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*"The theme of my life will always be Renaissance" The Architect Alfred Friedrich Bluntschli (1842-1930)*

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A. F. Bluntschli studied in Zurich under Gottfried Semper. In 1863 he went to Florence; one year later he entered the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1866 he moved to Heidelberg and in 1870 to Frankfurt/Main. There he led together with C. J. Mylius a successful architectural bureau. From 1881 to 1914 Bluntschli taught at the Zurich Polytechnicum.

Even before the end of his studies Bluntschli had chosen "renaissance" as the theme of his life. During the zenith of his working life Bluntschli was an internationally acclaimed authority. But when he died in 1930, his oeuvre was already regarded as dated.

Literature on Bluntschli is comparatively scarce and does not at all do justice to the significance of his achievement. This is the more to be regretted as Bluntschli has left us a singularly rich heritage of material which until now has been largely neglected.

This material is now being presented to demonstrate that Bluntschli in a measure almost unrivalled among his colleagues did over a span of several decades contribute to the solution of the most diverse building types in the face of those ever-changing and ever-expanding architectural challenges which had arisen during the second half of the 19th century.

Priority is being given to Bluntschli's search for individual solutions in the development of ground-plan and spacial arrangement, which, for each given task, inevitably led to new designs, especially since latest developments had always to be taken into account. For Bluntschli style had to include the capacity of continuous development and of ready adaptability to modern needs.

Alfred Friedrich Bluntschli's conception of "renaissance" does not apodictically differentiate between the various styles which are based on "antique principles". His position between late classicism and modernity is rather characterized by his adherence to tradition on the one hand and his openness for everything new on the other hand as long as it has "organically grown" - while rigorously rejecting all "a-historical" architecture.