment indicates that even where the use of native granite was celebrated, the connotations of its use were not solely national, but also reflected awareness of international trends.

From the first floor upwards the walls were clad in soapstone. The transition between the two materials was marked by a filleted band course, carved with a stylised clover-leaf design. The façade of the first floor was dominated by eight carved reliefs: four placed around the corner of the building, two above the main entrance and two above the apartment entrance, to the left of the main entrance on Torkkelinkatu. [Fig. 3.56] The sculptor responsible for the carved stone details of the façade was not credited in the review of the building and is not known. The firm's drawings for the building include an impression of the overall ornamental scheme, but not the details, so it is not possible to say whether the carvings were completely designed by the firm or by an independent artist. These panels were carved with large caducei topped by cogs. These clearly served to indicate the building's commercial identity, with the cog emphasising the importance of modern industry alongside the more traditional emblem for commerce. The fusion of a modern, ahistorical device such as the cog with the conventional iconography of the caducei was an example of the attempt on Penttilä's part to contribute to the development a new language of ornament. The fusion of old and new in the design can also be seen to indicate the progressive yet reliable nature of the new bank. Above the main entrance the carved panels were different. They contained two reliefs, one featuring a winged steam train, twined pine trees and a radial sheaf of corn; the other depicting a ship ploughing the waves, a fir tree between two pines and another radial sheaf of corn. [Fig. 3.57] The *Rakentaja* review described these panels as representing "trade, industry and commerce", though they could also be described as representing the position of Viipuri as a key centre of trade by both rail and sea, and the timber and arable products which were central to this

³²⁵ See the discussion on page 96-97.

³²⁶ Strengell, 'Suomen rakennustaide', 23-24.

trade.³²⁷ There was further detailed carving on the window frames between the larger panels, which featured swirling reliefs of a thistle motif. What remained of the wall surface between the window frames and plaques was dressed with smooth coursed ashlar, with thin bands of rubble-dressed stone in between each course. The complexity of the carving of the first floor in comparison to the ground floor reflected the very different characters of the two types of stone used.

The second floor was clad in smooth soapstone ashlar and separated from the first floor by a projecting string course. This string course ran right over the tops of the first floor windows, visually compressing this floor and giving it the character of a mezzanine level between the stern banking premises on the ground floor and the elegant principal apartments on the second floor. In reality the ceiling height of the first floor was only slightly lower than that of the ground and second floors. This compression made the lightness of the smooth wall surface of the second floor more dramatic. After the textured granite of the ground floor and the detailed carving of the first floor, the broad area of soapstone ashlar appeared particularly smooth and weightless. This progressively lighter effect achieved by the handling of the façade surface showed Penttilä putting into practice his belief in the need for design to reflect buildings' tectonic construction and the load borne by the ground floors. The heavy character of the granite of the ground floor visually counteracted the lightness of the large windows needed to illuminate the bank. The smooth ashlar of the second floor represented what Penttilä considered a more appropriate treatment of soapstone than the rubble-dressing used on the *Pohjola Building* and the *Nyland Students' Union*. Both of these designs had been conceived with the idea that they might be executed in granite rather than soapstone.

Penttilä's design also demonstrated his belief that the function of the building should be reflected in the façade. Thus the apartments of the second floor were visually distinct from the bank and commercial premises below. In contrast to the boldly illustrative nature of the first floor reliefs, the ornament of the second floor was purely decorative. [Fig. 3.58]

³²⁷ 'Kansallispankin talo Viipurissa', 95.

Ornament was concentrated around the windows and the cornice area. The window headers contained tight, unframed panels of curling thistles. This effect of small areas of intricate carving, emerging unframed from the smooth surface of the stone can be compared to Boberg and Wickman's handling of carving and surface on in their stone buildings.³²⁸ [Figs 2.40 & 2.41] The area of the corner of the building beneath the tower and the opposite end of the Torkkelinkatu façade were framed with shallow pilasters, the capitals of which were carved with thistle leaves with descending stalks. The cornice area was punctuated by plaques with a similar curling thistle motif and descending pine cones. The delicate, graphic quality of this ornament, especially on the pilasters, can be compared to the work of Wagner in Vienna, in particular his *Wienzeilehäuser*, 1899. [Fig. 3.59]

Penttilä's interest in international developments in technology and aesthetics, so frequently expressed in his writings, can be traced in the various international influences seen in this design. The granite cladding had been informed and inspired by Scottish and American sources and the stone ornament influenced by New Style architecture in Vienna, Stockholm and elsewhere. These varied sources of inspiration reveal the level of cultural exchange that characterised this vibrant period of the New Style in Finland. The construction and appointing of the building also reflected Penttilä's interest in technology. The construction was partly brick and partly iron, which enhanced the fire resistant qualities of the building. The 1901 review noted the technical specifications of the bank:

It is particularly worth mentioning that the actual treasury safe is constructed entirely of metre-long granite blocks. The supporting joists are all of iron and all the internal floors are of concrete.³²⁹

It is harder to isolate elements of the design that relate to Penttilä's ideas on the National Style. It could be argued that the use of Finnish stone gave the building national identity. Similarly, the iconography of the ornament, thistles and pines, could be read as specifically

³²⁸ For example Boberg's *Nordiska Kredit Bank*, 1899-1902 or Gustaf Wickman, *Skånes Enskilda Bank*, 1897-1900, which Penttilä wrote about in 1902, but which he may well have been familiar with through publications before then.

³²⁹ 'Kansallispankin talo Viipurissa', 96. The review also noted that the iron and steel parts of the safe came from England, though it did not mention the name of the company

Northern, if not uniquely Finnish, in character. The coats of arms incorporated into the decoration of the second floor, the arms of Finland on the corner of the tower and the arms of Viipuri and Karelia on either side of the tower's parapet give a more definite sense of locale. Here and there, particularly in the interior which will be discussed later, the robust medievalised character associated with much Finnish Style design can be identified. This character is particularly prominent in the areas of the design directly related to the bank. The rubble-dressed granite may be seen to be expressing a rugged Finnish character, as well as a forbidding character suitable for a bank.

The main entrance of the bank was designed with a bold granite portal containing stocky twined semi-columns and a solid wooden door. [Fig. 3.60] The 1900 drawing even included metal studwork in the door, increasing the medieval associations and aura of impregnability. [Fig. 3.61] As has been mentioned before, the extent to which the 'Finnish' character of features such as granite and heavy studded doors would have been apparent at the time is difficult to assess. It is only possible to note that these features were commonly used in the designs of G-L-S and Sonck in the 1900s, in buildings that were subsequently regarded by scholars in Finland and abroad as examples of Finnish National Romanticism.³³⁰ [Fig. 2.63] In contrast to this, the main entrance of the unbuilt wing and the entrance to the apartments of the banking wing express a different character. [Fig. 3.62] The main entrance in particular had curved panes in the door, curved radial glazing bars in the window above and rococo foliage and flowers carved around the stone portal. The entrance to the apartments above the bank, though more modest, again used the curved window panes associated with the curvilinear trend within the European New Style. This use of a lighter more cosmopolitan New Style for these doorways reflected the modern commercial character of this area of the building, in contrast with the sterner, and possibly more Finnish, character of the bank.

The commercial ground and first floor spaces of the unbuilt Torkkelinkatu wing were given large open and inviting display windows. [Fig. 3.54] This contrasted with the bank's

³³⁰ Comparison can also be made, for example, to the various doorways in *Hvittrask* by G-L-S, the entrance to the *Telephone Exchange Building* and *St John's, Tampere* by Sonck etc. See figures 3.120 and 3.112.

high windows, which admitted good light but were inaccessible from the street level and set deep in the granite clad walls. The arrangement of stone-clad piers between the display windows of the ground and first floors was exactly the solution to the atectonic, weightlessness of large areas of glass that Penttilä had admired in the *Lundqvist Commercial Building* (1898-1900) in his review of 1901.³³¹ These piers were probably to be clad in granite, to tie them in with the bank portion of the design. The caducei device was also used on some of the piers to maintain consistency across the whole façade. The apartments above the commercial premises were to be clad in roughcast, probably with soapstone ornamental details. This handling would have been similar to the Fredikinkatu end of the completed wing, which was clad in rough cast above the granite of the ground floor, with soapstone window frames, cornice and cornice plaques integrating it with the rest of the design. This use of rough cast rather than stone gives an indication of the expense of natural stone and thus an explanation of why the banks, as some of the richest commercial enterprises in the country, were so important as architectural patrons.

In general, the overall design of the *Viipuri KOP* was more refined and cosmopolitan in outlook than rugged and medievalised like its contemporaries, the *Pohjola Building* and *Nylands Students' Union*. The dominant note was horizontal rather than vertical, contributing to the design's air of balance and elegance. This was created by the strong horizontal bands of the different floors, visually affirmed by the various string and band courses that ran around the façade up to the projecting cornice. The broad domed form of the tower did not significantly counteract this horizontal. As it had been in Oulu, the tower was more of a visual statement than an architectural element. The presence of the tower was indicated in the main body of the façade by means of the grouping of façade ornament around the corner of the building. Two down-pipes also framed the corner portion beneath the tower. Only the parapet and cupola above the cornice gave the tower any physical reality, and this was purely ornamental, with nothing by attic space within.

³³¹ Penttilä, 'Kauppias Lundqvistin Liikepalatsi', 77.

Unlike in the vestigial use of a Brick Gothic style in Oulu, there was no overt historical language shaping the design in Viipuri. The expressive treatment of the stone, the corner tower and the detailed carved ornament all served to emphasize the building's break from tradition. The curious shape of the cupola and free handling of surface ornament associated the building with the inventive forms of the European New Style. Had the whole building been completed it would have been larger than Aspelin's *Viipuri POP* and as a mixed-function commerce and apartment building would have been comparable to developments such as Boberg's *Rosenbad* complex (1898-1902) in Stockholm. The design was innovative in its use of materials, ambitious in scale and modern in function.

The projected size of the overall floor area was approximately 1300 m² on each floor, with a further third floor on the unbuilt wing and a small mezzanine floor between the ground and first floor at the end of the Fredrikinkatu wing. [Fig. 3.63] The portion built had a floor area of approximately 670 m² on each of the three floors, plus approximately 170 m² for the mezzanine. Of this the bank occupied 480 m². This was a much larger banking office than the 150 m² area of the Oulu branch. Despite the large scale of the building space was carefully used throughout the design, as is indicated by the squeezing in of two small apartments on the ground and mezzanine floor of the far Fredrikinkatu end of the corner wing. Instead of the raised ground floor and high ceilings of the area occupied by the bank, the ground floor at this end of the building was slightly lower, as were the ceilings, allowing for the inclusion of an extra floor. Penttilä did, however, use space generously where it could be appreciated: for example the raised ground floor of the bank not only had the effect of elevating the bank, allowing for a more imposing experience entering the building, it also allowed for slightly larger basement windows, providing better illumination of the cellar and vaults area beneath the bank. The unexecuted Torkkelinkatu wing would have been comprised of three retail premises, with access to their own cellars, on the ground floor. In addition the wing would have included office spaces on the first floor and two large apartments and one small one on both the second and third floors.

In the executed L-shaped portion of the building the bank occupied the whole ground floor, apart from one of the small apartment to the other side of the yard passage on Fredrikinkatu and the entrance hall and staircase leading to the first floor. The broad rectangular banking hall was placed in the corner of the building, with large windows on Torkkelinkatu and Fredrikinkatu, as well as a few windows facing onto the yard. The main entrance to the bank was on Torkkelinkatu and lead up a shallow flight of stairs to the raised ground floor of the bank. From there it was possible to go to the right into the banking hall or to the left into an office. This may well have been the board of directors' meeting room. The manager's office stood at the rear of the building, at the heart of the business. From this office one could reach the meeting room and both the public and staff sides of the counter in the banking hall, near the stairs down to the vaults. The manager's office also contained the door of the day safe, an under-stairs storage area and what may have been a small waiting area. To the rear of the banking hall stood the staff areas; cloakrooms etc., and the chief accountant's office. The staff entrance to the building was off Fredrikinkatu and linked with one of the stairwells leading to the lesser apartments above.

On the first floor of the corner building there were three separate office spaces, accessed via the main Torkkelinkatu stairwell. On the Fredrikinkatu side were two small apartments, with a main entrance on Fredrikinkatu shared with the staff of the bank, and a service entrance on the rear yard. These staircases also served the mezzanine apartment and the two small apartments on the second floor. There was also one large apartment on the second floor, which was reached via the main Torkkelinkatu stairwell, though the kitchen opened onto the Fredrikinkatu service staircase. The central heating system extended only to the ground and first floor commercial premises. The apartments above were heated by means of traditional tiled stoves, which were considered to be healthier for heating residential spaces.³³² The building design preserved a clear hierarchy of use and access. The bank, first floor offices and grand second floor apartment all had entrances on Torkkelinkatu, whilst the staff entrance and smaller apartments were arranged up

³³² Wäre, 'National Romanticism in Finnish Architecture', 33.

Fredrikinkatu. The larger apartments in the design were all equipped with main and service entrances. It was common for apartment buildings to include both high status and low status apartments. Space and light were allocated reflecting the status and subsequent rent of the different apartments.

The interior of the *Viipuri KOP* displayed a more developed design concept than that seen in Oulu. In the large banking hall in particular, Nyström and Penttilä designed the whole interior from floor to ceiling. The hall was rectangular, with two massive granite columns supporting the broad span of the ceiling. [Fig. 3.64] Demi-columns around the walls supported the ends of the iron ceiling beams. The beams and fire-proof concrete intermediate flooring were concealed by wooden panelling. The design was a marked contrast to the arrangement and appearance of earlier banking halls in Finland. This can be illustrated through a comparison with the interior of Aspelin's *Viipuri POP* banking hall, completed in 1900. [Fig. 3.65] Aspelin's hall was arranged with a rectangular glass-roofed atrium, supported on tall marble columns. The columns had ornate, voluted capitals of gilded plaster. These capitals were repeated on the pilasters that ran down the wall opposite the arched windows along the other side of the hall. The glass roof was supported by architraves ornamented with a frieze and consoled cornice; a similar frieze ran round the ceiling of the hall. This Classical grandeur was continued in the woodwork, counters, furniture and fittings. The ornate doorway at the back of the hall, leading to the vaults, was arranged with a broad carved lintel, supporting an elaborately framed and pedimented clock. This arrangement can be compared to the clocks over the double doors at the rear of Jacobsson's *Skandinaviska kreditaktiebolaget* in Stockholm. [Fig. 3.17]

In contrast to this rich, ornate, Classically-inspired interior, the *Viipuri KOP* interior appears remarkably modest. This was not dictated by cost. The company's willingness to spend money was exhibited in the stone cladding of the façade. Similarly, the granite columns and specially designed interior fittings were not as modest as they might first appear. The solid woodwork and panelling, the granite columns and the ceramic tiles of the floor conveyed a different message from that of the *Viipuri POP*. Surfaces were treated

with greater simplicity: the tiled floor had an inconspicuous pattern and the panelling and stucco walls were largely plain, with no ornate mouldings. [Fig. 3.66] In some ways the interior can be compared to the wood panelling and low ceiling of G-L-S's *Pohjola Building's* customer hall. [Fig. 2.65] However, the *Viipuri KOP* was less exuberantly rustic in its tone. Ornament in particular was handled with greater delicacy. In place of the usual cornice mouldings around the top of the walls, there ran a narrow freeze of stencilled thistle garlands. The tops of the columns and demi-columns were picked out with plain bands of brass rather than ornate capitals, and wooden brackets reached up to the panelling of the ceiling, carved again with a thistle motif.

The arrangement of the hall, with the counter snaking from one side to the other, gave the space a less imposing, formal feel than the colonnaded, U-shaped counters of earlier halls. The counter and movable furniture was solidly constructed and panelled with unmoulded, shallow, rectangular or semi-circular panels. The long winding counter created as much serviceable counter space as possible. It had a thick wood counter top, supported on projecting curved brackets. In place of the usual beading or mouldings the semi-circular panels of the counter from were set with small squares of carved thistle patterns. The chairs, tables and benches provided for the customers were similar in character. [Fig. 3.67] Designed by Nyström and Penttilä, they resembled the solid construction and tapering forms of Gallen-Kallela's *Iris Room* suite. Like Gallen-Kallela's designs, Nyström and Penttilä's furniture blended the simplicity of vernacular furniture forms with the sinuous curved line of the European New Style. The heaviness of the wooden furniture was offset by notes of delicacy, just as the upper portion of the façade contrasted with the heavy handling of the granite of the ground floor façade. The cashiers' booths were constructed of light brass rods, with curving scroll details in the corners and bud-like brass knobs. The metal gate guarding the stairs down to the vaults was also designed with a geometric arrangement of slim brass rods, like stylised tendrils.

The hall and the building as a whole can be understood as a *gesamtkunstwerk*, in which all areas of the design complemented one another. The tapering forms of the brackets on the

counter matched the tapering legs of the furniture and the metalwork. Similarly, the repetitive downward arc of the stencilled garland complemented the upward arc of the counter panelling. The interior design was also related to the exterior design by means of the repetition of the thistle motif used in the panelling, furniture and on the stonework of the façade. The interior and exterior design broke from historicist conventions and explored instead the character of the materials used and the new forms of the New Style. Penttilä did not adhere entirely to his avowed principles of honesty in construction; for example, the iron ceiling beams were concealed beneath wooden panelling. In general, however, the design fulfilled many of the precepts for design reform Penttilä had discussed in the pages of *S.T.* By drawing on native plants in his ornament, using natural, native, materials, such as wood and stone and by exploring more simplified, less conventional forms, Penttilä can be seen to draw on principles that related both to ideas of a National Style and the New Style.

Vilho Penttilä, Kuopio KOP, 1903-1904

The success of the *Viipuri KOP* design appears to have cemented Penttilä's relationship with KOP and in the following sixteen years, until his death in 1918, he designed a further eight branch buildings for the bank. Following the *Viipuri KOP* came a much more modest commission for a branch in Kuopio in 1903. The town of Kuopio in Central Finland was founded in 1653 and stands on the shore of Lake Kallavesi, part of the Eastern lake-network. [Fig. 3.1] The waterway here is navigable down to Lake Saimaa and from there, via the Saimaa Canal, to Viipuri and the Baltic and Kuopio's prosperity in the nineteenth century was based on trade along the waterway, primarily in timber. By 1912 the population of the town had risen to 16,230 people, the vast majority of whom were Finnish-speaking.³³³

The Kuopio KOP branch had been founded in 1891. It operated in competition with the Kuopio Savings Bank, founded in 1875, and branches of the Bank of Finland, POP and SYP

³³³ Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Kuopio.

and by 1903 had acquired the largest deposit capital. Drawings for a new building for the KOP branch were ordered from Penttilä in the same year. Though the building was designed under the auspices of the Usko Nyström, Petrelius and Penttilä firm, Penttilä was referred to as the architect of the project in the minutes of the bank.³³⁴ The building was completed in 1904. The drawings have been lost, apart from a single sheet detailing the yard fence and the rear corner of the building.

The building stood on the Kauppakatu [Market Street]. [Fig. 3.68] It was a much smaller building than the *Oulu* or *Viipuri KOPs*, only approximately 270 m² on each of the two floors. The bank occupied the ground floor and there was an apartment on the first floor. [Fig. 3.69] The banking hall was placed in the corner of the building with light coming from the two street-front facades and from windows looking onto the side yard.

The entrance to the bank was via twin doors on either side of the corner. The design of the building was orientated towards this corner. A tower form was suggested by means of a cupola arrangement which broke through the eaves-line of the building. As in *Oulu* and *Viipuri*, the tower did not break from the main body of the building, but was indicated in the façade by the grouping of the entrance doors and three windows around the corner of the first floor. It was also delineated by means of two down-pipes. Beneath the cupola was a deeply recessed window set behind stocky columns. The effect is comparable, albeit on a smaller scale, with the use of colonnades on Sonck's *Telephone Exchange Building*. [Fig. 3.120] This arrangement stressed the thickness of the wall and the tectonic weight of the form.

In general the *Kuopio KOP* design can be related to the trend in the 1900s for rugged granite facades, towers and nature-based ornament, exemplified by Sonck's *Telephone Exchange*, G-L-S's *Tampere Savings Bank* and Lindahl and Thomé's *Polytechnic Building*. [Figs 3.120, 3.101 & 3.114] This trend will be discussed in more depth in relation to the *Tampere Savings Bank*, the *Tampere Joint-Stock Bank* and the *Tampere KOP* in the

³³⁴ Branch minutes, KOP archive, Nordea Bank,

following chapter. Only the ground floor of Penttilä's building was clad in rubble-dressed granite, with smoothly dressed stone for the basement, between the windows and forming a band course between the ground and first floors.

Most of the ornament did not survive the remodelling of the building in the 1930s.³³⁵ [Fig. 3.70] What can be made out from photographs indicate it consisted of abstract organic patterns like those seen in the stonework of the *Tampere Savings Bank*. The side entrance to the apartments has been preserved, and the massive field-stone blocks of the stairway, the carving of granite posts and the metalwork of the railings are a good example of the design trends of the period. [Fig. 3.71] The design represents a fusion of a rugged medievalised aesthetic with more modern design elements, such as the lamp incorporated within the newel post. This fusion is comparable to that noted in relation to Saarinen's furniture design for the *Finnish Pavilion*. The elaborate metalwork of the railings, porch hood and strap-work on the door were typical of the attention to decorative details of this period. Similar detail can also be seen in the metal-work capitals to the colonnade columns and decorative sheet-cladding of the chimneys.

The interior was even more richly decorated. [Figs 3.72 & 3.73] The decoration included panel-work, murals, stone stoves, decorative metal-work and light fittings. This richness is comparable with the interiors of the *Helsinki POP* and *Private Bank* of the same year.³³⁶ The owls carved in the brackets, between the columns and the ceiling beams, seen in figure 3.72 and 3.73, share the same archaic, totemic approach to nature-based ornament as Sonck and Jung's *Private Bank*. Ornament varied between geometric forms, exemplified by the pendant lamps formed of square brass panels, embossed with circles and light bulbs surrounded by circles of glass beads, and nature-based forms. These can be seen, for example, in the manager's office, figure 3.74, where the mural above the panelling was formed of stylised curling fronds of fern and the stove was tiled with leaf-patterned tiles.

³³⁵ The building was remodelled and extended by K.S. Kallio in 1925-25. The tower portion was demolished and other New Style features were erased. In 1980 the building was bought by the City of Kuopio and became the Kuopio Art Museum.

³³⁶ These two interiors are also discussed in depth in the following chapter.

In the *Kuopio KOP* we see again the fusion of National Style and New style elements that characterised Penttilä's and much of Finnish design in this period. The granite cladding and carved ornament of the exterior and the rich decorative scheme of the interior were the height of fashion in 1903. This small *gesamtkunstwerk* of a bank is another example of Penttilä's strength as an architect and the quality of service he offered to his clients. Even in a relatively minor commission in a remote provincial town, Penttilä's design incorporated the best materials, economically employed, and the latest design thinking, born of his familiarity with contemporary architecture in Helsinki and from across Europe.

3.ii THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRANCH BUILDING: THE CASE OF TAMPERE

Networks of branch banks formed a key part of the operation of the commercial banks at the turn-of-the-century. These branches, in towns and rural centres across the country, were essential generators of wealth for the institutions through deposits and interest on loans. By 1914 SYP had thirty-one branches, POP had thirty-six and KOP, despite being established a couple of decades later, had thirty-nine branches across the country. The Bank of Finland also established a number of branches to compete with the commercial banks and by 1914 it had thirteen branches across Finland and one in St Petersburg.³³⁷ These branches all initially operated from small rented business premises. During the 1900s and 1910s, however, a large number of specialised branch buildings were built to accommodate the more successful branches. There were a number of reasons behind this development. The larger, more successful branches in the growing commercial towns required larger banking halls, which were hard to accommodate within the small scale of the older infrastructure. The growth of the branch banks coincided with the improvement of the infrastructure of many Finnish towns. The streetscape of the town centres was changing, from one- and two-storey wooden buildings, with perhaps a few prominent brick buildings such as the church, school or town hall, to a fabric of more dense three- or four-storey brick buildings. The banks were in the forefront of these developments. The new bank buildings were also shrewd investments, often including lucrative commercial and apartment premises to let. Large buildings functioned as a mark of status and success and as such one branch could not ignore an impressive new building by a competitor. Local and regional banks also responded to these conditions, building themselves impressive head-quarters to compete with the branches of the national banks.

In 1900 there were seven banks in operation in the city of Tampere, branches of the Bank of Finland, SYP, POP, KOP and the Vaasa Bank as well as the head offices of the Tampere Joint-Stock Bank and the Tampere Savings Bank.³³⁸ Between 1900 and 1905 five new

³³⁷ Information taken from Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Finnish Banks.

³³⁸ The Vaasa Bank had been founded in 1878. Its operation was initially focussed in the Vaasa area, but began to extend across the country, though its branch network was not as extensive as the other nation-wide

buildings were built, creating new purpose-built premises for SYP, POP, KOP, the Tampere Joint-Stock Bank and the Tampere Savings Bank. [Fig. 3.75] The Vaasa Bank and the Bank of Finland continued to operate from rented premises. Built within a short five year period, close together along Kauppakatu [Market Street], these branch banks provide a good case study for the examination of the branch bank as a building type and the various stylistic impulses shaping urban architecture during this period.

The city of Tampere extends over both banks of the Tammerkoski River. [Fig. 3.76] The waterfalls at this point were used to run mills from as early as 1466. The town was formally founded in 1779. In 1810 the population was still only 682 people. The town was overwhelmingly Finnish-speaking.³³⁹ Tampere's fortunes changed throughout the mid-century. Drawn by the power of the rapids, industrial mills were founded along the shore. The three largest were the Finlayson Cotton Mill, the Lapiniemi Cotton Mill and the Pellavatehdas Linen Mill. By the 1850s Tampere was known in Finland as 'Finland's Manchester'. This growth was accompanied by a boom in the population: by 1880 it had risen to 13,750 and by 1900 it stood at about 35,000. The textile industry made up two-thirds of manufacturing. Other important industries were the leather and shoe industry, the paper industry and metal works. The town was well connected by the railways, with the line south to Helsinki completed in 1876. The line north-west to Vaasa was completed 1883 and the line west to Pori was completed 1895. [Fig 3.1] It was also possible to get as far south as Hämeenlinna on the inland waterways.

The majority of the town's built environment was made up of one- to two-storey wooden buildings. Brick buildings made up 19.2% of the built environment, in comparison to

commercial banks. By 1914 in addition to its head office in Vaasa, it had thirteen branches, including the splendid building in Helsinki. The Tampere Joint Stock Bank had been founded in 1898, fulfilling demands in Tampere for a local commercial bank. By 1914 it had five banks across the region. Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Finnish Banks. The Tampere Savings Bank had been founded in 1857. Initially its principal aim was to encourage poor townfolk to save from their wages to guard against destitution through ill-health or old age.

³³⁹ By 1910, when the population had reached 44,147 people, the census indicated that 41,835 of them were Finnish-speakers, with only 2805 Swedish-speakers, 76 Russian-speakers and 178 speakers of other languages. In the same census the religious mix was similarly dominated by Lutherans (43,654) with 239 people of other Protestant faiths, 147 of the Orthodox Church, 59 Muslims and 1 Jew. Statistics from Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Tampere.

Helsinki, where it was 61.9%.³⁴⁰ Industrial buildings were located along the shore and most of the rest of the large brick buildings were in the commercial heart of the city between the Market Square, Hämeenkatu and Kauppakatu.³⁴¹ As the fortunes of the town prospered throughout the 1880s and 1890s, new civic and commercial buildings were built in the town centre. This development corresponded in the late 1890s and early 1900s with the increased popularity of the New Style and a number of prominent buildings were built. This included civic buildings, such as the *Tampere Finnish Girls High School* (1899) by Wivi Lönn, and private commercial building, such as *Commerce House* by the firm of Andersin, Jung and Bomanson (1899) and the *Palander House* by Birger Federley (1900-01). [Fig. 3.77] The branch bank buildings, built between 1900 and 1905 were part of this trend, which made Tampere one of the most important centres for New Style architecture in Finland.

Gustaf Nyström, Tampere SYP, 1901

The first of the new branch banks to be built along the Kauppakatu was the branch for the SYP. [Fig. 3.79] The building was designed by Gustaf Nyström and completed in 1901. It was his third commission from SYP after his well-received head-quarters in Helsinki (1896-98) and the *Viipuri SYP* (1898-1900). [Fig. 3.78] In contrast to Penttilä's large-scale bank plus retail and apartment premises, Nyström's branch bank designs tended to be on a smaller scale. Their primary function was to provide a purpose-built bank premises in an impressive, attractive building, rather than to secure extra income through additional rented premises. In contrast to the head office in Helsinki, with its ground floor of approximately 930 m², the *Viipuri SYP* had been only approximately 350 m².³⁴² The *Tampere SYP* was slightly bigger, at approximately 620 m², per floor. The building comprised the bank premises and a lettable office or retail space on the ground floor and two apartments on the first floor. [Fig. 3.80] The bank occupied about five-sixths of the

³⁴⁰ In Viipuri brick architecture made up 28.1% of the built environment. Statistics from Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja* entry on Tampere.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, entry on Tampere.

³⁴² The building provided premises for the bank on the ground floor and further bank offices and a small caretaker's apartment on the first floor.

ground floor. The cellar contained vaults for the bank and cellar space for the other users of the building.

The most innovative element of the design was the way Nyström arranged the banking hall, extending out into the rear yard beyond the two-storey main form of the building. This made it possible to place a roof light over the rear portion of the hall, as well as running windows around the outside wall, overlooking the yard. This arrangement allowed Nyström to create an impressive sequence of spaces from the main entrance in the centre of the façade, through the grand entrance hall and vestibule to the large banking hall, with a U-shaped counter and roof light at the rear of the building. The front portion of the building to either side of the entrance hall was then used as office or retail space. This creative use of space allowed Nyström to maximise the impression of space and scale within the building and to make the most of the available light in the small plot.

The basic arrangement of the building's façade was symmetrical, with an arcade across the ground floor and projecting wings to either side. In this it was similar to the design of his *Helsinki SYP*. However, the overall language of the building was a significant departure from the Classicism seen in Helsinki. In his *Tampere SYP* design Nyström demonstrated his flexibility as an architect and his readiness to respond to new design currents, which was to make his architectural practice successful for so many years. The formal, Classical arrangement and rigid façade divisions of horizontal string courses and vertical pilasters were abandoned in favour of the smooth, unified architectural surface and delicate ornament associated with the New Style. The building was clad in plaster, apart from the granite basement, and the wall surface was embellished with plaster and soapstone details. The hipped roof of the wings and the steep pitch of the main roof reflected the adoption of a more Northern, Gothic aesthetic, comparable with the *Pohjola Building* and *Lundqvist Commercial Building*, and a contrast to the shallow roofs, concealed behind entablatures, seen in classical designs such as Nyström's *Helsinki SYP*, Bohnstedt's *Bank of Finland* and Aspelin's *Viipuri POP*.

Nyström's use of a New Style arrangement can be understood as an acknowledgement of the call made by his pupils and younger colleagues for an architectural style more rooted in Northern, and if possible, local traditions, rather than Classical, historical forms. The New Style had begun to significantly penetrate the public consciousness, in part due to the influence of Finland's success at the 1900 World's Fair in Paris and the accompanying coverage in the Finnish media. A number of architects in Nyström's generation, who had trained and practised in the Classical styles, attempted to adapt to this new trend. Aspelin's *Helsinki Savings Bank* (1901) was an example of this. In response to the criticism his *Viipuri POP* had received, Aspelin moved away from Italianate Classicism and designed a building incorporating a pitched roof, gables and more Northern Renaissance style ornament. [Fig. 3.81] Aspelin's design, however, remained formal and rigid and was criticised as such. Strengell commented in 1903 that "the domestic marble makes an excellent impression; but the design itself does not rise above the level of mediocrity."³⁴³ Similarly, Birger Brunila also praised the use of native marble but noted that "the effect is hindered by the unsuccessfully modelled, rubble-dressed pilasters and the distracting gables which disrupt the calmness and nobility that might be hoped for in relation to the cool, white marble."³⁴⁴

Nyström was more successful in his adaptation to the New Style and was able to adopt, not simply the formal language of pitched roofs and freer architectural ornament, but an understanding of the new relationship between wall surface and ornament that characterised the new mode. The unbroken surface of the plaster-clad wall exposed the building's basic form. The applied ornament floated on the surface of the wall, without any implied structural function; rather, it complemented the symmetry of the arrangement. [Fig. 3.82] Roundels punctuated the spaces between the arched windows and doorway, and these arched forms were delineated by fine plaster arches with ornamental springing points and headers. Ornament was particularly concentrated along the eaves-line, where ornamental gables above the first floor windows echoed the gables and pitch of the roof. The overall arrangement recalled the smooth surface and beautiful, detailed stone

³⁴³ Strengell, 'Suomen rakennustaide', 34.

³⁴⁴ Brunila, 'Uudempi rakennustaide', 611.

ornament of the *Vaasa Bank* in Helsinki, Clason's *Bünsow Palace* and *Hallwyl Palace* or Petersson's *Artist's Club* in Stockholm, which it can be seen to reference. See figures 2.53, 2.43 and 2.54. The language of ornament developed by these architects and others drew freely on the Venetian Gothic, Northern Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo traditions, but without strict adherence to historicist canons. Freed from these conventions, architects explored the relationship between architectural ornament and architectural form and developed an ornamental language that was both fresh and modern and more adaptable to expressing the increasingly varied functions of modern buildings.

The rich language of the ornament with which Nyström chose to decorate the *Tampere SYP* façade was a marked contrast to the allegorical sculptures of the *Helsinki SYP*. In part this change of course was directly influenced by the work of younger architects in Finland. The large post-devices on the two wings were reminiscent of similar features from the *Pohjola Building*. [Fig. 3.83] In the architectural drawings the posts even had soapstone bases with troll faces, further evidence of the influence of the ornament of the *Pohjola Building*. The G-L-S firm was increasingly prominent within the profession, and led the way in the adoption of the New Style in Finland. Their *Pohjola Building*, though only finished in July 1901, had been under construction since spring 1900, and initial designs had been published as early as 1899. The success of the nature-based ornament they developed for their *Finnish Pavilion* and the *Pohjola Building* was also widely influential in promoting the adoption of such ornament in Finland. On Nyström's finished building the soapstone bases were carved with large birds of prey perched on nests of pine needles and cones. The eaves ornament featured bees, a traditional device symbolising Saving, which was used in the ornament of banks across Europe. The bee was particularly associated with the Savings Bank movement. This can be seen, for example, in the large gold bee device on the façade of Alois Pichl's *Erste Österreichische Spar-Casse*, Vienna 1835, or Ödön Lechner's *Postal Savings Bank* in Budapest (1899-1902). [Fig. 3.84]

The gable headers above the first floor windows, which made up part of the cornice, were decorated with pine cones and needles and roses. They also included plaques containing

the entwined initials of the bank, “FBiF”(Föreningsbanken i Finland). The central soapstone header above the main entrance was particularly interesting as an example of Nyström’s new language of architectural ornament. A pair of putti hold up a shield containing the coats of arms of Tampere and of Helsinki, surrounded by pine needles and cones. [Fig. 3.85] Ears of corn, signifying bounty, frame the shield.

Nyström’s design differed from the robust, irreverent, medieval-inspired language of G-L-S’s *Pohjola Building*, or the bold, graphic reliefs and stylised plant ornament Penttilä used in Viipuri. Instead, he employed more established decorative forms: ribbons, shields and gables. The putti, in particular, are a contrast to the rugged aesthetic behind much early New Style ornament in Finland. The putti above the entrance could be compared, for example, to the putti used by Wagner on his *Länderbank* (1882-84) in Vienna. [Fig. 3.86] The fluttering ribbons, the scrolled shield and the rose details all also corresponded with a more international, polished, language of ornament. The entrance arrangement could be compared to Wickman’s portal sculpture over the entrance to the *Skånes enskilda bank*, Stockholm (1899-1900), in terms of the deposition of the figures, the scroll of the shield in comparison to the scroll of the prow. [Fig. 2.41] That Nyström chose a more consciously cosmopolitan, recognisable ornamental language, rather than the daring innovation practised by G-L-S or Penttilä, was a reflection of the ethos of SYP, as a conservative institution, in contrast to young Fennomane companies like Pohjola and KOP. It also reflected Nyström’s own understanding of architecture, in which New Style impulses were incorporated within an architectural philosophy based on a respect for the lessons of the architectural past.

The symmetry of the façade and the modernity and delicacy of the plaster and soapstone ornament resulted in a building that was both dignified and elegant. It was not insignificant that this imposing impression was created at a far more modest cost than the granite façade of the Helsinki head office had been. Nyström’s ability to design buildings that were recognisably contemporary but not iconoclastic goes a long way towards explaining his popularity among clients such as SYP and the Bank of Finland, as well as the

success of his work for the Government and the University in Helsinki. Nyström's contacts with his pupils, past and present, may have contributed to the speed and apparent ease with which he assimilated new ideas. The relatively small size of the Finnish architectural profession in general facilitated the spreading of new trends throughout architectural practice. Architectural and design competitions were held more and more frequently from the mid-1890s onwards. Competitions for prestigious projects and the publication of the results in *S.T.*, *Arkitekten* and other arts periodicals and newspapers opened up the field of architectural commissions and spread awareness of new design trends. Some competitions, like those organised by Penttilä and various societies interested in the success of Finnish design, were specifically geared, not towards allocating a commission for a new project, but towards raising standards of design in a certain area.³⁴⁵ The role of banks, as leaders in a small group of nation-wide enterprises, in commissioning buildings in the regional towns from leading Helsinki architects made an important contribution to the dissemination of new ideas outside Helsinki.

Nyström's banking hall design for the *Tampere SYP* demonstrated a similar transition from the opulent classicism of the *Helsinki SYP*. This was partially conditioned by the smaller scale and more modest budget devoted to the Tampere building. The hall was arranged along the same U-shaped counter plan, which Nyström had used in Helsinki and Viipuri and would also use in his *Turku Bank of Finland* branch in 1913. [Fig. 3.87] The customer approached the hall through the main entrance, through a vaulted hallway that also contained the front door to the apartments above, and progressed into a vestibule opening onto the hall itself. The central area of the U-shape in front of the counter was reserved for the customers and was tiled in black and white. It contained benches for waiting and desks for writing, as was usual. The outer area behind the counter was reserved for the staff and was lit by eleven windows that ran around the yard bay and the roof-light over the rear of the hall. To the right hand side stood the glass cashiers' booths. The columns, the U-shaped counter and the glass roof all evoked the atrium-like space of grander banking halls.

³⁴⁵ The *S.T.* competitions for Peasant housing and for urban workers' housing, in 1903 and 1909 respectively, are an example of this trend, as are the competitions called by societies such as the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts, the Finnish General Handcraft-Industry Society and The Finnish Stone Industry Union, etc.

Nyström's skill lay in devising this space within the confines of a smaller, more modest branch building.

Nyström retained some of the hallmarks of the earlier, Classical banking halls, such as the polished wood of the counter and the four half-fluted columns that supported the ceiling. The overall tone was, however, decidedly lighter and less elaborate than in Helsinki. Ornament was restricted to the polished bronze column capitals, with their corn sheaf motifs, the plaster ornaments above the picture rail and a delicately incised plaster frieze around the top of the wall. The plaster ornament was concentrated on the rear wall above the windows, and was thus most visible to customers on directly entering the hall. This decoration was more muted than the gilt and marble of the *Helsinki SYP* interior. The emphasis was on notes of delicate, sophisticated decorative detail on an otherwise plain plaster surface, echoing the handling of the facade. The gables and finials on the wooden frame of the cashiers' booths also directly echoed the appearance of the façade. Apart from the fluting on the columns the ornament was completely ahistorical. Instead, Nyström employed a New Style ornamental language inspired by organic floral forms. The plaster reliefs included both curved, abstractly organic forms and had a graphic, linear quality that makes them reminiscent of the plaster ornament used by Otto Wagner on the interior of his *Karlsplatz Station Pavilion* (1894-1901) and that used by other Viennese designers of the period. This language of ornament would have been recognised by customers as both new and foreign in origin, lending sophistication and prestige to the interior. This can be seen as a contrasting impulse to that seen in the interior of the *Pohjola Building* and the *Viipuri KOP*, in which the designers attempted to strike a less international note: impressive, yet consciously simple, honest and Finnish.

The interior of the manager's office exhibited further evidence of the influence of the New Style in the design. [Fig. 3.88] In the more intimate environment of the office Nyström chose a less formal style of furnishing. Instead of the highly polished copper beech that had been used in the hall, the furniture was of lightly varnished oak. The design of the furniture, sturdy but incorporating gentle curves and tapered legs demonstrated the same

approach as seen in Gallen-Kallela's *Iris Room* suite and Nyström and Penttilä's designs for the *Viipuri KOP*. The slated, round back chair resembled Van de Velde's work in Weimar. The gracefully moulded plaster frame around the door to the safe again shows the influence of the delicate New Style approach to surface ornament and echoed the delicate plaster arches of the façade.³⁴⁶

Birger Federley, Tampere POP, 1901-1902

Birger Federley had moved to Tampere in 1898 to set up a Tampere branch for his architectural partnership with Lars Sonck.³⁴⁷ The principal result of this partnership in Tampere was the *Tikkonen Building* on Kauppakatu (1898-1901). [Fig. 3.89] The building comprised shops and office premises and apartments and was one of the earliest New Style commercial buildings in the centre of Tampere. The building's ground floor was clad in grey rubble-dressed granite. The first and second floors were clad in pale plaster, with panels of incised floral decoration picked out in contrasting colours. The rounded corner high gables and varied colour, texture, façade articulation and fenestration all made the building a dramatic contrast to the older symmetrical, neo-renaissance wooden and brick buildings of the town. Sonck's involvement with the Tampere office was short-lived and by 1900 Federley was practising alone in Tampere. He was town architect from 1900-1901.

The *Tampere POP* building was designed in 1901, and the first portion was completed in 1902. [Fig. 3.90] The second portion was not completed until 1909. Instead of the high pointed gables of the *Tirkkonen Building*, the *Tampere POP* explored the freedom of the New Style in a different way. The façade of the 1902 portion of the building was arranged with a projecting cornice, broken by two gently curving gables. The pale plaster walls were smooth and plain and flush to the street-front of the plot. The flat surface was broken by

³⁴⁶ The *Tampere SYP* has been modified at various times since its construction. It now functions as a Students' Union building for the University of Tampere. The interior has been remodelled.

³⁴⁷ **Birger Federley** (1874-1835) had been born in Helsinki of German and Swiss parents. He graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1896. During his training he worked as a draughtsman in the offices of Grahn Hedman and Wasastjerna and Gustaf Nyström. In 1898 he formed a partnership with Lars Sonck in Helsinki.

shallow recessions and projections. The bay containing the yard entrance and the bay beneath the main gable both project forward slightly, whilst the first floor attic window above the yard entrance were set in a shallow recess. The line of the façade above the cornice was punctuated by short, cubic tower forms, framing the façade at either end and flanking the shallow gables. The attic windows beneath the cornice comprised of two round windows either side of the gabled bay and a variation on a Diocletian window in the centre, echoing the curve of the gable. The upper portions of the regular rectangular windows of the first floor were glazed with multiple square panes. All these elements contributed a complex variety of precise geometric shapes and gentle curves, which enlivened the apparent plainness of the flat plaster façade.

Ornament was used sparingly across the façade. A motif of little plaster beads ran beneath the window sills and down the sides of the upper three-quarters of the slightly recessed windows on the first floor. Beads were also used to punctuate the space to either side of the attic window above the yard entrance. The cornice and lintel over the main entrance were both supported by ornamental consoles, which took the form of lizard-like creatures. This creature is also depicted framing the shield in which the number of the building is displayed. The only other ornament on the façade was the floral forms nestling beneath the hips in the plaster work to either side of the main entrance and yard archway and also just above the main doorway. [Fig. 3.91] The cast-iron gate of the yard entrance was particularly striking, with studded panels and crooked, gothic spikes framing the pedestrians' gate within it. The name of the bank, in both Swedish and Finnish, was presented on a large plaque to the left of the bank entrance.

The cubic projections to either side of the gables and the relationship between areas of ornament and smooth plaster surface recalled the *Secession House* by Olbrich. Although Federley's virtually flat façade lacked the cubic-volumes of Olbrich's building. The gentle gables and flanking cubic forms also recall those used by Erik Lallerstedt on his *Matteus Elementary School*, Stockholm (1898-1901). [Fig. 2.42] Federley's subtle plaster façade and ornament contrasted with the dramatic decorative façade of the *Tirkkonen Building* and

with the more conservative, graceful façade by Nyström. The effect he achieved was both strikingly modern and cosmopolitan. This impression would help set POP apart from its competition, emphasising its good international contacts and suggesting an advanced outlook.

Federley maintained this air of daring modernity in the interior. The banking hall was arranged to the left of the main entrance, parallel to the street-front, with an L-shaped counter. [Fig. 3.92] The customers entered the hall into the smaller inner square of the L-shape. The hall was illuminated by the row of five ground floor street-front windows. Staff had an entrance in the yard of the building, leading via the staff cloak room to the clerks' side of the counter. The safe was situated in the banking hall rather than off the manager's office. The interior of the hall broke firmly from Neo-Renaissance conventions in favour of the New Style. The single column in the hall had no capital, simply bands of brass around the top. The furniture in the hall and in the manager's office displayed the fusion of fluid forms and a rustic, solid construction that had become established as a characteristic of Finnish New Style furniture design. [Fig. 3.93] The stem-like, smoothly curving arms and struts in particular recalled the work of Henry van de Velde, whose designs were known through international design periodicals.

Much of the furniture was ornamented with metalwork details, brass hinges, handles and key guards. Details such as the strap hinges on the cupboard in the manager's office illustrate the relationship between the medievalised or vernacular-inspired use of metalwork (seen for example in Gallen-Kallela's *Iris Room*) to more polished forms, reflecting the sinuous patterns of designers such as Mackintosh and Van de Velde. The light fittings and features employed similar graceful characteristics, delicate curves and arabesques. The counter gate was wrought into an unusual abstract, geometric pattern. [Fig. 3.96] The variety and inventiveness of detail shown in the metalwork alone, inside and outside the building, illustrates the enthusiasm with which new modes of decorative form were sought and explored at this period in Finland. The attention to detail within the

design, in which every door handle and stool was carefully crafted and lovingly ornamented indicates that the *gesamtkunstwerk* aesthetic was also strongly influential.

The other decorative features of particular note within the interiors were the large soapstone stoves in the banking hall and the manager's office. [Figs 3.94 & 3.95] The prominence of these stoves within the decorative scheme reflected an interest in more homely or rustic forms in interior design. This can be related to the prominence of fireplaces and hearths in both English Arts and Crafts interiors and to the symbolic value of the hearth in the romantically nationalist folk heritage narratives being constructed across Scandinavia and Germany, seen for example in figure 2.25. In contrast to the tall, slim, efficient ceramic stoves used in Sweden, Finland and elsewhere since the eighteenth century, in the 1890s architects frequently incorporated large open hearths or more massive stoves. Figures 3.97 and 3.98 provide examples of this trend from G-L-S.'s studio-villa *Hvittrask* and Sonck's villa for Jean Sibelius, *Ainola*. These more bulky stoves were inspired in part by the prominence of the stove in vernacular interiors, which were increasingly well documented. [Fig. 3.99]

This trend can also be traced in Penttilä's designs. The *Oulu KOP* sectional drawings show the traditional cylindrical stoves in the apartments on the first and second floors. In the *Viipuri KOP* we see both the cylindrical stoves used in smaller rooms where space is at a premium and larger, more rusticated designs in the grander apartments. [Fig. 3.100] It is interesting that large, more rustic and arguably less efficient stoves came into vogue at the same time as central heating made them less vital to the functioning of a building. Even when they were used as the primary source of heat they increasingly took on an important symbolic and aesthetic function alongside the practical one. Both of the stoves designed by Federley for the *Tampere POP* were typical of such stove design around 1900. The bulky form, roughly textured stone and prominent studs and hinges on the metal stove doors share the rugged, rustic characteristics that have been noted in architecture and furniture design of this period. The smoothly moulded chimney hoods and floral ornament details

are another example of the adoption of internationally recognisable New Style features within the rustic, medievalised Finnish New Style.

Around 1900 it is possible to detect a clear shift in Finnish architects' approach to interior design. This is particularly noticeable in terms of materials. In place of the glossy marble and gilt plaster ornament of Nyström's *Helsinki SYP*, natural, native wood and stone was given greater prominence. Plaster was treated as a cladding material only, rather than in imitation of stone, on both the interior and exterior walls. The same was true of plaster ornament, which began to take on more delicately moulded or incised forms based on floral or abstract, rather than historical, templates and the imitation of carved stone. This new course can be seen most clearly in the next two commercial bank premises designed for Tampere. The first, for the Tampere Savings Bank, was by the architectural firm that made the greatest contribution to the development of the New Style in Finland: Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen [G-L-S]. The second was by Federley for the Tampere Joint-Stock Bank. Both of these buildings were designed as large-scale commercial and apartment buildings as well as banks along similar lines to the *Oulu* and *Viipuri KOP* buildings.³⁴⁸

Gesellius-Lindgren-Saarinen, Tampere Savings Bank, 1900-1903

The *Tampere Savings Bank* building was the result of a nationwide competition organised by the bank in 1900. Though the G-L-S entry was disqualified for contravening the building regulations, it was purchased by the bank and commissioned.³⁴⁹ It has been suggested that the firm's success with the opening of the *Finnish Pavilion* in the same year significantly enhanced their esteem in the eyes of the bank and helped them secure the final commission.³⁵⁰ The architectural drawings were dated December 1900. The building was designed for a large corner plot at the junction of Kauppakatu and Läntinenkatu [West Street, now Näsilinnankatu]. [Fig. 3.101] It was planned as a three-storey L-shaped

³⁴⁸ The *Tampere POP* was demolished some time following the Second World War and the building is only known through photographs.

³⁴⁹ Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen*, 264.

³⁵⁰ P. Kivinen, *Tampereen Jugend: arkkitehtuuri-taideteollisuus [Tampere Jugend: Architecture - Applied Art]*, Keuruu 1982, 21.

building, with a further wing in the yard. The floor area would have been approximately 1980 m² per floor, significantly larger than either the *Oulu KOP* or *Viipuri KOP* designs. Construction was planned in phases. The first building phase, from May 1901 to May 1902, was the far end of the Kauppakatu wing and yard buildings. The ground floor street-front of this portion was occupied by small, temporary premises for the bank; approximately 180 m². The second phase, autumn 1902- May 1903, saw the completion of the opposite end portion of the Läntinenkatu wing. The linking corner portion, which was to have included a larger permanent banking premises and the dramatic corner tower, was never constructed.³⁵¹

The form of the building, its arrangement over a corner plot with a prominent corner tower, was similar to that of other G-L-S projects such as the *Pohjola Building* and *Fabianinkatu 17* (1900-1901). [Figs 2.56 & 4.20] This reflects the overlap in the design periods and the similarities in function between the projects: large-scale complexes, combining commercial and apartment premises. The *Tampere Savings Bank* ground floor was to have included both the temporary and permanent banking premises, six retail premises, the caretaker's apartment, storerooms and a stable and servants' toilets in the rear of the yard. There would have been twelve apartments in total on the first and second floors. Of the executed portions of the design, the ground floor was clad in grey, rubble-dressed granite. Above the ground floor the façades were clad in smooth plaster. Restricting the stone to street level maximised its impact, whilst keeping costs down.

In the arrangement of the stonework of the ground floor façades in particular one can detect the archaic, medievalised New Style developed by the G-L-S firm in the early 1900s. The bold, rusticated rubble arches, stout granite pillars and piers between the windows and the notes of carved ornament in particular were similar to the ground floor of the *Pohjola Building*. The arches, however, departed from the rounded Romanesque of the *Pohjola Building* in favour of a shallow, gently rounded, pointed arch; a New Style Gothic form that

³⁵¹ The building is still owned and occupied by the Tampere Savings Bank. The corner portion was built to a new design by Federley in 1926 and included new large banking premises. The height of the existing G-L-S portions was raised by one floor at the same time.

became very popular for windows and doorways in Finland around 1900.³⁵² The carved ornament also differed from the complexity of the *Pohjola Building* ornament. It was both less profuse and simpler in form. This change was necessitated in part by the change in material, from easily carved soapstone to granite. The granite portion of the first building phase on the Kauppakatu, was, according to the original drawings, to be clad in a rugged, rubble-dressed, cycloptic bond. In the end this portion of the façade was clad in a slightly more finished tessellating bond of rubble-dressed blocks.³⁵³ [Fig. 3.102] The bold textural use of stone was continued in the Läntinenkatu wing, with the craggy forms of the massive stone voussoirs overshadowing the arches of the windows and portals. The ground floor of the building was dominated by a strong, bold, archaic tone, expressed primarily through this handling of the stone. Primitive architectonic relationships were evoked by the use of such exaggerated voussoirs resting on broad, smooth stone piers. On the Kauppakatu façade this was taken even further with a striking post and lintel arrangement over the twin ground floor windows.

The carved ornament was simplified even further than that indicated in the designs. The carved reliefs along the springing-line of the arched windows were never executed. Carved decoration was limited to the main portal and yard archway on Läntinenkatu and the window headers and doorway on Kauppakatu. In place of detailed squirrels and other animals, pine branches and forest spirits etc., the carvings took the form of more schematic renderings of trolls and abstract lichen or foliage patterns. [Fig. 3.103] The simplification of the carved figures and the shallow nature of the relief patterns gave the carving a more architectural quality, as the underlying masonry block upon which the carving was executed was still palpably present. This contrasted with the rich, plastic, illustrative quality of the carvings on the *Pohjola Building*. The more primitive form of the carving, in particular the faces carved in the Kauppakatu window headers, recall medieval masonry traditions. [Fig. 3.104] The archaic character of the heavily textured stonework and

³⁵² This shallow, stylised Gothic arch can be seen in many of G-L-S projects and also many New Style buildings by Sonck.

³⁵³ This technique was one of the latest, fashionable modes of dressing granite, learnt from study of the Scottish granite industry.

primitive carving was continued in the handling of the heavy wooden doors. The door within the yard passage took on a particularly interesting bud-shape, infusing the Gothic ribbed vaulting of the passage with a more organic, New Style character. The doors were all conspicuously heavy, hinged and braced with studded and embossed metal. [Figs 3.105 & 3.106]

The plaster-clad first and second floor portions of the facade were, in contrast, handled with a smoother and lighter touch, to off-set the archaism of the ground floor. They display the same plasticity of surface as the *Fabianinkatu 17* design. The varied projecting and recessing niches for the windows created picturesque variety across the facade. These recessions and projections were primarily cosmetic and the façade of the building ran largely flush with the boundary of the plot. The regularity of the windows needed to illuminate the apartments within was underplayed as much as possible, through the use of varied groups and shapes of window. Alongside the modulations of the façade surface there were areas of applied ornament incised into the plaster. This was more delicate and lyrical than that carved in the stone, as befitted the different character of the material. Moulded courses ran across the façade separating the first and second floors and bisecting the second floor windows. There were panels of incised plaster ornament above certain windows, carved with gently swirling foliage and lichen-like forms, similar to the granite relief above the *Kauppakatu* doorway and the designs embossed on the metalwork of the doors. [Fig 3.106]

The major decorative statement of the design was to have been the tower, which was never constructed. This would have included an entrance to the bank on the corner, within an arched porch opening onto both *Kauppakatu* and *Läntinenkatu*, supported by a single, massive, stout granite column. The tower itself, rising high above the pitched roofs of the *Läntinenkatu* and *Kauppakatu* wings, would have had greater physical presence than the towers of Penttilä's *Oulu KOP* or *Viipuri KOP*. It would have been a hollow, purely ornamental structure, which would have risen twenty-nine metres high. The cupola was to have been square, raising to a hipped pyramid form similar to that of the *Pohjola Building*.

The existing, revised, corner portion of the building gives some indication of the effect that the tall, squared corner tower would have had. A corner vista like this was particularly effective on a relatively narrow street such as the Kauppakatu, only 14 meters across, where the facades could only be viewed obliquely. [Fig. 3.107]

The original interiors no longer exist. What is known of them indicates that the design continued the fusion of medievalised and archaic elements with more fluid, New Style forms developed in the work of the G-L-S firm during this period. E.O.W. Ehrström was an assistant in decoration, as he was in various G-L-S projects, and he designed much of the decorative craftwork, particularly metalwork, of the interior. The vaulted ceilings and heavily-studded doors reflected the use of similar features on the façade. The painted murals and colourful tiled stoves indicated in the sectional plans would have contrasted with the muted colours of the stone and plaster façade and created the jewel-like, warm interiors recognisable from other G-L-S commissions. [Fig. 3.108]

Birger Federley, Tampere Joint-Stock Bank, 1904-1905

The new building for the Tampere Joint-Stock Bank was designed by Birger Federley in 1904. The building, at number 7 Kauppakatu, was right next door to Federley's *Tampere POP*. The *Tampere Joint-Stock Bank* was later extended, stretching round down Kuninkaankatu to Hämeenkatu on the other side of the block. Work started on the Kauppakatu building in 1904. The larger Hämeenkatu and Kuninkaankatu section was started in 1906, but building work was interrupted by a fire on the site. This resulted in Federley being sent to Germany by the bank to study the use of fireproof, reinforced concrete constructions in housing architecture, a new technique which was employed in the final phase of construction. The large complex was finally completed in 1916.³⁵⁴

³⁵⁴ Kivinen, *Tampereen Jugend*, 249. The finished Hämeenkatu section included the new premises for the Tampere Post Office, an early example of this common union of important institutions. In 1932 the KOP moved its branch from Penttilä's building into the larger Hämeenkatu wing of this building.

The initial design was simply for the single building on the Kauppakatu. [Fig. 3.109] The raised ground floor of the three-storey building was occupied by the bank and there was a single large apartment on both the first and second floors. The design showed a strong relationship with the design of the recently completed *Tampere Savings Bank*, one block up on the opposite side of the Kauppakatu. The combination of rubble-dressed granite and smooth plaster surfaces were a form which became very popular in Finland in the early 1900s. The *Tampere Joint-Stock Bank* demonstrated Federley's readiness to incorporate these new design trends in his work. Penttilä's *Kuopio KOP* from 1903-04 was another example of the adoption of such features, see appendix 1.

The rubble-dressed stone portal and the stone columns between the ground floor windows shared same the rugged character as the stonework of the *Savings Bank*. The tapered arches of the ground floor windows also contributed to the medievalised character of the design. This contrasted with the more contemporary appearance of the unbroken pale plaster surface of the upper floors. The steep gable of the portal and the rugged stone of the arch were similar to the main portal on the Läntinenkatu façade of the *Savings Bank*. [Figs 3.110 & 3.111] Both evoked the pitched roof and rough field stone of Finland's mediaeval churches.³⁵⁵ Birger Federley had worked as supervisor on the construction of Sonck's *St John's Tampere* since 1902. The robust stonework, carved ornament and New Style medievalism of this grand project may have informed Federley's approach to the stone in his *Tampere Joint-Stock Bank* design. [Fig. 3.112] The heavy wooden form and metalwork details of the main portal can be related to this medievalising trend, but the embossing of the metalwork also revealed the influence of organic, insect and plant-life forms, which inspired many designers in this period. [Fig. 3.113]

The plaster first and second floors of the façade were even plainer than those of the *Tampere POP* and the *Tampere Savings Bank*. The rectangular windows were well spaced and slightly recessed into the plaster, with almost no mouldings. The upper portions were glazed with small multiple panes. The plaster surface of the wall was largely unbroken,

³⁵⁵ See discussion on page 71.

with no string courses or other mouldings. The arrangement of the façade was consciously irregular, but with little of the varied recessions and projections of the *Savings Bank*. The doorway was to the far left of the façade and above it, at roof level, a small tower form broke the eaves-line. The regularity of the windows was disrupted by a vertical arrangement of a bay of windows on the first and second floor, recessed within their own niche, and with a Diocletian window above in a small gable. This recessed bay, including its field of plaster ornament, can be compared to similar to features used on the *Tampere Savings Bank*. Such forms were an increasingly popular in Finnish architecture of the period, as they created an effect of plasticity but with minimal disruption of the regular plan of the building. This reflected the complex and sometimes contradictory relationship between the taste for irregularity and picturesque architectural forms and the reality of the regular street plots and the need to create maximum architectural space from valuable urban real-estate. Further plasticity was created in the design by means of the smooth flow of the tiles around the tower cupola and across the steep pitch of the roof, undulating over the two eyelid dormer windows and gable. The inclusion of the tower form reflected again the popularity of this element in Finnish architecture around 1900-1905. The roof and tower of the 1900-02 *Olofsborg* apartment building by GLS, the tower of the *Students Polytechnic Building* 1901-03 by Valter Thomé and Karl Lindahl, even the small pierced corner tower form of Penttilä's *Kuopio KOP* (1904) show how pervasive this form was. [Fig. 3.114]

The interior of the *Tampere Joint-Stock Bank* also reflected contemporary trends in interior design. It featured ornate ceramic stoves, with metalwork doors ornamented in a rustic, primitive style, similar to those noted in the *Tampere POP* and *Tampere Savings Bank* interiors. The wall friezes of flowing, organic patterns and the tapering, ahistorical doorframes can also be related to these new trends. The banking hall was situated at the back of the building, illuminated by a row of windows overlooking the rear yard. Access was from the main door up a shallow flight of stairs to the raised ground floor. From the hallway an ornate door opened to the right onto a vestibule that opened via an archway

onto the banking hall itself. The manager's and staff offices were arranged along the front of the building facing the Kauppakatu.

All five of the new branch buildings in Tampere were arranged along the Kauppakatu, in the commercial heart of the town. This grouping of banks was observable in towns across Finland. It is also evidence of the modern phenomenon of urban specialisation where, as towns grew, different areas began to develop distinct identities. In such close proximity and built within such a short space of time, the banks were clearly in close competition both commercially and aesthetically. Their responses to each other and to the architectural currents of the period give indications as to the nature of the different institutions. The SYP had turned to Nyström, a well respected Helsinki architect, for a design that was sympathetic to modern architectural trends but which retained a link to architectural traditions and resembled the restrained contemporary architecture of centres such as Stockholm. As such, the building reflected the status of the bank as the oldest, most established commercial bank and conveyed the idea that the institution was aware of contemporary developments and ready to embrace progress, but in a prudent manner.³⁵⁶

In a somewhat similar vein, POP had turned in 1902 to the fashionable local architect, Federley, and commissioned from him a design that drew on sophisticated international trends within the New Style. The barely ornamented plaster walls, asymmetry and completely ahistorical ornament and façade arrangement would have made a dramatic contrast with Nyström's more conservative design opposite. This choice may have been POP's attempt to distinguish itself from its rival and present itself as more progressive as an institution. The New Style language chosen differed from the stone-clad, pitched-roofed forms, ornamented with nature-based details which can be recognised as part of the impulse within the early New Style to explore ways of including a sense of national identity within the design. As such, the POP differed from most of the New Style building of this

³⁵⁶ The development of more settled affiliations, with SYP commissioning its third bank from Nyström and KOP its fourth bank from Penttilä, can be understood as the beginning of greater specialisation within the architectural profession. The further development of these affiliations would, in the 1910s, lead to buildings with a more recognisably consistent commercial character and institutional identity.

period and would have looked completely unfamiliar to the citizens of Tampere. Its 'foreign' appearance would have underlined the cosmopolitan orientation of POP.

In contrast, the Tampere Savings Bank had commissioned the young and increasingly successful Helsinki firm of G-L-S to build a large commercial premises in the medievalised National Style variant of the New Style the firm had pioneered. The Tampere Share Bank, another local bank, followed the course set by the Savings Bank, though their building was commissioned from Federley rather than from a Helsinki firm. These local banks, and subsequently the KOP also, commissioned architecture that was progressive, but which would have been increasingly recognisable as part of a larger group of Finnish Style, or Finnish New Style architecture. The progressive statement they were making therefore would have been less 'foreign', more recognisably Finnish, complementing the more egalitarian, inclusive natures of these institutions. The degree to which buildings within this mode were overtly Finnish Style in character varied from buildings like the *Pohjola Building*, in which National Style impulses made a significant contribution to the design, to buildings in which the use of natural stone and flora-and-fauna ornament was associated more with ideas on aesthetic reform and the idea of a National Style was less prominent and perhaps absent entirely, such as the *Lundqvist Building* or the *Tallberg Building*.

The granite façade, tower and board entrance archway of Penttilä's *Tampere KOP*'s linked the building into this Finnish New Style mode. The carved ornament on the façade was also part of the same trajectory of New Style ornament which drew on organic lichen-like designs, such as were seen on the Savings Bank and Joint-Stock Bank. This stylised ornament could be seen as a simplification or offshoot of the naturalistic flora-and-fauna ornament of *Finnish Pavilion* and *Pohjola Building*. However, it could also be related to the international New Style, in which ornament based on sea organisms, insects and magnified plant was approached by designers such as Obrist or August Endell, seeking a new, abstract language of ornament, completely free from historical conventions. It is impossible to reliably distinguish or separate the two strands, one national and one international, from this mode of ornament that appeared in Finnish design at this period. This detail

encapsulates the degree to which National Style impulses were intertwined with progressive impulses and a familiarity with the drive for aesthetic reform that motivated the international New Style.

Vilho Penttilä, Tampere KOP, 1905-1907

The Tampere branch of KOP was another of the first wave of KOP branch offices to open in 1890. It was initially situated in rooms in the Town Hall. The rapid growth of the Tampere economy and the successful development of the branch enabled it to buy its own plot as early as 1893. The new building, a two-storey brick building, by an anonymous architect in the Tampere Town Building Office at 4 Kauppakatu, was completed in 1895. [Fig. 3.115] The building made the Tampere branch the first of the KOP branches to build its own purpose-built building. It was quite small, with a floor area of only 160 m² on each of the two floors. It comprised a banking hall at the front and an office and safe at the rear, with a hallway running down the side of the building providing access. There was a flat on the first floor. Growth was such that by 1905 a new, more impressive, building was designed to replace the 1895 building. The new building was commissioned from Penttilä shortly after the completion of his *Kuopio KOP* in 1904 and was the last KOP building designed under the auspices of the UN-P-P firm. It was completed in 1907.³⁵⁷ [Fig. 3.116]

The floor area of the new building was approximately 840 m² on the ground floor; of this the bank occupied 370 m². [Fig. 3.117] The entrance to the bank was located within the broad arched passage to the yard, which divided the building in two. Customers entered, via a small lobby, straight into the long rectangular banking hall that extended into the yard at the rear of the building. This arrangement was similar to that Nyström had devised for the *Tampere SYP*, but projected further into the yard, allowing for a skylight over a greater area of the hall. The manager's office and other staff offices were arranged at the front of

³⁵⁷ KOP operated out of the building until 1932, when the branch moved to larger premises in the Hämeenkatu wing of Federley's *Tampere Joint-Stock* building. The building was taken over by a new bank, the Tampereen Osuuspankki, which still occupies the building. The interior was substantially re-modelled in the 1970s.

the building and round to the right hand side of the hall. To the left hand side of the yard passage the ground floor was occupied by three shops, each with their own entrances and each containing stairs down to storerooms in the cellar. On the other side of the building, beneath the bank, the cellar contained the boiler room with the building's central heating system and an archive vault, accessible only via the bank's offices above. The area beneath the safe was sealed. The first and second floors each contained two large apartments and one small one. The main stairway to the large apartments had its entrance in the yard passage, opposite the entrance to the bank. Two rear staircases to either side of the building provided service access to the two large flats and access to the smaller apartments.

The most striking aspect of the *Tampere KOP* design was the grey granite cladding which covered the whole facade. [Fig. 3.118] This enabled the building to stand out dramatically from the plaster facades of both the older Neo-Renaissance buildings and the other New Style buildings along the Kauppakatu. Though the *Tampere Savings Bank* and the *Tampere Joint-Stock Bank* had granite clad ground floors, the *Tampere KOP* was the only building on the Kauppakatu to have a façade entirely of granite. Apart from *St John's Tampere* it was at this time the only building in Tampere with an entire façade of natural stone, though Wivi Lönn's 1907 *Fire Station* did include large areas of granite cladding. Both Penttilä and the bank were clearly aware of the impact achieved by this façade material. The use of such a large amount of granite would have added significantly to the cost of the building, but it appears that the bank were prepared to undergo this expense to achieve a striking architectural presence in the town. Indeed, the executed façade included an even greater area of granite than had been indicated in the 1905 drawings, where Penttilä had allowed for plaster surfaces between the windows on the commercial side of the building.

The other noticeable change from the earlier drawings was made in the manner in which the stone was dressed. The 1905 drawings showed coursed ashlar on the ground floor and tessellating squared rubble bond on upper floors above the bank, whilst the upper floors of the commercial half of the building were plaster clad, with piers of granite ashlar running up to the eaves. On the executed building the whole façade above the granite ashlar of the

basement and the ashlar piers between the display windows received the same tessellating squared-rubble cladding. Within this, decorative features such as window frames and the entrance arch and bay window of the tower were picked out in smooth granite ashlar. This alteration in the design had the effect of emphasising the uniformity of the wall surface across the building, an effect comparable to that of the smooth plaster walls of earlier New Style buildings. This approach to granite cladding, emphasising its character as a skin over the surface of the building, was also comparable to Sonck's handling of the granite surface of *St John's Tampere*.

The façade was balanced by means of the interplay of various horizontal and vertical notes. The broad stone lintels above the windows and the dentilated string courses and cornice emphasised the horizontal on the bank side of the building, whilst the broad window piers on the commercial side of the building and the tower emphasised the vertical. This variation between the two halves may initially have arisen from a desire to differentiate between the 'stern' bank and the more 'frivolous' commercial aspects of the building's usage, an approach already noted in Penttilä's *Viipuri KOP* design. This variation became less pronounced once the skin of squared rubble was extended over the whole building, but the gently curved bay windows and larger areas of carved ornament on the commercial side still contrasted with the more austere face of the bank. The treatment of the windows across the façade was relatively regular in comparison to the use of bays, oriels and variously sized windows on the earlier banks. This regularity was offset by the picturesque interest provided by the tower bay.

The dramatic broad, low, stone arch of the yard passage, the concentration of carved ornament and the tall, pyramid-roofed tower formed the centre piece of the façade. The mid-block plot of the bank did not allow Penttilä to focus his design around a corner tower as he had in his *Oulu*, *Viipuri* and *Kuopio KOP* designs. The combination of the broad arch and tower into a striking unit was similar to the arrangement used in G-L-S's *Päivälehti Building* (1903-04) in Helsinki. [Fig. 3.119] The *Päivälehti Building* was on a similar mid-block plot and the tower bay was used to add romantic irregularity to the

building's silhouette and façade. Penttilä's tower bay served much the same function. The broad, low archway, the studded door to the bank and the iron lanterns gave the design the medieval touches familiar from the nearby works by G-L-S and Federley, but absent in the regularity of the bank side of the facade. The squared form of the right-angled bay window helped to maintain cohesion between the tower bay and the regularity of the rest of the façade. This unusual bay window shape was the same as that which had been used on the 1893 KOP building and was perhaps recycled to evoke a sense of continuity with the older building, which had stood on the same plot. The squared tower, with its supporting pillars and elongated pyramid roof, was also comparable to the tower form used by G-L-S on the *Päivälehti Building* as well as on their *Helsinki Railway Building* of 1904.³⁵⁸ It can also be compared to the squared tower and stocky columned form of Sonck's 1903-1905 *Helsinki Telephone Exchange*. [Fig. 3.120] These comparisons illustrate how popular such tower forms were at the time.

The shallow relief ornament carved in the granite was focussed around the tower bay, but also appeared around the windows on both sides of the façade. As has already been mentioned, this ornament took the form of leaf and lichen-like tendrils and spirals. [Fig. 3.121] There were none of the troll or gargoyle forms, seen on the *Savings Bank* however, and the stylisation of the organic forms was taken further towards abstraction, blurring the line between forms drawn from nature and forms drawn from geometry, circles and spirals. This language of ornament is comparable to Sonck's robust, organic, stone ornament used in *St John's Tampere* and elsewhere.

Interior Design: A Comparison of *Tampere KOP* with the *Private Bank* and the *Helsinki POP*

The banking hall of the *Tampere KOP* was one of the most remarkable of Penttilä's interiors. The design displayed the influence of two important banking halls which had

³⁵⁸ The results of the competition were published in *Hufvudstadsbladet*, *Arkitekten*, *Lukutupa*, *Helsingin Kaiku*, *Veckans Krönika*, *Lördagen* and *Rakentaja* in 1904.

been completed in Helsinki in 1904, the *Helsinki POP* by G-L-S and the *Helsinki Private Bank* by Sonck and Valter Jung.³⁵⁹ These three halls function as a useful illustration of the subtle change of direction that began to emerge in the New Style around this time. The three halls shared a similar basic arrangement, as can be seen in figures 3.122, 3.123 and 3.124. They were situated at the rear of the buildings, extending into or occupying the rear yard space and they were orientated at a right angle to the main street façade. They all had vaulted ceilings resting on granite columns and skylights over the central area. The *Helsinki POP* and *Private Bank* were both designed in 1903 and constructed and opened in 1904. Penttilä interior was designed in Helsinki in 1905. As an architect working in Helsinki, with a growing specialism in bank architecture, it is likely that Penttilä visited both the earlier banks.

Sonck and Jung's *Private Bank* was an alteration to an already existing building in the heart of Helsinki.³⁶⁰ In the design one can see the powerful, primitive, decorative spirit characteristic of Sonck's work of the period.³⁶¹ Alongside that one can also trace the first stirrings of a more restrained, linear and geometric aesthetic. Sonck's use of massive stone columns and gently pointed arches evoked medieval forms and the division of the space into a central aisle and low side aisles created a church-like atmosphere. The load-bearing function of the polished granite columns was emphasised through their girth and through the palpable weight of the squared mass of the soapstone capitals. Sonck particularly emphasised the tectonic role of these columns at the point where the entrance vestibule opened onto the banking hall. Here two broad granite-clad pillars and two round columns

³⁵⁹ **Valter Jung** (1879-1946) was a Swedish-speaking designer and had graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1902. He worked with Sonck on the interior of *St John's, Tampere* and the *Private Bank* in 1904. In the *Private Bank* Jung was responsible for the fittings and furniture and the carved and painted ornament. In 1905 he went on to form a successful architectural office with Emil Fabritius, which operated until 1915.

³⁶⁰ The building, dating from 1816, stood on the corner of Unionkatu and Pohjoisesplanadi. The *Private Bank* had been founded in Helsinki in 1895. The building is now owned by the City of Helsinki and the former banking hall functions as an exhibition space, known as the Helsingin Jugendsali [Helsinki Jugend Hall].

³⁶¹ The design and construction of the *Private Bank* coincided with continuing work on *St John's, Tampere*, the final stages of work on *St Michaels, Turku* and the *Helsinki Association Telephone Building*.

support massive stone lintels, one of which can be seen in the foreground of figure 3.123.³⁶² This arrangement in turn supported the load-bearing outer wall of the first, second and third floors of the original brick building above.³⁶³

Sonck orchestrated the customer's approach to the hall to enhance the dramatic impact of the space. The entrance from Pohjoisesplanadi was via a dark, barrel-vaulted corridor that ran through the front portion of the original building. This corridor opened onto the vestibule area, which was separated from the main banking hall only by the large columns mentioned above. Neither the corridor nor the vestibule had any natural sources of light but that which filtered in through the glass panes in the front door and from the banking hall to the rear. The banking hall itself was richly illuminated with a large skylight and windows in the rear wall looking onto the yard, including a large stained glass window designed by Jung. Customers entering the dark entrance corridor were thus drawn toward the light of the hall and on passing between the massive vestibule pillars entered a light, colourful, airy, vaulted space, which contrasted vividly with the dim, enclosed spaces behind.

The use of dark and light and of tangible and powerful tectonics created a space with a strong visceral impact. The decorative scheme augmented this effect by means of richness of colour and striking carved ornament. [Fig. 3.125] The stone carved ornament was particularly interesting. It was neither entirely abstract nor as naturalistically illustrative as the ornament of the *Pohjola Building* or *Finnish Pavilion*. The animals, birds and figures within the designs took on stylised, totemic forms and were enveloped and incorporated into dynamic abstract patterns. [Fig. 3.126] These patterns hinted at an origin in organic forms such as lichen or fish scales. Just as with the use of posts and lintels, in which Sonck seemed to return to a more primitive, ancient mode of construction, so the language of ornament can be seen to evoke a more primitive language. The ornament also drew on the tradition of medieval church mural painting for its fusion of pattern and nature and for its

³⁶² The pillars contained residual sections of the original outer, supporting wall of the older building, beneath the granite cladding. Korvenmaa, *Innovation Versus Tradition*, 58.

³⁶³ Sonck use of the post and lintel tectonic technique has been examined more fully in *Ibid*.

position, accenting the underside of arches and running along ribs. [Fig. 2.34] Some of the patterns could also have been drawn from traditional Finnish textiles. Others, such as the carved birds' heads of the vaulted ceiling beams were completely original, but executed with the same spirit of a primitive, creative invention of ornament.

Alongside the strong, imaginative, medievalised elements of the interior there ran a more restrained and geometric approach to design. The post and lintel elements of the interior lent themselves to strong accents places on horizontals and verticals. The main horizontals of the vestibule lintel, the dark, polished mahogany counter and the flat skylight were set against the upward thrust of the sloping vault of the hall roof and the downward thrust of weight upon the columns. The furniture designed by Jung took this further. The central table and chairs, with their vertically panelled backs and sides and near-horizontal arms and tops, had a solidity that was almost Classical in its stable, cubic-volumed elegance. The cubic form of the chairs and table can be compared to the experiments of a number of designers in the early 1900s to pare down furniture to essential, geometric forms. Koloman Moser's dramatically simple geometric furniture designed for the *Puckersdorf Sanitorium* (1903) or Charles Rennie Mackintosh's furniture for *Hill House* (1903-04) are examples of this impulse.

The solid polished mahogany and leather upholstery in which Jung's furniture was executed emphasised the status of the interior. This conventional luxury softened the modernity of the forms. Classical character was increased by the bold scroll forms of the arms of the chairs. These scrolls were used elsewhere on the wooden panelling that fenced off the staff stairway down to the vaults and up to the managers' offices on the first floor. [Fig. 3.127] The scroll form obliquely referenced the classical scroll of the Ionic column, but was used primarily as an elegant geometric form. In figure 3.127 one can see how the scrolls at the end of the barrier, which formed a small bench, were combined with ribbed panelling that can be seen as a stylised reference to an Ionic capital upon a fluted column. The round seat at the base of the vestibule column also rests on similar ribbing. The scroll was also used on the low gate in the panelled barrier, again visible in figure 3.127. Here the

scrolls were repeated and instead of evoking a classic form they can be seen to evoke the stylised tendrils of a plant, thus harmonising with the primarily organic character of the mural ornament. The top of the barrier, the counter, the central table and the panelling at the back of the benches wrapped around the columns were all ornamented with a pattern in inlaid circles. The clean lines of the furniture and the restraint with which it was ornamented ensured that the interior did not entirely take on the slightly wild, fairytale-like quality of the *Pohjola Building* interior.

As noted above, the *Helsinki POP* interior employed a similar arrangement to the *Private Bank*. The main space was composed of a high vaulted central nave, with skylights, separated from the low-ceilinged side aisles and apsidal alcove by thick granite columns. The similarity of the two interiors implies some common source of inspiration. Though there was some resemblance to the vaulted, sky-lit, mural-decorated exhibition hall of G-L-S's *Finnish Pavilion* it is likely that the vaulted banking halls of Gustaf Wickman in Stockholm were particularly influential. The halls of the *Skåne Enskilda Banken* (1897-1900) and the *Sundsvallsbank* (1900-02), with their ribbed, vaulted ceilings and rich decoration broke the mould of the traditional banking hall atrium, with a new inventiveness of form and ornament. [Figs 3.128 & 3.129]

The granite columns and the bold flat character of the ornament of the *Private Bank* and the *Helsinki POP* contrasted with the undulating counters and rich filigree ornament of Wickman's banks. The *Helsinki POP* exhibited the same mixture of medievalised features and a more restrained, geometric language of design as in the *Private Bank*. The vaulted ceiling and colonnade had less of a gothic feel than the *Private Bank*, because the columns supported broad, smooth architraves rather than pointed arches. This arrangement was echoed in the wood panelling of the service counter, where round demi-columns appeared to support the broad squared apron of the counter top. The interior was particularly remarkable for the variety of its decoration, both in terms of materials and modes. The

overall effect would have been one of great richness and light.³⁶⁴ The skylight was decorated with a stained glass frieze around the edge and the ribs of the vault and the top of the architrave were picked out with geometrically incised plaster. The architrave was supported by ten round granite columns and each column was capped by embossed bronze capitals, incorporating electric light brackets. These capitals included medallions depicting trades, designed by Armas Lindgren and made by the sculptor Alpo Sailo.³⁶⁵ [Fig. 3.130] These medallions represented a continuation of the tradition of such representations in bank design, which was first seen in Finland with the sculptures on the façade of Nyström's *Helsinki SYP*. The top of the bronze capitals included a pattern of overlapping coins, which was also used at various points in the wood work and furniture. The plaster walls of the side aisles, apsidal alcove and entrance area were all painted with murals. These murals included both abstract patterns, such as the wave design around the banking hall, which can be seen in figure 3.122, and stylised leaf and fruit patterns, which can be seen in figure 3.130.

The furniture of the hall and the manager's office was all designed by the firm.³⁶⁶ Again, a variety of decorative impulses were brought to play within the same design. These included playful elements, comparable to the inclusion of gnomes and spirits in the stonework and interior of the *Pohjola Building*; for example, the little old men's heads carved into the knobs of various terminating uprights, see figure 3.130. Elsewhere, the woodwork was carved with figures in flowing robes, as can be seen in figure 3.131. These sinuous figures recalled the supple arabesque forms of the sculptor, Ville Vallgren, who worked in Paris and whose work was inspired by the expressive forms of August Rodin and the decorative forms of the Parisian New Style. His work had been exhibited across Europe in the 1890s and he acquired unprecedented fame for a Finnish artist. Vallgren's work was

³⁶⁴ All the buildings on this plot were demolished in 1934 to make way for the new Pohjoismaiden Yhdyspankki head-quarters, an institution created when SYP and POP had merged in 1919. The new building was designed by Ole Gripenberg and completed in 1936.

³⁶⁵ Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen*, 154. Alpo Sailo (1877-1955) had studied at the Finnish Art Society School in Turku from 1895 to 1897 and at the Helsinki Centre for the Industrial Arts from 1898-99. He worked in the studio of Gallen-Kallela from 1899-1901.

³⁶⁶ Armas Lindgren's notebooks indicate that it was he, within the office, who primarily co-ordinated the interior decorative scheme. Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen*, 154.

well known in Finland also and the appearance of the figures would have been recognised as contemporary and fashionable. Their gracefulness contrasted with the gargoyle-like, humorousness of the old men's heads.

Alongside this figurative ornament the wooden panelling and much of the furniture was inlaid with geometric patterns, squares or triangles, or panelled with recessed squares. These geometric patterns show the same interest in the decorative possibilities of the repetition and interrelations of geometric shapes as were being explored by designers such as Moser and Hoffmann in Vienna and Mackintosh in Glasgow. This geometric ornament complemented the repetitive patterns incised in the plaster of the ceiling and elsewhere. In a similar vein, the form of the furniture itself showed the same move towards simple geometric construction as the furniture in the *Private Bank*. The bench in figure 3.130 had a straight flat back and arm rest, giving it a solid cubic form that resonated with the inlay of squares along the back and the recessed squares in the panelling along its base. This solid cubic form could also be seen implied in the broad apron and base of the counter. Apart from the carved heads, the furniture was not carved or moulded. The writing desk in the centre of the hall was constructed with the desk ends and legs made of two-dimensional panels, braced by a strut beneath and the desk top above. This could be seen as a variation on the single strut table form used by Sparre and Sucksdorff in their furniture designs of 1894. [Figs 2.18 & 2.20] Instead of a medieval character and a complexity of carved detail, the desk simply took the constructional system and reworked it with a form in which the complexity of the final form is belied by the transparency of the construction and the simple pattern of the inlay. That elements recognisable as derived from the firm's medievalised early work, pillars, murals, decorative carving, could be harmonised with elements such as geometric patterns and simplified form, was an indication of the evolution in taste occurring within the Finnish New Style at this time.

Mainly this change can be seen in the move towards simpler, more schematic geometric forms in ornament and furniture design and a greater sense of clarity and simplicity in the arrangement of space, as pointed arches and high-backed chairs with carved armrests gave

way to squared horizontals and verticals. A similar evolution of taste can be seen in Penttilä's *Tampere KOP* interior. In a number of ways the space was very similar to that of the *Helsinki POP*, yet it was not simply an imitation. The *Tampere KOP* banking hall was smaller than that of the *Helsinki POP*, about 180 m², rather than 240 m². The gently vaulting ceiling with skylights was supported by only four stout granite columns. The smaller scale and the fact that the hall only extended partially into the building's yard, and therefore could be only partially vaulted and sky-lit, necessitated a different approach to layout. Instead of a U-shaped counter, the counter was shaped, running across the hall, in front of the two rear columns, then down to meet the third column and finally bulging out and curving down to the entrance of the manager's office, as is indicated in figure 3.117. The cashiers' booths were located behind this curve in the counter and the rest of the clerks occupied one side aisle and the rear portion of the hall. The side aisles on both sides of the hall had relatively low ceilings. The ceiling of the central aisle, before the vault of the skylight, was raised by about a metre, as high as would be allowed by the first floor above. Beyond that the rear of the hall opened up into a vaulted space, running to the end wall. The hall was illuminated by skylights and the light in the side aisles was supplemented by two windows in the end wall and windows along the left-hand aisle, overlooking the yard.

Apart from the curved shape of the vaulted ceiling, the features most directly comparable to the *Helsinki POP* were the bronze capitals of the granite columns. [Fig. 3.132] These were similarly embossed with medallions illustrating the bank's sources of wealth: dairy farming, arable farming, commerce and industry. Throughout the interior the same mixture of geometric patterns and ornament inspired by natural organisms could be found. The decoration was, however, less extensively applied and the accent was placed more heavily on the geometric motifs. This partly reflected the fact that the *Tampere KOP* was a more modest space, without the resources of the main Helsinki branch of POP. It also reflected the general trend in Finnish interior design after 1904, in which ornament

was more sparingly applied and geometric patterns were used more extensively than organic or illustrative motifs.³⁶⁷

The hall was panelled to head height with wooden panelling decorated with a pattern of recessed squares. The panelling of the counter-front and the design of much of the fitted furniture continued this theme of squares. The counter face was divided with flat, filleted panel dividers headed with a pattern of inlaid squares. These square-base patterns and the rectangular panelled mounting of the main hall clock all showed the same interest abstract ornament created through the inter-relation of cubic shapes. The fitted benches along the customers' side aisle had similar panels of recessed squares and the wall panelling. [Fig. 3.133] The other furniture, tables and desks etc., varied the squared insets with squared struts, lightening the solidly constructed form of the furniture and maintaining the same geometric character. The floor of the hall carried a motif of large circles made up of small square tiles. This circle was also inlaid in the side of the customers' writing desk. On the embossed bronze capitals the allegorical medallions were framed in patterns including squares and circles. There was no mention of the names of the craftsmen responsible for the bronze reliefs or any of the other ornament within the design. Unless the craftsmen were sculptors of note, such as Runeberg or Wikström, they were not mentioned in architectural reviews. Due to the loss of Penttilä's personal papers and the limited nature of the papers relating to architectural commissions held in the KOP archive the work of these craftsmen must remain anonymous.

The other mode of decoration, using patterns derived from natural organisms, was found primarily in the mural work. The murals were not as extensive as in the *Helsinki POP*. They ran only along the undersides of the architraves and ceiling beams and up over the ribs of the vault, but elsewhere the walls were treated with pale, unmoulded plaster. The exception to this was a customers' waiting recess opposite the curved cashiers' counter. This was created by means of a stud wall, not shown in the original plans but indicated in

³⁶⁷ This was particularly the case in commercial and public spaces. In the domestic interiors the popularity of rich floral and foliated patterns and a medieval/cottage aesthetic continued, based on its supposed 'cosy' qualities.

figure 3.117. The recess is visible to the left in figure 3.133. Here, above the fitted benches, the ceiling was formed into a low vaulted space and painted with a colourful mural of stylised plant form, spirals and squares. The patterns running up the ribs of the vault can again be related to that practice in medieval church interiors. The richly painted, vaulted nook in relation to the rest of the hall can be compared to Saarinen's dining room in his part of the studio-villa *Hvittrask*. [Fig. 3.98] Here, within the wooden building, he created a low plaster vaulted ceiling, with colourful murals, which opened via an architrave onto the large, open space of the house's main hall. It is interesting that Penttilä chose to use this alternative decorative language for the waiting niche. The medievalised and enclosed space of the low vaulted ceiling gave the niche a different quality from that of the main hall, one with a more cosy character.

In general the *Tampere KOP* interior, like that of the *Helsinki POP*, illustrates the transition taking place in Finnish interior design around towards the middle of the 1900s. The imaginative, medieval- and vernacular-inspired, flora-and-fauna based ornament of the early 1900s began gradually to give way to interiors in which ornament was more abstracted and increasingly relied on purely geometric patterns. Similarly, furniture design moved further from the medieval or vernacular models and away from the fluid, curved forms that characterised the furniture in Penttilä's *Viipuri KOP* and Federley's *Tampere POP*, to more cubic forms.

The diversity of the five bank buildings built in Tampere between 1901 and 1905 illustrate the dynamism of Finnish architecture at this period. This dynamism gives an indication of why it is difficult to classify the 'style' of the period. Even over only a handful of years, exploration of the New Style approach to architecture produced the restrained elegance of Nyström's *Tampere SYP*, the smooth sophistication of Federley's *Tampere POP* and the rugged character and fluid facades of the *Tampere Savings Bank*, the *Tampere Share Bank* and the *Tampere KOP*. Within them can be traced the exploration of formal aesthetic concerns: the need for a new language of architectural form and ornament that was ongoing in the Finnish architectural scene, as it was across Europe. It is also interesting to

note that the exploration of forms associated with the National Style, rugged granite, ornament derived from nature, etc., was not the sole preserve of Fennomane institutions, as KOP and the Swedish-speaking POP and Private Bank all commissioned buildings within this mode. The case of Tampere is also interesting as it illustrated how rapidly ideas were disseminated and shared across the architectural community, from Helsinki to the regions, and how ready architects were to experiment with new ideas from their peers within Finland and abroad.

4.i THE NEW DIRECTION

Evolution within the Finnish New Style

The changes occurring within design, noted in regards to the *Tampere KOP*, *The Private Bank* and the *Helsinki POP*, were felt throughout the field of architecture and design, from the mid-1900s onwards. The alterations made by the G-L-S firm to the façade design of the *Helsinki POP* provide a good illustration of the course this new direction was to take. The facade plan from 1903 showed a building with a massive stone foundation, medievalised arched windows and a dramatic main portal. [Fig. 4.1] The heavily embossed and hinged main doors, the gargoyle-like carved figures between the windows and the crenellated cornices all lent the design the decorative, robust, medievalised character familiar from the firm's work since 1900. Only the symmetry and regularity of the arrangement indicated the changes that were to follow.

Though the 1903 drawings were accepted by the bank, the design was changed during the construction of the building, between summer 1903 and the building's opening on 19th September 1904.³⁶⁸ [Fig. 4.2] The rugged stonework of the design was replaced by smooth soapstone ashlar. The tower and much of the surface ornament were also abandoned, creating an effect of restrained elegance instead of textural and ornamental richness. Only the central bay window was retained and the intricacy of its carved surface gives an indication of the effect the original design would have had in execution. The smooth surface of the stone, the curved forms of the ground floor arches, and the way the remaining fields of carved ornament floated on the surface of the stone, all recalled the sober richness of the 1899 *Vaasa Bank*. [Fig. 2.53] The flat largely unbroken surface of the stone highlighted the building's symmetry and, in the absence of the tower, the composition was dominated by the horizontal. This created a stately repose that could be described as Classical in spirit, in place of the sturdy Gothicism of the original design.

³⁶⁸ Hausen, et al., *Elie Saariinen*, 152, 279-80.

There is no record of the reason behind this extensive revision of the façade design. One factor may well have been the discussion that sprang up in response to the firm's first-prize winning entry in the *Helsinki Railway Station* competition in the spring of 1904.³⁶⁹ The firm's design, like the majority of designs submitted, featured the rusticated stone, pitched roofs and gables, and carved stone ornament which had been popular in Finnish architecture since 1900. [Fig. 4.3] The G-L-S design was intentionally harmonised with Tarjanne's *Finnish Theatre*, which stood next to the proposed administrative block of the station on Railway Square. The administrative block was physically linked to the theatre by means of an arch, and the towers were capped with similar shaped cupolas. In general the stonework and tiled roofs of the station echoed the expressive New Style and National Style elements of the recently completed theatre. The G-L-S design was highly praised by the jury:

The proposal is exceedingly amusing and deliciously handled. The feelingly executed façades are very appealing. The two parts of the complex are united well and skilfully and the natural stone of the station building is also handled skilfully, so as to unite effectively with the plaster clad administrative building. The whole group has a monumental calmness and fine, modern bearing, giving it a noble overall effect.³⁷⁰

Two young architects took issue with this assessment and with the general approach of the competition. Gustaf Strengell and Sigurd Frosterus had both graduated from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1902.³⁷¹ Over the winter 1903-04 Frosterus had worked in the Weimar office of Henry van de Velde, with whom he had made contact via the Belgian designer A. W. Finch working in Finland. Strengell had gone to work in the London office of C. Harrison Townsend. Both architects had submitted designs to the Railway Station Competition. Strengell's entry did not place and has been lost. Frosterus submitted a

³⁶⁹ The competition was organised by The General Board of Public Buildings. The jury was composed of the architects Sebastian Gripenberg, Hugo Lindberg and Gustaf Nyström and the railway representatives Colonel Daniel Dratchevsky and August Granfelt.

³⁷⁰ S. Gripenberg, et al., 'Helsingin Asematalon Kilpailu [The Helsinki Station Competition]', *Rakentaja* 1904, 37.

³⁷¹ **Sigurd Frosterus** (1876-1956) was also from a Swedish-speaking background. He graduated from the Alexander University in 1899 with a degree in art history and then went on to study architecture, graduating from the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1902. Both architects were active in the youthful, Swedish-speaking, intellectual circle centred around the journal *Euterpe*.

striking composition with sweeping fluid lines, which indicated the influence of Van de Velde on his work of this period. [Fig. 4.4] The large areas of glazing and smooth curves of the design displayed a wholehearted response to the possibilities offered by the building's construction materials, iron and reinforced concrete. His design was not, however, well received. The jury commented:

The designer has put a lot of unnecessary work into his creation and the result has not been successful. The whole architectural arrangement appears imported and foreign and not particularly appealing.³⁷²

In May 1904 the pair aired their criticisms in letters to the leading Swedish-language newspapers in Helsinki, *Hufudstadsbladet* and the *Helsingfors Post*, they also published their opinions in a pamphlet, *En stridskrift våra motståndare tillägnad [A Challenge to Our Opponents]*.³⁷³ In this pamphlet they attacked the vernacular- and medieval-inspired trend in Finnish architecture, which they characterised as romantic, and portrayed it as a digression from the reformist aims that had originally inspired the adoption of the New Style in Finland:

After starting off on purely rationalistic grounds with a proclamation on TRUTH as the guiding principle in architecture, the new movement in Finland has surrendered surprisingly quickly to utter arbitrariness, to subjectiveness no longer steered by any rational considerations, into a quasi nationalistic, archaic archaeological romanticism...³⁷⁴

The “proclamation of TRUTH” referred to here, was the pamphlet *Vårt Museum [Our Museum]* written by Hermann Gesellius, Bertel Jung, Armas Lindgren, Harald Neovius and Lars Sonck, in 1900. This pamphlet had been written in protest at the historicist, palazzo model planned for the new National Museum and put forward the young

³⁷² Gripenberg, et al., 'Helsingin Asematalon Kilpailu', 35. In G. Strengell and S. Frosterus, 'Architecture: A Challenge to Our Opponents (May 1904)' in Salokorpi (ed) *Abacus: The Museum of Finnish Architecture Yearbook: 3*, Helsinki 1982, Strengell particularly took issue with the jury's frequent use of the term 'appealing' in their judgements; citing it as evidence of a subjective, personal taste-driven response, rather than a critical, rational assessment of the proposals' responses to the task. 49-50.

³⁷³ Strengell and Frosterus, 'A Challenge to Our Opponents', 49-79.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 58.

architects' vision for New Style architecture. Their concerns had focussed on the need for the building's design to respond to its function and a call for the architectural language chosen for this project to speak directly of the national content of the museum. The impact of the pamphlet led to a new competition being held in 1901-02 and a design being commissioned from the G-L-S firm. Both Frosterus and Strengell admired the expression of national identity in the new *National Museum* design, as an appropriate and rational response to the nature of that particular commission. [Fig. 4.5] However, they took issue with the widespread application of similar elements on unsuitable buildings. Strengell singled out the *Pohjola Building* in particular as an example of the inappropriate use of such National Style themes:

Strictly speaking, modern business life and modern man have very little to do with pastoral romanticism and mysterious fairytales. It is therefore hardly a good idea to apply grinning heads of beasts of prey – wolves, bears, eagles and lynx, and wild men with rolling eyes and long claws – to a business building.³⁷⁵

The main thrust of the pamphlet was a call for architecture to return to the core principles of reflecting the character and function of a building and the materials with which it was constructed. Frosterus commented on the fact that the principle that it was unsuitable to imitate stone forms in plaster or wood, had become generally accepted. He related this point to the idea that it was equally unsuitable to render in iron and concrete and precision cut stone the rough surfaces and heavy structural forms devised for ancient brick and stone architecture. “The new materials call for new forms – a simple, acknowledged fact.”³⁷⁶ Both authors then applied these ideas to the question of the new Railway Station. They maintained that the modern, technologically advanced character of the project should be celebrated in “bold, mighty, elastic contours, a building of stone, glass and iron”³⁷⁷; rather than the romantic, picturesque forms submitted and admired in the recent competition. Both architects were impassioned in their pleas to their colleagues to temper their

³⁷⁵ Ibid., 60.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., 73.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., 62.

“decorative and ‘artistic’ talent”³⁷⁸ and the “‘heart and soul culture’ so heavily emphasised in Finland at the present”³⁷⁹ with a rational, durable response to materials and character, “AN IRON AND BRAIN STYLE”.³⁸⁰ Frosterus presented new technology as the model for future developments, as well as suggesting a revision of the nation’s understanding of itself:

We have more to learn about form from the construction of machinery, bicycles, cars, from battleships and railway bridges, than from historical styles. Such knowledge may seem imported³⁸¹, but the fact that this country is not a leading centre of civilisation should not discourage us from profiting by the gains of culture. Even in Finland we do not rely on hunting and fishing any more, as in the old days, and decorative plants and bears – to say nothing of other animals – are hardly representative symbols of the age of steam and electricity.³⁸²

Their manifesto triggered a brief debate in the Finnish press throughout May 1904. In general the results of the Railway Station Competition were defended, but much of the thrust of their attack seems to have resonated. Whether the manifesto acted as a catalyst, or simply reflected something of a more widespread change of heart in the architectural profession, 1904 marked the beginning of the end of rugged granite, towers and bear ornaments. As early as the autumn of 1904 Saarinen revised the firm’s designs for the Station. [Fig. 4.6] As figures 4.6 and 4.7 shows the visual and physical link with Tarjanne’s *Finnish Theatre* was broken. The pitched gables and cupolas were replaced by plainer, shallow, arched gables and the stone bear ornaments were removed. The station tower, which had previously closely resembled the tower of the *National Museum*, was re-designed in a firmly modern vein. Tall windows were placed, running up the tower’s height, which reflected the iron and concrete of the construction better than the slit windows of the earlier design. These windows and the large, glazed arch of the main entrances appear to be directly comparable to features in Frosterus’ competition entry. The new trends that appeared in Finnish architecture in the later 1900s and the 1910s will be discussed further shortly.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 65.

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 78.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 79.

³⁸¹ This comment can be seen as a direct reference to the criticism made of his Station design by the exhibition jury.

³⁸² Strengell and Frosterus, 'A Challenge to Our Opponents', 75.

Suomen Teollisuuslehti and the New Direction

There was no direct response to Strengell and Frosterus' manifesto in any of the *S.T.* publications. Never-the-less, the journal was not immune to the new currents beginning to circulate. As Penttilä's architectural career flourished, his journalistic contribution to *S.T.* declined. In 1902 he handed over his editorship of *S.T.* and concentrated his attention on the supplements *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide* only.³⁸³ His written contribution reduced sharply after 1904, though he remained the editor of *Kotitaide* until 1907. He was away from Finland between May 1908 and March 1909. During this period he travelled across Europe, visiting Messina in Sicily, Rome, Vevey and Genevre in Switzerland, Paris, and Cordoba, Seville and Valencia in Spain. In 1909 he returned to *Kotitaide* as executive editor.

Despite the dearth of his writing, in comparison to the 1890s and early 1900s, it is still possible to glean information about Penttilä's views on architecture from the contents of *Kotitaide*. The 1918 obituary for Penttilä in *Kotitide*, written by the then editor, the architect Jalmari Kekkonen³⁸⁴, maintained that:

In the later years, though he did not have enough time to take part much in the actual editorial work, he determined the paper's tone and direction, right up to the end.³⁸⁵

He did continue to contribute a few articles up to 1909. In 1906 he published two short articles, reviewing two of his own building projects, the *Kallio Chapel* and the *Kotka Co-Ed High School*. These articles were primarily brief descriptions of the projects to accompany the illustrations. Both articles concentrated on descriptions of the arrangement and construction of the buildings and acknowledging the various firms who contributed.

³⁸³ In 1906 *Rakentaja* ceased publication and from then on *Kotitaide* broadened its focus to include both architecture and interior design.

³⁸⁴ **Jalmari Kekkonen** (1878-1948) attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1900-1903. His was an assistant in the firm Usko Nyström, Petrelius, Penttilä during his years at the Polytechnic. He had a particular interest in the provision of technical education, and undertook numerous study trips in the years 1905-1912 to study the question across Europe. He was active as an architect and as a teacher.

³⁸⁵ J. Kekkonen, 'Vilho Penttilä', *Kotitaide* 1918, 3.

In 1907 only a single article was published under Penttilä's name, a short review of the furniture section of the 1906 Industrial Exhibition in Helsinki. In this article we see that Penttilä's concern with keeping up to date with international developments, commented upon earlier in chapter 2.iii, was still lively:

Though it was almost a decade ago that a general upheaval overtook furniture forms abroad, it is only now that we begin to see the effects of it here. The numerous curves and abundant winding forms have disappeared and in their place simple, plain and smooth features and greater practicality have arrived.³⁸⁶

The furniture he particularly admired for having kept up with this new trend was manufactured by the joinery firms of John Ericsson and N. Boman of Turku.³⁸⁷ [Figs 4.8 & 4.9] The pieces illustrated all shared the economy of form and absence of extensive ornament that emerged in furniture design in the later 1900s. Tastes had not changed overnight however, and the exhibition included a suite of study furniture, designed by Saarinen in 1902 and manufactured by the Ericsson Joinery works for the exhibition. [Fig. 4.10] The solid, heavy forms, carved fern ornament and blackened metal key plates and hinge guards were all typical of the medievalised trend of the early 1900s. Comparison to the elegant rectangular forms, geometric textile patterns and inlay of N. Boman's suite, figure 4.9, displays the essence of the transition from medieval and vernacular sources to a more modern, Classical model, that was taking place within the Finnish New Style.

In 1908 the Usko Nyström-Petrelus-Penttilä architectural office was dissolved. The decision was an amicable one. Of the three, only Penttilä continued to practise actively as an architect, forming his own architectural office.³⁸⁸ His last two articles for *Kotitaide* in

³⁸⁶ V. Penttilä, 'Huonekaluja teollisuusnäyttelystä Ateneumissa v. 1906 [Furniture from the Industrial Exhibition in the Ateneum in 1906]', *Kotitaide* 1907, 3.

³⁸⁷ The Ericsson firm was based in Helsinki and founded in the early 1900s. It was favoured by a number of Helsinki architects. The N. Boman firm was founded in Turku in 1871. It received a gold medal for its exhibits at the 1894 Paris Worlds Fair and grew quickly to become the best known furniture manufacturer in Finland. It had display rooms in Helsinki, St Petersburg, Moscow and Riga and was often commissioned to manufacture the designs of leading Helsinki architects. E. Kruskopf, *Suomen taideteollisuus: Suomalaisen muotoilun vaiheita [Finnish Industrial Art: Phases in Finnish Forms]*, Helsinki 1989, 100-101.

³⁸⁸ Rauske, *Kivet Puhuvat*, 39. The amicability of the dissolution is indicated by the fact that Nyström continued to collaborate with him on into 1909 on the *Viipuri Town Hall* project, which they had worked on together since 1899.

1909 were travel reports, written during his trip abroad. The first, published in February, recorded his impressions of Messina, in the light of the earthquake that had reduced the whole town to rubble on December 28th 1908. The second article, published in the winter of 1909, was a detailed account of Penttilä's visit to the *Alhambra Palace*.

The limited content of Penttilä's writings in the period 1905-1909 can give only a general indication of the development of his theories on architecture, revealing that he continued to favour the use of new technology, the taking of an innovative approach to each commission, and the necessity of keeping up with contemporary international developments. The content and the presentation of the supplements *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide*, with which he was most directly concerned, offer some further illumination. As has been noted before, the content of the main journal, *S.T.*, was orientated primarily towards technical information, new techniques and machinery and other developments in the engineering and building industry. Penttilä's articles on wooden architecture etc. in the 1890s were something of a deviation from the standard fare. With the founding of the *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide* supplements in 1901 and 1902, Penttilä's interest in the architectural and design fields found more appropriate organs for expression. Initially the content of both these supplements was focussed primarily on Finnish architecture and design, reviews of buildings and the results of design competitions and exhibitions. Both *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide* also carried articles relating to Finnish architectural heritage, Karelian artefacts and so on. However, right from the out-set, both supplements also presented material related to international architecture and design.

Initially this material made up a relatively small proportion of the content. In 1901 *Rakentaja* included only three articles with an international dimension; a transcription of Professor Yrjö Hirn's presentation to the Industrial Arts Society on William Morris and his theories on Arts and Crafts, a review of a new high rise building in New York and an article on workers housing in Sweden.³⁸⁹ The amount of internationally orientated material increased year by year including material on architecture and design in England, America,

³⁸⁹ *Rakentaja* 1901, 53-55, 69; *Rakentaja* 1901, 61-62; *Rakentaja* 1901, 96.

Sweden, Denmark, Italy, Austria, Japan, Russia, Belgium and Holland. The international architecture and design practitioners who were featured as individuals in the years 1901-1910 were William Morris³⁹⁰, Henry H. Richardson³⁹¹, Camillo Sitte³⁹², Charles Harrison Townsend³⁹³, Hermann Muthesius³⁹⁴, John Ruskin³⁹⁵, Henry van de Velde³⁹⁶, Gerhard Munthe³⁹⁷, Gabriel Mourey³⁹⁸, Leo Tolstoy³⁹⁹ and Joseph Hoffmann⁴⁰⁰. From 1905 onwards the dissemination of information on international developments in the fields of architecture and design took on increasing importance in the pages of *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide*. Correspondingly less space was accorded to articles on Finnish architectural heritage and folk art.

The journal headers provide a good illustration of the changing perception of Finnish design held by Penttilä and the other architects who contributed to *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide*.⁴⁰¹ The original *Suomen Teollisuuslehti* header reveals the much of character of

³⁹⁰ *Rakentaja* 1901, 53-55, 69 ('William Morris' Theories of Arts and Crafts' by Yrjö Hirn); *Rakentaja* 1905, 8 (trans. short quote from Morris); *Kotitaide* 1902, 32. ('Reflections on the domestic arts II: William Morris and his Firm', by Jalmari Kekkonen); *Kotitaide* 1903, 12-16 ('William Morris', anon.); *Kotitaide* 1905, 60. (trans. 'Thoughts on Arts' by William Morris); *Kotitaide* 1906, 112. (trans. short quote from Morris).

³⁹¹ *Rakentaja* 1903, 9-10. ('Henry Richardson and his contribution to American architecture' anon.)

³⁹² *Rakentaja* 1904, 15. ('Camillo Sitte' anon.)

³⁹³ *Rakentaja* 1904, 47-49, 62-65. ('Originality in architectural design: Charles Harrison Townsend' anon.)

³⁹⁴ *Rakentaja* 1905, 4-6. (trans. from *Das Englisch Haus*); *Rakentaja* 1905, 8. (trans. short quote from Hermann Muthesius); *Kotitaide* 1904, 17-18. (trans. 'Art for the poor' by H. Muthesius, taken from writings in *Die Kunst*); *Kotitaide* 1905, 10-12, 29-32, 34-37. (trans. 'The path of industrial art and its main features', by H. Muthesius, taken from *Die Kunst*); *Kotitaide* 1910, picture supplements ('Hermann Muthesius as an architect of villas').

³⁹⁵ *Rakentaja* 1905, 8. (trans. short quote from Ruskin); *Kotitaide* 1903, 30-31, 35-38. (John Ruskin, trans. taken from W. Fred, *Die Prae-Raphaeliten : eine episode englischer kunst*, Strassburg 1900); *Kotitaide* 1904, 23-26, 27-31, 42-44. ('Art and utility' a discussion of John Ruskin's theories, anon.); *Kotitaide* 1906, 86. (trans. short quote from Ruskin); *Kotitaide* 1907, 17. (trans. short quote from Ruskin); *Kotitaide* 1907, 28. (trans. short quote from Ruskin).

³⁹⁶ *Kotitaide* 1902, 24. ('Reflections on the domestic arts I: Henry van de Velde' by Jalmari Kekkonen); *Kotitaide* 1907, 150-153. ('Van de Velde in Copenhagen: The Danish art museum director's report' by Jalmari Kekkonen); *Kotitaide* 1909, 39, 51. ('Henry van de Velde').

³⁹⁷ *Kotitaide* 1903, 27-28. ('Gerhard Munthe' anon.); *Kotitaide* 1904, 13-17. (trans. 'Historical styles and the pictorial presentations of former ages', by G. Munthe).

³⁹⁸ *Kotitaide* 1907, 17. (trans. short quote by Gabriel Mourey).

³⁹⁹ *Kotitaide* 1910, 86. ('Leo Tolstoy and art' by Toivo Salervo).

⁴⁰⁰ *Kotitaide* 1907, 61-65, 102-105. ('Joseph Hoffmann and *Die Wiener Moderne*' by Gustaf Strengell).

⁴⁰¹ Among the architects and designers who contributed to *Rakentaja* and *Kotitaide* were Yrjö Blomstedt, Werner von Essen, Birger Federley, Bertel Jung, K.S. Kallio, Jalmari Kekkonen, Armas Lindgren, Usko Nyström, Albert Petrelius, Gustaf Strengell, Victor Sucksdorff, Eliel Saarinen, Lars Sonck, Eino Schroderus and Väinö Vähäkallio.

the publication in the 1890s. [Fig. 4.11] A figure of the craftsman/engineer is portrayed sitting between two groups of artefacts. One group represented technology and the tools of his trade, an anvil, set squares, cogs and measures. The other group was made up of a Classical capital, urns, a shield and a basilica plan and represented Art. The design symbolised the union of technology and art promoted by the journal. It is interesting that the art represented still pertained very much to a traditional, historicist, academic understanding of the visual arts, in which the Classical paradigm was pre-eminent. There was nothing in the header to reflect the growing interest in native folk culture represented in Penttilä's articles of the same period. The text used also took a fairly traditional, calligraphic form.

The first *Rakentaja* header, used from 1901 until 1904, featured a rather different aesthetic. [Fig. 4.12] The name of the journal was proclaimed in a bold, contemporary font and the castle that formed the background proclaimed the shifting aesthetics of the time, away from the Classical towards a reassessment of medieval traditions. The castle depicted was not based on any Finnish model, but with its tourelle and projecting gabled elements, it represented the more fluid picturesque approach to form, free from formal concerns of symmetry, that were admired in medieval models. The way the weather cock and the top of the R broke through the frame of the header demonstrated the freer, less conventional approach of the new supplement. In 1904 a new header was introduced, in which the font was even more boldly schematised and sans serif. [Fig. 4.13] The image below was also more stylised than earlier images, depicting two figures a mason and a carpenter shaking hands. The stylised foliage of the trees in the background were similar to the New Style abstract patterns developed by designers of the period, inspired in part by the patterns in folk textiles.

The header of *Seppo*, the metalwork supplement of *S.T.* founded in 1902, was also revealing. [Fig. 4.14] The header featured a drawing derived from Gallen-Kallela's painting, *Forging the Sampo*, 1893, a variation of which had been included in his mural scheme for the interior of the *Finnish Pavilion* in 1900. [Fig. 2.33] The header drew an

overt link between the legendary smith, Ilmarinen from the *Kalevala* and modern-day metalwork. This image illustrated the view of contemporary Finnish craftsmen as the heirs to the heroes of the *Kalevala* and how closely ideas of design reform, national identity, the folk past and the technological future, were interwoven at this time.

The first header of *Kotitaide*, used between 1902 and 1903, presented the name of the journal in a bold, stylised lower-case font. [Fig. 4.15] The image below depicted a craftsman at work at a plane with a great stylised swirl of wood symbolising the vibrant creativity of his work. In comparison to the *Rakentaja* header of the castle used at the same time, the image was strikingly graphic and dynamic. The second header, used from 1904 to 1907, employed another stylised, capitalised font. [Fig. 4.16] The key image represented a peasant craftsman sitting by the fire carving an elaborate post. In the background, in silhouette, a female figure sat at a loom. The image perfectly illustrated Penttilä's appreciation of vernacular culture and the role it would play as a model for design reform, expressed in his editorial to the first number of *Kotitaide* in 1902.⁴⁰²

The inclusion of the male and female figures also neatly illustrated the fact that the supplement's interest extended to the traditionally female sphere of textile design, though gender divisions were not really abandoned and the majority of designers of textiles, and all of the manufacturers of textile works featured in the journal were women. The image of folk craftsmen also reflected the approach of many of the international designers, whose ideas were featured in the journal during this period, such as Munthe, Ruskin and Morris. The stylised nature of the image, in particular the cat sitting by the fire, also served to indicate that while folk art was admired as a model, it was not to be followed slavishly and contemporary taste was also embraced.

In 1908 a new header was introduced, in which the folk art concept was abandoned all together. [Fig. 4.17] This new header marked the end of Penttilä's editorship of *Kotitaide*. The new editors were Eino Schroderus and Tyyne Kolinen, who had previously served as

⁴⁰² This article has been discussed on pages 41-42 and pages 86-87.

contributors to the journal.⁴⁰³ The new editorship did not have a dramatic impact on the journal's contents and the same writers, such as Jalmari Kekkonen and Gustaf Strengell continued to contribute. The new header reflected the decline of vernacular art as a key model in the applied arts that had already become apparent in the journal's contents. The new header focused on contemporary applied arts, depicting an interior containing a small table, pendant lamp and two elaborate candle sconces. The bold, geometric forms reflected the new course taken by the New Style in Finland. In 1910 the header was changed again, when Väinö Vähäkallio became editor.⁴⁰⁴ [Fig. 4.18] The new header was more complex and decorative, including a number of separate ornamental fields, illustrated with applied arts objects, interiors, furniture and a villa. In 1911 an alternative header was introduced in a much simpler vein. [Fig. 4.19] This header simply displayed the name of the journal and a graphic border of lines and a punctuating device of squares. This plainer header continued to be used by the last *Kotitaide* editor, Jalmari Kekkonen, who edited the journal from 1912 until it ceased publication in 1918. This move away from ornate and illustrative decoration in 1911 again reflected similar moves in the general field of design, which shall be explored in more detail later.

From 1906 onwards the pages of *Kotitaide* made very few overt references to the idea of a National Style, in Finland or elsewhere, or of Finnishness within architecture. Interest in new trends in design from the cultural centres of Europe took up an increasing proportion of the journal's contents, as has been noted above. Following the end of *Rakentaja* in 1906, and particularly following Penttilä's retirement as editor, the focus on technical innovations, long an area of fascination for Penttilä, also waned. The contents of *Kotitaide* from 1906 to 1914 can be summarised as a balance between articles on introducing and discussing international developments in the field of design and articles related to design in

⁴⁰³ **Eino Schroderus** (1880-1956) attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1901-1906. He worked as an assistant in the General Board of Public Buildings in 1907. He was an architect and designer and the owner and founder of the *Koru* art-metalwork firm. **Tyynne Kolinen** (1882-1910) Fennicised his name from Kollin in 1906. He attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1903-1907.

⁴⁰⁴ **Väinö Vähäkallio** (1886-1959) attended the Helsinki Polytechnic from 1905-1909. As a student he worked in Gustaf Nyström's office and after graduating he worked as an assistant in Vilho Penttilä's private office, for a year. In 1910 he made a study tour of France, Italy, Spain, England and Germany and in 1911-12 he made a tour of Turkey, Egypt, India and Germany with the architect Einar Sjöström. He edited *Kotitaide* from 1910-1911.

Finland, design education, exhibitions and competitions. From 1914 onwards the proportion of content focussed on international architecture was necessarily lessened as the First World War brought architectural production in much of Europe to a standstill.

Though *Kotitaide's* concern with the idea of a National Style declined, design reform remained a project with strong patriotic dimensions. The educative drive behind the publication, the desire to spread knowledge and to reform taste and practices can be seen to share the same patriotic aspiration as earlier calls for a National Style. The journal consistently sought to aid the development of design culture in Finland. The introductory editorial to the New Year issue of 1908 stated *Kotitaide's* aim of promoting artistic sense throughout the nation:

Our own national art is only just emerging and its promotion needs the whole nation's collective strength. Enthusiasm for domestic art must continue to be raised and extended to the lowest strata of society. We must show art to every citizen, teach them to understand and give to everyone the chance to practice it for themselves. In these brutal times the nurturing of art takes on an even greater importance, as beauty and art have an ennobling effect on the human spirit.⁴⁰⁵

The article acknowledged that “ancient arts and crafts have been abandoned, due to the richness of the industrial production”.⁴⁰⁶ But it also pointed out that though it was more economical to turn away from home produced wares, in favour of cheaper foreign industrial products, there was a growing appreciation for domestic artistic products. The old bugbear of *Kotitaide*, the “foreign, alien forms” of imported products was still presented as a negative model. But these forms were now characterised as “out of date”, whilst the domestic design *Kotitaide* promoted was characterised as “up to date”.⁴⁰⁷ Though there was no mention of it in the article, the journal clearly distinguished between ‘bad’ foreign, cheaply manufactured products, based on historicist or eclectic patterns, and ‘good’ foreign design, represented in positive references to, and photographs of works by,

⁴⁰⁵ 'Kotitaide', *Kotitaide* 1908, 1.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

Mackintosh, Macdonald, Baillie Scott, Morris, Van de Velde, Olbrich, Hoffmann, Behrens and Moser found in *Kotitaide* in the same year.⁴⁰⁸

Kotitaide still saw its mission as the education of public taste: “*Kotitaide* wishes to be a disseminator of information on domestic and industrial arts and a reviver of art practice throughout the nation.”⁴⁰⁹ This was to be done through the journal’s coverage in articles and illustrations of artistic interior design and art products, villas and rural buildings and architectural in general, as well as its publication of competition designs and its own competitions. Within this mission to reform culture in Finland there had been an important shift in tone from that of the 1890s or early 1900s. In ‘Beauty and Culture’, the introductory article of the first issue of Vähäkallio’s editorship, this shift was made apparent.⁴¹⁰ The article started with a burst of familiar rhetoric lamenting the pollution of Finnish culture, “the simple but original beauty of our fore-fathers”, by “the world’s weeds”. The beauty of the culture of their Finnish fore-fathers’ was discussed in terms of “nature” and “natural beauty”, while contemporary culture was described in terms of “glaring colours”, “clumsy and tasteless” and “Russian mass-produced products”.⁴¹¹ It is significant that what followed was not the exhortation to turn back and to earlier Finnish folk heritage, as had been familiar in the contents of *S.T.* and *Kotitaide* in the 1890s and early 1900s. The author was quite firm on this point:

It should not be understood from this, that we – as some theorists maintain – may find the correct beauty ideal only in the past, that we would want to return headlong to those *ethnographic forms*, which our fore-fathers created. Though from those we could get some guidance as to our nation’s sense of style and an understanding of its psychology, but we would be short sighted if we were not to observe that mankind progresses, moves on and new spiritual content requires new forms of expression. Between us and our fore-fathers there lies a yawning gap, the bridging of which would be a denial of our own development.⁴¹²

⁴⁰⁸ In particular in Gustaf Strengell’s fourteen page, illustrated article ‘Modern Furniture and Interior Design’, published in three parts in 1908, detailing developments in British, Austrian and German design in particular.

⁴⁰⁹ ‘*Kotitaide*’, 1.

⁴¹⁰ ‘Kauneus ja Kulttuuri [Beauty and Culture]’, *Kotitaide* 1910, 1-2.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, 2.

Vernacular culture was now valued as a mode of beauty, successful both aesthetically and as a reflection of the character of the people who created it, but not as a model to be directly emulated. The author did not elucidate on how the “nation’s sense of style”, revealed in vernacular artefacts, was to be absorbed, but evidently not through the direct imitation of motifs and forms.⁴¹³ Instead, he emphasised the idea that culture was a reflection of the state of the age. Readers were urged to concern themselves with a holistic approach to the problems of their age and to raising the condition of the country: “The question is not only one of aesthetics, but rather of ethical nurturing and cultivating....”. The author did not exactly embrace the modern age of steam and electricity, as Frosterus and Strengell had done, but his position with its recognition of the nature of the modern age as distinct from the past shows that even more conservative designers with a great love for Finland’s heritage were looking for new modes of expression.

The content of this article reveals that, while there was still uncertainty as to what path future developments should take, the romantic, vernacular- and medieval-inspired course of early New Style architecture in Finland had generally been abandoned. Even *Kotitaide* acknowledged that it was not the way forward. The trend that finally emerged in Finnish architecture in the late 1900s and 1910s was not exactly the “iron and brain” style called for by Frosterus, but there was a noticeable move away from the expressive imaginative form and ornament of the early 1900s, which we have seen in the *Pohjola Building* and the banks of Tampere. The direction the New Style took is succinctly described by the last editor of *Kotitaide*, Jalmari Kekkonen, in 1912, in an article titled ‘On Helsinki’s Newer Architecture’.⁴¹⁴ Kekkonen outlined the history of architecture in Helsinki, from its ‘birth’ in the hands of Engel, through the building boom of the late nineteenth century and its transition from a wooden town to a stone one. The building boom was presented as having produced architectural monstrosities. Newer architecture was presented as a remedy to

⁴¹³ As had been urged by earlier theorists, such as Penttilä and others, in the pages of *S.T.* and *Kotitaide*. See for example the quotes from “Suomalainen tyyli”, cited in chapter 2ii, pp. 66-67.

⁴¹⁴ J. Kekkonen, ‘Helsingin Uudemmassa Rakennustaiteesta [On Helsinki’s Newer Architecture]’, *Kotitaide* 1912.

this excess. By newer architecture Kekkonen meant the Finnish architecture of the twentieth century. He characterised this architecture, somewhat hyperbolically, as “absolutely one of the most notable art phenomena in all of modern architecture.”⁴¹⁵ He ascribed its quality to the fact that Finns, having few architectural traditions compared to architects elsewhere, were forced down paths of original creation complemented by such influences as they gleaned from abroad.⁴¹⁶ This is a significant further shift away from advocating an approach to design centred on the nation’s vernacular heritage. He commented that radical currents from abroad were quick to get a foothold in Finland and cited G-L-S firm’s *Fabianinkatu 17* (1900-01) as an example of the early adoption of a new approach to form, in which the appearance of the building was determined by the internal layout, rather than vice versa. [Fig. 4.20]

Kekkonen commented briefly on the “romantic form” of the firm’s *Pohjola Building*, stating that the doorways were modelled in a fashion similar to old stone churches and the customer hall [Fig. 2.65] “was given a mystical, ancient, mythic character.” Such imaginative expressions of national identity in architecture were, according to Kekkonen, quickly “superseded”. He described the new *Helsinki Railway Station* design, [Fig. 4.6] referring probably to the revised drawings of 1909 in which the building took on its final form, as:

...totally free from romantic influences...in which the amount of surface ornamentation was scarce, but even so, so mightily monumental that one searches in vain for comparison in the modern architecture of our country or abroad.⁴¹⁷

It was this newest trend, free from ‘romantic’ elements, that Kekkonen was most excited about. He characterised this new architecture as “cosmopolitan” and perhaps primarily influenced by German architecture. He compared it to earlier New Style architecture:

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., 34.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., 34.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., 35.

Showy disproportions have almost wholly vanished from these [buildings], steep roofs have sunk to become invisible from the street, windows are arranged once more in symmetrical groups, ornamentation is no longer derived from the animal or plant world, rather there is a new mode, *something of an artistic Esperanto...* in which we notice the old forms, but in totally new dress.

Modern Finnish architecture is something radical, a refined palace architecture, in which a new Classicism is in some degree involved.⁴¹⁸

By 1912, therefore, it is clear that a new path had been forged and embraced, even by *Kotitaide* the journal that had been the most vocal in support of the exploration of national expression in the early New Style. This later New Style Classicism presented a very different appearance to earlier buildings. As indicated by Kekkonen, picturesque forms and rooflines and asymmetry were replaced by symmetrical, axial designs, with shallow roofs, hidden behind parapets. One of the buildings Kekkonen cited as an example of this new mode of building was Sonck's *Mortgage Association Building*. [Fig. 4.21] It shared many of the key impulses of the New Style, a commitment to the pursuit of new architectural forms and new modes of ornament, as well as the honest use of materials and an exploration of new building technology. Alongside this however, was a reassessment of the architectural legacy of Classicism and an adaptation of some of its principles to endow the New Style with the authority and substance some felt to be missing from its fluid and inventive early forms.

Lars Sonck, Mortgage Association Building, 1907-1908

The *Mortgage Association Building* was one of the first buildings to really embrace the move away from the earlier New Style. The Helsinki based Mortgage Association had been founded in 1860 by businessmen to provide loan capital when it was perceived that the lack of available capital was inhibiting the development of Finnish business and agriculture. Demand was so great that in the first year of business in 1862 the volume of loans granted was twice that of the older loan granting institutions, the Bank of Finland and the Military Office Pensions Fund, combined.⁴¹⁹ The Mortgage Association was directed by Finland's

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., 35.

⁴¹⁹ Mortgage Association website: <http://www.hypo.fi/historiaa>.

foremost economist, the Fennomane philosopher J.V. Snellman from 1869-1881. Demand for its services continued to increase and Finland's economic growth during this period ensured the success of the institution.

It is likely that Sonck was chosen by the board of the Association through the recommendation of Emil Schybergson, a director since 1905. Schybergson was also the director of the Private Bank and had been instrumental in the commissioning of Sonck's work for the bank in 1903.⁴²⁰ The plans for the *Mortgage Association Building* were drawn up in the spring of 1907. The site was on the South Esplanade, a block along from the *Vaasa Bank*. It was a deep mid-block site, with a relatively short street-front. The most striking feature of both the facade and the plan was the extent to which they were governed by axuality and symmetry, in contrast to the studied asymmetry of earlier buildings including Sonck's 1905 *Telephone Exchange Building*. [Fig. 3.120] Sonck utilised the long narrow site by dividing the building into two portions connected by a central passageway and stairwell. [Fig. 4.22] The area to the left of the passageway was a yard space, whilst the area to the right was occupied by a single storey, glass-roofed banking hall. The yard and the light-well above the banking hall allowed Sonck to provide as much natural light as possible for the front and rear portions of the building. The building was to house the Mortgage Association and a number of commercial tenants.⁴²¹

The arrangement of the ground and first floor can be seen in figure 4.22. The main entrance led to the central corridor, through the ground floor of the building, and to the main staircase. The portal to the far left of the façade led to the side passage which provided access to the middle and rear yards. The entrance to the far right of the façade provided access to the banking hall of one of the tenants, the Finnish Commercial Bank.⁴²²

⁴²⁰ Korvenmaa, *Innovation Versus Tradition*, 86.

⁴²¹ Tenants included the Finnish Commercial Bank, The Municipal Mortgage Fund Offices, The Finnish Real Estate Bank and J. E. Cronvall, a marketing agent for new technology.

⁴²² The Finnish Commercial Bank was a new joint-stock commercial bank, founded in Viipuri in 1907, when POP moved its headquarters from Viipuri to Helsinki. It opened its Helsinki branch office in 1908 and by 1913 had four further branches in Southern Finland. Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Banks.

The internal layout was not entirely governed by symmetry, yet the central corridor, the tessellation of chambers between the central corridor and the side entrances on the ground floor and around the central customer office at the front on the first floor recalled the spirit of the symmetrical arrangement of chambers last seen in Bohnstedt's *Bank of Finland*. [Figs 3.14 & 3.15] The use of reinforced concrete in the construction enabled Sonck to create larger internal spaces. The central corridor terminated in a two-storey high hall at the rear of the plot, with a span of eleven by eleven metres, broken only by two concrete pillars, bearing the weight of the partition wall of the first floor.

The first floor of the rear portion was intended for office space and the concrete construction minimised the need for supporting walls or pillars. This allowed for a flexible space that could be partitioned as necessary to serve the needs of the occupants. The banking hall of the Finnish Commercial Bank also benefited from the use of reinforced concrete. It was reached via a passage that opened onto a vestibule separated from the main banking hall by two broad pillars. This arrangement is very similar to the arrangement of the *Private Bank*. However, beyond the pillars of the vestibule the hall opened in to a complete unbroken span, in contrast to the six columns and two demi-columns that supported the vault and glass roof of the *Private Bank*.

The ground floor of the front portion of the building was occupied by the administrative offices of the Finnish Commercial Bank on one side and the offices of J. E. Cronvall on the other. The offices of the Mortgage Association occupied the first floor, whilst the offices of the Municipalities Mortgage Fund and the Finnish Real Estate Bank were on the second floor. Much of the interior decoration was the work of Sonck's assistant J. D. Frölander.⁴²³ The customer office of the Mortgage Association, on the first floor, was long and narrow, occupying the space behind the central façade colonnade. [Fig. 4.23] The space was not very flexible with five large windows across the external wall. The interior decoration was designed entirely by Frölander and his solution for the hall was a long counter running

⁴²³ **David Frölander-Ulf** (1874-1947) was a Swedish architect. He came to Helsinki in 1898 and worked as an assistant for both Saarinen and Sonck, among others. He founded his own office in 1912, which operated in Helsinki until 1938.

across the length of the room. The staff worked behind the counter in front of the windows, with access to the offices at either side. Customers entered the other side of the room and the counter curved in the centre to increase the amount of space available on the customers' side.

The overall accent of the interior was firmly horizontal, with pronounced ceiling beams and broad flat lintels running over the openings to the side offices and the customers' entrance. The customer vestibule and the small hall to the other side of the customer entrance were both open to the hall through a series of openings. These openings were ornamented by a series of short, stocky, groups of columns. This arrangement again reworked the use of columns separating the vestibule from the main hall in the *Private Bank*, however in the *Mortgage Association Building* the crisp corners, symmetry and balanced horizontal elements evoke a refined and Classical atmosphere, which was not remotely church-like. The dentilated plasterwork along the ceiling beams similarly created a different effect from the nature, or vernacular- and medieval-inspired patterns used on the underside of the arches and lintels in the *Private Bank*.

The internal fittings and fixtures of the building were luxurious. The light fittings and other metalwork were designed by Frölander and manufactured by *Koru*, Eino Schroderus' fashionable metalwork company, which was soon to dominate the field in luxury art metalwork in Finland. The central pendant lamp in the Customer Hall was designed with a circular mount studded with bulbs, from which a ring of glass globe lights were suspended. The interplay of circles and spheres within the design complemented firm horizontals and verticals of the interior. The Board of the Mortgage Association had given Schybergson and Sonck complete responsibility for the project and no expense was spared. The front door had silver handles and fittings. The original estimate for the building was finally exceeded by over 500,000 marks.⁴²⁴

⁴²⁴ Korvenmaa, *Innovation Versus Tradition*, 92.

Like the interior, the façade offered a dramatic contrast to the rough hewn stone facades of earlier New Style buildings in Helsinki. It was symmetrically arranged in a series of interrelating cubic-volumes, which could be divided into distinct portions.⁴²⁵ There were two wings, at the foot of which were one-storey-high, cubic porches. The central portion of the building was divided into a ground floor containing the main portal, a two-storey high colonnade, dominating the first and second floor, and an attic storey above. This volumetric division represented a change of direction, compared to the increasingly fluid and uniform treatment of the wall surface noted in earlier New Style Buildings.

The divisions of the façade were emphasised through the different handling of the smooth, grey, granite cladding. The ground floor central entrance area and flanking porches were clad in smooth ashlar. A band course of large, rectangular blocks ran across the top of the porches and beneath the central colonnade, delineating the horizontal between the ground floor and the floors above. The first and second floor wings above the porches were dressed in irregular tessellating blocks of ashlar. The area above the first floor window lintels and the sills of the second floor windows were clad in regular square tiles of granite. [Fig. 4.24] This motif was repeated on the windows behind the tapering round columns of the colonnade. The top portions of the wings and the attic storey were clad in ashlar in courses of varying heights.

Alongside the variety of the manners of dressing the granite, the façade was decorated with carved granite ornament, designed by Frölander. This abstract ornament was similar in its boldness to that developed for the stonework of the *Private Bank* by Jung. However, on the *Mortgage Association Building* there was even less suggestion that it could have evolved from plant or animal forms or folk textiles. The Finnish art historian Onni Okkonen, writing in 1945 suggested the ornament perhaps derived from Egyptian sources.⁴²⁶ Whether this is the case or not, the ornament can be understood as part of the final stages

⁴²⁵ The building was purchased from the Mortgage Association by the State in 1939. It then housed the Social Insurance Office and then the National Board of Schools. During this time two further floors were added to the building. In 1978 it became the home of the Ministry for Transport and Communications.

⁴²⁶ Okkonen, *Suomen Taiteen Historia*, 232.

of the pursuit of a new language of ornament, which had been instigated in Finnish architecture the early 1890s. This new ornamental language was both ahistorical and somewhat alien, decorative and completely abstract. At the same time it suited the “new Classicism” of the façade. Okkonen’s suggestion of origins reveals how this new ornamental mode retained within it some echoes of forms that could be recognised from within the historical canon of architecture. What Kekkonen was to describe as “old forms, but in totally new dress”.

This ornament and the unusual features of the façade such as the projecting porches and triangular spine that ran up the wings went some way to obscuring the Classical roots behind the basic design of the façade. The arrangement of arches along the ground floor and a colonnade across the first floor between two flanking wings echoes the arrangement used in 1896 by Nyström on his *Helsinki SYP*. [Fig. 2.50] The central colonnade between the flat façade and rectangular windows of the wings can also be compared with *Governor-General’s Residence* (1824) by Engel a few blocks down on the same street. [Fig. 4.25] Similarly Sonck’s high blank attic was comparable in character to the broad attic of the *University Library* (1844), also by Engel. [Fig. 4.26]

Sonck’s design for the *Mortgage Association Building* was firmly modern in its concrete construction, precision cut granite façade and innovative language of ornament. It was also sympathetic to the Classical, historic fabric of the city centre, the symmetrical city plan laid out by Engel and the nearby classical buildings of the old heart of the city, near the Market and Senate Squares. This represented a move away from the ideal of the picturesque medieval townscape advocated by Camillo Sitte, which had dominated architectural design in Finland since 1900. This change of course was accompanied by a new appreciation of Finland’s Classical heritage, in particular the work of Engel. Engel’s work in the heart of Helsinki had long been acknowledged as admirable, but it had not been approached as a model by New Style architects in the same way as Finland’s medieval

heritage, churches and castles, had been approached.⁴²⁷ This began to change in the second half of the 1900s. *Kotitaide* carried an article on Engel in 1906 and the work of Engel was also the subject of a retrospective at the first Exhibition of Finnish Architecture in Helsinki in 1907.⁴²⁸ Kauno S. Kallio commented on the shift from the romantic to classical model in his review of the Exhibition in 1908 reflecting a similar opinion to that later expressed by Kekkonen:⁴²⁹

This period within architecture has been an era of storm and passion, just as it has been in our national and social life.

But within this period there have also been signs of stabilisation. One can see a move away from efforts geared towards the clumsiness of the Middle Ages and such romantic, fantasy art, which, in naïve dreams of independence, rejected knowledge of our age's technical advances. Now, included in the exhibition was a retrospective section focussed on C. L. Engel (1778-1840), not simply to give historical background to this exhibition, but to also express the respect and understanding the younger generation wanted to show to such earlier works.⁴³⁰

The significance of Sonck's innovative design was not lost on his contemporaries. Kallio praised the *Mortgage Association Building* in particular, finding both the smooth, finished stone and the overall arrangement more refined than course rubble facades of earlier buildings.⁴³¹ In contrast, he criticised Sonck's *Telephone Exchange Building* for having a strangely alien and archaic feel for a modern Telephone Exchange. He stated that the *Mortgage Association Building* was still immoderately decorated, but that the excesses of earlier buildings had been avoided.⁴³²

⁴²⁷ See Penttilä's observations in Penttilä, 'Kauneudesta rakennuksissa', commented upon in chapter 2.i, pp. 45-46.

⁴²⁸ J.K. [Jalmari Kekkonen], 'Meidän Rakennustaitelijoita I: Carl Ludwig Engel' [Our Architects I: Carl Ludwig Engel], *Kotitaide* 1906, 122-124. K. S. Kallio, 'Arkkitehtuurinäyttely syyskuulla 1907 [The Architectural Exhibition, Autumn 1907]', *Valvoja* 1907, 759.

⁴²⁹ **Kauno Sankari Kallio** (1877-1966) was born in Central Finland. He attended the Polytechnic in Helsinki from 1896-1900. He worked as an architectural assistant for UN-P-P from 1901-1903, when he formed his own architectural office with Emil Werner von Essen and Emanuel Ikäläinen, who had also been assistants at UN-P-P. In 1904 he undertook a study tour of Germany, Austria, Holland and Belgium, to study contemporary architecture. In 1906 he was awarded a scholarship to study medieval architecture in Italy and French architecture in Paris. He wrote for *Rakentaja*, *Kotitaide* and *Arkitekten*.

⁴³⁰ Kallio, 'Arkkitehtuurinäyttely syyskuulla 1907', 759.

⁴³¹ *Ibid.*, 762.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 762.

4.ii VILHO PENTTILÄ AND THE NEW DIRECTION: THE LATER KOP BUILDINGS

Just as Penttilä had been among the first architects to embrace the design precepts of the New Style in the late 1890s, so he was quick to respond to the change in its course in the late 1900s. His extended trip across Europe in 1908-09 came at a fortuitous juncture, bringing him back to Finland with fresh eyes, ready to appreciate and recognise the significance of new buildings such as Sonck's *Mortgage Association Building*.

The Kotka KOP, 1908-1910

His *Kotka KOP* was something of a transitional work, differing from both the towered forms of the early New Style KOP buildings and from the later KOP style. This is partially explained by the fact that the initial designs were commenced while he was still abroad in the winter of 1908, months before his return to Finland, so he was not particularly in touch with the latest developments in architecture there.⁴³³ The town of Kotka is on the south coast of Finland, see figure 3.1. It was a new commercial town, only founded in 1878. The economy of the town was based on sawmills, paper mills, metal works and trade, via the large harbour. By 1911 the population was approximately 10,000 people.⁴³⁴

Though it had been discussed in various quarters during the 1890s, the branch of KOP in Kotka had not been founded until 1902, largely through the initiative of the local teacher and active Fennomane, Juhani Alin.⁴³⁵ The branch initially operated from the offices of a local sea captain, Juho Penttilä.⁴³⁶ The opportunity for new premises arose in 1908 when the Kotka Trading Company Ltd, which had been formed by local Fennomane businessmen in 1905, decided to build a large commercial apartment and warehouse property near the harbour. The company traded in various goods such as grains, animal

⁴³³ He did have copies *Kotitaide* sent to him regularly throughout his travels. *Correspondences by Vilho Penttilä in the possession of Raija Penttilä, 1908-09*

⁴³⁴ Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Kotka.

⁴³⁵ Blomstedt, *Kansallis-Osake-Pankin*, 174. Alin Fennicised his name in 1906 to Arajärvi.

⁴³⁶ Juho Penttilä was, in all probability, related to Vilho Penttilä, whose immediate family were based on Suursaari, an island in the Gulf of Finland, for which Kotka was the nearest mainland town.

fodder, leather, salt and cotton. The complex was to house the company's offices and warehouses, shops and offices, as well as apartments. It was decided that the new building would include purpose-built premises for KOP.

The designs for the complex were commissioned from Penttilä. This could have been arranged through Penttilä's association with KOP or through his association with the townsfolk of Kotka.⁴³⁷ There are preparatory drawings dated in both Paris and London in the autumn of 1908, prior to the final drawings dated in Helsinki, April 1909. [Fig. 4.27]

The plot for the complex occupied a whole street block, by the harbour stretching from the corner of Pieni Satamakatu [Little Harbour Street] and Pakkahuoneenkatu [Warehouse Street], along Pakkahuoneenkatu and up Koulukatu [School Street]. This location reflected the needs of the Kotka Trading Co. to be near the harbour, rather than the needs of KOP. The other banks in the town, the Bank of Finland, SYP, POP and the Savings Bank, were all located in the centre of town near the main square.⁴³⁸

The overall complex was massive, approximately 1300 m² on the ground floor, much the largest of the buildings by Penttilä examined in this study. The fact that the building was designed as a commercial complex, rather than primarily as a KOP bank, further explains its somewhat anomalous appearance in comparison to Penttilä's KOP designs as a group. The branch was relatively small, only about 270 m², the same size as the *Kuopio KOP*. It occupied the first floor of the far corner of the Koulukatu wing of the complex, but had a street level entrance due to the slope on which the complex was built.

The design was a clear break from the granite clad forms of the earlier *Kuopio* and *Tampere KOPs*. [Fig. 4.28 & Fig. 4.29] Granite was only used to pick out the piers between the arches and entrances on the ground floor. Above that the building was clad in smooth

⁴³⁷ Penttilä had attended school in Kotka and almost certainly had family there. In 1905 he and Usko Nyström designed the *Finnish-speaking High School* there.

⁴³⁸ In 1930 KOP moved to a new building in the centre of town, commissioned from the architect Vainö Vähäkallio. Penttilä's building still stands. The premises occupied by KOP are now owned by the Society of Jehovah's Witnesses. The interior has been substantially remodelled.

plaster with areas of decorative plaster-work picked out in white. The most dramatic portion of the design was the stepped massing, culminated in a squared tower, on the corner of Pakkahuoneenkatu and Koulukatu. Though asymmetrical, the arrangements recalled the stepped forms of the tower of Hoffmann's *Palais Stoclet*, Brussels, 1905-1911. The squared tower can also be compared with the form of Saarinen's 1908 design for the *Parliament Building*. [Fig. 4.113] Such designs represented a variant of the New Style popular in the late 1900s, as nature-based ornament and rugged stone gave way to New Style Classicism. The inventiveness of the New Style was rationalised into geometric shapes and abstract ornament. The transition between the early New Style and the more monumental New Style Classicism of the 1910s is exemplified by the *Kotka KOP* and by other buildings of the late 1900s, such as Thomé's *Kotka SYP* of 1908-09. [Fig. 4.30]

The area of the building occupied by KOP was distinguished from the rest of the building by its small ground floor windows, which contrasted with the large display windows around the rest of the ground floor. [Fig. 4.31] The bank on the first floor was illuminated by the row of eight rectangular windows overlooking Koulukatu, that had a mixture of rectangular and oval lights. The bank entrance was in the left hand corner of the façade beneath a large plaster relief of stylised waves and pine branches. The upper portion of the door frame was ornamented with square tiles of rubble-dressed granite. The piers between the bank windows were picked out in white, but other than that the façade was completely plain. The second floor windows were unframed and flush with the wall surface. The third floor was clad in sheet metal, which was also used for the roofs across the complex.

The banking hall interior was the last New Style KOP interior designed by Penttilä, prior to the New Style Classicism of the *Iisalmi KOP*, designed the following year, which will be discussed shortly. [Fig. 4.32] The painted beams and painted plaster reliefs link the design to the rich interiors of the *Kuopio* and *Tampere KOPs*. It is, however, much plainer. The panels of concentric squares in the ceiling around the light fitting give some indication of the coffered ceilings that were to follow.

Following on from the *Kotka KOP*, Penttilä designed five further granite palaces for KOP. One in Iisalmi (1910-11), one in Lahti (1911-1913), one in Turku (1912-13), one in Hämeenlinna (1913-15) and one in Jyväskylä (1913-16). These buildings can be seen as both as a reflection of the general trend towards classical regularity in Finnish urban architecture during these years and as a distinct series in which a unique corporate architectural identity was developed.

Before these buildings are discussed it is worth noting the condition of the political situation in the 1910s. In general, by 1910 the political situation was worse than it had been in 1900. There had been a breathing space afforded by concessions granted by a weakened Tsar in the wake of the 1905 General Strike. In Finland the General Strike had functioned primarily as a protest against the February Manifesto rather than as an action of class struggle. This is exemplified by the fact that employers supported the strike, continuing to pay the wages of striking workers, and the principle demand of the strikers was the rescind the February Manifesto and all the edicts that rested on its authority.⁴³⁹ The Tsar acceded to these demands and Finland enjoyed a brief period of jubilation. In 1906 the Four Estates of the Diet were reformed into a Unicameral Parliament based on universal and equal suffrage.

This restoration of legal independence did not last long. The Tsar repeatedly suspended the Finnish Parliament and failed to ratify any legislation it passed, thus creating a legislative deadlock. The weakened Tsar was increasingly dependant on the support of Russian nationalists, who gain strongholds in both the Duma and the Imperial Council. In 1908 a new decree was put forward to replace the February Manifesto. Again the Diet of Porvoo was to be overturned; though this time there was to be no distinction between internal and external matters and all Finnish legislation deemed to be of importance was to be the province of the Russian Assembly. There was no attempt made to pass this bill through the Finnish Parliament, instead the Finns were invited to report on it. The Finnish Parliament protested and refused. In the spring of 1909 Constitutionalists senators

⁴³⁹ Jutikkala, *A History of Finland*, 370.

resigned from Parliament and in the autumn of the same year the Compliant Old Finns recognised defeat and joined them. Their places were taken by the unprincipled and ambitious or by Russians who held Finnish citizenship.

The bill was carried by the Russian Assembly and signed by the Tsar in 1910. From this point onwards Finnish law and Finland's independent legal existence remained in effect only so long as it took the Russian Assembly to draft and enact new laws. The first major piece of legislation to significantly effect Finnish independence was the 1912 Parity Act, which gave Russians civil rights within Finland, without the need to gain Finnish citizenship. This allowed Russians to hold seats in parliament and posts in the civil service and the process of Russifying these two institutions in terms of language of business and personnel gathered pace. By 1914 it was apparent to all that only secession from Russia would save Finland from annihilation.

It is impossible to trace Penttilä's personal response to the political events of the 1900s and 1910s as his personal papers do not survive and censorship made public pronouncements impossible. In general published documents, such as the architectural press, give little indication of the political climate. Only the numerous examples of individual acts of defiance, resignations and public disobedience across all strata of the Finnish society and private records of private conversations give an indication of how strongly Finns felt. In the absence of further evidence it is difficult to trace the relationship between cultural production, such as architectural design, and the tense political situation. It is interesting to observe however, that the destruction of the rule of Finnish law in Finland in 1910 was not accompanied by the appearance of traditionally Finnish Style design. Instead of the bears and pine boughs of 1900, the architecture of the 1910s was characterised by a return to a serious-minded Classicism. This surprising absence of overtly nationalist iconography in design passed without comment in the architectural press. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that by the 1910s the grim political situation had taken the romance, if not the passion out of Finnish nationalism and that a stern and mature architectural appearance was better suited to a nation on the brink of either destruction or

independence. Such an explanation can be no more than conjecture in the absence of any authoritative contemporary commentary. However it is worth bearing such ideas in mind when examining the architecture of the 1910s.

The Iisalmi KOP, 1910-1912

Though significantly smaller in scale than the buildings that followed the simple monolithic form of the *Iisalmi KOP* was an indication of the architectural character Penttilä was to develop for his later KOP buildings. The location and scale of the project were not auspicious. Iisalmi was a small town in Northern Central Finland on the shores of Lake Porovesi. [Fig. 3.1] In 1910 the population of the town was only 2311 people, almost entirely Finnish-speaking. It had been granted a town statute in 1860, though there had been a small church community on the site since 1627. The economy of the town depended primarily on agriculture and forestry; there were three saw-mills in the vicinity. On the outskirts of the town was Finland's largest dairy co-operative. The town was also home to a leather working factory, an electricity plant (opened 1910), a machine workshop and a brewery. In 1910 the financial needs of the town were served by only two banks, the Iisalmi Savings Bank and a branch of KOP.⁴⁴⁰

The branch of KOP had been opened there in 1893. Fennomane merchants in Iisalmi had approached the Helsinki KOP directors in 1891 about the possibility of establishing some sort of local division of KOP to serve the town and districts around Iisalmi. The directors acceded to their request in November 1893 and a branch was opened, managed by the merchant N. J. Hjelman. The branch operated from his business offices on the corner of Eerikankatu [Eric Street], later re-named Kauppakatu [Market Street], and Pohjolankatu [North Street].⁴⁴¹ In 1909 a plot was bought on the Market Square on the corner of Eerikankatu and Heleenankatu (later re-named Louhenkatu).⁴⁴² The building for the plot was designed by Penttilä in 1910 and completed in 1912.

⁴⁴⁰ Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Iisalmi.

⁴⁴¹ Blomstedt, *Kansallis-Osake-Pankin*, 160-162.

⁴⁴² Iisalmi Branch records *Branch minutes*, *KOP archive*, *Nordea Bank*, 1909.

It appears that there was a change of heart about the nature of the new building, relatively early in the design process. A set of designs exist, signed by Penttilä and dated July 1910, which show alterations to an existing wooden building to make it into a bank. [Fig. 4.33] A second set of designs, dated November 1910, show a new brick building on the same site though orientated slightly differently. [Fig. 4.34] It was this second building that was subsequently erected. It is interesting to note that Penttilä intended to clad the renovated wooden building in panelling resembling the colonnade motif he went on to employ on the finished granite building. There is no surviving record in the branch archives of the decision-making process that led the branch directors to commission a second set of designs and build in brick rather than wood. There must have been a re-evaluation of the amount of money the bank was prepared to, or was capable of, putting into the new building. The increase in expense from the renovation of an existing wooden building to a new brick, granite clad building would have been significant.

The bank building was a compact design and contained only the bank premises itself. The building was single-storey and was much the smallest KOP branch designed by Penttilä at only about 260 m². The vista presented onto the market square was of unbroken colonnades on the two street facades of the building. [Fig. 4.35] The two street-front facades were arranged as recessed colonnades framed by filleted piers in the corners of the building. The appearance was that of a modernised Classical temple. The composition rested on a strong interplay between horizontals and verticals. The vertical emphasis of the faceted columns, the lean windows, the vertical fillets and the shield devices over the columns were offset by the pronounced horizontal of the entablature with its projecting cornice.

The high entablature concealed the gently sloping roof behind, giving the impression of a flat roof. The flat roof and subsequent cubic temple form was a distinct contrast to the pitched roofs of Penttilä's earlier KOP designs and another example of the trend noted by Kekkonen above. The Classical temple model behind the design was inescapable, yet its expression was entirely modern and free from any historicist Classical ornament. Instead,

it was simply the classical structure, the colonnade and the entablature, and the sense of tectonic repose that accompanied them, that was appropriated. The entrance was recessed back from the street so as not to interrupt the essential cubic form and symmetrical harmony of the colonnaded façades. This was a contrast to earlier KOP designs in which the main entrance had provided a significant focal point. By playing down the bank entrance Penttilä clearly sought to emphasize the temple form of the design.

The architectural decoration was neither naturalistic nor abundant as in earlier KOP designs. Ornament was provided by the interplay of various planes created by faceting and filleting and recessed panels rather than elaborate carving. Shield devices and rectangular billets along the architrave echoed the repeated rectangles of the modillions beneath the cornice. The shield devices were also used to top the pilasters that flanked the main doorway. The temple model and comparative simplicity of decoration allowed Penttilä to endow the small building with a significant amount of gravitas and presence. The granite cladding would also have added to this effect, signalling the institution's wealth and status, particularly in contrast to the wooden townscape which surrounded it.

The main entrance led into a round lobby and then into an entrance vestibule which was open on one side to the banking hall. [Fig. 4.36] The main hall was rectangular and orientated lengthwise along Eerikankatu. There was a waiting room alcove to one side of the entrance vestibule with a window onto the rear yard. The counter ran down the middle of the hall culminating in the cashier's booth. The staff side of the hall enjoyed the greater supply of natural light from the windows on Heleenankatu. The building was heated by means of seven tiled stoves. Two were fitted into niches at either end of the Eerikankatu wall. Three were clustered around the main chimney in the centre of the building, one in the banking hall, one in the manager's office and one in the staff cloakroom. There were a further two small stoves in the meeting room and the staff tea room. The bank offices were situated at the back of the building along Heleenankatu. The large manager's office had a door onto the customer's side of the hall and a double architrave open to the staff side. The manager's room also contained the door of the safe. The safe was particularly large,

reflecting the absence of cellar vaults. From the manager's room there was a door to a meeting room and WCs and to a rear hallway that led to the rear entrance, to the staff tea room and to the small staircase up into the loft.

As on the façade the interior decoration relied on geometric rather than medieval or nature-inspired forms. [Fig. 4.37] The floor was tiled with square tiles which were inset with a lattice of chequered bands. The panelling of the counter reflected the vertical arrangement of the exterior and of the windows. The wooden piers with recessed panels vertically divided, mirrored the arrangement of columns on the facade. The walls were panelled to head height with a painted frieze above of ovals set horizontally in a dark band. There was a broad opening between the manager's office and the staff area of the hall. In the sectional plans this took the form of a large shallow arch supported on rounded columns. In execution it took the form of two architraves divided by squared vertically filleted columns. This was more in keeping with the Classical geometric style of the exterior and served to strengthen the accents on horizontal and vertical relationships and the cubic character of the space. The tops of the columns were carved with repetitive geometric detail in place of a traditional capital. The opening from the vestibule into the hall was similarly formed by an architrave rather than a doorway.

The walls above the panelling and the ceiling were plastered in a pale colour. The pronounced ceiling beams were carved with a sequence of dentils where they met the ceiling, in a similar fashion to that seen in Frölander's interior for the *Mortgage Association Building*. The ceiling itself was plastered and painted to simulate more intricate coffering. This pattern echoed the cheques of the floor tiles and those used on the façade creating unity throughout the small building. The light fittings were treated as the principal decorative flourish within the interior. Four large pendant lamps, supplemented by wall bracket lamps, were composed of elegant square bases and frames of metal supported by large oval linked chains with delicate chain garlands and cascades of glass beads. The cashier's booth was formed of a simple wooden frame set with transparent and frosted glass. The large stoves were minimised within the design by being set into the walls and

treated in harmony with the walls. This is another marked contrast to earlier interiors in which the stoves were ornately tiled and prominent.

As in the external architecture the small building was a model of contemporary elegance. The Classical elements were used in a non-historical way capturing the authority and dignity of the forms without historicist associations. Penttilä's abstracted Classical design for the building's exterior and interior was remarkably uncompromising in its lack of ornament and cubic severity. The stable cubic form was also a dramatic contrast to the varied plastic forms of his earlier work. It was a significant change of direction for Penttilä and one that reflected the broader change of direction within the architectural profession. The simple requirements of the client were used to his advantage as Penttilä created an impressive and coherent design for such a small, provincial branch bank.⁴⁴³

The Lahti KOP, 1911-1913

The *Lahti KOP* was the first of the large granite palaces built for KOP. There had been a village in Lahti since 1445, but it was not until the opening of the Riihimäki-St Petersburg railway line in 1871 that the area began to develop.⁴⁴⁴ [Fig. 3.1] The village was devastated by fire in 1877, but its rebuilding was encouraged by the elevation of its official status to Market Town. By 1911 the population had risen to 6042 people. The town was well connected for trade, with a port on Lake Vesijärvi and a station on the Helsinki – St Petersburg line and another train link to Lovisa on the south coast. There was also a cellulose factory, a saw mill, a large metal works and numerous smaller industries, such as a sweet factory, brewery, soft drink factory and four printing houses.

⁴⁴³ A first floor was added to Penttilä's building in 1928. The bank continued to operate from this building until 1962, when it was determined that the old building was too small. The building was torn down and a new branch building was built on the site by the architectural firm of K.A. Pinomaa.

⁴⁴⁴ The first railway line in Finland, built between 1858 and 1862 ran between Helsinki and Hämeenlinna. Riihimäki was on the Helsinki-Hämeenlinna line and the line from Riihimäki east to St Petersburg, effectively connected Helsinki and St Petersburg. See figure 3.1.

The growth of the town encouraged Finnish-speaking merchants and businessmen to approach the head office of KOP in Helsinki about setting up a branch to serve their needs in Lahti. In 1896 they were invited to find suitable premises and rented an office in a building on the corner of Aleksanterinkatu and Rautatiekatu [Railway Street]. [Fig. 4.38] The economic growth of Lahti through the 1900s enabled the branch to expand so that by 1911 they were able to purchase the block on which the branch office was situated. The new building was built next to the older wooden one on Aleksanterinkatu, orientated towards the market square on Torikatu [Market Street]. [Fig. 4.39] Building work started in 1911 and the branch moved into its new quarters in 1913.⁴⁴⁵

The scale of the building was large, approximately 800 m² per floor and three storeys high. [Fig. 4.40] The banking premises on the ground floor were approximately 340 m² and occupied the corner of the L-shaped plan along Torikatu. The rest of the ground floor was occupied by six small shops with back rooms and storerooms in the cellar, and a small caretaker's apartment in the rear yard. On the first floor was a post office which occupied a similar area to the bank below. There were also two large apartments and one small one. The second floor was occupied by four large apartments and one small one.

Though the building occupied a corner site, the corner was not emphasised, unlike on earlier KOP buildings. Instead, Penttilä arranged three rectangular towers of equal height on the three visible corners of the building. This arrangement with its implied but non-existent fourth tower created a strong cubic mass with a firm horizontal emphasis. The monolithic quality of this mass was further emphasised through the continuous wall surface of textured grey granite. The surface of the façade was not broken up into bays, instead it was treated as a single whole. The continuity of the two visible façades was maintained through consistent use and handling of materials and through the regularity of

⁴⁴⁵ The bank continued to operate from Penttilä's building until 1962. In that year an architectural competition was held for the renovation and extension of the building. This competition was won by the firm of Viljo Revell & Co. Half of the Aleksanterinkatu façade was demolished and the interiors remodelled as part of this work. The new building was typical of the modernism of the 1960s, a large, rectangular concrete building, with unbroken ribbon windows. It was clad in grey granite in an attempt to harmonise with what remained of Penttilä's façades. The junction of the old and the new building can be seen in figure 4.41. The building was sold off when KOP was taken over by Merita, now Nordea bank, in 1995.

the fenestration. The broad band course running between the ground and first floors and the crenellated entablature of the building further tied the two facades into a solid whole and emphasised the horizontal within the design increasing the sense of the building's stability. The towers were also treated identically with a shield motif at the top and an oriel window marking the tower portion of the entablature, though below that the towers became one with the main surface of the wall. [Fig. 4.41] This regularity and symmetry represented the move away from picturesque forms, silhouettes and ornament noted by the architectural critics mentioned previously.

The *Lahti KOP* achieved its effect of grandeur, solidity and presence without reliance on historic models, but employed certain elements reminiscent of Classical conventions such as the use of a *piano nobile* arrangement on the Torikatu façade. Kekkonen's comment about "old forms in new dress" is again well illustrated. The emphasis on symmetry, solidity and balance within the design can be seen to draw on Classical architectural principles, but handled in a new manner. Rather than evoking a modern temple form as Sonck had in the *Mortgage Association Building* or as Penttilä had in the *Iisalmi KOP*, the building was reminiscent of a castle or fortress. The castle-like character was created through the impregnable mass of the walls and towers and details such as the crenellations and the small slit windows in the towers. And yet the building did not resemble a medieval castle such as that suggested by Sonck's *Telephone Exchange Building*. Instead, it resembled a Moorish fortress, such as the *Alhambra Palace* which Penttilä had visited and deeply admired on his visit to Spain in 1908. [Fig. 4.42] The squared forms of the towers and the uninterrupted surface of the walls were almost certainly inspired by the *Alhambra Palace*. This fusion of elements from different architectural traditions to create a new modern architectural language in which contemporary needs and techniques were easily incorporated was very much in the spirit of the "architectural Esperanto" mentioned by Kekkonen.

Both street facades were arranged with a central focal point. On the longer Torikatu façade this took the form of a central group of four windows on the first and second floor, which

were highlighted by means of a corbelled balcony on the first floor and elaborate stone window frames, rising to encompass the second floor windows above. [Fig. 4.43] On the shorter Aleksanterinkatu façade the focal point was arranged around the central three windows of the first floor and the two main portals, of the ground floor. [Fig. 4.44] Otherwise the facades were treated identically. The base of the building was clad with smooth granite blocks reaching approximately two metres up the façade, which projected slightly to create a firm sense of the building's foundations. Above this the walls were clad to the first floor band course in lightly textured granite ashlar. Above the band course the stone work was subtly altered to alternating broad and narrow courses of ashlar in the same, lightly textured granite. The band course, ornamental areas around the central windows and portals, the oriel windows beneath the towers and other areas of ornament were all executed in the same stone, though it was dressed more smoothly or with greater texture to create a variety of effects. This manner of dressing the stone, as has been noted in relation to contemporary criticism, was a significant change from the rubble-dressed stone of the early 1900s; one which embraced rather than denied modern precision stone cutting technology. The qualities of the stone, its colour, its durability and the different patinas that could be achieved on its surface continued to be explored throughout the second phase of the stone revival in Finland.

The main entrance to the building was on the Aleksanterinkatu façade. It was arranged as two portals framed by massive granite piers, with a similarly deep-set window in between. The portal to the left led to the bank's premises on the ground floor, while the right-hand portal led to the building's main stairwell leading to the post office on the first floor. It also provided access to one of the retail premises of the ground floor. In the broad lintel above the portals the words *PANKKI* [bank] and *POSTI* [post office] were carved into the stone above the relevant entrance. The smoothly dressed granite of the portal group continued up around the first floor windows. Between the windows there were four allegorical sculptures by the sculptor Into Saxelin.⁴⁴⁶ [Figs 4.44 & 4.45] These sculptures presented

⁴⁴⁶ **Into Saxelin** (1883-1927) studied architecture for a few years before transferring to the fine arts. He studied at the Finnish Art Society School in Helsinki from 1908-1912. He also studied abroad, travelling to

Seafaring, Commerce, Farming and Industry. The male figure of *Seafaring* was represented standing upon the prow of a ship, the female figure of *Commerce* held a pair of scales, the female figure of *Farming* was standing over a churn and the male figure of *Industry* stood with pliers and an anvil.

These figures can be compared with the allegorical figures by Runeberg representing trades on the façade of the *Helsinki SYP* and Wikström's sculptures on the *Turku Savings Bank*. [Figs 2.51 & 3.30] The intent behind the sculptural schemes, the representation of the fields upon which the prosperity of the institution rested, was similar in all three cases. Runeberg's figures had been muscled and proportioned in line with nineteenth century Classicism sculptural tradition, whilst Wikström's were elegantly posed and draped in a manner reminiscent of the Beaux Arts school and sculptors such as Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux. In the 1900s architects had eschewed figurative sculpture in favour of naturalistic representation of animals or plants, followed by increasingly stylisation and completely abstract ornament. Penttilä's inclusion of figural sculpture on the *Lahti KOP* was consistent with the reappraisal of the legacy of Classicism in Finnish architecture in the 1910s. Just as Classical forms, such as colonnades, and Classical principles, such as balance and harmony were adapted within a modern approach to architecture so Classical sculptural traditions were also revived.

The muscled solidity and balance of Saxelin's figures were Classical in character, but it was a consciously stylised modern Classicism which went far beyond naturalism. This treatment was similar, in terms of creating monumental balanced figures, with the work of Emile-Antoine Bourdelle and Aristide Maillol which Saxelin had studied in Paris. Details such as the drapery abstracted into regular symmetrical grooves on the two female figures, or the regular boarding of the prow and waves in *Seafaring*, helped harmonise the allegorical panels with the abstract ornament around the windows and portals and elsewhere on the facades.

Paris and Italy in 1910-11 and again in 1913. In Paris he studied at the Academies Colarossi and Grande Chaumière where he was a student of Antoine Bourdelle.

This ornament was concentrated around the central areas of the Torikatu and Aleksanterinkatu facades the four oriel windows beneath the towers and the tops of the towers. Around the oriel windows and the four main windows on Torikatu the granite was treated in alternating blocks of rubble-dressed and smooth stone, which contrasted with the lightly textured dressing of the main wall. [Fig. 4.43] The graphic effect of these alternating textures and the subsequent contrast in colours of the blocks of stone complemented the emphatic rectangular forms of the window frames, the balconies and the stepped corbel beneath the balcony. The crenellations around the top of the facades and the dentilations running beneath the band course further emphasised the bold graphic squared character of the ornamental features of the façade. This character was augmented by areas of more complex, carved ornament, largely the work of the sculptor Gunnar Finne.⁴⁴⁷ This ornament included delicate scroll and shell or flower-like forms running along the balcony between the balcony corbels in the headers of the first floor windows to either side of the central group and the headers of the second floor windows of the central group and as a course demarking the lower portion of the entablature. These smaller areas of ornament evoked something of the spirit of the foliated egg-and-dart and scalloped ornament found on Neo-Renaissance buildings but they were used much more sparingly and were bolder and more abstracted, as suited the tough material and the plainer character of the building.

The larger areas of carved ornament above the windows of the central Torikatu group and the oriel windows were of a different character. Here the patterns owed nothing to Classical prototypes. They shared something of the totemic, slightly alien, character of Frölander's ornament on the *Mortgage Association Building*. The only recognisable forms within the designs were shield-forms, otherwise the patterns were completely original and unfamiliar. The shield appeared at the top of the Torikatu oriel windows and was

⁴⁴⁷ **Gunnar Finne** (1886-1952) studied briefly in the architecture department of the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1905, he then transferred to the School of Applied Arts in 1906. In 1907-09 he studied in the Vienna School of Applied Arts he also studies under Josef Hoffmann, 1909-10. On his return to Finland he taught at the School of Applied Arts. His career in Finland took off around 1912, the year in which he worked on the *Lahti KOP* and on Armas Lindgren's *Kaleva Building*. He went on to become one of the leading sculptors in Finland, producing numerous works for public and private patrons.

incorporated in the footers of the devices over the Aleksanterinkatu portals as well as to the left of the figure's head in the Seafaring allegory. [Fig. 4.45] This shield was similar to that used on the façade of the *Iisalmi KOP*. Its repeated use on the *Lahti KOP* façade helped draw an iconographic connection between the two buildings, which represented the beginnings of what can be recognised as an institutional architectural identity, this point will be further discussed later. The shield was most firmly used to punctuate the top of the towers. Interestingly, alongside the dentils surrounding these shields, were carved curving toadstools forms. [Fig. 4.46] This detail deviated sharply from the non-naturalistic character of the rest of the ornamental scheme and was more easily associated with the design trends of the early 1900s than with those of the 1910s. In fact they bear a strong resemblance to the toadstools used by Sonck around the lancet windows of *St Michaels Turku*, completed in 1903.⁴⁴⁸ [Fig. 4.47] The roof of the building sloped gently towards the inner yard and was concealed by the entablature, as in *Iisalmi*. This arrangement served not to break the firm horizontal emphasis of the design.

The large premises of the bank occupied just under half of the area of the ground floor. The banking hall itself was in the corner of the site utilising the solution of cross lighting from two street facades, as Penttilä had done in Oulu, Viipuri, Kuopio and *Iisalmi*. In addition, the waiting room alcove also had windows onto the inner yard. The hall was rectangular and orientated lengthwise along the *Torikatu* façade. The entrance was in the corner of the hall in the centre of the *Aleksanterinkatu* façade. It led up a few stairs through a porch into a circular hallway. This led to a vestibule which was open on one side via a broad architrave onto the banking hall itself.

The hall was divided in two by a counter down its length. [Fig. 4.48] The ceiling was supported by two columns and the counter was bowed out gently between the columns. This area was where the glass booths for the cashiers were situated. Near the counter at the entrance to the manager's office there was a small stairway down to a sealed cellar which contained the large vault. The manager's office had access to both sides of the counter: a

⁴⁴⁸ Penttilä was working on his designs for the *Turku KOP* during the completion of the *Lahti* building and Sonck's toadstools may have caught his eye and imagination on a visit to the town.

doorway to the customer's side of the hall and two broad lintelled openings onto the staff side of the hall. The manager's office was large and grand and included two smaller columns supporting the ceiling. The manager's office also contained the door of the main safe and doors onto other staff offices, which probably included a meeting room and staff tea room and an accountant's office. The accountant's office had its own small safe. There were separate WC facilities for staff and customers. The staff rooms had a rear entrance from the inner yard. Apart from the main and rear entrances and the stairs to the sealed cellar there was no other access to the bank premises.

The interior of the *Lahti KOP* bore some similarities to that of Iisalmi, though it was on a much grander scale. [Fig. 4.49] The ceiling beams were pronounced and plastered white and ornamented with complex dentils, though in Lahti the mouldings were more elaborate and the ceiling itself between the beams was intricately coffered creating a richly varied geometric pattern. The front of the large service counter was also panelling in a similar fashion to that in Iisalmi with broad filleted panel dividers and panels. The massive marble-clad pillars were the most noticeable feature. They stood as a pair in the middle of the hall with the counter running around them and there were a further two columns to either side of the vestibule entrance. This return to polished marble, rather than rough granite, indicated a readiness to re-embrace the grandeur of the Classical and Renaissance architecture and its tradition within banking architecture in particular. The polished bronze capitals were decorated with stylised renderings of the acanthus leaves of the Corinthian order, an example of the fluid adaptation of Classical forms within the interior.

The double cashier's booths were solidly framed in wood, with glazed panels and bronze bars. Above each service hatch the word KASSA [Cashier] was written in bronze. The bronze headers over the doors to the manager's room and staff offices were styled with similar bold abstract ornament to that used by Finne on the façade. Neither Classicist nor naturalistic they represented again the new language of ornament, with the symmetry and monumentality of Classicism and the free form expressiveness of the New Style. The main pendant lamps took the form of semi-spheres of glass, suspended from a bronze lattice, set

with further small round bulbs. The lamps and other interior metalwork were by the *Koru* firm. The walls and ceiling were not wood panelled but polished stucco, reflecting more light and contributing to the gleam of polished surfaces within the interior. The white ceiling met the darker walls in an ornamental picture rail, the moulding of which complemented the moulded edges of the ceiling beams and coffers. These mouldings resembled Classical dentilated or egg-and-dart forms, but were not directly derived from Classical models.

The interior as a whole had a level of splendour and authority recognisable from the Classical gilt and marble banking halls by Nyström and Aspelin at the turn-of-the-century. [Figs 2.66 & 3.65] The stateliness of the hall was largely created by means of the symmetry of the arrangement and restful horizontal emphasis, the pillars supporting the broad moulded ceiling beams and the lattice work of the coffering in between and the broad lintels over the entrance architraves and alcove. This structural relationship of horizontals and verticals created an air of authority through its complete stability and through its association with Classical columned spaces. This new Classical spirit was accompanied by a return to high-status materials such as marble and to surface gloss, gilt, polished bronze and stucco. This move contrasted with the self-consciously less polished interiors of wood and carved ornament seen in the *Pohjola Building* and the *Viipuri KOP*. The development can be seen as a readiness to embrace sophistication and glamour after a period exploring designs in which honesty and robustness of materials and a craftsman's aesthetic were paramount. Attention to decorative detail carried through from the earlier New Style. The bronze panels and light fittings and the intricate, but restrained, ceiling mouldings brought a similar note of artistry and decorative richness to the interior as the carvings and metal strap work of the more medievalised New Style interiors of the 1900s.

The Development of the Branch Bank Model

The *Lahti KOP* was Penttilä's seventh bank premises for KOP and he had evidently become adept at responding to his client's requirements. Certain elements of his arrangement were

now recognisable from one design to the next. The position of the hall in the corner of the building with lighting from two street facades, and possibly the rear yard also, was common. It was also usual for the manager's office to be set to one side of the hall, with access to both sides of the counter. The stairs down to the vault, if there was one, were nearly always located in the area between these two openings from the manager's office. The safe was always accessible from the manager's room only and the area of the cellar beneath it sealed, this was the standard arrangement in banks across Finland. Penttilä's interiors always included a prominent clock and often a calendar as well, both for practical reasons and to illustrate the orderliness and precision of the running of the institution.

The layout of the *Lahti KOP* was in fact almost identical to that in Iisalmi, despite the variance in size of the two branches. [Figs 4.36 & 4.40] The main entrance was to one side of the hall opening onto the vestibule, which itself opened on to the hall. The space beyond the vestibule was occupied by a recess or waiting alcove. The counter ran parallel with these openings down the middle of the room. The rest of the offices were located beyond the hall, with important offices given street-front windows and the staff area given the yard side with their own back entrance. The safe was located in the middle of these offices. This similarity reflects the fact that the two premises were designed just under a year apart. As well as the practical similarities, similarities in design, such as the use of the shield motif, have already been commented upon. There is evidence therefore that in Penttilä's later series of banks, designed between 1910 and 1913, he had begun to develop solutions that could, with adaptation, be transferred from one design to the next. His decorative schemes and layout indicated he had arrived at what he felt to be a good working solution for the design of his KOP branches. Whether this is evidence of the evolution of a corporate identity within design or more simply of reliance on solutions which had already proved effective it is difficult to say.

In favour of the idea that there was an element of conscious branding in the appearance of the banks are the KOP branches designed by the Master Builder Heikki Kaartinen.⁴⁴⁹ In the 1910s and 1920s he designed buildings for a number of KOP's smaller regional branches. The majority of these buildings were wooden, though a few were not. Of the brick buildings, the *Savonlinna KOP* (1912), the *Kouvola KOP* (1913) and the *Lappeenranta KOP* (1915) were interesting for their adoption of some the language of ornament used in the *Iisalmi* and *Lahti* designs by Penttilä. [Figs 4.50, 4.51 & 4.52] The *Savonlinna KOP* was almost an identical copy of Penttilä's *Iisalmi KOP*. The *Kouvola KOP* a larger two-storey building had a central colonnade of filleted, capital-less columns and a symmetrical, temple-like form again reminiscent of the *Iisalmi KOP*. The design also used the empty shield device to cap the stone-clad piers between the ground floor windows. The *Lappeenranta KOP* used a more delicate ornamental language, similar to Penttilä's *Turku KOP*, which will be discussed next. The shield device was used in the centre of the entablature and above the main door. The banking hall ceiling was coffered and moulded in a fashion reminiscent of the *Lahti KOP*. [Fig. 4.53]

There is no record of why these commissions were given to Kaartinen rather than Penttilä. In the case of the smaller wooden branches it is likely that Penttilä's practice had grown too prestigious for such small commissions. Though the *Kouvola KOP* and the *Lappeenranta KOP* were relatively large branches, certainly bigger than the *Iisalmi KOP*, they were still significantly smaller than the important branches designed by Penttilä from 1911 onwards in *Lahti*, *Turku*, *Hämeenlinna* and *Jyväskylä*. Kaartinen may have secured his contacts with KOP during his time with the *Usko Nytröm, Petrelius, Penttilä* firm, though this is not certain. It is, however, clear that Kaartinen's designs were inspired by the work Penttilä had already done for KOP. Whether this was done on Kaartinen's own initiative or requested of him by KOP it can be seen as a demonstration of one of the earliest expressions of a corporate architectural style in Finland. The adoption of elements from

⁴⁴⁹ **Heikki Kaartinen** (1872-1947) had trained as a master builder in Helsinki and his first position had been as a draughtsman for UN-P-P from 1898-1902. He had also acted as site supervisor on a number of the firm's builds.

Penttilä's designs by another designer working for the same company indicated that a certain level of visual labelling was intended.

In the period 1890 to 1916 there were three architects in Finland who could be said to specialise in bank architecture. Gustaf Nyström, who has already been mentioned, designed three buildings for SYP in Helsinki (1896-98) [Fig. 2.50], Viipuri (1898-1900) [Fig. 3.78] and Tampere (1900-01) [Fig. 3.79] and four branches for the Bank of Finland, in Viipuri (1908-09), in Kotka (1909-1910), in Pori (1912-13) and Turku (1913-14). Valter Thomé began to specialise in bank architecture in the late 1900s.⁴⁵⁰ Between 1908 and 1914 he designed seven branches for SYP and ten branches for POP across the country, as well as a couple of Savings Banks.⁴⁵¹ This specialisation was a reflection in part of the health of the economy and growth within the banking sector; with eight new branch buildings for SYP, ten for POP, six for the Bank of Finland and ten for KOP, all built between 1908 and 1916. This new building was also in part a reflection of competition between the banks in the regional towns. As we saw in Tampere, the branches were generally located close together in the financial heart of town and one new branch building often provided a spur for the others to follow.

The number of branches built in the early 1910s and the division of the task, with Nyström building for the Bank of Finland, Thomé for SYP and POP and Penttilä and Kaartinen for KOP contributed to the emergence of architectural characteristics specific to the different institutions. Nyström was the most prestigious practising architect in Finland by the 1910s, his work for the State, the City of Helsinki and the Alexander University put him at the heart of the national establishment and his work for the Bank of Finland was an

⁴⁵⁰ **Valter Thomé** (1874-1918) attended the Helsinki Polytechnic between 1894-1898. He worked as an assistant in the firms of Lars Sonck (1896-97), Grahn, Hedman & Wasastjerna (1898), Onni Tarjanne (1899). In 1900 he went into partnership with Karl Lindahl and in 1905 he opened his own private architectural office which ran until his death in 1918. His brother Ivar (1882-1918) joined the firm in 1912 and specialised primarily in interior design.

⁴⁵¹ He designed the *Kotka SYP* in 1908 and the *Hämeenlinna Savings Bank* in 1909. In 1910 he designed *Hämeenlinna POP*, *Seinäjäki POP* (wooden building), *Kouvola POP*, *Oulu SYP*, *Uusikaupunki POP*, *Porvoo SYP* and the *Tornio SYP*. In 1911 he designed the *Turku SYP* and *Turku POP*. In 1912 he designed the *Jyväskylä POP*, *Lappeenranta POP* and *Heinola POP* (wooden building); followed in 1913 by the *Lieksa POP* (wooden building), *Roveniemi POP* (wooden building) and *Raahe SYP* (wooden building) and in 1914 by the *Hämeenlinna SYP* and the *Porvoo Savings Bank*. Lehto, *Valtar Thomé*.

indication of this institution's special status. However, his four branches for the bank could not be said to be particularly homogenous in appearance. The *Viipuri Bank of Finland* was a large red brick, Hanseatic style, pitched-roofed building, designed as a homage to the town's past and present as part of the Baltic and Northern European trading network. [Fig. 4.54] The *Pori Bank of Finland* similarly responded to local architectural traditions, with a broad plaster façade and mansard roof, recalling the late Renaissance and Neo-Classical manors and administrative buildings of the period of Swedish rule, such as *Porvoo Old Town Hall* and *Louhisaari Manor*. [Figs 4.55, 4.56 & 4.57] Pori was a largely Swedish-speaking town on the west coast, with strong contacts with Sweden. The *Kotka Bank of Finland* had a rusticated granite clad façade and was arranged in a sober, ahistorical Classical style. [Fig. 4.58] The *Turku Bank of Finland* was also Classical in character. [Fig. 4.59] The use of the Florentine palazzo model, rusticated granite ground floor and smooth ashlar above, recalled Aron Johansson's *Stockholm's Savings Bank* of 1897. [Fig. 3.31] The boldness with which the rustication and smooth stone wall surface above were left without almost any further ornament and the monumental character created by the uninterrupted symmetry of the façade gave Nyström's building a more modern character.

Thomé's nineteen bank buildings necessarily varied in appearance, but overall trends can be identified. Particularly through the 1910s, Thomé developed a style of building that also referenced the Neo-Classicism of the period of Swedish rule in Finland. He used this style for both SYP and POP branches, see for example the *Porvoo SYP*, *Kouvola POP* and *Lappeenranta POP* in figures 4.60, 4.61 and 4.62. These two institutions had become increasingly homogenous in character and served largely the same Swedish-speaking professional and commercial sector of society. The two banks merged in 1919. This perhaps explains why Thomé was not driven to develop contrasting architectural styles for the two institutions. The branches commissioned from Thomé were almost always fairly small in comparison to Nyström's or Penttilä's branches. The use of symmetry and selective application of Classical details, such as pilasters and round dormer windows set in a mansard roof, helped give these small buildings status.

The development of corporate architectural character among the branch banks of Finland in the 1910s was still in its very early stages and does not appear to have been consistently and consciously sought by architects or clients to any great extent. However, it can be noted that KOP followed a slightly different policy when it came to the scale of its branch buildings. In Oulu, Viipuri, Tampere, Kotka, Lahti, Hämeenlinna and Jyväskylä, KOP commissioned buildings far larger than those commissioned by the other commercial banks. The sizes of the actual bank premises within the buildings were not significantly larger than those of their competitors, but KOP favoured the inclusion of a larger number of lettable retail, office and apartment space within the buildings. It would appear that the relatively young, Finnish-speaking bank was keen to publicly demonstrate its rapid growth and strong financial position through the scale and grandeur of its buildings.

It is also worth noting that the banks in which Swedish was the language of business chose architects who were Swedish-speakers and the Finnish-speaking KOP chose Finnish-speaking architects. Similarly, KOP did not adopt the Swedish Baroque Classical motifs used by SYP, POP and the Bank of Finland. Penttilä's designs, and Kaartinen's which followed his model, adopted Classical characteristics such as monumentality and symmetry, and occasionally used recognisable forms such as pilasters, but remained firmly New Style in overall approach. This suggests that KOP was less keen to associate itself with Finland's Swedish Classical heritage than the other Swedish-speaking banks.

The *Turku* KOP, 1912-1914

Turku, or Åbo as it is called in Swedish, was the first city to be founded in Finland. It was founded in South west Finland on the mouth of the Aura River by crusading Swedish forces in the thirteenth century. [Figs 3.1 & 4.63] It served as the capital of Finland from its founding until 1812. As the capital Turku was the religious centre of the country, with *Turku Cathedral* consecrated in 1300 and the administrative centre based in *Turku Castle*. The city was also the educational centre of the country with the Åbo Academi, Finland's

first and for a long time only University, founded in 1640. The Great Fire of 1827 destroyed large areas of the city and ensured the final removal of any remaining government and other national administrative offices to the new capital of Helsinki.

The city remained the second largest and most important in Finland after Helsinki. In 1912 the city had a population of 52,057 people. In 1870 only 48.4% of the population of Turku had been Finnish-speaking. By 1910 this figure had risen to 76.8%, demonstrating the effect of Fennomane campaigns to promote the language and, in particular, the provision of Finnish-language education. In 1913 Turku had 104 factories and businesses in operation, only Helsinki, with 229 and Tampere with 110, had a more developed industrial base. This industrial base was diverse, with the ten biggest businesses in town being the Vulcan metal works, John Barker's cotton mill, P.C. Rettig & Co.'s tobacco factory, N. Boman's joinery works, the Turku Iron works, the Turku textile factory, the Turku tile factory, the Crichton and Co machine works and Steamboat Company, the Aura Sugar Factory and the Finnish Spirits Distillery.⁴⁵²

As the oldest city in Finland Turku also had the richest architectural heritage, reaching back to the medieval castle and cathedral. Alongside these medieval buildings were the seventeenth and eighteenth century Classical and Baroque buildings related to the Town's history as the administrative centre of Finland under Swedish rule. Many of these buildings were destroyed in the 1827 fire. The last great civic building in Turku of the Swedish period was the *Åbo Akademi Building* 1802-1815 by Carl Christoffer Gjörwell and Charles Francesco Bassi.⁴⁵³ [Fig. 4.64] It is a good example of the plaster clad, sober Classicism of the Swedish period. This Classical character of the town was cemented in the first half of the nineteenth century with the rebuilding of the town to a new spacious grid-

⁴⁵² Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Turku.

⁴⁵³ **Carlo Francesco Bassi** (1772-1840) was born in Turin and moved to Sweden at the age of 11. He studied architecture in the Stockholm Academy and became an assistant to **Carl Christoffer Gjörwell** (1766-1837). Gjörwell designed the *Åbo Akademi Building* in Turku, but as City Architect of Stockholm could not oversee the work and sent his assistant. Bassi stayed in Turku following the transfer of power from Sweden to Russia. He oversaw the completion of the *Åbo Akademi Buildin* in 1815 and remained and worked in Turku and the surrounding regions for the rest of his career.

plan by Engel. The Swedish born Pole, Georg Theodor Chiewitz contributed further Neo-Renaissance buildings during his years as Regional Architect.⁴⁵⁴

The Turku branch of KOP opened in 1890, one of the first four KOP branches to open after the bank's founding. This was despite the considerable trouble had with the setting up of the branch administration. The election of a manager, perceived as Svecomane, over a well known popular Fennomane candidate stirred up a lot of acrimony and allegations of foul play. Despite the intervention of KOP's central administration preparation for the opening of the branch did not get underway until a third candidate was installed who was more acceptable to both parties.⁴⁵⁵ The branch commenced business in March 1890, from premises in a building at 16 Linnankatu, a block up from Gripenberg's 1888-91 *Turku Savings Bank*.

It was not until 1912 that a new plot was purchased for the bank on the same street, almost opposite the original branch. [Fig. 4.65] The plot was next to the POP branch in C. J. von Heideken's 1869 building, on the corner of Linnankatu and Aurakatu. [Fig. 4.66] In 1911 Valter Thomé had begun working on the designs for the new *Turku SYP* building for a plot just around the corner on Aurakatu as well as for an extension to the POP branch, also on Aurakatu. [Figs 4.67 & 4.68] It may well have been KOP's awareness of these building plans that prompted the plans for a new building of their own. [Fig. 4.69] In 1913 the Bank of Finland followed suit with a new branch building further down Linnankatu by Gustaf Nyström. [Fig. 4.59] The local Turku Joint-Stock Bank had also built a new building on the opposite corner of Linnankatu and Aurakatu in 1909 [Fig. 4.70] and 1912 Birger Brunila and Valter Jung designed an extension to Gripenberg's *Turku Savings Bank*. [Fig. 4.71] Thus we see in Turku a similar development to that noted in Tampere: within the space of only four years, five new bank buildings and one new extension appeared in Turku, grouped closely in an area that comprised the commercial centre of town.

⁴⁵⁴ **Georg Theodor Chiewitz** (1815-1862) had trained at the Stockholm Technical College from 1827-1829 and the Stockholm Academy from 1829-1832. He was government architect for the region from 1852-1862. He taught a generation of Finnish architects in his own studio in Turku, prior to the opening of the Polytechnic in Helsinki, among them were Höijer and Sjöström.

⁴⁵⁵ Blomstedt, *Kansallis-Osake-Pankin*, 105-108.

The Turku KOP did not occupy a corner plot, unlike most of Penttilä's KOPs, rather it had a single mid-block, street façade, as in Tampere. As a result a similar solution for the hall was also chosen, with a one-storey extension into the yard of the plot, lit predominantly by a roof light. In Tampere the hall had extended only partially into the yard, and had been illuminated partially by a roof light and partially by windows onto the yard on two sides. Though the Turku building was smaller than that built for the bank in Tampere, the ground floor was devoted almost entirely to the bank, creating a bigger actual bank premises, 450 m² in comparison to 370 m² in Tampere. There was a small caretaker's apartment on the ground floor and two apartments on the first floor and two on the second. The building was, therefore, first and foremost for the bank, without any other commercial tenants.⁴⁵⁶ [Fig. 4.72]

The main entrance was on the right of the street façade and led into a small round hallway and on to the entrance vestibule. The small spaces to either side of the hallway were used as WCs, one accessible from the vestibule and one from the manager's office. The entrance vestibule opened onto the banking hall under a broad lintel supported by two columns. This sequence of spaces, albeit differently orientated, was the same as the entrances to the *Iisalmi* and *Lahti KOPs*. The banking hall was large and rectangular and was arranged with a central nave and two narrow side aisles, separated by colonnades of five columns on each side. [Fig. 4.73] The counter was not arranged in a U-shape around the nave, but ran straight down the middle of the hall. The advantage of this was that it was directly under the roof light and instead of the staff occupying the relatively ill-lit side aisles they occupied half of the hall. Their aisle, behind the columns, was supplemented with light from the rear yard. The customers entered the other side of the hall. The side aisle on this side, with no windows, was quite dark and was used primarily as a waiting area furnished with benches and tables.

⁴⁵⁶ The building was demolished in 1962. The façade sculptures by Finne was salvaged and set up in the front yard of the Nummenpuistonkatu Youth Building, Turku.

The manager's offices occupied the front of the building, while the staff rooms were behind them with access and illumination from the rear yard. The first office, probably the manager's, had entrances on both the staff and customer sides of the counter. Between the first and second office on the staff side of the counter was the iron stair which led down to a sealed cellar that contained the bank vaults. The day safe on the ground floor was directly over the vaults. Access to the apartments above was via an entrance in the side passage. This led to the main stairwell and there was a second service stairway opening onto the rear yard. This service stairway led down to the cellars and up to the apartments, but did not open onto the banking floor at all. At the very rear of the building was the caretaker's apartment with a separate entrance from the yard.

Penttilä's design for the *Turku KOP* was his most elegant and Classical, reflecting the Classical character of the townscape. The façade was clad in lightly textured, coursed ashlar of grey granite, with areas of more finely dressed stone. The arrangement was symmetrical, with a central bay of five windows repeated on each storey. On the ground floor this central bay was flanked by a doorway at either end of the façade, with a single large window above, on the first and second floors. The basement of the facade consisted of large smooth granite blocks and the small basement windows were protected by iron bars. The doorway to the right of the façade was the entrance to the bank. It was slightly recessed and within its shallow niche the door was flanked by filleted pilasters and topped with a broad lintel displaying the word PANKKI [Bank] and above that was a small window and carved ornaments that served as capitals for the pilasters.

The entrance at the other side of the façade led to the side passage and rear yard. This entrance was also slightly recessed from the surface of the façade and had a similar arrangement of lintel and ornamental field. The ornamental panel contained the street number. The ornament here was less geometric and abstract than that used in Lahti and included a garland and a large floral arrangement. [Fig. 4.74] The five plate glass windows of the ground floor were slightly recessed and unframed other than an angle of stone as a sill. The ashlar blocks above each window were arranged out of course in three regular

blocks, creating window headers without breaking the surface of the wall. The five windows each had the word PANKKI stencilled on them and they provided light for the main bank offices. The ground floor of the facade was separated from the first floor by a projecting band course and the scale of the ashlar blocks was reduced slightly for the first and second floors. The bay of five windows was repeated on the first floor, though with smaller broader and more widely spaced windows, again without framing. The larger windows above both ground floor entrances were framed with smooth carved stone rising up from the string course. These windows were ornamentally glazed with three vertical lights each containing oval panes at the top.⁴⁵⁷ Above each of these windows was an ornamental field of carved stonework, containing bold scroll or wave forms emanating from a central plaque.

The central bay of the second floor was the *piano nobile* of the façade. The five windows of this bay each had a small curved balcony of stone with a slotted balustrade. The windows were recessed within niches and between them the wall surface formed gently curved pilasters with fluted sides and no capitals. In the niches above the window lintels were a series of figurative sculptures by Gunnar Finne. [Fig. 4.75] These sculpted reliefs depicted pairs of plump children engaged in various trades, the wealth of which is gathered in the large vessels at their feet. There is no record of each plaque's title. The first pair appeared to represent industry and commerce, one was engaged in handwork and the other with a pair of scales, and in the background there was a wheel. The second pair were wrestling with a large bounteous garland. Of the central pair, one held a hoe and the other an object that may be a sextant or a cross bow. In the background were flowers, possibly a reference to the fruits of the land. The fourth pair was again holding a garland and the final pair depicted one holding a ship and the other something which may be a net or sack of some kind. Between each pair of figures a small square window was let into the design which illuminated the attic behind.

⁴⁵⁷ This was the same glazing arrangement as Penttilä had used in Kotka in 1909, see fig. 4.31.

The wall to either side of the central bay displayed the carved and gilded name of the bank on both sides. Above this the building was topped by a projecting cornice with modillions. These modillions are the only echo of the crenellations and dentils Penttilä used to ornament on the rest of his later KOP buildings. Above the cornice was a high blank entablature. The emphatic horizontal of the cornice and entablature reinforced the cubic solidity of the building's form. The roof sloped down gently behind the entablature and was clad in sheet metal. The one-storey banking hall to the rear of the building had a flat rectangular skylight and this was protected by two pitched glass over-roofs.

The long rectangular banking hall, with its columns, roof light and side aisles recalled the arrangement of the *Helsinki POP*, *Private Bank* and *Tampere KOP*. [Figs 3.122, 3.123 & 3.124] The sloping pitch of the roof reaching up to the skylight and the plaster ornament on the roof beams and the undersides of the lintels in particular recalled Penttilä's *Tampere KOP* interior. However, these elements were contained within the firm geometric tone of the overall design. The pitch of the roof was created with angles rather than smooth curves. The sharp angles and edges of the squared columns, lintels and counter top served to counteract any lingering medieval or church-like character. The rich colour schemes of the earlier interiors had also been abandoned in favour of a greater contrast between light and dark tones. The dark lustre of the stone columns, woodwork and gilded ornament, contrasted with the light colour of the plasterwork and floor.

The polished stone columns were square, with the exception of the twinned columns at either end of the counter. All the columns had narrow, almost non-existent, bronze capitals. The columns evoked Classical associations, but were sharp and modern in form. The strong load-bearing relationship of the columns and lintels contrasted with the lightness of the vaulted roof and skylight. The relatively low pitch of the vault and the heavy, downwards thrust of the large pendant lamps hanging from the edges of the skylight, counteracted the upwards thrust of the vault to bring it more in line with the horizontal emphasis of the rest of the interior. The polished rectangular panels of the counter were divided by fluted panel dividers, reminiscent of the bodies of fluted columns.

The walls were not panelled but were clad in polished stucco, as in Lahti. A frieze of rectangular plaques ran around the top of the wall otherwise the junction between wall and ceiling was without mouldings. Large areas of plain surfaces, the painted walls, the tiles of the floor and the plaster of the ceiling all increased the sense of space.

The ceiling was relatively plain, compared to the intricate coffering of the *Lahti KOP*. At the far end of the hall in the centre under the pitched roof was a clock, with a gilded frame and a plaster garland beneath. The rippling form of the garland beneath the clock gave it a Rococo character that contrasted with the clocks in earlier KOP halls. [Figs 4.76, 4.77 & 4.78] The clock in the *Oulu KOP* was a wall-mounted long-case clock. The wooden case, with its elaborately carved corbel and broken pediment top, reflected the fusion of Neo-Renaissance traditional forms with more the fluid decorative forms of the New Style. In the *Tampere KOP* the clock was no longer a separate piece mounted on the wall but was fitted into the panelling of the walls. This reflected the trend of the period for architect-designed interiors in which every detail was incorporated into the overall scheme in line with the concept of *gesamtkunstwerk*. The decorative, Rococo character of the *Turku KOP* clock contrasted with the severe geometry of the overall interior. In general there was a distinct division between ornament, the metalwork lamps, clock and incised plaster work, and the structural and functional elements of the interior. The ornamental elements were intricate and richly textured, whilst the structural and functional elements, the columns, counter and furniture was characterised by smooth surfaces and crisp lines. The cashiers' booths were constructed of simple, solid wood frames, with regular, rectangular glazed panels. The frosted panels dividing the service areas were framed with bronze bars and angled to mirror the form of the roof above. There were no finials or other elaborations on the frame to distract from the simple horizontal and vertical structure of the booths. The free-standing furniture, chairs and desks for the customers, were similarly robust and economically designed. The cubic solidity of the armchairs in particular, with their square padded seats and backs and solid arm rests complemented the formality of the interior.

The Hämeenlinna and Jyväskylä KOP buildings, 1913-1916

The two final KOP buildings by Penttilä were both designed in 1913. This fact was reflected in their layouts, which were identical on a number of levels. The *Hämeenlinna KOP* building was particularly interesting. In this building Penttilä took the opportunity to use brick as a façade material, a material he had been interested in throughout his career.⁴⁵⁸ Facades of red Helsingborg brick from Sweden became especially popular in the 1910s and a large number of high status apartment buildings were clad in this manner, particularly in Helsinki. In Hämeenlinna this material took on important local associations, as the Häme castle, after which the town was named, was one of the few prominent brick buildings in Finland's architectural history. [Fig. 4.79]

Hämeenlinna had developed as a village in the fourteenth century, serving the nearby castle, which had been built by the Swedes at the end of the thirteenth century, to secure their hold on Central Finland. The settlement was awarded official town status in 1638. Following fires in 1713 and 1739 and awareness of the cramped nature of the town's site, the town was moved about a kilometre from the castle. The town was devastated by fire again in 1831, when three quarters of the buildings were destroyed. The opening of the first railway line in Finland, running from Helsinki to Hämeenlinna in 1862, was a significant factor in the upturn of the town's fortunes. In 1876 the railway was extended west to Tampere and Turku. [Figs 3.1 & 4.80]

By 1910 Hämeenlinna had a population of 6034 people. It was an important administrative centre for the region and a garrison town. It was also an important centre of education. The first school was founded there in 1639. The Hämeenlinna Finnish-language Lyseo, founded in 1873, was one of the first Finnish-language secondary schools and attracted students from across Central Finland.⁴⁵⁹ By 1910 there were two Finnish-language

⁴⁵⁸ Despite this interest, few of Penttilä's buildings had brick facades reflecting public taste in regards to brick, as Penttilä noted in 1898 (see p. 106-107), as well as the expense of importing façade quality brick, usually from Sweden.

⁴⁵⁹ Graduates of the Hämeenlinna Classical Lyseo included Uno Cygnaeus, founder of the Finnish Primary School system, Fredrik Cygnaeus and Agathon Meurman, early leaders in the Fennomane movement, and the composer Jean Sebelius.

secondary schools and one Swedish-language one. The town also had a small industrial sector, with a tobacco factory, three printing presses, a textile factory, a saw mill, a distillery and three breweries.⁴⁶⁰ The town supported two local banks, the Hämeenlinna Savings Bank, founded 1846, and the Finnish Savings Bank, founded 1910, as well as branches of the Bank of Finland, KOP, POP, SYP and the Tampere Joint-Stock Bank. [Fig. 4.81]

The Hämeenlinna branch of KOP had been founded in 1891 and initially operated out of the house of the local merchant, Alex Bogdanoff. Hämeenlinna was the ninth branch to open as part of KOP's plan for regional offices. The bank moved shortly after its foundation to another building owned by Bogdanoff on the Main Square. In 1910 the office moved to a rented building on the corner of the town's Main Square. In April 1913 the bank bought this site and the next year work was started on a new three-storey office building by Penttilä. The new office was opened in 1915.⁴⁶¹ [Fig. 4.82]

The site was on the corner of Raatihuoneenkatu [Town Hall Street] and Läntinen Linnankatu [West Castle Street], the present day Sebeliuksenkatu [Sebelius Street], and was an important plot on the corner of the Main Square, opposite the main town church and near the town hall. The other commercial banks all operated from buildings close to or on the Main Square. Valter Thomé had designed the *Hämeenlinna Savings Bank* building on Raatihuoneenkatu, just up from the Square, in 1909. [Fig. 4.83] He designed the *Hämeenlinna POP*, just next door, in 1910. [Fig. 4.84] In 1912 he had also designed a large, grand building to be shared by SYP and the Bank of Finland on Hallituskatu [Government Street] on the Main Square, completed in 1914. [Fig. 4.85] It is likely that the plans for the new KOP building were prompted, at least in part, by the building projects of KOP's commercial rivals.

⁴⁶⁰ Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Hämeenlinna.

⁴⁶¹ The interior and the entrance on the corner were completely re-modelled in the 1970s. The building was owned and occupied by the bank until 1995, when KOP merged with the Union Bank to become Merita Bank.

The Hämeenlinna KOP was a large, rectangular building, whose high crenellated entablature gave it a monolithic cubic stateliness. Thomé's nearby *Hämeenlinna SYP* was a large building, much the largest of Thomé's branch designs. Despite the similarities of scale the two buildings were firmly contrasting in character. Thomé building, with its plaster walls and granite basement and portals, maintained a distinctly Classical spirit. The portals framed by pilasters and the ornament of garlands and putti evoked a distinctly Classical note. The ground floor, plaster wall surface, incised imitation of coursed ashlar and the pedimented header over the central first floor window linked the building visually to the early nineteenth century *Regional Government Building* next door, which can be seen in figure 4.85. In contrast, Penttilä's *Hämeenlinna KOP* design emphasised a more robust, ahistorical reflection on Classical principles of mass, regularity, symmetry and repose. This comparison illustrates the commonly occurring contrast in character between Thomé's elegant Classical bank designs and Penttilä's larger more expensive monolithic constructions.

The most notable feature of the KOP building, the red brick of the upper portion of the façade, has already been noted. The ground floor and basement were clad in smooth grey granite coursed ashlar. The long façade on the Main Square was divided into a central bay of windows, with a decorative emphasis on the flanking windows to either side. This simple regularity and division followed a similar pattern to that used in Iisalmi, Lahti and Turku. The transition between the granite ground floor and the brick upper storeys was mediated by the granite frames of the first floor oriel windows. [Fig. 4.86] The arrangement was largely symmetrical, though the different requirements of the banking premises on the left-hand side of the building from the shop premises to the right necessitate differences in fenestration on the ground floor.

Above the ground floor windows ran a billeted string course. The corbels of the oriel windows interrupted the string course at either end of the façade. The upper portion of both oriels formed a balcony for the second floor window above. Between the two oriels the central bay was arranged as a regular series of nine identical windows. The first floor

windows were framed with a narrow frame of carved granite and had carved headers, floating in the brickwork above each window. The dentils on the underside of these headers echoed the geometric pattern of the string course.

The second floor was plainer than the floor below, with the windows above each oriel framed with a simple frame of carved granite and the central bay of nine windows framed with a similar frame of smooth granite. The name of the bank was written large above the five windows of the central bay. Penttilä used the down pipes to decorative effect dividing the façade into three equal sections with ornamental badges on the top of the pipes punctuating the title of the bank. These pipes broke up the horizontal emphasis of the broad facade.

Above the name of the bank was a high entablature the top of which was dramatically crenellated, as in Lahti. Below the crenellations ran two bands of rectangular recesses in the brickwork, forming a counterpoint to the projecting rectangles of the ground floor string course. These graphic patterns in the brickwork recalled the Germanic Brick Gothic style found in Häme Castle, a decorative brick technique Penttilä had already quoted in his *Oulu KOP* in 1898. [Fig. 3.41] In the *Hämeenlinna KOP* this feature was rationalised and simplified down to a basic graphic pattern and stripped of any Gothic associations. The entablature was further enlivened by the regular punctuation of projecting stone forms, reminiscent of slim gargoyles, with animal faces. [Fig. 4.87] The regularity and firm rectilinearity of the design also stripped these gargoyle forms of much of their Gothic character. Instead the overall effect was of a reference to a local historical architectural monument but understated, ahistorical and contemporary, giving the building local significance and identity without compromising the progressive modern thrust of the design.

The Raatihuonenkatu façade was short and completely symmetrical in its arrangement. [Fig. 4.88] The ground floor had large doorways at either end of the façade and two display windows with a smaller central door in the middle. The main entrance to the bank was

similar to that of the *Turku KOP* with filleted pilasters and a large ornamental lintel. The ornamental carving was a central shield with flowing scrolls of stone to either side. The doorway at the other side of the façade was less grand and provided access to the apartments above. The arrangement of filleted pilasters and carved ornament was sufficiently similar not to interrupt the impression of symmetry. The treatment of the wall surface, stone ground floor, billeted string course and brick above were all identical to the Linnankatu façade.

The consistent treatment of the two facades helped emphasised the monolithic unit of the buildings, as it had in Lahti. This made good use of the building's prominent location on the corner of the square. Its large rectangular mass and the bold geometric repetition of its crenellations and other ornament gave it a unique and imposing edge. The warm red brick contrasted effectively with the pale plaster facades of the rest of the buildings on the square. Early contemporary photographs also show how impressive its mass was in comparison to the sparse single and two-storey stone and wooden buildings that initially surrounded it. [Fig. 4.89]

The *Jyväskylä KOP* was the last in the sequence of KOP branches designed by Penttilä. Jyväskylä is a small town in Central Finland. [Fig. 3.1] It had only been founded in the 1830s and in 1837 had a population of only 189. The first mayor of the town was appointed in 1863 and by 1910 the town had a population of 3615, the overwhelming majority of whom were Finnish-speaking.⁴⁶² Jyväskylä had grown to become an important cultural centre in Finland, through the founding of the first Finnish-language Secondary School in 1858 and the founding of the first Finnish-language Teacher Training College in 1863, the first Finnish-language institution of tertiary education.

The active Finnish-speaking intellectual cultural life that sprang up there led to the town becoming known as the Athens of Finland. The town's prosperity rested on the business attracted by the scholarly community and on its original identity as a market town, linking

⁴⁶² Bonsdorff, et al., *Tietosanakirja*, entry on Jyväskylä.

the Central Finnish hinterland with the towns of the south, via the great Päijänne waterway. The advent of steamships on the waterway and the extension of the national rail network to Jyväskylä in 1897 improved transport connections and trade for the town. The town supported a number of industries including a glove factory, a brewery and a number of soft drink factories, but it was primarily trade in wood and agricultural products from Central Finland that provided the town's wealth.⁴⁶³ [Fig. 4.90]

As may be expected in a town with a strong Finnish-speaking culture the founding of a KOP branch in Jyväskylä was supported enthusiastically by many. The first manager of the bank was John Hagelberg whose Fennomane sympathies were indicated by the later Fennicisation of his name to Raekallio. He was also the editor of the local Finnish-language newspaper, *Suomalaisen* [The Finn]. The bank initially operated from rented rooms at 7 Kauppakatu [Market Street]. In 1900 a building was bought at 18 Kauppakatu and the bank moved there in 1901.⁴⁶⁴ Penttilä drew up the plans for a new building for the site in 1913 and in 1914 work was started. This new bank was finished in 1916 and was Jyväskylä's first large combined residential and business building.⁴⁶⁵ [Fig. 4.91]

The new building was located in the commercial centre of the town, on the corner of the central Market Square and Kauppakatu. This was one of the most prestigious sites in town, facing the main church in the centre of the square and also on the main trading street. The building, much higher than its one- or two-storey neighbours and a good way up the slope upon which the town is built would have been very prominent in the streetscape. Up until the 1950s the building remained one of the few three-storey brick buildings within a town made up predominantly of low wooden buildings.

The *Jyväskylä KOP* was, like the other later KOP branches, a massive cubic form both imposing and solid. Though the Kauppakatu façade was slightly shorter both main facades

⁴⁶³ Ibid., entry on Jyväskylä.

⁴⁶⁴ Information from branch histories *Branch minutes, KOP archive, Nordea Bank*, .

⁴⁶⁵ Information from the Museum of Central Finland, Finnish Building Heritage Records. The entrance and banking premises were remodelled in the 1970s. The building passed into the hands of Merita Bank and is now owned and operated as a branch bank by Nordea.

were treated with equal attention. As in Hämeenlinna, the overall arrangement was symmetrical, despite some variations necessitated by function. The *Jyväskylä KOP* was not such an expensive project as in Hämeenlinna, reflecting the smaller size of the town. Only the basement was clad in stone and the rest of the building was clad in pale plaster. The high basement followed the slope of the hill on which the building stood. At the lower end of the slope, where the basement area was greatest the windows got larger culminating in display windows for the shop in the basement, the shop entrance and the entrance to the side passage.

The ground floor contained the banking premises. Rectangular granite blocks were used to punctuate the plaster wall surface along the upper portion of the ground floor in line with the tops of the windows. These grey granite blocks echoed the rectangles of the small basement windows. The ground floor fenestration on the Market Square façade was arranged as a series of twined tall rectangular windows. These provided the illumination for the banking hall. Above the side passage there was a further, smaller pair of windows. The first floor was the most ornate, comprising of a central bay of four windows, with decorative moulded plaster frames. This central bay was flanked by two large oriel windows, decorated with rectangular panels, dentils and scrolled plaques. The upper portion of the oriels formed the balconies for the second floor windows above, as they had in Hämeenlinna and Lahti. Between the two oriels, forming the sill of the first floor windows, ran a doubly dentilated string course, which also wrapped around the oriels. [Fig. 4.92]

The second floor was largely plain. With each of the later KOP branches Penttilä used less and less ornament placing more emphasis on the uninterrupted mass of his rectangular buildings. The arrangement of windows was identical to the floor below, reflecting the identical floor plans of the apartments on the first and second floors. The ornament on the second floor was restricted to moulded plaster frames around the windows over the first floor oriels and stylised plaster festoons beneath the four central windows. The only other interruptions of the plain plaster wall surface were small rectangular plaques evenly spaced

across the façade. These may have been grilles, relating to the ventilation system; they are not included in the drawings and are no longer visible on the façade.

The entablature and roof were strong features in the design, as they had been elsewhere. The entablature included a projecting cornice, boldly dentilated above and below. The parapet was bare above this and topped by a ledge. The shallow hipped roof was clad in sheet metal and had a series of small semi-circular dormer windows. The ridge crest was crenellated, echoing the large dentils of the cornice. Overall the decorative scheme was based strongly on a simple harmonious balance in the arrangement of the windows and, though there were a few areas of carved plaster work, the decoration largely relied on repetitive rectangular forms. The bold band of the cornice and the ridge crest emphasised the mass of the building suggesting a massive rectangular form, rather than the L-shape it actually took. This was similar to the effect achieved in the *Lahti KOP* by means of the corner towers. There was clearly an intension to emphasise the scale of these buildings to maximise dramatic impact.

The Kauppakatu façade contained the entrance to the bank, the main entrance to the apartments and four shop premises. [Fig. 4.93] The basement windows were small and sunk to ground level, reflecting the height of the slope. The entrance to the bank was on the right hand side of the façade and was surrounded by a large and ornate portal, with the word PANKKI [Bank] written above. The portal to the apartments was also of granite, though smaller than that of the bank. To the left of the apartment's entrance the ground floor contained four large display windows with two shop doors between them. On the upper corners of the windows and between the two portals, granite blocks were set, in line with those punctuating the Market Square façade.

The windows of the first and second floors were arranged identically. The central bay of the first and second floor made up the key ornamental feature of this façade. An ornate plaster band formed the footer of the arrangement, corresponding with the lower sills of the two central first floor windows and the base of the two-storey oriel windows to either

side. The dentilations and rectangular panels of the plaster band corresponded with the decorative treatment of the building as a whole. The whole of this arrangement was recessed in a shallow niche, resulting in a subtly complex interplay of recession and projection. This interplay reminiscent of the recessed bays employed in earlier New Style buildings, but was carried out with a spirit of subtlety and precision rather than picturesque exuberance.

As has been mentioned earlier, the interior arrangements of the *Hämeenlinna* and *Jyväskylä KOP* buildings were largely identical. [Figs 4.94 & 4.95] The entrance to both banks was placed to one side in the corner of the building, and led via a vestibule into the banking hall. Both halls were orientated along the longer façade of the buildings with the bank offices beyond. The differences between the two plans reflected the different shapes of the two buildings. In *Hämeenlinna* the building was long and rectangular creating a principal façade on the Main Square. Four shop premises were included on the ground floor, two next to the bank entrance on Raatihuoneenkatu and two at the far end of the Läntisen Linnankatu façade beyond the bank premises. In *Jyväskylä* the plan was L-shaped, perhaps in a desire to include imposing facades facing both the Market Square and Kauppakatu. There were five shops included on the ground floor, four to the left of the bank entrance and one on the far right of the Market Square façade, in the street level basement area created by the steep slope of the hill.

The handling of space within the banks and the banking halls was also similar. The customer entering the building was ushered through a series of spaces, starting in a lobby from which double doors opened onto a vestibule. In both buildings the vestibule opened onto the banking hall through a wide opening and a shallow flight of curved steps that brought the customer up to the floor level of the hall. In *Hämeenlinna* the vestibule opening took the form of a broad lintel, supported by two polished marble clad columns, with narrow bronze capitals. [Figs 4.96 & 4.97] In *Jyväskylä* the opening arched gently between two similar columns. Both banking halls were light and airy, illuminated by the row of windows facing the Square and by some windows overlooking the rear yard on the

other side of the hall. [Figs 4.98 & 4.99] The service counters ran down the length of the halls so that staff faced the main windows.

Rather than running straight both counters bent inwards in the middle creating a larger service area. In the plans of both banks this took the form of a squared recess in the counter between the two columns that supported the ceiling. In Jyväskylä, however, the counter was constructed with a gentle inward curve. In both banks the cashiers' booths were placed in the centre of the curve or recess in the counter. Echoing the form of the counter the rear wall of the hall included a single-storey bay out into the yard. This bay made up for some of the space lost on the staff side of the counter by the inward recession of the counter and provided for greater light from the yard.

In keeping with the dramatic impact of the large, stately, restrained buildings, both interiors were elegantly and soberly decorated. They were relatively austere in comparison to the richly coloured murals and stone and bronze ornament of banks such as the *Helsinki POP*, *Private Bank* and *Tampere KOP*. In both halls the walls on the customer side of the bank were panelled to the height of the service counter, the front of which was panelled in the same manner. In Hämeenlinna the panelling formed square panels, divided into checkers of inlay, whilst in Jyväskylä the panelling formed square panels with an inlay of concentric squares. In Hämeenlinna the columns of the vestibule opening rested on panelled piers, whilst in Jyväskylä they were full height from floor to ceiling. The polished marble clad columns in both banks had capitals of bronze, ornamented with broad fluting dentils and curved scrolled shields. The ornamental language recalled Corinthian forms, but without directly reliance on historicist models. In Hämeenlinna there were further marble clad pilasters set in the wall, in line with the two main columns, supporting the central beam of the hall ceiling.

The ceilings of both banks were ornamented by moulded panels set in the plaster, though the coffering was not as deep or as detailed as in the *Lahti KOP*. In Hämeenlinna the centres of the panels contained richly moulded centre pieces, but in Jyväskylä the panels

simply contained geometric arrangements of concentric squares or circles. Pendant lamps hung from the centres of the ceilings. These lamps were of the same design, solidly elegant, composed of a circular structure and spherical glass shades. The lustre of the polished marble and wood and the bronze lamps and capitals created an elegant effect, which alluded to Classical grandeur and recalled rich Neo-Renaissance interiors of Nyström's *Helsinki SYP* and Aspelin's *Viipuri POP*. However, the interiors did not share the opulence and lavish ornament of these earlier interiors. Each element, the smooth plaster surface of the walls, the delicate moulding of the ceiling and the understated but elegant decorative details of the metalwork, was handled with greater moderation. Decorative elements were not allowed to overwhelm the sense of space.

The effectiveness of these two halls rested on this combination of pared down Classical heritage, with its associations of wealth and nobility, and a New style desire to reveal form and enhance rather than conceal structure and surfaces. This can be seen in the shallow geometric patterns of the wood panelling and in the ceiling panelling, particularly in Jyväskylä. The furniture of the halls complemented this scheme. In both halls the wood panelling beneath the main street-front windows formed a number of benches and booths, augmented with solid pieces of furniture. The slatted barrel chairs, deep skirts on the tables and standing desks all shared a volumetric solidity, and pared down basic form, which complemented the pared down Classicism of the room.

4.iii NEW STYLE CLASSICISM IN HELSINKI IN THE 1910s

Change and Continuity

Penttilä's later KOP designs reflected trends that can be traced throughout the Finnish architectural scene. The rapid growth of Helsinki in the late nineteenth century continued in the early twentieth century and by 1910 the population had risen around 91,000 in 1900 to 140,000. This growth needs to be put into context. Finland as a whole remained a predominantly rural country. Despite the urban growth noted in relation to the towns included in this study, by 1910 the number of Finns living in urban, rather than rural districts was still only 10% of the total population. Similarly, only 12.2% of the population earned their living in industry, compared to 33% in Sweden.⁴⁶⁶ The industrial sector continued to grow however, particularly in the spheres of forestry and sawmills, paper mills and textile mills. Economic prosperity provided the patronage to drive innovation in the arts.

Financial organisations, which continued to prosper, remained at the forefront as patrons of innovative design. The development that has been noted in Penttilä's later designs for KOP can also be traced in the work of many architects whose earlier work had explored more picturesque, expressive, New Style and National Style modes. The work of Lindgren and Tarjanne for the Suomi Insurance Company is a good example. Both Lindgren, with his work as part of the G-L-S partnership, and Tarjanne, with his design for the *Finnish Theatre*, were architects whose work was closely associated with the National Style trend in the Finnish New Style.

The Suomi Insurance Company was, like KOP, a Fennomane financial institution. It had been founded in 1890 by members of the Finnish Club in Helsinki, with the aim of extending life insurance cover among the predominantly Finnish-speaking, general public. Just as had occurred with KOP, the company had expanded rapidly, exceeding the number

⁴⁶⁶ D.G. Kirby, *Finland in the Twentieth Century*, London 1979, 3.

of policies sold by older insurance companies within a few years.⁴⁶⁷ The 1909-1911 building for the Suomi Insurance Company provides a good illustration of the extent to which clients and architects, who might be expected to favour the National Style, were ready to embrace the new direction in architecture.

Tarjanne and Lindgren's Suomi Building, 1909-1911

By 1909 the old head office, which had been designed by Gripenberg in 1893, was found to be too small to house the growing company. A new plot was purchased on the corner of Antinkatu (now Lönnrotinkatu) and Yrjönkatu, facing Old Church Park and the *Old Church* by Engel (1826). [Fig. 3.3] This location reflected the shift of the commercial centre of the city, away from the Market Square and Senate Square, towards the axis of the Railway Square and Heikinkatu (now Mannerheimintie). The plans for the new building were commissioned from Tarjanne, but it was later decided by the board to hold a closed competition for façade designs, based on Tarjanne's floor plans. The selected competitors were Tarjanne, Lindgren, Saarinen and Sonck, the some of the most prominent younger architects of the day. The competition jurors were Gustaf Strengell, Valter Jung and Birger Brunila and the company directors W. A. Lavonius and E. W. Walldén.⁴⁶⁸ The jury awarded Lindgren the first prize, followed by Saarinen with second prize and Tarjanne with third prize. Lindgren's design was substantially similar to the building eventually built and will be discussed below.

Saarinen's design was thoroughly modern and ahistorical, with a strong vertical emphasis reminiscent of German New Style commercial architecture, such as Alfred Messel's

⁴⁶⁷ The webpages of the Suomi Company: <http://www.suomi-yhtio.fi/Yhtioesittely/Historia/default.htm>

⁴⁶⁸ The management of the Suomi Insurance Company were clearly serious about commissioning an innovative design and selected young architects as competitors and jurors. Lindgren, Saarinen and Sonck were all still in their thirties, whilst Strengell was 31, Valter Jung was 30 and Birger Brunila was 27. Tarjanne, at 45, was the oldest of the architects involved in the competition and the fact that the company was not satisfied with his façade designs, submitted as part of the original commission, indicates they were looking for something quite modern and dramatic.

Wertheim Department Store or Olbrich's *Tietz Department Store*.⁴⁶⁹ Figure 4.100 shows the rhythmic repetition of piers and windows and the restrained use of decoration in the design. The ratio of windows to wall surface was particularly generous, reflecting the flexibility given to architects by the use of new construction technology and materials. A two-storey arcade separated the first two floors from the floors above. This was in accordance with Tarjanne's plan, in which the company archives were housed on the ground floor and the offices of the insurance company were on the first floor. The three floors above this were private apartments. The division that occurred in the facades between the first and second floors expressed this division in function between the commercial and residential sections of the building. This division was expressed in all four designs.

Tarjanne's entry was described by Strengell as "clear and sober but a bit mundane".⁴⁷⁰ [Fig. 4.101] The design was simple and symmetrical with a two-storey arcade around the ground level and giant pilasters around the upper three floors, with a stepped tower in the centre of the Lönnrotinkatu façade. The round windows, between the piers, under the eaves of the building and the other geometric ornament focussed under the eaves and around the top of the central tower and corner piers indicate the influence of Viennese architecture. The round windows in particular recall the decoration of Wagner's *Karlsplatz Pavilion* and the stepped cubic forms of the tower can be compared to Olbrich's *Secession Pavilion*. [Fig. 4.102]

Sonck's entry was described by Strengell as employing "a shifting, *Mortgage Association* granite palace theme, but without the same unity and harmony."⁴⁷¹ The comparison to the *Mortgage Association Building* was probably based on the inclusion of two-storey, recessed colonnades in the centre of the facades. [Fig. 4.103] The decoration of the façade was complex, with a detail of groups of short, twinned columns around the first floor and the

⁴⁶⁹ These points were noted by Strengell in his long review of the *Suomi Building*: G. Strengell, 'Suomen uusi palatsi [Suomi's New Palace]', *Kotitaide* 1911, 56.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 56.

colonnades of twinned columns above. To this structural ornament were added a field of highly decorative surface ornament around the fourth floor of the building. The richness of this ornament also recalls Viennese architecture, such as the decorative facades of Wagner's *Wienzeilehäuser* apartment buildings. [Fig. 3.59]

Lindgren's design differed from the other three, particularly in terms of the volumetric dramatically articulated mass of his facades, which contrasted with the rich surface ornament of Tarjanne and Sonck's designs, or the pared down starkness of Saarinen's. It is clear from the competition entries submitted that the picturesque and expressive New Style of the early 1900s had been superseded. [Fig. 4.104] The architects, Tarjanne, Saarinen, Sonck and Lindgren, had been among the architects most active in exploring ways of expressing a sense of Finnishness within architectural design, but by 1909, in a competition for a Fennomane insurance company, no National Style elements were discernable.

Work on the new building began in 1910. It was built according to Tarjanne's plans with Lindgren's facades and was completed in 1911. The interiors were largely designed by Tarjanne, though Lindgren designed the interiors for the company directors. The building's plot was rectangular with the longer façade running down Yrjönkatu and Lönnrotinpuisto. The main entrance was located on the shorter façade, and this façade was given greater importance by means of a central raised tower, cupola and sculpted central bay. [Fig. 4.105]

The identical Yrjönkatu and Lönnrotinpuisto facades were less dramatically modelled, and were based on a schematised Florentine palazzo form. [Fig. 4.106] The arrangement can be compared in its basic elements to the long façade of Aspelin's *Viipuri POP* of 1899-1901. [Fig. 3.26] The basement level was heavily rusticated and the regular fenestration of the upper floors was enlivened with a central balcony and flanked at either end with two-storey oriel windows. The use of the Florentine Renaissance model was noted by Strengell and

other reviewers.⁴⁷² The traditional association of the palazzo form with financial architecture endowed the building with an appropriate air of authority, though the handling of the granite cladding and the ornament was far from conventional.

In Lindgren's design a basement of massive granite blocks supported large, two-storey piers that ran between the windows of the ground and first floors. These piers were clad in lightly textured ashlar, with deeply scored horizontal courses, creating a highly stylised form of rustication. The ground floor windows were relatively small and rectangular and set deep between the piers. They were protected by iron grilles, contributing to the fortress-like impregnability of the first two floors. The first floor windows were larger, tall rectangles that provided the illumination for the Suomi Insurance offices. Between the ground and first floor windows, between the piers, the wall was studded with individual diamond pointed stone blocks around which the stone cladding tessellated.

The first floor windows were capped by the broad, dentilated, band course that marked the boundary between the commercial and the residential sections of the building. Below the band course, between the first-floor windows, ran a course of large rectangular billets. These billets related to the strong punctuating forms of the stepped corbels supporting the central balcony and two oriel windows. The coursed stone and geometric block ornament gave the first two floors an uncompromisingly bold and severe character. On the Yrjönkatu façade the regularity of the ground floor was interrupted by the large archway of the yard passage.

The upper three floors were lighter in character, with smooth ashlar walls of an even more lightly textured stone. The sills of the second floor windows were formed from the upper ledge of the band course. The second floor was given something of the character of a *piano nobile*, with windows set within stepped arched frames of stonework. The glazing bars of the upper semi-circular lights were arranged with a single square pane in the middle that could be opened for ventilation. This square pane also echoed the dominant geometric

⁴⁷² Ibid., 56.; J. Öhquist, *Suomeen taiteen historia [The history of Finnish art]*, Helsinki 1912, 606.; Brunila, 'Uudempi rakennustaide', 618. and Okkonen, *Suomen Taiteen Historia*, 238.

theme of the façade. The balcony ran in front of the central three windows and the stone balustrade ran up to form pedestals between the windows on which were set bronze urns. Oriel windows framed the facades on both sides. Those on the Lönnrotinkatu corner were more varied in their form and ornament, helping to ease the transition between the side facades and the more ornate main façade.

The main façade exhibited the same basic treatment of wall surface, band courses and fenestration as the side facades. The band course between the first and second floors was replaced by a balcony, which ran across the façade in front of the second floor windows. Much of the overall grandeur of the building was derived from the strong emphasis placed on horizontal relationships within the design, the weight of one floor upon another. The majority of ornament, horizontal coursing of the stone work, band and string courses, balconies, projecting sills and the projecting cornice, reinforced this horizontal accent. An exception, or counter-point to this, was the central field of the main façade in which the dominant accent was vertical. [Fig. 4.107]

On the ground and first floors the horizontally coursed stone was interrupted by four massive squared pillars, which created a tall but shallow, shadowy portal for the main entrance to the building. The granite pillars supported the corbels of twin oriel bays that ran the full height of the building, as well as the portal lintel. The oriel bays were inventively formed, composed of paired, channelled shafts that metamorphosed into free-standing columns around the fourth floor windows. The wall between the two oriel bays was also filleted continuing the vertical theme. Above the oriel bays the entablature rose up to form a low square crenellated tower with a mansard-roofed cupola. These crenellations echoed the crenellations that ran above the cornice all round the building. The centre of the tower was ornamented with a further arrangement of short pilasters and columns. The roof of the cupola and the pitched roof of the rest of the building were clad in copper. The lively modelling of this portion of the façade was described by Strengell as rather Baroque

in character and a feature in which the characteristic artistic individuality of the architect was recognisable.⁴⁷³

The majority of façade ornament took the form of rectangular dentils, billets or crenellations, which complemented the squared masses of the stepped corbels beneath the oriels and balconies. There were, however, some areas of more intricately carved ornament. The most important of these were the façade sculptures by Eemil Halonen.⁴⁷⁴ In the centre of the main façade, above the entrance portal, was a sculptural group of a mother and two children surrounded by a cascade of fruits, symbolising bounty and the nurturing spirit of the company. [Fig. 4.108] At either end of the balcony on the main façade were matching sculptural reliefs of a pair of children leaning nonchalantly against the balcony balustrade, again surrounded by fruit. [Fig. 4.109] These figure groups will be examined in more depth shortly.

Apart from these groups, carved ornament was limited to the headers of the third floor windows and areas on the oriel bays, where the ornament formed abstracted crests, swags, garlands and scroll work. Above the cornice in each corner of the long facades there were large blank shield devices, with three crenellations on top, very similar to those used on the towers of the *Lahti KOP*. Shields were included in Lindgren's original designs in 1909 and also appeared on Penttilä's *Iisalmi KOP* drawings in 1910. The potential significance of Kaartinen's use of this device has already been noted. It is not clear whether it had any particularly Fennomane significance. It did not appear on the last three KOP buildings by Penttilä, nor the 1912, second *Suomi Building* by Karl Lindahl, which would indicate that it was not a Fennomane symbol, but simply a device that enjoyed a period of particular popularity. The shield form was effective because it was a recognisable ornamental device, but was not specifically associated with any particular historical period or style. As such, it

⁴⁷³ Strengell, 'Suomen uusi palatsi', 56-57.

⁴⁷⁴ **Eemil Halonen** (1875-1950) trained first as a carpenter. From 1896-1897 he studied at the Finnish Art Society School in Helsinki. His Fennomane sympathies are indicated by the fact that in 1899, in protest at the February Manifesto, he changed the spelling of his first name from Emil to the more Finnish Eemil. He was quick to find success in public competitions. A number of his carved wooden reliefs were displayed in the Finnish pavilion in 1900. From 1899-1901 Halonen studied in Paris at the Academy Colarossi. His work became increasingly popular through the 1910s and 20s.

had the iconographic authority missing from newly invented ornament, but was free from strong historical associations.

Around the yard archway and the entrances to the apartments the ornament was more intricate, reflecting its proximity to street level. Above the yard archway were two more blank stone shields with ribbed frames and a cascade of stylised fruits and flowers, some of which look like cogs, perhaps suggesting the vehicular traffic using the yard passage. [Fig. 4.110] The entrance to the apartments was ornamented with a round window set beneath the squared corbel of the oriel window above. Around the window were further stylised fruits and core sheaves. This more naturalistic ornament recalled the earlier ornamental language of the New Style. [Fig. 4.111]

Tarjanne and Lindgren's interior designs for the *Suomi Building* shared the same mixture of schematic Classicism and bold ornament as the façade. Tarjanne's main entrance hall with its banister-less quarter-turn staircase, twinned squared columns and squared landing balusters, captured the character of the monumental squared ornament of the façade. [Fig. 4.112] This façade language was translated for the interior through the use of finer, glossier materials. The graphic relationship between glossy dark squared columns and the staircase structure and the white plaster of the walls, lintels and ceiling was reminiscent of the graphic abstract relationships between light and dark surfaces in the work of Adolf Loos, such as the black and white marble interiors of his *Villa Karma*, Lake Geneva (1904-06).

Tarjanne's main customer hall interior was similar in many ways to Penttilä's *Lahti KOP* and it is possible that Penttilä was partially inspired by Tarjanne's design. [Fig. 4.113] The broad round marble columns with bronze capitals, the polished wooden counter and moulded beams of the ceiling are all similar to Penttilä's interiors in their reworking of Classical forms and the traditions of the rich banking hall interior. It should be remembered, however, that Penttilä had already begun to explore these themes in his *Iisalmi KOP* in 1910, so Tarjanne's hall can not be regarded as a seminal source.

Lindgren's interiors for the rooms of the company directors followed a similar New Style Classical mode. [Fig. 4.114] In the director's meeting room the walls were ornamented with shallow filleted pilasters with capitals formed of three pendant wedge shapes, similar to the capitals of the massive portal columns of the façade. The high backed chairs with oval backs, turned wood legs and scrolled arms were reminiscent of heavy carved Neo-Renaissance furniture but without any real historical touches and with a greater lightness and balance that complemented the light Classicism of the interior. The light fittings were again produced by the *Koru* firm.

The *Suomi Building* was widely admired. Strengell, despite reservations about the more ornamental sections of the façade, said that "the capital has in Lindgren's new *Suomi* façade an artwork both thoroughly thoughtful and monumental, which – may one dare to say – will stand the test of time."⁴⁷⁵ Birger Brunila described Lindgren's design as having a noble and simple beauty that made it an ornament to the city:

Smoothly carved, clear-cut surfaces, horizontal lines, unbroken cornices and focussed, tasteful decoration lead one to think of grand Spanish Renaissance palaces, which have earlier caught the artist's eye, though the approach is truly personal.⁴⁷⁶

The reference to Spanish architecture is interesting. The author may have been thinking of buildings such as the *Palace of Charles V* in Granada by Pedro and Luis Machuca (1527-68), with its monumental square form, dramatically rusticated lower floors and central entrance bay. [Fig. 4.115] This example again demonstrates how the later New Style was understood by contemporaries to be a re-working of older architectural traditions, but in a new and creative way.

There were no suggestions from the building's reception that its appearance was viewed negatively as 'imported', as had been said of Frosterus' competition entry for the Helsinki railway station in 1904. Yet like Penttilä's KOP buildings there was little in the designs that could be read as overtly Finnish. The granite cladding of the façade could be taken as a

⁴⁷⁵ Strengell, '*Suomen uusi palatsi*', 57.

⁴⁷⁶ Brunila, '*Uudempi rakennustaide*', 618.

national statement, but functioned more directly as a statement of the institution's wealth and corresponding status. The smooth, precise handling of the stone certainly owed more to the technical and industrial advances embraced by the stone industry in Finland than to the medieval tradition of granite use in Finnish architecture. The Renaissance mode recognisable within the design could be seen as sympathetic to the Classical architecture of the heart of Helsinki, but it could also be related to a widespread re-evaluation of the legacy of Classicism by architects across Europe.

Both Tarjanne and Lindgren had embraced the imaginative expressiveness and the exploration of National Style forms of the New Style in their earlier works, but the later transition to New Style Classicism was fluid. It does not appear to have been an expression of lessening of pro-Finnish zeal. In general pro-Finnish attitudes were pronounced in the 1910s, as it became increasingly apparent that the Tsarist regime was still intent on the dissolution of Finnish autonomy, regardless of Finnish and international protests. In terms of the client, Suomi Insurance, political feelings within the company still ran sufficiently high that in 1910 there was a dispute within the management between those who supported the younger Fennomane line of active resistance to Russification and those who supported the Old Finn position of compliance.⁴⁷⁷ The dispute was serious enough that with the victory of the Young Finn faction the Old Finns withdrew from the company and founded the Salama Insurance Company instead. It is clear therefore that the decline of interest in National Style forms did not correspond with any waning of feeling on Fennomane issues.

The change in direction seen in the *Mortgage Association Building*, the *Suomi Insurance Building* and Penttilä's later KOP designs became the prevailing trend in urban architecture in Finland. The *Kaleva Insurance Building* by Lindgren was one of the most prestigious building projects in Helsinki in the 1910s. It was a massive building in the very heart of the capital, on the corner of Mannerheimintie and Kaivokatu, adjoining Lindgren's earlier *Students' Union* (1907-1910). The building incorporated the premises of the Kaleva

⁴⁷⁷ See the discussion on page 23.

Insurance Company, the luxury *Seurahuone Hotel*, shops and apartments. It was designed to present a monumental vista down Kaivokatu to the new *Helsinki Railway Station*, which was nearing completion. This scheme can be seen in figure 4.116. The building on the opposite side of the street, which was to complete the vista, was never built.

The façade of the *Kaleva Building*, stretching round from Mannerheimintie onto Kaivokatu and round again to face the station, was handled uniformly. The line of the crenellated cornice was maintained and the windows were regularly spaced. There was very little articulation of the smooth surface to interrupt the sense of unbroken volume. The Kaivokatu-Mannerheimintie corner was not emphasised with a tower like the *Student's Union* on the other end of the block. Drawings from the early stages of the project showed a tower, mirroring the tower of the *Student's Union*, but this was abandoned by the final stages of the design between 1911 and 1912. Instead, the building presented a smoothly curving corner, unbroken cornice and monumental corner entrance which were to have been echoed on the other side of the street, creating a vista of harmony and regularity, which was thoroughly Classical in spirit.

The main entrance is particularly interesting as an illustration of how dramatically Finnish architecture had transformed from the earliest stages of the adoption of the New Style. In contrast to the intricately carved details of pine boughs, bears and spirits, seen around the entrance to the *Pohjola Building* or the low, granite archways of the *Tampere KOP* or *Telephone Exchange Building*, [Figs 2.63, 3.116 & 3.120] the *Kaleva Building* relied on the monumental impact of the fluted granite columns that flanked the entrance. [Fig. 4.116] These columns had broad, faceted, but unmoulded granite capitals and supported a curved granite lintel with the name *KALEVA* upon it. Above the lintel the balcony, which ran around the whole façade beneath the first floor windows, cast the whole arrangement into dramatic shadow. The effectiveness of the design lay in the sense of powerful tectonic relationships between the massive granite columns and the weight of the lintel, balcony and upper floors of the building. The fluting of the columns recalled the Doric order lending the design the authority associated with the heritage of Classicism.

Above the entrance there was a large carved relief by Finne depicting a blank shield, two children surrounded by flowers and a header proclaiming “Solid Security through Insurance”.⁴⁷⁸ The relief was the only area of figurative ornament on the whole façade. The design can be related to the figurative sculptural work on the *Suomi Building*, on Pentillä’s *Turku KOP* and on Thomé’s *Hämeenlinna SYP*. [Figs 4.108, 4.109 & 4.75] The child figures used as iconography in these works were a return to a more universal scheme of ornament after the idiosyncratic inventive ornament of the earlier phase of the New Style. They can be seen as part of the long tradition of figural architectural ornament. In particular they evoked the putti figures of the Baroque and Rococo periods which enjoyed a renewed vogue in the late nineteenth century. Such schemes were popular on financial buildings, perhaps because of the connotations of nurturing care that such child-like figures evoked. The children supporting the shield above the entrance of Nyström’s *Tampere SYP* have already been noted. [Fig. 3.85] Other prominent examples include Wagner’s use of putti on his *Länderbank* façade in Vienna (1882-84) [Fig. 3.86] and Richard Norman Shaw’s use of cherubs on the façade of his *Alliance Assurance Company Building* (1881-83). [Fig. 4.118]

The Classical New Style shaped architecture throughout the 1910s. Though a few progressive architects, like Frosterus, were frustrated by what they perceived as the retrograde, “neo-biedermeier” course taken by the New Style, most critics were enthusiastic in their response.⁴⁷⁹ Brunila’s article on contemporary architecture in 1910 sums up how this development within the New Style was perceived. His article summarised the architectural development of Finland through the nineteenth century, from Engel to Höijer, Ahrenberg, Gripenberg and Nyström. He then went on to discuss the rise of the use of natural stone and of interest in Finland’s medieval and vernacular heritage and the development of the New Style, through buildings such as the *Finnish Pavilion*, the *Finnish*

⁴⁷⁸ Finne worked to a design by Lindgren.

⁴⁷⁹ R. Nikula, *Armas Lindgren 1874-1929 : arkkitehti*, Helsinki 1988, 167.

Theatre, the National Museum, St John's, Tampere and the Telephone Exchange. He ended by introducing the most recent developments in architecture:

The highest expression of Saarinen's creative power to date has been seen in the design competition for the new parliament, in which he won first prize. The building's stately mass, which rises organically from the base form, is rare in its magnificence, and it must be regretted that the building work has had to be postponed as the ruler has not approved the parliament's decision for the new building.

Entirely typical of the new direction is the *Mortgage Association Building's* palace, which was built by Lars Sonck. What a development from the gloomy and coarse language of form of the *Telephone Exchange* to this harmonious, clear architecture, smoothly carved granite blocks and colonnades and light, graceful decoration! Even though there are only four years between the two. The same decorative path as the *Mortgage Association Building* appears in the creation of Sonck's new Helsinki *Exchange Building* designs. The *Kallio Church*, currently under construction, also displays clarity, harmony and tranquillity. Colonnades and hidden roofs are characteristic marks of the direction to which architecture has turned. Weary of National Romanticism, architects have turned their gaze southward, towards the clarity, harmony and monumental character of the antique and the Renaissance, in which architecture's eternal, fundamental truths are hidden.⁴⁸⁰

The New Style Classicism of the buildings mentioned above was based on the same clarity of form, derived from Classical principles of proportion and balance, which shaped Penttilä's later KOP designs. The expressive ornament and dramatic medievalism of the earlier New Style was rejected by 1910 as "gloomy and coarse". Saarinen and Sonck, who had designed many of the key monuments of the earlier New Style, were similarly responsible for prominent work within later New Style Classicism. Figures 4.119, 4.120 and 4.121, showing the *Parliament Design*, the *Exchange Building* and the *Kallio Church*, illustrate the smoothly hewn granite, monumental symmetrical designs and colonnades that became the common language of form for high status architecture. It was not simply such high profile buildings that followed this course. The trend towards symmetry, monumentality and restrained ornament was similarly felt in the field of apartment

⁴⁸⁰ Brunila, 'Uudempi rakennustaide', 618.

building design. See for example Lindgren's 1913 apartment building at Tehtaankatu and Frosterus' 1913 apartment building on Museokatu. [Figs 4.122 & 4.123]

Writing in 1912, the author Onni Öhqvist described the success of this new language of form:⁴⁸¹

This branch of art, in Finland, is at present on the verge of triumphing over all others, with its grandiose goals and schemes, and its wide ranging creative ability, depth and originality.⁴⁸²

In the space of just over fifteen years Finnish architects had explored a wide range of new architectural styles, in search of a new modern architectural mode which would adequately reflect the inventive optimistic spirit of the age and be able to respond to the challenge posed by contemporary architectural needs, materials and methods of construction. Alongside this had run the desire to catch up and keep up with developments in more established architectural centres and to create architecture that would grace the growing infrastructure of Finland and represent the Finnish people. By the 1910s understanding of what form this new architecture would take had evolved. Overt national expression was abandoned in favour of a modern Classical mode, which spoke of the growing assurance of the architectural profession in Finland and their sensitivity to the renewed interest in Classicism seen among architects across Europe.

Renewed respect for Classical rules of architectural composition and the authority of Classical forms can be seen, for example, in the work of Erik Lallerstedt and Carl Westman in Sweden, Carl Peterson in Denmark, Peter Behrens in Germany and Adolf Loos in Austria. It should be remembered that Finnish architects had turned to imaginative forms of national expression at the same time as, or following shortly after, architects across Europe had become more and more concerned with the need for nationally authentic architecture. Similarly, they turned to the more universal forms of Classicism at the same time as their European colleagues. This supports the assertion of this thesis that National

⁴⁸¹ **Johannes Wilhelm Öhqvist** (1861-1949) was an writer and lecturer in German and modern languages at the Helsinki University.

⁴⁸² Öhqvist, *Suomen taiteen historia*, 609.

Style impulses can not be fundamentally separated from the general thrust of New Style design reform, inspired by international theories and a familiarity with the work of architects across Europe and America. The ease with which overtly National Style elements of design were abandoned gives an indication of the relative significance of this trend within the broader trend of architects' desires to create a new and modern style of architecture.

5. CONCLUSION

Unlike the relatively short-lived period of New Style inventiveness and the exploration of National Style forms in the early 1900s, the principles of New Style Classicism: the reinterpretation of Classicism for the contemporary urban streetscape, continued to resonate in Finnish architecture through the 1920s and 1930s. The outbreak of the First World War, independence and the Civil War that followed brought the building boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to a swift end. It was not, for example, until 1923 that housing production returned to its pre-war level.⁴⁸³ In the 1920s the construction of the new Republic of Finland wrought some profound changes within the architectural sphere. The state and the municipalities, rather than private companies and individuals, became the dominant clients. The pressing need for more housing, growth in the industrial sector and the development of a municipal and national infrastructure for the new nation resulted in numerous innovative architectural projects across the country.

But there was continuity also. The 1900s and 1910s had seen the development of an established and assured architectural profession. The system of architectural competitions instigated in 1893 continued to operate in the new Republic, promoting innovation and keeping the field open to young architects. The tradition of architectural discourse was kept alive in the pages of *Arkitekten*, published in Finnish as *Arkkitehti* from 1921 onwards, and *Rakennustaito* the journal for Master Builders published from 1906 onwards.

Many of the architects who had established their careers in the 1900s and 1910s continued to practise. Lindgren became professor of architecture at the Helsinki Polytechnic in 1919, as well as practising as an architect specialising largely in residential buildings. His tuition continued to place an emphasis on architectural history, just as Nyström's had, though Lindgren included Finland's medieval and vernacular architecture within his syllabus. He also encouraged the study of the so called *architettura minore* of Italy: the vernacularisation of Classical principles, as a means of approaching the valuable essence of Classicism but

⁴⁸³ R. Nikula, 'The Inter-War Period: The Architecture of the Young Republic' in Norri, Standertskjöld and Wang (eds) *20th Century Architecture: Finland*, Helsinki 2000, 39.

freed from its dogma. As such, it is clear that the New Style Classical architecture of the 1910s provided the foundation for the architecture of the new Republic.

The inter-war years were still dominated by architects who had been taught by Nyström and gained experience in the firms of the leading New Style architects of the 1900s. An example of this phenomenon can be found in the career of the architect Wäinö Gustaf Palmqvist (1882-1964). He had graduated from the Polytechnic in 1905. As a student he had worked in the offices of Nyström, Lindgren and Sonck. He began practicing as an architect in 1906, forming a short-lived partnership with Birger Brunila. From 1909 to 1919 he worked in partnership with Einar Sjöström and they designed buildings throughout Helsinki in line with the New Style Classicism of the period. [Fig. 5.1] Following independence Palmqvist set up his own private office, developing a specialisation in the field of design for industry, particularly the paper industry, as well as producing a number of prominent buildings in Helsinki. [Fig. 5.2] Financial institutions also continued to make an important contribution, as patrons of innovative design. In 1930 Oiva Kallio designed a starkly modern building for the Pohjola Insurance Company, which included the first ribbon-window arrangement in Helsinki. [Fig. 5.3]

The architecture of the 1920s is commonly understood as part of the wider trend of Nordic Classicism. But it developed upon the fusion of monumental form, functionality and selective use of Classical elements seen in the previous decade. The new *Parliament House* for Finland, was designed by Johan Sigfrid Sirén in 1924 and completed in 1931. [Fig. 5.4] It was a powerful representation of the identity of the new nation. The international language of Classicism conveyed the idea of a confident, conservative nation, orientated towards the Western European cultural sphere. The design can be compared to Saarinen's winning *Parliament Building* design from the earlier 1908 competition. [Figs 4.113] This building, as a national monument, forms a distinct contrast to developments in many of the Central and Eastern European nations such as Romania and the former Baltic States. In these countries architectural and design forms drawing on the nation's vernacular or

other historical architectural heritage remained current during the inter-war years of independence.

This study has sought, through an examination of contemporary architectural journalism and the architectural type of the financial institution, a deeper understanding of how National Style impulses at the turn-of-the-century related to the broader architectural picture of the years 1890-1916. It has also sought to illuminate further the decline of interest in National Style forms in the 1910s and the place of the architecture of the 1910s within the broader New Style movement of the early twentieth century. The nature of the relationship between the National Style and Fennomania has also been explored.

Vilho Penttilä's importance to scholarship does not lie primarily in the quality of his output as an architect, nor is it suggested that his authorial voice was instrumental in guiding Finnish architectural development in these years, though his contribution in both fields was far from insignificant. This study has revealed his importance primarily as a figure through which the complex tenor of the field of architectural design in this period can be better understood. His architectural writings have revealed how passionately National Style ideas appealed to Finnish architects around 1900, particularly those who shared Fennomane beliefs. They have simultaneously demonstrated how international National Style models, in particular the Norwegian Dragon Style and the Swiss Style, inspired Finnish architects to examine their vernacular heritage in order to discover authentic Finnish forms and ornament. It is the significance of international models even within the nationalistic National Style trend that offers the key to understanding this period. Though the call to reject 'foreign' forms was widespread, there was never any idea of rejecting all international influences.

Throughout the written material examined for this study there emerge strong indications that Finnish authors understood Finnish culture primarily in relation to its position within the Western European cultural sphere. Whether they lament the underdeveloped nature of

Finland's culture or industry, or whether they celebrate the uniqueness of Finnish culture and its interest to the rest of Europe, Finnish culture was evaluated in comparison to international models and international thinking. The need for Finland to keep up with international developments, praise for designers who have done so and enthusiasm for the latest artistic and technological ideas are recurrent themes throughout Penttilä's writings and many of the other authors mentioned. As was stated in the introduction, this phenomenon should not be seen as at conflicting with the powerful sense of pride in the distinctive culture and character of the poetic, mystic and rugged Finns associated with the *Kalevala* and the artefacts of Karelia. The idea of the dichotomy of national versus international can obscure how deeply intertwined the response to international and national sources were.

The desire for architectural reform and for a new style, which would successfully reflect the Finnish people, the modern age and project the hopes for the nation's future was ultimately what governed architectural design during this period. When national vernacular sources were internationally regarded as the solution to this dilemma, the pursuit of such forms in Finland was logical, and was enthusiastically followed. These national vernacular sources were always used alongside other forms, fused with older conventions or other strands of contemporary international thinking. As other ideas came to the fore, interest in the National Style declined. Vernacular forms alone were found to be insufficient to respond to the complex challenge of a New Style in all fields of architecture and design.

Penttilä's work for KOP from 1898 to 1916 reflects the evolution of his ideas on architecture traced in his writings. These works illustrate how even within the work of a zealous Fennomane architect, working for a Fennomane company, the National Style was only one area of concern alongside interest in new forms, materials and technology, as well as function. The link between design and political views was made primarily in terms of showing "the world and our enemies that the Finnish nation has created [culture] freely as a nation", as Penttilä said in regards to the *Finnish Pavilion*,⁴⁸⁴ and the need to "address the

⁴⁸⁴ Penttilä, 'Kuvia Pariisin maalimannäyttelystä', 2. See chapter 2.ii, page 60.

world, and state that here there existed our own culture, which was worthy of notice”, as Brunila said, speaking in 1910 of the arts around 1900.⁴⁸⁵ As such, though the expression of a unique national culture was important, it was also important that such design be admirable enough to win international regard. The pursuit of design quality was therefore as important as national uniqueness.

The bank architecture examined in this thesis has served to illustrate the rich variety of architectural forms explored in the years 1890 to 1916. These buildings can be viewed from different perspectives, as a snap-shot of the development of architectural production during a uniquely vibrant and complex cultural period, and as an architectural type with its own trajectory of development in which relationships to the international sphere of banking architecture is as important as relationships to Finnish architecture as a whole. The focus of this thesis on the drawing out of the intricate web of impulses shaping architecture during this period in Finland has necessarily left these international connections somewhat to one side. It is clear that future research in this field as well as into the international sources, context and co-manifestations of Finnish thinking on New Style and National Style architectural design will be most valuable. In particular the nature of Finnish cultural contact with Russia during these years is deserving of future research. The tense political climate of the period led to the official severing of most ties between Finns and Russians and the equally tense climate following independence, the Second World War and the Cold War did not encourage scholars to delve further in this area. It is difficult to believe that there was no contact at all between the vibrant architectural cultures of Helsinki and St Petersburg, despite the political tensions.

In the years following the success of the *Finnish Pavilion* in 1900 the complexities and contradictions inherent within the idea of the creation of a modern National Style based on vernacular sources became increasingly apparent. Concern with various areas of architectural reform, new materials, construction technology and languages of ornament, as well as an acute awareness of and interest in international developments began to

⁴⁸⁵ Brunila, 'Uudempi rakennustaide', 612. See chapter 2.i page 45.

overtake National Style ideas. Ultimately, Finnish architects were primarily concerned with good design. When National Style ideas were seen as a way of restoring architectural integrity they aroused great interest, but when they were no longer seen as a viable path for the reform of architecture in Finland they were abandoned with ease.

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