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Terminology and Information Mining

A history of an attempt at classification. The work of Edmund Sharpe and the periodization of English medieval architecture through the lens of terminology theory

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To all failed attempts.

Ever tried.

Ever failed.

No matter.

Try again.

Fail again.

Fail better.

Samuel Beckett, Worstward Ho (1983)

What’s in a name?

That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet

To improve is to change. To be perfect is to change often.

Winston Churchill

Table of Contents

Abstract

This thesis aims at demonstrating the existence of terminology as common practice even before its official codification as a discipline. Indeed, classification of objects and terms has always been part of the development of knowledge in history, as of human experience of reality. Specifically, this work focuses on the discovery of a terminological activity in the history of architecture and, in particular, in the periodization of the English ecclesiastical architecture of the Middle Ages. There, the main aim is to evidence how the reflections of architecture historians on classification and naming of periods and building specimens prefigure future theories of terminology. Focusing on the architecture historian Edmund Sharpe (1809 – 1877), this thesis describes his attempt at classification of English medieval and ecclesiastical architecture, according to the visual features of its windows. Beyond Sharpe's work, the debate is reconstructed on the update of the official nomenclature of English medieval architecture, established in 1817. Indeed, this work intends to describe Sharpe and his colleagues as terminologists *ante litteram* and to highlight the contribution of classification and naming to the progress of knowledge.

Each chapter focuses on a successive stage of definition of Sharpe's periodization of English medieval architecture. Chapter 1 introduces the historical context of the events and the impact of evolutionary theories on Victorian culture in mid-19th century England. Concurrently, the principles of terminology are presented, later applied to the reflections of the architecture historians. Chapter 2 is centred on the establishment of the official classification of English architecture by Thomas Rickman in 1817. Thirty years after Rickman, in Chapter 3, some historians started to note window specimens, which could not be described through the official classification. Consequently, Chapter 4 presents Sharpe's innovative method for a classification of medieval buildings, based on the analysis of visual elements of their windows. In Chapter 5 Sharpe's periodization is examined, in his main volume, *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a). Eventually, in Chapter 6, the discussion culminates in a debate among historians, reported in a correspondence in the journal *The Builder*. There, the experts discuss Sharpe's periodization and alternative ones, questioning both terms and classification criteria. To conclude, Chapter 7 comments on the events. The destiny of Sharpe's periodization is outlined, towards the final acknowledgement that a continuous terminological update is necessary in every discipline, to keep up with the constant evolution of knowledge.

Abstract

Questa tesi intende dimostrare l'esistenza della terminologia come pratica comune ancor prima della sua codifica ufficiale come disciplina. La classificazione di oggetti e termini ha infatti sempre contribuito allo sviluppo della conoscenza nella storia, così come all'esperienza umana della realtà. Nello specifico, questo lavoro si concentra sulla scoperta di una attività terminologica nella storia dell'architettura e, in particolare, nella periodizzazione dell'architettura ecclesiastica inglese del Medioevo. In questo, l'obiettivo principale consiste nell'evidenziare come le riflessioni degli storici sulla classificazione e denominazione di periodi e modelli costruttivi prefigurino i successivi sviluppi teorici della terminologia. Incentrandosi sulla figura dello storico dell'architettura Edmund Sharpe (1809-1877), questo elaborato esamina il suo tentativo di classificare l'architettura medievale ed ecclesiastica inglese secondo la descrizione degli elementi compositivi propri delle finestre. Inoltre, viene ricostruito il dibattito sull'aggiornamento della classificazione ufficiale dell'architettura medievale inglese, introdotta nel 1817. Il racconto della vicenda ha infatti l'obiettivo di presentare Sharpe e gli altri storici dell'architettura come terminologi *ante litteram*, cercando allo stesso tempo di mettere in luce il contributo dato dalle pratiche di classificazione e denominazione al progresso della conoscenza.

Ogni capitolo è dedicato ad una successiva fase di definizione della periodizzazione dell'architettura medievale inglese di Sharpe. Il capitolo 1 introduce il contesto storico degli eventi e l'impatto delle teorie evolutive sulla cultura vittoriana, nell'Inghilterra della metà del XIX secolo; al contempo, sono presentati i principi della terminologia, poi applicati alle riflessioni degli storici. Il capitolo 2 si concentra sull'istituzione della classificazione ufficiale dell'architettura medievale inglese di Thomas Rickman, introdotta nel 1817, mentre nel capitolo 3 è descritta la difficoltà degli storici di utilizzare la classificazione ufficiale per la descrizione di alcuni esempi di finestre, già trent'anni dopo Rickman. Il capitolo 4 presenta quindi l'innovativo metodo di Sharpe per una classificazione degli edifici medievali, basato sulla descrizione degli elementi compositivi delle finestre; da questo deriva infatti la periodizzazione proposta da Sharpe nel suo *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a), oggetto del capitolo 5. La discussione tra gli storici che fu ospitata nelle colonne della rivista *The Builder* è presentata nel capitolo 6. In una fitta corrispondenza, gli esperti discutono la periodizzazione di Sharpe, nel confronto con proposte alternative e valutando sia termini che criteri di classificazione. Al capitolo 7, infine, è affidato un commento agli eventi. Partendo dall'esperienza della proposta di Sharpe, si giunge così alla consapevolezza che ogni disciplina vive la necessità di un continuo aggiornamento terminologico, che accompagni il progresso costante della conoscenza.

Abstract

Diese These zielt darauf ab, die Existenz der Terminologie als gängige Praxis schon vor ihrer offiziellen Kodierung als Disziplin zu beweisen. Tatsächlich war die Klassifizierung von Objekten und Begriffen immer Teil der Entwicklung des Wissens in der Geschichte und der menschlichen Erfahrung der Realität. Insbesondere befasst sich diese Arbeit mit der Entdeckung einer terminologischen Aktivität in der Architekturgeschichte und, spezifisch, in der Periodisierung der englischen Kirchenarchitektur des Mittelalters. Dabei geht es darum, zu zeigen, wie die Überlegungen der Architekturhistoriker zur Klassifizierung und Benennung von Perioden und Bauwerken künftige Theorien der Terminologie vorwegnehmen. Darüber hinaus beschäftigt sich diese These mit dem Architekturhistoriker Edmund Sharpe (1809 - 1877) und seinem Versuch, die englische und mittelalterliche Kirchenarchitektur nach den visuellen Merkmalen ihrer Fenster zu klassifizieren. Folglich wird die Debatte über die Aktualisierung der offiziellen Nomenklatur der englischen mittelalterlichen Architektur von 1817 rekonstruiert. In der Tat beschreibt diese Arbeit Sharpe und seine Kollegen als Terminologen *ante litteram* und belegt, wie die Klassifikation und Benennung zum Wissensfortschritt beitrugen.

Jedes Kapitel präsentiert eine sukzessive Definitionsphase von Sharpes Periodisierung der englischen Architektur. Kapitel 1 führt in den historischen Kontext der Ereignisse ein und beschreibt die Auswirkungen der Evolutionstheorien auf die viktorianische Kultur im England der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts. Gleichzeitig werden die Prinzipien der Terminologie eingeführt, später angewandt auf die Überlegungen der Historiker. Kapitel 2 konzentriert sich auf die Einführung der offiziellen Klassifizierung der englischen Architektur durch Thomas Rickman im Jahr 1817. Dreißig Jahre nach Rickman, in Kapitel 3, bemerken die Historiker Fensterexemplare, die nicht durch die offizielle Klassifikation beschreibbar sind. Folglich wird in Kapitel 4 Sharpes Methode für eine Klassifizierung mittelalterlicher Kirchenbauten vorgestellt, die auf der Analyse ihrer Fenster basiert. In Kapitel 5 wird Sharpes Periodisierung untersucht, aus seinen *Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a). Schließlich gipfelt in Kapitel 6 die Diskussion in einer Debatte unter Historikern, analysiert in einer Korrespondenz in der Zeitschrift *The Builder*. Dort werden Sharpes Periodisierung und Alternativen von den Experten diskutiert, wobei sie Begriffe und Klassifizierungskriterien in Frage stellen. Abschließend kommentiert Kapitel 7 die Ereignisse. Hier wird die Zukunft von Sharpes Periodisierung dargestellt, um endgültig anzuerkennen, dass eine kontinuierliche terminologische Aktualisierung in jeder Disziplin notwendig ist, um mit der ständigen Entwicklung des Wissens Schritt zu halten.

Introduction

This thesis aims at illustrating and discussing a case in which terminology became a well-developed practice well before it was actually codified as a discipline at the beginning of the 20th century. Even though the discipline of terminology is a relatively young one, as Faber (2009) recalls, classification and systematisation of objects and terms have always been part of the activity and development of scientific disciplines in history. Indeed, as Cabré (2000) underlines, experts of every field of knowledge have always felt the need to systematise and order their vocabulary with the main purpose of communication. Moreover, as Brewster and Wilks (2011) underline, great efforts were made since Aristotle (4th century BC) to categorise knowledge in specialised disciplines and organise vocabularies in ordered structures.

Specifically, this thesis focuses on the application of the principles of terminology to English history of architecture and, in particular, to the periodization of the English ecclesiastical architecture of the Middle Ages. The main purpose is to show how the reflections of the English architecture historians on the classification and naming of the periods of medieval architecture reflect and foresee future theories of terminology. Though the discipline of terminology had not been codified yet, the methods and principles applied by these historians are evidenced as pre-eminently terminological. Accordingly, they are discussed in this thesis in the light of future theories of terminology, in order to emphasise – despite the distance in time – their vicinity in purposes.

Secondly, this work is centred on the figure of the architecture historian Edmund Sharpe (1809 – 1877) and his attempt at classification of English medieval and ecclesiastical architecture according to the visual features of its windows in the first half of the 19th century. Windows, and specifically window tracery, seem to be the elements which best reflect the buildings' stylistic evolution and are thus classified by the author in *'pictorial taxonomies'* (Skipton-Long 2018:165). Beyond Sharpe's work, the debate is illustrated, revolving around the update of the official classification of English architecture in four periods introduced by Thomas Rickman (1817). Through a parallel with the theories of terminology, this thesis aims at describing Sharpe and his colleagues as terminologists *ante litteram.*

Thirdly, through the terminological analysis of Sharpe's work, this dissertation intends to showcase how the practices of classification and naming strongly contribute to the progress of a discipline, here the history of architecture. Inspired by similar reflections by Yanni (1997; 2014) and Skipton-Long (2018) on architectural history in Victorian Britain, the development of the discipline is contextualised within the progress of other scientific fields during the 19th century in Britain. Experts' interest and knowledge advancement in medieval architectural history at the time leads to the appearance of new concepts, to be named and categorised within the discipline's knowledge structure. This process is constantly influenced by the new vision of reality connected to evolutionary theories. Since everything is in constant progress, language and vocabulary, too, should be updated accordingly, to allow a careful description of the disciplines' objects of study.

Lastly, this research compares the evolution of the classification of English medieval architecture to the one of terminology theory, in their progress from a prescriptive to a descriptive

approach. While a first official classification of medieval architecture was proposed by Thomas Rickman (1817), it seemed too restricted to include the whole variety of forms from reality, and visual features of real specimens were not considered as classificatory means. The necessity of a more detailed classification, as well as of an extended vocabulary for description is thus later addressed by Edmund Sharpe, who reforms the classification to permit a more precise description of specimens. The same evolution towards a more descriptive and comprehensive approach to language is perceived in the history of terminology, to which this phase of architectural history is compared in this thesis.

Regarding the method of analysis, this work is constructed as a comparison of texts in an historical and diachronic perspective. No testimony or classification proposal is presented on its own, but rather in comparison to contemporary, previous and successive ones, with the aim of highlighting the historical progression and derivation of each of them from previous ones and their role within the discipline's evolution; relevance is also given to the context of each testimony as the product of its contingent situation. Contextually, texts are discussed in the light of the principles of terminology they most clearly anticipate. Methodologically it was further decided to report original sources. Therefore, the work is built as a series of original quotes which are commented. This derives from the belief that in the original words of the authors lies the clear evidence of their intentions.

Each chapter of this thesis focuses on a successive stage of definition of a new periodization for English medieval architecture. The first chapter introduces the context of the events. Here, the impact of evolutionary theories on Victorian culture and the consequent reflections on life and reality are connected to the scientisation of disciplines and their adoption of a scientific method. In the same chapter, the main principles of terminology are introduced and discussed at some length.

Chapter 2 focuses on the establishment of the official classification of English architecture in four periods by Thomas Rickman (1817). Concurrently, the absence of a previous classification and the need of a usable, though simple, periodization and nomenclature are evidenced, together with the absence of precise reference to real specimens and visual illustrations.

More than thirty years afterwards, in Chapter 3, historians start to discuss concepts and specimens which could not be described through Rickman's classification. Through his reflections about the recognition of the *Geometrical* period, to be included within the official periodization of medieval architecture, Edmund Sharpe is first introduced here. The moment has paramount relevance, as the first acknowledgement of the necessity of a more precise and comprehensive classification.

Chapter 4 introduces Sharpe's method for an innovative classification and nomenclature of medieval buildings through a visual analysis and categorisation of their windows. Here, Sharpe's volumes are presented in which the author elaborates his visual taxonomies of medieval windows.

In Chapter 5 Sharpe's new periodization of English medieval architecture is introduced, as proposed in his 1851 volume, *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a) and in Chapter 6, the discussion about a better nomenclature and periodization to substitute Rickman's official one culminates in a debate among architecture historians on the pages of the architectural journal *The*

Builder. There, the experts discuss Sharpe's proposal for an extended classification in seven periods as well as alternative ones, questioning both terms and classification criteria.

To conclude, the whole event is commented on in Chapter 7. There, through a comparison of all quoted classification proposals for English medieval architecture, the comparative approach at the origin of this research is discussed. Moreover, reflections are proposed on how a diachronic perspective on the different nomenclatures and classifications testifies to the evolution and knowledge improvement in architectural history during the time frame considered (1807 to 1851). Indeed, Sharpe's proposal and reflections are surrounded by an array of theories and naming suggestions by other contemporary historians, proving a diffused interest and necessity for extended knowledge and vocabulary. In that, Sharpe's activity can be seen as being part of a much wider discussion about the evolution of the discipline aa well as its language and vocabulary. From Rickman's (1817) primary and simple classification of styles, an increased interest on the subject causes a progress in the discipline, which than requires an appropriate classification and nomenclature to be expressed.

In conclusion, this work appears to show nothing more than the natural and typical evolution of a scientific discipline. As soon as the study is intensified, new concepts appear, which need to be categorised within the existing knowledge and are therefore discussed by the experts' community. In this light, the event presented here can be described as a process of *'terminologisation',* or term formation (Sager 1990:60): the progressive definition of a concept, occurring through its discussion among experts, is flanked by successive stages of naming, signalling an increasing knowledge of multiple aspects of the concept, and therefore of the concept itself.

Eventually, the question is addressed about the destiny of Sharpe's periodization attempt and its official adoption. Notably, throughout his production, Sharpe constantly admitted the difficulty of changing an existing nomenclature as well as the users' linguistic habits, no matter how outdated or imprecise traditional terms were. In that, the role of the scientific community in prescribing and standardising the vocabulary of the discipline has paramount relevance and determines the destiny of terms. Future research suggestions are finally provided, to further investigate aspects of the events which were not included within this research.

1. On the historical and terminological context of Edmund Sharpe's work

1.1. Introduction

This chapter is aimed at describing the context of Edmund Sharpe's work, in order to appropriately value his efforts in the classification of English medieval architecture. To that purpose, the introduction is divided in two parts: the first one is devoted to a historical perspective, while the second one offers an overview of the main terminological aspects this work deals with. First, the historical context is presented, depicting the cultural situation of Victorian Britain in the middle of the 19th century in which this research is set. Subsequently, an overview of the main authors and theories is presented which marked the beginning of the discipline of terminology. Reference will be made to all these aspects in the description of Sharpe's periodization of English medieval architecture which makes the chore of this study. Additionally, an illustration of the method and main sources employed in this work is presented.

In the first part of this introduction, the main elements of the historical and cultural situation in Victorian Britain are recalled. First, the condition of architectural history in the 19th century is addressed. There, reference is made to the so-called *Battle of Styles*, a theoretical discussion among architectural Revival styles, concerned with the reconstruction of the Londoner Houses of Parliament in 1834 (Bullen 2004). Since Sharpe's work is primarily a classificatory and scientific one, the evolution of scientific disciplines in Victorian Britain is also depicted. In line with this, the key role of Carl Linnaeus is presented, already considered the initiator of the scientific method (Skipton-Long 2018). Indeed, not only his figure but also his method of classification will become famous and adopted in other disciplines, among which, crucially for the purposes of this thesis, in architectural history (Yanni 2014). The interest of scientific disciplines in the progress and evolution of life and history should be seen as the most characterising element of the whole cultural situation of the time. The same interest is famously mirrored in Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory and his volume *On the Origin of Species* (1861).

Secondarily, the protagonists of this research are presented: the science historian and passionate terminologist William Whewell, the antiquarian and architecture historian Thomas Rickman and the architect and architecture historian Edmund Sharpe. After that, not less important components of the historical context are recalled, as the approaching Great Exhibition in London in 1851, which shifted the interest of the society on architecture the building industry (Yanni 2014). To that, the relevance of specialised journals as a means of communication among experts is focused upon through a presentation of the main publications on architecture. These are also the main sources on which this research is based.

The second half of this chapter illustrates the main topics of the theory of terminology recalled in the following research. There, the history of the terminology theory is presented as an evolution from a prescriptive to a more descriptive approach (Faber 2009). Starting with the fundamental and preparatory principles and work of Eugen Wüster, his *General Theory of Terminology* (GTT) is described as well as his activity as founder of the discipline (Wüster 1979). Following that, the newly attributed importance to the context in terminology is examined within the communicative theory of

Maria Theresa Cabré (see Cabré 1999; 2000). Not less central are the reflections of Juan Sager, a main contributor to the establishment of the discipline (see Sager 1990;2000). Thereafter, a second generation of authors is introduced, after the so-called *'cognitive shift'* of the discipline (Faber 2009:1). There, terminology appears to have experienced an evolution, where authors shift from a more prescriptive to a descriptive approach and place more emphasis on context and conceptual structures behind language. From now on, authors seem more interested in a description of language in its social and cognitive context, rather than in codifying rules for the discipline (Faber 2009). The attitude of this second generation of authors is exposed through the Frame-Based Terminology of Pamela Faber (see Faber et al. 2007; Faber 2012), and the socio-cognitive perspective of Rita Temmerman (see Temmerman 1997; 2000). Together with these main authors and theories, other important ones are recalled, to provide a complete overview of the beginnings and evolution of the discipline of terminology.

To conclude, it is important to underline that this introduction is not conceived as a presentation of the whole theory of terminology. Instead, an overview is provided of selected main topics, later compared to the work of the English historians of architecture. While the present historical introduction is aimed at furnishing basic knowledge to understand the object of this work and its background within Victorian culture, the terminological overview should present the main concepts of terminology which will be later recalled in comparison to the reflections on English architecture by Edmund Sharpe and his colleagues. Indeed, this serves the purpose to prove the relevance of Sharpe's work not only as architecture historian, but also as a terminologist *ante litteram*.

1.2. Method and sources

This research is based on the analysis of volumes and papers dealing with the classification and naming of the periods of English medieval architecture. In the analysis, the progressive naming and classification of the periods are compared to principles and theories of terminology. This comparison serves the primary aim of showing that terminology was practiced well before its actual codification as a discipline.

In order to enhance the comprehension of these contributions in context, a comparative method is adopted. Namely, each text is analysed in comparison to, at least, one contemporary, previous or similar one, with the purpose of showing their connection and derivation from one another. Further, the work of each single author, examined through volumes and papers, is contextualised against the backdrop of contemporary authors contrasting or sharing his opinions. This method serves two purposes contemporarily. On the one hand, it demonstrates the derivation of each individual term, classification or theory from past ones. Specifically, that happens when a comparison is drawn with preceding tests or sources of inspiration, in a diachronic perspective. On the other hand, this comparative method testifies how even the most revolutionary theory is never attributable to the efforts and intuitions of a single person. Quite the opposite, it is the result of common thoughts, purposes and studies of a community of authors taking inspiration from their predecessors' work.

Accordingly, Edmund Sharpe's work becomes in this research part of the reflections of a whole generation of historians, who tried to rethink and refine the classification of their national architecture

in the years around 1851. In the adoption of a comparative method, inspiration was drawn from Sharpe's comparison of window specimens in his treatise on *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a). In the volume, the relevance of a single specimen emerges not from its description alone, but much more from his comparison to other ones and would probably not have been so evident without. Further, the diachronic dimension of comparison helps appreciating the progress of these theories of classification and their dependence from one another as successive phases of an evolution. As time goes by, the progress of medieval window tracery is perceivable through the comparison of successive specimens. The same happens to historians and their theories. Since this research focuses on a brief, though intense, frame of time, the diachronic dimension and the vicinity of successive sources and authors show a knowledge evolution in the discipline of architectural history and allow us to appreciate it as a dynamic process. With regards to the method, even if not in accordance with the usual conventions, all literal quotes present in this work are indicated in italics. Likewise, the emphasis in any citation is added by the author and indicated in bold. Emphasis in bold is indeed not present in the original quotes. Fearing that this might disturb the reading, the addition of emphasis has not been signalled in every single quote.

Regarding the sources, both primary and secondary sources were used in this research. The primary sources are mainly volumes and papers written by Sharpe and other past and contemporary scholars to express their theories on medieval architecture and its classification. In addition to that, a significant number of papers presents the transcriptions of speeches hold by the authors at meetings or conferences and published on specialised journals of architecture. Indeed, it seems here appropriate to underline how at the time, journals constituted the main means of communication for scientific communities, where new theories were announced and then discussed. Specifically, the two main journals for architecture taken into consideration here are *The Ecclesiologist* and *The Builder*. The *Ecclesiologist* was the weekly publication of the Cambridge Camden Society, then known, since 1841, as the Ecclesiological Society. The journal deals with ecclesiastical architecture and related topics. However, the main debate about the nomenclature and classification of English medieval architecture is held on the pages of *The Builder* journal. The magazine, dealing with topics related to construction in general, such as church building, engineering, water systems and railways was a main reference at the time within the building industry. The journal became mostly popular in England and its diffusion reached far beyond the architects and experts' community. It started publications in London in 1838 and still exists today under the name of *Building*.

With reference to the secondary sources, two articles in particular should be mentioned, dealing with the same topic this work is devoted to. Yanni's article *On Nature and Nomenclature: William Whewell and the Production of Architectural Knowledge in Early Victorian Britain* (Yanni 1997) and Skipton-Long's 2018 article *Classifying Specimens of Gothic Fenestration: Edmund Sharpe's New Taxonomy of English Medieval Architecture* (Skipton-Long 2018). As it happens, both describe Edmund Sharpe and his generation's reflections on a new periodization of English medieval architecture, based on the classification of window specimens first reintroduced by Thomas Rickman. In both articles, the

work of Sharpe is considered in the broader perspective of the scientific situation of mid-19th Century Victorian Britain. Therefore, evolutionary theories and a general dynamic discussion in the natural sciences and other disciplines about evolution and scientisation is depicted. Indeed, Linnaeus revolutionary work on biological taxonomies (Linnaeus 1737) and Darwin's evolutionary theories (Darwin 1861) are brought in relation to the reflections of the historians of architecture. In this, the so-called *'Scientific Trend'* (Yanni 1997:206), or progress to the scientization of disciplines is described with reference to architectural history. Not less important is the description of the cultural situation and concept of evolution in Victorian Britain provided by Lightman and Zon in their volume: *Evolution and Victorian Culture* (Lightman & Zon 2014), while Hughes' monography on Edmund Sharpe presents a most useful overview of his remarkable life (Hughes 2010). Summing up, it seemed appropriate to discuss explicitly in this section the main references on which this research is based. As great sources of inspiration, this work would probably not have existed without them. Indeed, from them comes not only the inspiration for the present thesis, but also the interest in the investigation of the naming and classification process against a scientific and historical broader backdrop.

1.3. The historical context

1.3.1. The concept of evolution in Victorian Britain

A most clear overview of the interrelation of the concept of evolution and the cultural context in mid-19th century Victorian Britain is provided by Lightman and Zon in the introduction to their volume *Evolution and Victorian Culture* (Lightman & Zon 2014). As the authors assert, the cultural situation in Victorian Britain was characterised by a fervent debate about the concepts of life and evolution. There, the scientific method was being developed, based on the observation and description of reality. Interestingly, the reality mirrored in these observations was in a state of constant change. Concurrently, other disciplines, such as history of art and architecture, were rethinking their principles as well as the adoption of a more scientific, observational method. In that, the main aim of these disciplines was to be recognised as scientific and to gain authority within the scientific community (Lightman & Zon 2014).

In order to achieve this, principles, theory and method of the discipline needed to be updated and remodelled on the example of authoritative natural sciences such as biology and chemistry. That is the phase in the history of architecture that this work deals with and, as Yanni describes (2014:227), that was characterised by the discussion of the concept of evolution in each area of knowledge, derived from a closer observation of reality. As Yanni (2014) points out, the concept of evolution was of paramount importance in mid-19th century Victorian culture. Indeed, starting from the theory of evolution proposed by Charles Darwin in *On the Origin of the Species* (1861), it was taken up in all disciplines. Darwin's evolutionary theory – first defined by Herbert Spencer as the principle of the *'survival of the fittest'* (Spencer 1864:444) – was not the only evolutionary theory at the time. Instead, numerous scholars of various disciplines were contemporarily reflecting on evolution and life progress. That resulted in an array of evolutionary theories in the first half of the 19th century, which emphasised contrasting aspects of evolution, as Lightman and Zon report (2014). Interestingly, in Yanni's (2014:227) view, Victorian

culture tended not to sympathise with Darwin's theory of natural selection, which was seen as too materialistic. His non-deterministic vision of the development of life with no purpose, merely determined by natural and environmental factors and by the living beings' capacity to adapt to the environment (Lightman & Zon 2014:5) was not well received. However, since the concept of progress towards a final purpose was firmly part of the British culture at the time, alternative theories trying to explain the evolution of living beings emerged. As Lightman and Zon argue (2014:4), in the Britain of the industrial revolution, the main aspect of these theories to be underlined was the concept of progress, or the development of life towards a better form and future. In other words, evolution was accepted, but only when it could be seen as a process of improvement. Understandably, this interpretation of evolution was strongly influenced by Christianity and its theological view of a final salvation, which had a most significant place in culture at the time (Lightman and Zon 2014:4). Through a final purpose, these theories implicitly allowed the presence of a pre-determined project of God for all living beings to evolve towards a better future (Ibid.).

It is important to observe, how theology was of paramount importance in the culture of the time. In universities, theology was studied, and other aspects of culture were implicitly connected to it (Lightman & Zon 2014:2). Victorian culture was not only deterministic, as it searched for a cause of every event and did not believe in causality, but also teleological. This teleological view depended on the presence of God as main force involved in the progress of evolution towards a final better state (Yanni 2014:227). In other words, science was accepted as long as it did not deny God's existence. Some years later, in 1844, as Yanni (2014:235) recalls, Robert Chambers' volume *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (Chambers 1844) became a huge best-seller, mirroring its contemporary cultural situation. Indeed, the volume based on the conception of a series of advancing phases of development of the living being, culminating in a state of perfection. As Yanni (2014:235) underlines, Chambers' theory of evolution was the one to become most popular within the cultural circles of Victorian Britain as it seemed to give progress a purpose. It appears therefore that Victorian scholars could accept the concept of evolution, only if the presence of God still held true. To Darwin's (1861) atheist theory of survival, Victorian culture preferred a deterministic theory of evolution, as the one expressed in Spencer's *Principles of Biology* (1864). It was indeed preferable to believe that nature tended towards a better future, instead of sharing Darwin's view of a brutal process of evolution and elimination of the unfit due to natural and practical reasons (Lightman & Zon 2014:5).

Naturally, evolutionary theory influenced the history of English architecture, too. Within the frame of a still predominant role of religion in Victorian culture, the Gothic was conceived as *'a testament of God's greatness'* (Yanni 1997:205) and was promoted as the national style of Christian England. Indeed, as Yanni explains (1997), this style was considered as the main tribute to God and, at the same time, the most wonderful creation of God himself, through mankind. In line with this, Lightman and Zon (2014:9) address a most central question for this research: the problem of lexicon in Victorian Britain. The evolutive perspective pervaded all disciplines at the time. Consequently, a new vocabulary

was needed to express and discuss these ideas. Therefore, parallel to the theoretical discussion, a linguistic debate emerged in almost all cultural disciplines about the new lexicon to adopt. This questioning process is mirrored in the discussion this work is dedicated to:

> *Many writers in the second half of the century came to believe that **evolution** constituted the **law** of things as they are, and this belief transformed their view of human nature, the social environment and the theory and practice of fiction itself. […] Darwinian theory raised questions for both novelists and scientists about the **suitability** of the **current lexicon** to capture the **dynamic reality** now revealed by evolution. (Lightman & Zon 2014:9)*

Lastly, as argued by Yanni (2014:227), it is important to remember how the debate about the concept of evolution was common to all cultural disciplines at the time. Indeed, this discussion involved all scholars and discipline in different manners, constantly and mutually influencing each other. There, a positivist and deterministic view of evolution was preferred in all cultural circles, starting the process of *'scientization'* of disciplines (Yanni 1997:207).

1.3.2. Evolution applied to architectural history

The context of the terminological dispute on the history of English medieval architecture with which this work deals is the development of scientific disciplines in Victorian Britain in the first half of the 19th century. Inspired by natural sciences, history of architecture tried to become a scientific and authoritative discipline through a theoretical discussion of its principles and a diffused and intense activity of classification and naming of its objects of study (Yanni 1997:204). As will be discussed later in detail, the activity of naming had indeed paramount importance in the definition of the discipline's concepts and theories, since names helped to shed light on multiple aspects of concepts, and hence enhanced their definition and knowledge (Sager 2000). As Yanni points out (1997:204), scientific disciplines did not exist at the middle of the 19th century as we know them today, and theology had a prominent role in universities and within scientific communities (Ibid.). Other sciences such as biology and chemistry were being defined through discussions among experts, and history of architecture was no exception. Through the application of a scientific ad observational method, it was believed that architecture would become an authoritative discourse, as Yanni reports (1997:205).

The study of natural sciences, and of architecture was closely connected to religion. Indeed, nature and its rules needed to be understood as *'a testament of God's greatness'* (Yanni, 1997:205). With respect to that, as signalled by Yanni (1997), both in France and Britain the separation between nature as work of God and the arts as product of humans was surpassed in the 19th century in favour of a unity between nature and its creatures. Therefore, each product of mankind started to be considered as both *'scientific and spiritual'* at the same time (Yanni 1997:217). Indeed, as reported by both Yanni (1997:206) and Sager (1990:205–206), this historical period was defined in 1960 by art historian Paul Frankl as *'The Scientific Trend'*. This was, according to the author, the period in which each discipline

attempted to become scientific by concentrating on the application of principles from natural sciences, based on the observation and description of real data. This *'Trend'* extended not only to architecture, but to a multitude of disciplines (Yanni 1997:206).

Regarding the history of English medieval architecture, many historians and antiquarians were investigating the origin of the pointed arch and of medieval architecture, as Thomas Rickman and Robert Willis (Yanni 2014:230). Under the influence of natural sciences, architecture was indeed being studied as a living being, whose evolution towards its actual form raised the interest of historians. As a consequence, numerous so-called Revival movements emerged as the Norman, the Romanesque, the Gothic, the Classical Revival, interested in investigating styles of the past, and even more in reusing some of their principles in contemporary architecture (Bullen 2004:139). Consequently, the diffused interest in medieval architecture caused an increase in knowledge on the topic, and of concepts which needed to be named. According to Yanni (2014), history could be explained and reconstructed as a succession of forms, evolved from one another and as an evolution to a more complex and perfect state was the explanation of historical change. Hence, the Gothic was considered the most perfect form of architecture, being the result of centuries of development from Classical architecture (Yanni 2014:239). As Yanni adds, in the broader perspective of Victorian Culture, this *'developmental'* (Yanni 2014:228) model of evolution with a final purpose, could be easily applied to both the industrial revolution and the progress of the British Empire, as well as to the personal growth of an individual.

Further, as always Yanni (2014:228) underlines, the *'history of ideas does not take place in a vacuum'*. Instead, cultural circles enjoyed a far-reaching interconnection and disciplines constantly influenced each other. Hence, the evolution of architecture into a scientific discipline is full of contaminations by other sciences. Apart from theology, geology played a significant role in the debate about architectural history, as buildings carved out of stone were considered natural objects (Yanni 2014:230). Not less important was anatomy or, the study of the human body, as a system functioning through the connection of its parts: the Gothic building is frequently compared to a body as a coherent system, formed and functioning through the support of its components (Yanni 2014:230). Naturally, scientists were also friends and the scientific circles functioned as places of exchange of principles and theories, causing interdisciplinary contamination. To the vicinity of nature and anatomy is due the introduction of a new language for architectural description, as Yanni (1997:208) explains: through an observational method, buildings are compared to bodies, and described by applying anatomical language, which had not been used before for that purpose.

According to Yanni (2014:236), this vicinity of natural development and architecture was primarily made manifest by Freeman in 1844, shortly after the publication of a fundamental text for the time: Robert Chambers' *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* (Chambers 1844). In Yanni's opinion, indeed, the success of Chambers' volume was determined by its vision of progress as a component of all forms of nature. Echoing Darwin (1861), Chambers refused the interpretation of God as creator of the finished form of nature. Conversely, he shared the idea of perfection as a result of

progress, possible only through a constant change. As Yanni (2014: 237) comments, Chambers' (1844) volume contained the relevant reflection, that living beings experience successive stages of evolution, leading to a perfect form. Indeed, Yanni states how Chambers *'popularized the idea of gradual progression over time'* (Yanni 2014:237). Consequently, this justified the introduction of transitional periods also in architectural history, which were not considered before, as Skipton-Long (2018) reports.

The Victorian idea of evolution as a series of successive stages of development was transposed also to architectural history. As Yanni (2014:237) argues, good architecture was considered at the time as the one showing progress in its forms, as the medieval one did. Further, the application of the evolutionary theory to architecture was most profitable, since, it helped making *'sense'* of the succession of styles in history (Yanni 2014:238). As Yanni (2014: 238) recalls, numerous authors shared this view. Among others, Robert Kerr addressed architecture as the effort of humankind which more than everything demonstrated the principle of evolution through history (Kerr 1884, in Yanni 2014). Accordingly, Francis H. Baker described architectural history in 1886 as *'a long series of adaptations'* (Baker 1886:528, in Yanni 2014:239), as did John A. Symonds, who famously compared the style to *'an embryo'*, going through phases of evolution, before *'committing suicide'* (Symonds 1890:45).

Lastly, the influence of natural sciences and religion on architectural history seems evident. The efforts to scientize architectural history must indeed be read as an attempt to ennoble the great achievements of humankind, or of God through humans. To do that, each area of expertise of humans had to be seen as an aspect of the evolution of mankind, and more importantly, of the history of nature and the universe. The fundamental role of religion should not be forgotten, as it is the backdrop against which each theory should be read. Development and progress towards perfection constitute the basis of this new philosophy which justified changes and adaptations through history (Lightman & Zon 2014:1).

1.3.3. The key role of Carl Linnaeus

A mention is due to the figure of the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus. Both Yanni (1997:211) and Skipton-Long (2018:175) describe him as a model of scientific discipline and as a pioneer of the practice of classification and naming.

Specifically, the role of Linnaeus in the classification and systematisation of biological species is compared to that of Thomas Rickman in the history of English architecture. Therefore, Yanni describes Rickman as the *'Linnaeus of English medieval architecture'* (Yanni 1997:211), making reference to a comparison that William Whewell first drew in his *Remarks on the Architecture of German Churches* (Whewell 1830). This comparison has paramount significance, since it underlines the methodological connection of architecture to natural disciplines at the time. In Yanni's (1997) report, it was Whewell who originally suggested that architecture should take inspiration from botany, as far as systematisation and terminology were concerned. Indeed, the reference to botany was not casual, since Carl Linnaeus was already recognised in Victorian Britain as *'the father of natural history'* (Yanni 1997:211). Furthermore, as Calisher also recalls, Linnaeus is known as *'the father of modern taxonomy'* (Calisher 2007:268), thanks to his invention of the binominal nomenclature of botanical species.

Consequently, botany was looked up to for his modern taxonomy and binominal nomenclature, and naming and classification were considered central activities in the process of scientisation.

Linnaeus' fundamental activity of classification is stressed by Skipton-Long (2018:175), as a model for the successive systematisation of the English architecture of the Middle Ages. The new method of classification of architectural elements is based on the comparison of various specimens of the same object and presumably inspired by Linnaeus' comparative tables of botanic species (Skipton-Long 2018:176). Indeed, Skipton-Long goes even further and attributes to John Aubrey the invention of the method of classification later adopted by Linnaeus in 1737 (Skipton-Long 2018:177). As the author affirms, Aubrey developed a method to classify windows which was based on the grouping of common features in his *Chronologia Architectonica*[1] in the 17th century (Aubrey 1693). The same method then resonated in other disciplines such as geology, botany and archaeology and would eventually lead to the creation of taxonomic systems such as Linnaeus' own. Hence, according to Skipton-Long (2018), the supposed inventor of Linnaeus' method of classification is an English historian in the 17th century.

Both Lamarck, a French naturalist, biologist and academic, and Linnaeus used pictorial comparative taxonomies to describe their objects of study in all their real variants, as will happen for architecture (Skipton-Long 2018). These successive variants are opposed to the *'static nature of previous terminology'* and classes, which did not involve an inherent evolution (Skipton-Long 2018:177). Eventually, the fundaments of these works lie according to both Skipton-Long (2018) and Yanni (2014), in Aristotle's concept of living beings on a *'climbing scale'*, also known as *'The Great Chain of Being' (*Skipton-Long 2018:177), in which life is a constant progress towards a better form.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that these observations come from the development of a scientific and observational method by scholars of different cultural disciplines. Indeed, the application of a scientific method, the activity of naming and the discussion of the founding principles of each cultural discipline contributed to the scientisation of disciplines. This is confirmed in the words of Yanni: *'By the middle of the I830s, several architectural historians shared assumptions about their emerging discipline; they hoped to make their work methodical […]'* (Yanni 1997:207).

1.3.4. The *Battle of Styles* and the Revival movements

The so-called *Battle of Styles* is here significant as it helps us to envision the importance of the different architectural styles in the cultural situation of Victorian Britain, and specifically among experts in architecture (Yanni 2014). Particularly the Romanesque and Gothic Revival movements were trying to evidence the value of these past styles, traditionally ignored by history of architecture, too concentrated on the grandeur of the Classics and on Grecian and Roman styles (Bullen 2004). The interest of the historians in an ennoblement and re-evaluation of the architecture of the Middle Ages should be placed in this frame of contrasting Revival movements, as Bullen argues (2004). Indeed, the architecture of the Middle Ages was for the first time studied in detail by experts and its classification, with an improved

[1] English translation: 'Architectural chronology'. In: Horsfall Turner 2011:172.

and more detailed nomenclature, were aimed at providing it with the same relevance that the Classics had always enjoyed (Yanni 2014). Therefore, the scientific community of England could at this moment be divided into supporters of the Classics, and historians who tried to evidence the value of medieval architecture as typically English and as a national style (Yanni 2014).

The phenomenon known as *Battle of Styles* identified a series of contrasts between supporters of different architectural revival movements in England during the 19th century. Numerous Revival movements of past architectural styles began appearing in England and in all Europe at the beginning of the 19th century. As Bullen (2004) testifies, these movements originated in the interest of architecture historians – particularly in England – in the rediscovery and study of the architecture between the Classics and the Gothic. Indeed, the Middle Ages had never been properly studied before from an architectonical point of view and their history was thus open to interpretations (Bullen 2004). These contrasting groups of historians supported different architectural styles to be reused in modern architecture and to be identified as England's national style. As Bullen (2004) reports, the main figures of the Romanesque Revival in England were William Whewell, a science historian, the antiquarian Thomas Rickman and the younger architecture scholar Edmund Sharpe. Indeed, these scholars were involved in an enquiry of Romanesque architecture which took place in the 1830s in England, after Gunn's (1819) term *Romanesque*, introduced in 1819, had become popular. As Bullen (2004) argues, the major interest of the Romanesque revival were the origins of the Gothic and its pointed arch.

In the 1830s and 1840s, the interest of the experts' community shifted from the Romanesque to the Gothic and the Gothic revival gained major recognition (Bullen 2004). Considered *'the only Christian* Architecture' (Bullen 2004:155) the Gothic revival was supported for instance by *The Ecclesiologist*, the journal of the Cambridge Camden Society, which reported how the rediscovery of the Gothic began in England and spread internationally (Carver 2003). Indeed. in Carver's (2003) view, this revaluation of the Gothic was mainly due to the emergence in those years of a new concept of nature and beauty. Influenced by the landscape gardening practice, authors started to appreciate the *'irregularity'* and *'picturesque'* (Carver 2003:1) of nature, as opposed to the classical ideal of beauty as symmetry and regularity. This trend, which marks the beginning of the Romantic movement, became very popular in Victorian Britain and dominated the rest of the 19th century (Carver 2003:2).

Moreover, quoting an article appeared in 1842 in *The Ecclesiologist* [2], Bullen (2004:155) states how the Gothic revival was founded on the recognition of this style as major expression of God's existence. Support for the Gothic was huge and on an international scale, and it was soon identified as the only Christian architecture. As Carver (2003:2) quotes, Goethe defined Strasbourg Cathedral as *'the tree of God'* in his volume entitled *Von deutscher Baukunst* (1773). Similarly, according to Heinse, Milan Cathedral was *'the most glorious symbol of the Christian religion I have ever seen'* (Carver 2003:2). Most significant is also the description of the Gothic in Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire Raisonné*

[2] 'Romanesque and Catholick Architecture' (1842). In: Bullen 2004:155.

de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle (1854). The French architecture historian, supporter of the Gothic, described it as the result of a process of evolution:

> *[…] the **product** of a secular **civilization** succeeding the religious domination of the Middle Ages, based on rational construction employing the system of rib vault, flying buttress and buttress. The ribs are a **skeleton**, and its influence is apparent in the Eiffel Tower and in the work of Baron Victor Horta in Brussels. (Viollet-le-Duc 1854, in Carver 2003:3)*

This quote recalls all aspects of the Victorian culture presented here: evolutionary theories and the principle of hereditariness of features, as well as the vicinity of architecture to natural sciences and anatomy. Indeed, the quote can be considered as a testimony to the present cultural situation (Carver 2003). Following the previous quote in Carver (2003:3), the Gothic appears to be so interesting for the historians at the time since it represents – as God's architecture – the final stage of perfection in the evolution that architecture underwent since the Classics.

The opposing revival movements led to the so-called *Battle of styles* in Britain, which identified different stages of the discussion among opposing Revival movements in England. Specifically, Carver (2003) describes it as the debate among supporters of the Classical revival, or *Neoclassical*, and those of the Gothic revival, or *Neogothic*, over the reconstruction of the Londoner Houses of Parliament (1840–1876). Rebuilt after the fire of 1834, the Palace of Westminster is today the most famous building associated with the *Gothic Revival* style (Carver 2003:2). The Palace was rebuilt in a style which Pugin himself will later define *'Perpendicular Gothic style'* (Carver 2003:2). However, two schools of thought were opposed regarding the style to be adopted for the reconstruction: The Gothic, promoted as English national style, and the Classical style, to connect the Palace with the glories of Grecians and Romans. Naturally, the opposition was also ideological. If the Gothic was considered as the religious architecture of God and the main proof of mankind's devotion, the Classics were pagan, giving the Palace an identity, which was not perceived as mirroring the English national one, as Kondo (2016:88) argues. Specifically, the *Battle* lead to public debates between the two main figures of each school (Carver 2003:2): Decimus Burton and Augustus Pugin. While Burton (1800–1881), was mostly known as exponent of the Classical Revival, Pugin (1812–1852) was a pioneer of the Gothic Revival, who fought for the reintroduction of Gothic principles in construction and for its recognition as English national identity style.

As Guy (1990) reports, a committee of experts was called in to judge the redesign proposals. Pugin's redesign for the Palace of Westminster and its Tower was submitted by Sir Charles Barry and won the competition. However, a huge debate followed the decision. As Guy (1990) asserts, William Richard Hamilton published a critical pamphlet lamenting how *'gothic barbarism'* was preferred to *'the masterful designs of ancient Greece and Rome'* (Guy 1990: 69). Indeed, another project was submitted by James and Decimus Bruton in Classical Revival style. As Guy reports, during the competition, the adoption of a Classical revival style for the redesign of the Palace was criticised by the opposing historians in the so-called *'anti-Bruton campaign'* (Guy 1990:129).

However, the *Battle* did not end with the reconstruction of the Palace of Westminster. As Kondo (2016:80) recalls, the *Battle of styles* also designates the dispute which took place in 1867 about the attribution of the Palace to Sir Charles Barry or his assistant Augustus Pugin. Though the project had the name of Sir Charles Barry, its success seemed due to the involvement of the young Gothic specialist Augustus Pugin. Apparently, the dispute involved the sons of the two architects: Reverend Alfred Barry and the architect Edward Welby Pugin. Originated through pamphlets published by the two, a debate began about the recognition of the main author of the Palace, whose design was a perfect mixture of Classical and Gothic. Indeed, Barry was known as a classicist architect, while Pugin was a Gothic expert.

As of today, both architects are reported as designers of the Palace (Kondo 2016). The relevance of this debate should be here fully understood. As Kondo (2016) reports, the Palace of Westminster was evidently the most prominent palace in Victorian Britain and the *Battle* was especially for the Gothic revivalists not merely a stylistic battle, but also an ideological one. Indeed, the study of the history of the Gothic, so popular among ecclesiastics, was supported by the conviction that discovering the rules of the style's evolution would reveal God's work on earth (Kondo 2016). As pioneer of the Gothic Revival, Pugin even writes *The true principles of the Christian or Pointed Architecture* (Pugin 1841), where he notably chooses the term *Christian* as a synonym for *Gothic*. Shared by other authors, the choice identifies the Gothic as God's architecture. As argued by Yanni (1997:212), admiration for the Gothic was so great at the time, that several theories were developed about its origin and that of the pointed arch. While some asserted a sudden transformation of the round arch into the pointed one, others saw the pointed arch and the Gothic as final product of an evolution from the round arch of the Romans.

To conclude, Sharpe's work should also be inserted within a tradition of attempts of classification and systematisation of English architecture. As Yanni states (1997:211) after an era of studies almost totally devoted to the Classics, both Grecian and Roman, the interest of the English historians seems to shift towards the architecture of the Middle Ages. Indeed, Sharpe is but one of numerous historians attempting to bring order in the history of architecture in those years and to evolve the official classification and vocabulary proposed by Thomas Rickman (Ibid.). Not less central, is the coincidence of the events with the London Great Exhibition of 1851. A great interest for the matters of architecture and its history presumably accompanied the preparations for the exhibition in London, which is considered a major date in the modern history of architecture. In turn, the expert's discussion about history of architecture needs to be contextualised within the scientific and cultural situation of Victorian Britain. The scientific theories and their revolutionary vision of reality as a constant evolution bring new impulses to the study and conception of the history of architecture of Sharpe and his contemporary authors (see Yanni 2014).

1.4. The protagonists

1.4.1. Whewell (1794 – 1866)

Scientific disciplines as we know them today were first theorised in the reflections of historians and scientists of the19th century, as Yanni reports (1997:216). Regarding the history of architecture, William

Whewell can be considered the founder of empirical architectural history, or the study of architecture based on the analysis of the single building. There, theoretical principles are derived from the study of real objects. Whewell was a Gothic revivalist, and thus considered the Gothic as the most valuable success of humankind and evident proof of God's original project (Yanni 1997). A science enthusiast, Whewell was an expert in different fields, as theology, geology and architecture. Interestingly, he was also passionate about naming and classification, which he applied in the categorisation of English architecture. As Yanni (1997) explains, he thus united the two disciplines of architecture and terminology, via the practice of naming and classification.

Referring to Whewell, Bullen reports how the curiosity of these historians for the history of architecture was more *'a kind of natural theology'* (Bullen 2004:143), where the brilliance of God's mind was proved. According to Yanni (1997), also the new language of architectural description employed inspired by natural sciences originally came from the work of Whewell. As it happens, in his *German Churches*, Whewell (1830) provides the student with recommendations on how to take efficient notes on an unknown building. Whewell, like Rickman, was indeed convinced that in building descriptions, words and language could substitute both illustrations and real experience (Yanni 1997:211). Since Whewell considered Art as *'the Mother of science'* (Whewell 1852:8, in Yanni 1997:204), the application of a scientific method to its study was justified. Indeed, Yanni (1997:204) argues how Whewell's effort in naming and his application of an observational method played a fundamental role in the scientisation of the discipline. In addition to that, in Whewell's view, the unity of all parts of the *Gothic* proved its divine origin (Yanni, 1997:216). Hence in his view, the classification of architecture should be exclusively based on its visual elements. Indeed, Whewell was the first scholar who applied the scientific method of observational sciences to architectural history, and argued that a style should be identified by its visual evidence, without resorting to historical documents:

> *[…] if there really [is] any* ***consistency*** *and* ***uniformity*** *in the buildings of the same epoch, we ought to be able to detect this agreement examining the buildings* ***alone****. (Whewell 1830:9, in Yanni, 1997:208)*

It is also important to notice how the prominence of visual evidence introduced by Whewell will be a funding element of all successive theories of classification. As Yanni (1997:208) points out, Whewell adopts here *'a visual epistemology of far-reaching importance'* or, in other words, a belief that appearance may be categorised and that seeing is a reliable way of knowing. In Whewell's opinion, the method of study of architecture should be the same as that of other observational sciences, like geology and botany (Yanni 1997:209). Indeed, the old separation in Victorian Britain between *'things made by the hand of God and things made by the hand of Man'* (Yanni 1997:210) is surpassed by Whewell's application of an observational method to all disciplines. Naturally, to the classification of appearance the naming of elements should follow. Further, in his *German Churches* (Whewell 1830) the author also denounced the *'desperate need of a consistent nomenclature'* (Yanni 1997:211) of English architecture

to allow for a careful description. Indeed, as stated by Yanni (1997:204), medieval architecture in England needed a richer vocabulary, to reach the same level of description and knowledge enjoyed at the time by Classical architecture. It should be remembered that Whewell (1830) shared with Rickman (1817) a deep faith in the linguistic description of architecture. As it happens, both authors were convinced that language would be able to describe anything better than drawings. In line with that, the *'strong affinity'* (Bullen 2004:143) of Whewell and Rickman should also be borne in mind, as Bullen recalls. Though Rickman was eighteen years his senior, he and Whewell often went on architectural tours together and Whewell involved Rickman in his studies. As Bullen (2004:144) reports, Whewell recognised how the development of scientific disciplines, such as botany and anatomy, was only possible through an evolution of its nomenclatures. In that, architectural history was no exception.

Quoting Nikolaus Pevsner, Bullen (2004:144) also underlines that Whewell was a pioneer of the history of medieval architecture, whose interests reached subjects such as geology, astronomy, political economy, theology and history of science: the *'unity'* of both Gothic buildings and nature should be remembered as another crucial intuition by Whewell (Yanni 1997:216). As Yanni argues, in opposition to Classical architecture, the key element of the Gothic was the *'unity'* (Ibid.) of its components. This unity of the parts and the evidence of a constructive principle proved the presence of God as its creator, as the revaluation of the Gothic is founded on its resemblance to a creature of God.

1.4.2. Thomas Rickman (1776 – 1841)

Thomas Rickman is, together with William Whewell, one of the main figures of the Gothic Revival in Britain. An English antiquarian, Rickman developed a profound interest for medieval architecture in the course of his adult life, which he mainly expressed through his famous volume, *An Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation*, first published in 1817 and analysed in the present work in its third edition of 1825 (Rickman 1825). Oriented to a career as doctor by his father, after the failure of his first business in 1807, Rickman turned to his passion for medieval architecture and antiquarianism (Aldrich 2009:1). Indeed, the author spent several years drawing and studying medieval churches. From that study and the successive classification resulted his system of four main periods of English medieval architecture. In 1829, Rickman became a member of the British Antiquaries Society and authored multiple articles and lectures on medieval architecture.

As Aldrich further (2009:2) recalls, Rickman was a self-taught architect, but was nonetheless responsible for the construction of several churches in the *Gothic Revival* style, which combined elements of the Gothic. However, his national recognition is due to his role in the reestablishment of the Gothic taste, which he shared with Augustus Pugin. Quoting Baily (1977:148), Aldrich (2009:2) asserts how Rickman's lack of expertise in classical studies presumably enabled him to have a different point of view on the classification of medieval styles and therefore being successful where others failed. Interestingly, as Baily (1977) asserts, due to his lack of academic knowledge, Rickman could not read any document in Latin about the Middle Ages, which gave him the chance for a fresh approach to the

subject. Presumably, this was also the main cause for his development of a visual approach, based on the description of the building and not on historical studies of its architecture.

Rickman also embarked in several architectural tours of England and Europe during the last years of his life, as underlined by Aldrich (2009). In 1832, he travelled to France with William Whewell, from where he reported back to the Society of Antiquaries in a series of letters about their discoveries on the French *Flamboyant* style and *Gothic* tracery in France. Rickman also worked on several successive editions of his *Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England* (Rickman 1825), each of which was systematically revised and enlarged by the author. The fourth edition of the volume in 1835 contained the results of his French tour with Whewell and as he died, in 1841, evidence showed that he was working on a fifth edition of the volume (see Rickman 1848, in Aldrich 2009:4).

Lastly, Rickman's work can be identified as a preliminary systematisation of English medieval architecture, referred to as *'the new basis of the historiography of English Gothic architecture'* (Skipton-Long 2018:168). Adopting the observational method of natural disciplines, he forged a classification of paramount relevance for the study of medieval architecture in England. Indeed, in his role of pioneer, Rickman systematised about 500 years of English medieval history and his efforts were recognised by both Sharpe and other authors (Skipton-Long 2018). Hence, in an evolutionary perspective, Sharpe sees his own research as a development, or update of Rickman's original systematisation (Sharpe 1851a).

1.4.3. Edmund Sharpe (1809 – 1877)

As the central figure of the present research, Sharpe deserves a detailed presentation. As Hughes (2010) reports in a monograph devoted to the author, Sharpe was not only an architect and historian, but also a railway engineer and sanitary reformer. During his university years, Sharpe was friend with William Whewell, at the time professor of Minerology at Cambridge Trinity College. Concurrently, Sharpe corresponded with Thomas Rickman and visited him, though there is no evidence that he *'served any kind of formal apprenticeship with him'* (Hughes 2010:69). After his graduation at Cambridge University, he was awarded with a travelling scholarship, which allowed him to visit France and Germany in 1833, as Hughes recalls. During the time abroad, as Yanni (1997) points out, he reported about foreign architecture to Whewell and Rickman in a series of letters (see Sharpe 1833, in Yanni 1997:208). Both older than him, Sharpe considered Whewell and Rickman as his masters and models.

As Bullen (2004:150) states, in 1835 Sharpe was back in Lancaster and took up the study and practice of architecture. Having founded a construction partnership with Edward Paley, Sharpe resigned from it in 1851 to continue working on his own. In the same year, he worked as a railway engineer in Lancaster, where he was involved in the town administration and served as a town counsellor and Major between 1848 and 1849 (Hughes 2010). Among his many activities, Sharpe's national recognition is mainly due to his practice as medieval architecture historian (Bullen 2004). As a Romanesque and Gothic revivalist, he became member of the Cambridge Camden Society and his theories and buildings were repeatedly mentioned on their periodical, *The Ecclesiologist*, which declaredly supported medieval and ecclesiastical architecture and the Gothic Revival (Skipton-Long 2018:161). As Skipton-Long

(Ibid.) reports, Sharpe was also awarded with the Gold Medal of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1875 for his efforts in the theory and practice of architecture. The author devoted his adult life to the drawing of English ecclesiastical architecture of the Middle Ages, as Hughes (2010) further recalls. His studies and drawings were collected in 12 volumes produced between 1845 and 1847 and published as the *Architectural Parallels* (Sharpe 1848a). In 1849, Sharpe's *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a) and *Illustrations* attached (Sharpe 1849b) followed. Despite his numerous studies, Sharpe is mainly remembered for his volume called *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a), on which this research is focused. In the last years of his life, Sharpe embarked on several architectural tours throughout England, France and Italy. During one of these trips dedicated to the study of foreign architecture, he fell ill near Milan and died there in 1877 (Hughes 2010).

As Hughes (2010) recalls, Sharpe's legacy consists of around 40 churches throughout whole England, in both *Romanesque* and *Gothic Revival* styles. In addition to that, Sharpe is also known for the design and construction of the so-called *pot churches* in England, entirely made of terracotta. These experiments with the versatility of the material, of which all church elements were made, testifies to a joy in experimentation which the author applied in every area of his work (Hughes 2010).

In Sharpe's work, and specifically in his treatise on the *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a) evidence can be found of the contemporary discussion taking place at the time in England about evolutionary theories in natural sciences and their application to architectural history, as Skipton-Long (2018:182) argues. Moreover, Skipton-Long addresses Sharpe's interest in the Gothic as stemming from the general debate about the definition of England's national identity, and the necessity to distinguish the British architectural identity from the Classics and European building tradition. Like other supporters of the Gothic revival, Sharpe believed that the stylistic evolution of architecture was mirrored in the evolution of the English society (Skipton-Long 2018:177). In line with this, Sharpe's treatise on the *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a) embraced the innovative conception of *'medieval buildings as material expression of historical development'* (Skipton-Long 2018:162). Like Whewell (1830), Sharpe insisted on both the visual analysis of single specimens and on the use of comparative charts and taxonomies to represent the stylistic development in time (Skipton-Long 2018).

Bullen (2004:145) reports how Whewell got to know Sharpe, through Rickman, as an *'able and intelligent young man',* draughtsman and interested in medieval architecture. Reportedly, Whewell encouraged Sharpe to embark on architectural tours of France and Germany in 1833 (Bullen 2004). There, he could investigate the stylistic passage of the Romanesque into the Gothic through the evolution phases of the pointed arch (Bullen 2004). Interestingly, Sharpe's letters to Whewell show traces of the introduction of a new language for architecture (Yanni 1997:208): Sharpe's architectural descriptions have changed, and the building is now regarded as a whole unity of numerous parts working together.

We could thus conclude that the general commixture of scientific disciplines at the time, and the influence of Whewell and his interest in the young Sharpe could have caused his introduction of this innovative vocabulary. The new vocabulary and his visual taxonomies of windows constitute the main

innovations of Sharpe's main volume (Sharpe 1851a). As Skipton-Long (2018) affirms, differently from other volumes, like those of Rickman (1825), or Freeman (1851a), Sharpe's illustrations *'enable the reader to situate themselves within the rise and progress of window tracery and experience its transformation towards a perfected state over time'* (Skipton-Long 2018:170).

After presenting the historical context of England where this research is set and its protagonists, an overview will be provided in the next paragraphs of the main terminological aspects recalled in the next chapters. There, the reported reflections of the historians on architecture periodization will be examined from the perspective of terminology theory, in order to evidence their vicinity in purposes.

1.5. The terminological context

The following section presents the main topics related to the theory and practice of terminology which will be drawn upon in the next chapters. Specifically, the origins of terminology as a discipline are described: from the work of his putative inventor, Eugen Wüster (1898 – 1977), to the socio-cognitive theories of Pamela Faber and Rita Temmerman. In this progress of terminology as a discipline from its founding principles, the necessity of a more precise description of reality is made evident. In that, a parallel to the history of classification of English medieval architecture can be detected. The present terminological overview has indeed the purpose to set the context for the analysis of the historical material presented in the following chapters.

1.5.1. Eugen Wüster and the first theory of terminology

Terminology has always existed as the practice of naming objects. This activity of naming permits to categorise them in groups with similar features and is, as Aristotle already described, the activity through which humans evolved their knowledge of the world (Skipton-Long 2018:177). Conversely, terminology as a linguistic discipline was first codified by an Austrian engineer, Eugen Wüster. Wüster was interested in the creation of an internationally recognized lexicon of terms in his own field of specialisation, electrotechnics, with the aim of allowing unambiguous communication among experts. Wüster's interest in terminology led to his cooperation in the compilation of the first International Electrotechnical Vocabulary in London 1938, still updated today (Temmerman et al. 2005:649).

Further, Wüster's dissertation of his PhD at Stuttgart University in 1931 under the title of *Internationale Sprachnormung in der Technik, besonders in der Elektrotechnik* [3] (Wüster 1931), is considered the founding text of the discipline of terminology. In 1951 Wüster was also appointed secretary of the *Osterreichicher Normenausschuss* [4] for the standard ISO/TC 37. The Norm, issued by the International Organisation for Standardization, refers to terminology, its principles and coordination. Wüster is thus considered the father of terminological standardisation and of the international norm for

[3] Wüster, Eugen (1931) Internationale Sprachnormung in der Technik, besonders in der Elektrotechnik. Die nationale Sprachnormung und ihre Verallgemeinerung. [International Language standardization in technology, particularly in electrical engineering. The national language standardization and generalization]. Berlin, VDJ Verlag.

[4] Translation by the author: Austrian Standards Committee.

terminology (Temmerman et al. 2005). Some years later, in 1971, Wüster initiated in Vienna the institute for terminology which would later become the *Infoterm*, or International Centre for Terminology. Indeed, Wüster's school of thought is also known as the *Vienna School*.

In Wüster's theory, terminology is based on the systematisation of concepts. His main object of interest are concepts and from their systematisation in conceptual structures come terms as their linguistic realisations (Temmerman et al. 2005). According to Nedobity (1983:70), in Wüster's view meaning primarily resided in concepts and is then expressed through terms. In particular, the author was convinced that terminology should focus on specialised languages, since there a univocal or monosemic correspondence between terms and concepts could be achieved. In Wüster's theory, everything could be described as a concept: ideas or thoughts, as well as material objects from reality (Wüster 1979).

Wüster's approach to terminology can thus be described as clearly onomasiological, as his conception of the discipline focused primarily on concepts and conceptual systematisation, from which then terms derived. Once concepts have been defined and correctly systematised, they should be named with appropriate and univocal terms, which belonged to the lexicon of a specialised field (Wüster 1979). In his *Introduction to the General Theory of Terminology and Terminological Lexicography*, first published in English in 1979 (Wüster 1979), Wüster formulated the *General Theory of Terminology* (GTT), which constitutes the fundament of the terminological science and the basis of future theories. All main principles of Wüster's theory are recalled in this work. There, the author describes his approach to terminology, founded on the study and systematisation of concepts, as well as on the choice of univocal terms, in order to assure unambiguous communication among experts (Wüster 1979).

The main goal of Wüster's terminological research was to find a way to systematise concepts and terms to enable national and international communication (Nedobity 1983:71). There, the concept should correspond univocally to a linguistic sign, or term, in order to be clearly recognised and identified. Indeed, another basic element of Wüster's GTT is the difference between terms and words in general language. While terms are identified by a monosemic relation between each term and the concept they designate, this does not happen for words in general language, which can refer to more than one concept contemporarily and have more than one meaning (Wüster 1979).

The systematisation of concepts in a specialised discipline, to be reflected in specialised vocabularies, required, according to Wüster, a firm knowledge of the specialised subject. To be appropriately systematised, concepts had to be known in all their identifying aspects, and that knowledge is possessed exclusively by experts (Wüster 1979). Additionally, the systematisation of concepts and terms by experts could decisively contribute to the advancement of knowledge in each discipline (Ibid.). Eventually, a higher level of conceptual knowledge would lead to the progress of the discipline as a whole. Interestingly, this connection of conceptual systematisation and knowledge advancement will be a fundamental topic in the following chapters (see Freixa & Cabré 2011:53).

Later on, Wüster's studies would lead to the publication of a dictionary of specialised language called *The Machine Tool. An Interlingual Dictionary of Basic Concepts* (Wüster 1968). The volume is,

in line with its author's theory, a dictionary of concepts, to which then terms are assigned. A French, English and German dictionary of standardised terms of Electrotechnics, Wüster's volume was presented as model for future specialised dictionaries (Temmerman et al. 2005:650).

Not less crucial is Wüster's conviction that the knowledge of concepts, as mental entities, is due to our experience of the world from childhood on (Temmerman et al. 2005:648). Hence, concepts are constructed by humans in relation to their experience of reality. Consequently, a certain grade of arbitrariness and variability in the definition and systematisation of these concepts is considered acceptable, since it is caused by our personal constructs and experience (Wüster 1979). According to the author, to the development of our knowledge of the world as humans belongs our ability to abstract concepts from the objects of reality, as Temmerman recalls (Temmerman et al. 2005). This ability grows indeed with our experience of reality. As human beings, we are then able to order these concepts into conceptual structures, which eventually constitute our knowledge of the world. This humans' ability of conceptual systematisation is another key element of Wüster's (1979) theory. There, the example of the term *'apple'* (Temmerman et al. 2005:648) is provided, as an instance of concept's abstraction. First, we learn the term *'apple'*, then that apples have multiple colours and forms. Lastly, we learn the concept of apple to identify all different sorts of them. Similarly, through this process of abstraction, it is possible to go from *'the general concept apple to the superordinate concept fruit'* (Ibid.).

Representing an additional element of Wüster's theory, the construction of a precise and univocal definition of a concept constitutes for the author a necessary passage towards the choice of a univocal term (Temmerman et al. 2005:648). As Sager (2000) will specify, a concept is thoroughly formed only when a precise definition of it can be provided. As it should also be noted, Wüster's study of terminology is pre-eminently synchronic (Wüster 1979). Indeed, the author was interested in the systematisation of concepts and terms in their present form. Hence, the diachronic evolution of concepts and terms, as their syntax, were ignored (Ibid.). The choice between a diachronic or a synchronic perspective in the study of terms and concepts will be a major difference among theories of terminology.

The relation between real objects, concepts and terms, represented in his *Dreiteiliges Wortmodell* (Wüster 1991:165)[5] constitutes another contribution of Wüster's to terminology theory. This univocal correspondence is, according to Wüster, the funding principle of terminology. Indeed, this triangular figure depicts the monosemic relation which exist in terminology among concept, term and real objects. A triangular model of the relation of reality, elements of thought and linguistic signs was first introduced by Gomperz in 1908 (Wüster 1991:165). The same triangle has then become the so-called *Semiotic Triangle* proposed by Odgens and Richards in 1923 (see Odgens & Richards 1989).

To conclude, three main elements of Wüster's theory are to be remembered. First, the central role of concepts and conceptual systems in terminology. According to the author (Wüster 1979), terminology is primarily an activity of concept definition and systematisation. Specialised knowledge is

[5] English translation proposed by the author 'Three-part word model'. The English translation proposed in Temmerman 2000:58, by Felber 1984:100 is: 'Wüster's term model'.

always based on concepts and conceptual structures, and their study and systematisation enhance the progress of knowledge by an increasingly profound investigation of the concepts. Indeed, our knowledge and experience of reality are internally constituted of concepts (Wüster 1979). Secondly, not less central is the monosemic reference of concepts to terms (Ibid.). Indeed, this relation constitutes the fundament of the univocity ideal, to which terminology should always tend, and which is the basis of Wüster's theory (Wüster 1979). Moreover, this univocal correspondence is what differentiate specialised languages from the general one. Thirdly, it is important to remember that Wüster's terminology adopts a synchronic perspective on language (Ibid.). Differently from future theories, it does not consider the evolution of terms and concepts in time, but it is rather interested in the systematisation and exact definition of concepts in their present form.

One final aspect of Wüster's theory is most relevant for the present research: the arbitrariness of concept formation. Indeed, concept formation depends on the human perception of reality and their ability to abstract away from real objects and group them into classes. As Cabré (2003:179) confirms, the main aim of Wüster's theory was to reach an unambiguous communication of specialised concepts among experts at a national and international level. To do that, a monosemic correspondence between concept and term should be aimed at in specialised languages (Wüster 1979).

1.5.2. The prescriptive approach to terminology

The following sections try to provide an overview of the main scholars and theories involved in the beginnings of the discipline of terminology after Wüster. Following Faber (2009:110), terminological theories can serve two primary purposes: prescription or description in reference to reality and language. In other words, they are either devoted to the prescriptions of rules for language and the discipline, or to the description of linguistic phenomena. Prescriptive theories mark the beginnings of the discipline. On the contrary, the descriptive theories which follow try to describe real terminological phenomena denouncing the limitedness of prescriptive approaches.

A first generation of scholars seems to try and specify Wüster's (1931) principles of the discipline. To this generation belong Juan Sager and Maria Theresa Cabré. Thereafter, a distance starts to be perceived between the principles of terminology and the reality of language, or its *'environment'* (Cabré 1999:17). Therefore, successive scholars, as Pamela Faber and Rita Temmerman, will shift the focus of the discipline to a more precise and faithful description of the reality of language. Concurrently, the limitedness of prescriptive theories will be discussed in comparison to reality, where more flexibility is needed (Temmerman 2000:7).

1.5.3. Sager and the process of *'terminologisation'* [6]

Juan Sager's approach to terminology can be classified under the first generation of *'prescriptive'* ones (Faber 2009:110). As previously reported, Sager belongs, indeed, to the generation of scholars who try

[6] Sager 1990:60.

and define the principles on which the discipline of terminology should be based. In his volume of 1990, Sager presents the main elements of his theory of terminology. Among others, a crucial role is played by the process of *'terminologisation'*, or the formation of new terms (Sager 1990:60). This process is described by the author as the progressive definition of a concept through successive stages of naming. A fundamental principle of terminology is acknowledged here: the correspondence between the practice of naming and the progressively better knowledge of a concept. In other words, in order to be known, different aspects of the concept must be investigated and named. In this, Sager's theory (1990) seems to reflect Temmerman's future one, also known as sociocognitive terminology (Temmerman 2000).

For both authors, *'different stages of naming'* (Sager 1990:80) reflect the successive phases of evolution of a concept and its knowledge. In Sager's view (1990:80), term formation can be primary or secondary. Primary term formation occurs contemporarily to the appearance of a new concept. It thus happens within the scientific community, is normally monolingual and is characterised by the absence of a precedent term for the concept. On the contrary, secondary term formation identifies the process of change or manipulation to an existing term, to which a different meaning is bestowed. This could happen through the search of an equivalent term in another language, in attempts of term standardisation, or in scientific debates. A process of secondary term formation is also marked by the existence of a primary term for the concept. In other words, a precedent term should already exist for the concept, which is now named differently (Sager 1990:80). Connected to that, is also Sager's (1990:72) definition of neology: this does not only identify the appearance of a new term, but also designs the process in which an old term, already present in the specialised vocabulary, gets a new meaning in a specific context.

In the introduction to Sager's *Essays on Definition* (Sager 2000), Alain Rey (2000:1) addresses definition as a practice helping humans' understanding of the world and which, therefore, has always been part of what they do, as Aristotle already reported. Definitions are described by Rey as comparison to a model, or as the most precise delimitation of a concept from similar ones of the same domain. Indeed, the update and modification of both concepts and terms are necessary stages of knowledge evolution. and a constant adaptation seems necessary. Hence, in Sager's (2000) opinion, no knowledge evolution could occur without a necessary update of concepts and terms to accompany it. Indeed, this process of *'terminologisation'* described by Sager (1990:60) will be central in the following chapters.

In Sager's theory, concepts have primary relevance and need to be named and classified. Indeed, the activity of the terminologist is according to Sager comparable to that of a scientist, *'who has to find a name for a new concept'* (Sager 1990:56). In this, the onomasiological approach of terminology introduced by Wüster (1979) is openly recalled. Indeed, as Sager (1990:56) affirms, the role of modern terminologists does not merely involve the naming of new concepts. Instead, it also includes their systematisation in appropriate conceptual structures, which vary according to their context.

The vicinity of Sager's and Cabré's theories of terminology is best seen in the introduction of the communicative dimension of terms. Sager (1990) shares Cabré's opinion according to which terms exist only in context, and specifically in texts: the necessity of a context to delimit the meaning of a term

is a common feature of both authors. As Sager asserts, it is impossible for terms to be isolated from their context and be merely *'label for things'* (Sager 1990:23), as the communicative dimension of terms shows (Cabré 1999:11). This implies that terms can take different meanings according to the context. In this light, Sager's (1990:23) statement presumably anticipates the *'multidimensionality'* of concepts recognised by both Faber (2014:18) and Temmerman (2000) some years later. Indeed, these authors seem to agree on the fact that the term identifying a concept depends on its situation of use and meaning. By extension, the same concept can be described by more terms, in relation to the one aspect highlighted in context. In this, the focus on concepts as the basis of terminological theory is clear (cf. Wüster 1979).

Sager's (1990) theory successively underlines the importance of comparison. Comparison, especially of concepts, is according to the author the pillar of every classification and systematisation attempt. In turn, the author recalls the importance of classification, termed as *'differentiation'* (Sager 1990:92) and based on comparison, as a primary human activity, enhancing the comprehension of reality (Ibid.). In the Sager's understanding, the practice of differentiation implies an activity of observation and recognition of similarities according to which objects are grouped into classes. In particular, he brings the example of biology and the classification of plants and animals. These classes can be then described as concepts and a distinctive definition can be attached to them. Indeed, being able to describe specimens from reality and subdivide them according to their features reasonably underlies a better knowledge of them (Sager 1990). These classes can be then named with distinctive terms.

Another interesting element of Sager's theory is the impossibility of synonymy (Sager 1990:58). According to the author, no real synonymy exists in reality. Instead, different terms indicate different concepts, since different terms signal an equivalent number of possible interpretations. Hence, in Sager's (1990) opinion, synonymy should not be ignored, as it represents the possibility of more perspectives on a concept. Regarding synonymy, Sager's theory differs from Wüster's (1979) GTT, and it appears to pave the way for Faber (2012) and Temmerman's (2000) successive interpretations. These successive authors, indeed, seem to accept synonymy as an expression of the multidimensional nature of concepts. In his translation of Rey's *Essays on terminology* (Rey 1995), Sager also addresses the possibilities of graphical representation of a conceptual structure. The more complicated the concepts structure gets, the more creative its form should be (Rey 1995:139). Indeed, not only linear connections exist among terms and this must be reflected in the graphical form of their representation.

A further interesting component of Sager's theory are his reflections on successful communication (Sager 1990:102). Inspired by Wüster (1979), the author believes that successful communication depends on three parameters that the sender of the message has to choose. First, the intention of the message, which must be adapted to the listener's expectations, so that s/he can respond appropriately. Secondly, the choice of knowledge, as the listener must possess the needed knowledge to understand the message. Lastly, the language of communication should be chosen appropriately, with the aim of maximising listener's understanding (Sager 1990:102, see section 4.1.). In Sager's theory, communication seems even to get the form of a *'comparability of knowledge'* (Sager 1990:103), where

shared terms and concepts allow experts to communicate successfully, thanks to their similar knowledge. His reflection appears most relevant towards the development of the present work:

> *In the […]* ***communication between specialists*** *in a discipline, the existence of* ***accepted standardised terms*** *and expressions which the sender can assume the recipient to recognise is of considerable utility in ensuring* ***comparability of knowledge****, since the standard term presupposes absolute comprehension of its definition.* ***Standardised terms*** *[…] should only be adopted, if the collective state of knowledge in the relevant subject field or subfield is sufficiently stable not to require modification in the foreseeable future. (Sager 1990:103)*

Within the importance of right language to assure a successful communication, Rey (1995:11), in Sager's translation, underlines the relevance of naming and standardisation in scientific disciplines. As the author points out (Rey 1995:11), naming is fundamental for the evolution of a subject field. As part of the process of *'terminologisation'* (Sager 1990:60), it flanks the discipline's evolution. However, Rey also specifies how the practice of naming is accompanied by the appearance of new terms and the two are parallel to each other. (*'It is impossible to name without names; it is impossible to name scientifically without terms'*; Rey 1995:59). The reference to biology and chemistry in the following quote is not a casual one. There, nomenclatures are constructed to allow the addition of terms as soon as new concepts appear, so that knowledge can progress:

> *The practice of naming the concepts in a particular subject field according to a system which reflects a systematic structure imposed on these concepts is most clearly evidenced in* ***biological and chemical taxonomies****, which are deliberately constructed as open systems* ***permitting the creation of new terms*** *for concepts yet to be established. (Sager 1990:104)*

Special mention should be made to Sager's definition of concepts, and his reflections about their cognitive dimension (Sager 1990:21). Concepts are defined as the main objects of terminology, represented through linguistic signs, or terms. Comparison is involved in concept formation, where objects with common features are grouped and thus implicitly compared. The features of a concept which univocally identify it are called *'essential'* (Sager 1990:24). Further, Sager defines all real objects grouped under the same concept as its *'extension'* (Sager 1990:24). Interestingly, the choice of the essential characteristics of a concept can vary, according to the scientific field, or context. The said features then determine the term chosen for the concept. Presumably, the choice of features in chemistry involves a material's main constituent elements, while in engineering it could be its size or function (Sager 1990). Terms as *'cousin'* or *'uncle'* (Sager 1990:25), are mostly determined not only by their own features, but through their relation to other terms. Indeed, the concept's features can be part of its own description or be determined by the concept's comparison to other concepts of the same field.

Again, a concept's definition seems to depend on its context (Sager 1990:41). Conversely to general language which exploits polysemy and synonymy, terms in specialised language need to be as

precise as possible and to possibly best reflect the concept and the conceptual structure behind them (Sager 1990:40). Indeed, as entities which reflect the progress of knowledge in a discipline, terms must primarily aim at *'transparency and consistency'* (Sager 1990:57). Transparency in the expression of the concept, and consistency within their conceptual structure and nomenclature. Indeed, terminological consistency as the constant relation of terms with one another is a central aspect for Sager. To conclude, the dynamicity of concept designation discussed here is fundamental for this research (Sager 2001:46, in Temmerman & Van Campenhoudt 2014:3). As it happens, Sager acknowledges a concept as an entity in constant evolution, and this development happens parallel to the evolution of a discipline. In turn, thus, as Rey (1995:59) argues, also specialised nomenclatures must be constantly updated, in order to provide a linguistic usable and correct representation of the specialised discipline that they represent.

1.5.4. Cabré and the communicative theory of terminology

The approach to terminology of Juan Sager and Maria Theresa Cabré identifies the first generation of authors after Wüster. Indeed, Sager and Cabré try to evolve Wüster's *General Theory of Terminology* (Wüster 1979) and define further aspects of it. These first authors' approach appears nearer to Wüster's original interpretation of terminology. In a most illuminating paper, Cabré (2003) comments on Wüster's (1979) theory of terminology and provides an overview on how this theory has been evolved by successive authors. This paper clarifies the main aspects of Wüster's theory of terminology and illustrates the discipline's evolution from its original form to the successive communicative and socio-cognitive theories. As Cabré (2003:165) affirms, the main aim of Wüster's theory was to eliminate terminological ambiguity from specialised language by means of standardisation. Moreover, Wüster was interested in convincing users of the benefits of unambiguous terminology for communication and in establishing terminology as a science (Cabré 2003:165). After the beginning of the discipline, Wüster's original theory of terminology (Wüster 1979) has been evolved by successive authors. There, some principles have been maintained and others dismissed (Ibid.).

Among others, the univocal correspondence of concept and term, or univocity ideal, is addressed as a fundamental principle (Wüster 1979). In Cabré's (1999:194) own theory, the correspondence is not strictly univocal anymore, and in fact a certain level of synonymy and polysemy is tolerated. As Cabré herself (2003:168) reveals, especially in specialised discourse synonyms are used by experts to highlight particular aspects of a concept and must therefore be studied by terminology.

Cabré's understanding of the discipline is known as *Communicative theory of terminology* (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:8). There, the communicative dimension of terms is evidenced, and paramount relevance is attributed to the communicative context in determining each term's meaning. Indeed, the communicative dimension of terms is added to their linguistic and cognitive ones, and context as the main place of communication becomes from now on a key element in terminology (Cabré & Freixa 2009:1). This context can be constituted by both a text or a conversation, since the importance of spoken communication is also underlined. Cabré's theory is known as communicative not only since it considers spoken language, but also as phraseology is included in the analysis of concepts and terms.

In studying terms in their real context of communication and within the phraseology they are normally employed into, paramount relevance is attributed to the context of use of these terms. In that, a major innovation is introduced to Wüster's (1979) theory, where the context clearly did not have such a prominent role. Indeed, one of the main principles of the communicative theory of terminology is that meaning exists only in context (Cabré 2003:184). A further most relevant innovation introduced by Cabré's theory is the diachronic perspective (Ibid.), to accompany Wüster's synchronic one (1979).

However, as Cabré (2003:167) specifies, some elements of Wüster's *General Theory of Terminology* (Wüster 1979) are hold valid also in her communicative theory. First, the necessity of a pre-eminently monosemic relations between concepts and terms. Moreover, terminology is still characterised by an exclusively onomasiological approach and the focus should still lay on concepts (Cabré 2003:167). Consequently, the importance of conceptual structures and concepts organisation is also remarked as fundamental. Indeed, the author underlines how more complex topics deserve non-linear and more elaborate structures. Among the principles of Wüster's theory maintained in Cabré's communicative theory is also the preference for international terms, over national ones (Cabré 1999:17).

As Wüster (1979) previously asserted, also Cabré (1999:111) states how the highest possible clarity in communication should be achieved, and for that, national and local synonyms should be avoided. According to Cabré, the main purpose of every theory, and not only of terminology, should be the description of *'real data'* and of the greatest possible number of specimens from reality (Cabré 2003:178). She goes as far as to claim that all theories of terminology are descriptive, but they should also be *'consistent'* and *'predictive'* (Ibid.). In other words, they should be based on a form of categorisation and able to predict future developments in the discipline, while entailing a consistent interpretation of reality and thus also conceptual systematisation. Cabré's theory of terminology also attributes huge relevance to the systematisation of concepts in conceptual structures. According to the author the origin of the discipline lies in systematisation (Cabré 1999:1). Since everything, abstract or material, can be defined as a concept, the need for systematisation has always been felt by humans in each aspect of life. Indeed, systematisation is the way in which humans get to know and understand the world or, in other words, how they both acquire and improve their knowledge. Of course, this systematisation should be preceded by the ordering of objects of reality through their observation and description first, and the construction of classes of similar specimens, secondarily (Cabré 1999:1).

Cabré agrees with Rey (1995:13) in asserting how, classification plays a major role in the process of building knowledge in specialised fields. In these similar aspects, the vicinity of Rey's and Cabré's own theories seems perceivable. Similar to what previously anticipated, Cabré's theory reaffirms some of Wüster (1979) principles, as for instance terminology's main goal of normalisation (Cabré 1999:195). According to the author, normalisation is fundamental towards unambiguous communication. Specifically, Cabré (1999:195) also defines the difference between normalisation and standardisation. Both are, according to the author, fundamental for terminology and will be significant concepts in the following chapters:

There is some disagreement around the world as to the use of ***normalization*** *[…] or* ***standardization*** *to refer to the concept of '****setting a form up as a model or type****'. Some argue that normalization is the best way to express the action of reducing several concurrent possibilities to a single norm. […] For others standardization is the best term available to refer to decisions issued by authoritative bodies and does not lead to the unnecessary polysemy of normalization.* ***Normalization*** *seems to imply two rather different meanings: one referring to extending the use of a language, e.g. a language in a minority position returning to a 'normal' situation, and the other referring to determining which form is the most suitable for a particular concept. In English* ***standardization*** *has both meanings and is the accepted term for referring to both the correction of a sociolinguistic situation and the choosing of a specific term as a reference form. (Cabré 1999:195)*

Another relevant concept introduced by Cabré is the one of *'semantic clarity'*, at which terminology should aim (Cabré 1999:111). In specialised languages, where more synonyms are present, preference should be given to only one term. In order to achieve semantic clarity, synonyms and all factors which could disturb communication should be eliminated. As Cabré reports (1999:110), as a consequence to that, the tendency to adopt recurrent, fixed terms reduces the lexical variety of specialised discourse, when compared to general language. Indeed, *'semantic clarity'* (Cabré 1999:11) searches for the best term for each concept and a univocal correspondence of concept and term. In this, Wüster's univocity ideal of terminology is recalled (Wüster 1979). Naturally, the right term is the one appropriate to its context, and, as previously argued, the context determines the meaning of a term, since *'a word can only become a term if located in a specialized reality'* (Cabré 1999:113). Terms could be also considered as expressions of an ideology or a social practice. As Rey (1985, in Cabré 1999:112) affirms, terminology is the expression of the ideology of a particular group of interlocutors. Exactly as for Wüster, Cabré's approach to terminology is onomasiological and believes that communication is possible only if the concepts, before terms, are shared by all participants in the discussion (Felber 1984b, in Cabré 1999:194). Indeed, terms should be as univocal as possible, since the progress of a discipline is strongly dependant on their comprehension and communication, both at a national and international level.

Concurrently, the comparison of language to a living being (Corbeil 1980, in Cabré 1999:214) is also relevant towards further understanding. As Corbeil asserts, language, exactly like a living creature, finds itself in a state of constant evolution. This naturally implies that no fix term or concept exists in reality. Instead, through the progress of knowledge in specialised disciplines language, too, necessarily evolves. Accordingly, Cabré's theory (1999:214) is also based on the constant evolution of terminology in each specialised domain. This occurs as soon as a new concept is formulated or introduced, and the existing terms are not sufficient to describe it (Cabré 1999:1). In this, Cabré's theory reflects again Wüster's one (1979), since the necessity for unambiguous terminology in specialised languages originates in a knowledge progress of scientific disciplines. Wüster's (1979) univocity ideal appears to be still clearly present in Cabré's communicative theory:

> *The constant and rapid **progress** of **science** and **technology** has brought about a spectacular increase in the number of **concepts** that have had to be named, either because of new creations or adaptations of something already in existence. As a result, the terminology in several subject fields has often experienced an **uncontrolled increase** in the **number** of **designations**. […] **special communication** demands a higher level of **precision** than that required in general communication. Communication without **ambiguity** would require each designation to correspond to a single concept and each concept could only be designated by **a single term**. (Cabré 1999:194)*

According to Cabré (1999:11), special languages should be the primary object of terminology. As subsets of general language, they do not normally belong to the speakers' general knowledge. Experts of a field of specialisation are thus the only users of a special language and communication happens through shared concepts and terms. In connection to that, as Wüster (1979) previously did, Cabré (1999) also defines the principle of abstraction in special languages. Indeed, these languages are characterised by different grades of *'abstraction'* (Cabré 1999:7), depending on the knowledge of the speaker and listener. In other words, the degree of abstraction of terms can vary depending on the subject field, the communicative purpose of the speaker and the knowledge of the receiver, but also in connection to geographical, social and cultural factors and the *'personal style'* of the speaker (Cabré 1999:65).

Eventually, Cabré's theory should be mainly remembered for the importance it attributes to the context of communication. According to the author, the meaning of a term does not exist if not in context, or in its phraseology and use in real communication (Cabré 1999). The communicative dimension to terminology is also exemplified in Cabré's *'Theory of doors'* (Cabré 2003:186). There, terms present three different dimensions: a cognitive, a linguistic and a communicative one, through each of which the term can be accessed, understood or categorised. However, the most interesting part of this theory is the assumption that the choice of one dimension of access does not exclude the others.

Hence, even if according to Cabré terminology prefers the cognitive dimension of a term, language and context of communication are still considered as secondary factors (Cabré 2003:186). This three-dimensional representation seems to recall both *The Triangle of Meaning* (Ogden & Richards 1989) and the *Dreiteiliges Wortmodell* [7](Wüster 1991:165). Indeed, the three dimensions, cognitive, linguistic and communicative one, appear to reflect the elements of the triangle respectively. By extension, the terminological unit described by Wüster (1991) as a univocal relation of concept, term and object, seems to be represented by Cabré as the three-dimensional entity accessible through a cognitive, linguistic or communicative door (Cabré 2003:186). As previously addressed, the vicinity of Wüster and Cabré conceptions of terminology seems here remarked and demonstrated.

[7] English translation proposed by the author 'Three-part word model'. The English translation proposed in Temmerman 2000:58, by Felber 1984:100 is: 'Wüster's term model'.

1.5.5. The *'cognitive shift'* [8] in terminology

As Faber points out (2009), what differentiates the following theories of terminology from the previous ones is a so-called *'cognitive shift'* (Faber 2009:1). This shift is characterised by the major relevance assigned to context and conceptual structures behind language and texts. In Faber's (2009) view, terminology seems to evolve from a prescriptive to a descriptive approach, where concepts are considered in their social, contextual, and cognitive aspect (Faber 2009:1). If Wüster was primarily interested in defining the principles of terminology in his *General Theory* (Wüster 1979, in Faber 2009:110) and in providing synchronic and standardised vocabularies, this new descriptive approach is devoted to the study of language units in context and of the conceptual structures and concepts behind terms (Faber 2009). Indeed, the focus is shifted to a more precise observation and faithful description of language in context and thus also major relevance is attributed to texts and corpora (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:12). Overall, this approach could be acknowledged as more descriptive (Ibid.:8). The following theories of terminology are also known as *'Cognitive-based theories of Terminology'* (Faber 2009:116, see section 4.3.). This title reflects their common principle according to which linguistic units cannot be separated from their context and conceptual dimension. To those theories belong Faber's Frame-Based Terminology (Faber et al. 2007) and Temmerman's (2000) sociocognitive terminology.

1.5.6. Faber and the frame-based terminology

Pamela Faber' and colleagues' theory of terminology is known as *Frame Based Terminology* (Faber et al. 2005; 2006: 2007). Derived from Charles Filmore's frame semantics (Filmore & Baker 2001), Faber's theory (2012) focuses on the importance of context and conceptual systematisation. Concurrently, the theory is based on the principle that, in a specialised domain, conceptualisation should be purpose oriented. The purpose of the communication constitutes the frame, or context, according to which concepts are organised (Faber 2012:23). Within this approach, knowledge is represented as a dynamic *'conceptual network'*, able to adapt to each context (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:10). Faber's theory is known as a communicative one, since it asserts the presence of meaning exclusively in context. Indeed, this theory is also founded on the analysis of meaning from texts and corpora. There, concepts and terms are used in their frame. Eventually, the theory promotes an interdependence of concept, term and context. Each term can be rightly understood only in its own context, where it exclusively exists. Hence, the study of texts as language context is another component of the theory (Faber 2012:23).

The multidimensionality of concepts is also discussed, mirrored in their capacity to adapt to the single *frame*, or context (Faber et al. 2007). Accordingly, a concept possesses numerous aspects, such as a communicative and a cognitive one, and each of them should be employed in the concept's representation to enhance comprehension (Ibid.). Not less relevant are conceptual relations underlined in the representation of all concept's aspects. Indeed, as Sager (1990:25) previously asserted, the

[8] Faber 2009:1.

definition of a concept does not reside in its features alone, but also in its relations to other concepts of the same domain. Further, Frame-Based Terminology (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:25) underlines how the visual representation of concepts is particularly useful in complex and dynamic conceptual structures. In the theory, concepts representations, as the linguistic and visual one, should evidence their multidimensionality. Indeed, the multidimensional nature of concepts is seen as the array of possible representations of concepts, according to their multiple aspects (Ibid.).

Not one visual representation, but also the grade of abstraction from reality is most relevant to understand concepts and conceptual relations (Faber et al. 2007, section 2.2.). That implies that the represented features should be carefully chosen, since this will be crucial towards the understanding of conceptual relations (Ibid.). What Rey (2000:14) called *'essential'* features of a concept's definition seem to be the same here addressed in the concept's visual representation (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:25). Hence, the choice of essential features to define or represent a concept decisively influences both the concept's understanding and its classification. In connection to conceptual representation, Faber also provides a precise definition of *'multidimensionality'* in terminology (Faber 2014:18). In the author's opinion, this concept represents all possible alternative classifications of a concept. This becomes evident every time a concept is classified in more than one manner, according to its evidenced aspect. Specifically, this choice could depend on the subject field, the conceptual structure or the classification's discriminating feature (see Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:20).

As other authors, Faber defines classification as a most relevant component of terminology. As Faber and López Rodríguez (2012:18) confirm, categorisation enhances human comprehension and understanding of reality. However, differently from Wüster (1979), Faber believes in the necessity of a diachronic dimension in the study of concepts and terms. Indeed, her theory represents knowledge as a complex network of information adapting in turn to each frame (Faber 2009:123). Concordantly, concepts and terms constantly evolve and thus need to be studied diachronically (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:11). Moreover, knowledge and its conceptual organisation reflect the cultural, social, linguistic status of language users (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:17). This underlines how knowledge constantly changes not only in time, but also in relation to its geographical and cultural settings (Faber 2014:26). This perspective openly contrasts with Wüster's (1979) synchronic one, oriented towards the standardisation of terms. Conversely, the image of language provided by Faber's theory is a dynamic and evolving one. Consequently, conceptual structures need to be constantly adapted to keep up with reality. Naturally, no standardisation and static language models are thus accepted: phenomena like polysemy and synonymy are present and need to be acknowledged (Faber 2012:14). The univocal standardisation of terms wished for by Wüster (1979) becomes for cognitive-based terminology *'a chimera'* (Faber 2012:14), possible only in a specialised language and specific context (Ibid.).

Freixa's (2006:51) concept of denominative variation also belongs in this descriptive generation of terminological theories and will have paramount relevance in the present research. The principle illustrates the possibility for a concept to be identified with more than one term within the same

specialised language and domain. Indeed, as Freixa (2006:66) asserts, each term expresses a unique interpretation and aspect of a concept and should therefore be studied singularly. Freixa's (2006:51) concept of denominative variation contrasts with Wüster's univocity ideal, on which terminology was originally founded (Wüster 1979). Indeed, Freixa's (2006:51) denominative variation affirms the existence of more possible terms for a concept within the same specialised domain, and this could have multiple reasons, as the intention of the speaker, the communicative purpose or the expression of a specific aspect of the concept. As the author further specifies, this variation does not apply to lexical forms, such as definitions, or periphrasis, but only to different denominations or lexicalised forms. In Freixa's theory, more than in every other, the fundaments of terminology seem to be discussed and updated, as the discipline becomes aware of its previous distance from the reality of language.

Similar to that, the vision of terminology that Kageura presents in his works seems to question the discipline's funding principles (Kageura 2002). The author describes terminology as a unique phenomenon governed by two forces contemporarily: the need for standardised terms and the necessity to precisely express concepts of a specialised domain (Kageura 2002:7). Therefore, while trying to delimit terms' limits for standardisation, the discipline adopts the lexical variety of general language towards the best conceptual expression (Kageura 2002:15). For this, the author denies the existence of synonymity, claiming that even slightly different terms always express a divergent aspect of a concept. The author also exposes an interesting theory about term formation, seen as *'the specification of concepts within a conceptual class, as represented by the nucleus, by means of modifications represented by the determinants'* (Kageura 2002: 59). Clearly, the theory reveals how terms are formed in relation to other terms of the same domain, and how terms reflect the conceptual structures according to which the domain is organised. Moreover, Kageura describes how this specification of concepts can happen at different levels. Indeed, according to the author, multiple levels of concepts classification are possible in relation to the level of specification required in their systematisation (Kageura 2002:7).

To conclude, it seems appropriate to point out one common element of these theories: the dynamicity of concept systematisation and term formation, as described by Cabré, Fernández-Silva and Freixa (2011:51). Accordingly, terminology is not a static science of standardisation, but a dynamic activity of constant new classification and adaptation to an always evolving context of communication.

1.5.7. Temmerman and the sociocognitive terminology

Rita Temmerman's contribution to the theory of terminology is known as sociocognitive terminology (see Temmerman 1997; 2000; 2006). As described in her volume (Temmerman 2000), key elements of the author's research are terminological variation and a culture-bound and context-related understanding of terminology. While Faber's (2009) frame-based theory underlined the cognitive dimension of language and the relevance of context, Temmerman's sociocognitive theory evolves it and adds to the focus the social and communicative dimension of linguistic units (Temmerman 2000:61). According to the author, the activity of terminology consists in detecting concepts from a context, organise them in conceptual structures, and find appropriate terms to define them in terminological dictionaries

(Temmerman 2000:39). A most relevant aspect of Temmerman's theory is her questioning of the principles of Wüster's Vienna School, according to which concepts should always be clearly defined and occupy a specific place in a conceptual system (Temmerman 1997). Conversely, Temmerman believes that concepts are not always precisely defined and conceptual structures can vary according to the context. Concepts are defined by the author as *'units of understanding'* (Temmerman 2008:116), to be specified according to the purpose of the communication and its context (Temmerman 1997:54).

To the univocal and exact assignation of a term to a concept professed by Wüster (1979) and the Western objectivism, Temmerman (2000:16) opposes the multidimensional nature of concepts, according to which different aspects of them can be described through numerous terms. Additionally, the terminological variation discussed by Temmerman (2000) resembles quite closely the one that Freixa (2006) will also present: both authors admit the possibility for a concept to be described through different denominations. In addition to that. according to Temmerman's (2000) sociocognitive theory, terms and concepts evolve in time and need thus to be studied diachronically. In that, the distance from Wüster can be better envisioned. Wüster (1979) aimed at standardising terms in a fixed form, to make them available for international communication. Conversely, successive authors such as Temmerman recognise how specialised languages and their terms cannot be fixed in a systematisation (Temmerman et al. 2008:189). Indeed, the awareness of the necessity of a constant update of terminology differentiates these theories from previous ones (see Faber 2009). As Temmerman (2000:31) argues, the *'multidimensionality'* of concepts is reflected in their capacity to be classified according to the context. Since concepts are also not clearly delimited, they can overlap with each other. This idea assumes that different contexts necessarily need proper conceptual structures and terms.

One of the main principles of Temmerman's sociocognitive terminology is the questioning of the univocity ideal (Temmerman 1997:51). Wüster's (1979) GTT is criticised for its lack of correspondence to reality. Indeed, the univocal correspondence among the three elements of the *Semantic triangle* (see Ogden & Richards 1989), and specifically among concept and term is considered as a mere theoretical simplification. In Temmerman's (1997:62) opinion, a series of near synonyms exist for each concept in a specialised language. Indeed, their presence is due to the multiple categorisation possibilities of concepts in context. This near synonymy acknowledged by Temmerman is what Wüster (1979) wished to eliminate in favour of standardisation and univocity.

On the contrary, in Temmerman's (1997:98) theory, synonymy in specialised discourse among experts is most functional, as it highlights the multiple aspects of a concept. Indeed, each term underlines a different aspect of the concept and can be employed in different contexts. Every time the speaker choses a term, a specific side of the concept is evidenced (Ibid.). That has paramount relevance in specialised communication, where precise knowledge needs to be transmitted among experts. Concurrently, Temmerman (1997) believes that concepts and categories cannot be defined since they are not clearly delimited. The opposition between Wüster's exact definition of concepts and Temmerman's not clearly delimited *'units of understanding'* (Temmerman 2008:116) is here evident.

Accordingly, in Temmerman's (1997) theory, no exact definition can be provided for concepts, as precision does not belong to this *'descriptive'* theory, interested in revealing the complex reality of language (Faber 2012:8). This awareness of the impossibility of exact definitions and separation among concepts, and thus terms, is a key element of this theory to be bear in mind.

Categories, like concepts and terms, evolve over time and a diachronic approach must be employed in their study (Temmerman & Van Campenhoudt 2014:3). Interestingly, Temmerman's sociocognitive theory argues that cognitive models have paramount importance in developing new ideas. In other words, the change of concepts systematisation in a specialised field always hints at the development of new concepts. Recalling Freixa's (2006) definition of denominative variation, Temmerman and Van Campenhoudt (2014:2) argues how terminological variation constitutes an evolution in knowledge of a specialised domain. The appearance of new terms reveals the presence of new concepts and thus of new aspects of knowledge which need to be defined and termed (Temmerman 2000). This idea of conceptual structures playing an important role in the progress of a discipline is common also to Cabré's and Sager's theories of terminology (see Cabré 2003; Sager 2000).

The following reflection by Temmerman (2000:17) on the univocity ideal and by Wüster (1979) and the Vienna school is important for further understanding. For the first terminologists, the interest in the study of concepts and terms was substituted by an urge for standardisation. In turn, this was influenced by a wide diffusion of the theory of objectivism, described by Johnson (1987:X, in Temmerman 2000:16). The theory sees the world as an ensemble of objects with various features and standing in relation to each other. There, Temmerman believes that the human capacity *'to understand and to imagine phenomena, their meaning, function and interrelation'* (Temmerman 2000:16) is ignored. Accordingly, the author is critical towards Wüster's prescriptive approach to terminology:

> *Wüster […] turned Terminology into a number of* ***dogmatic principles*** *for terminology description with language engineering, planning and standardisation, as a consequence of product standardisation, as the underlying socio-economic motivations. (Temmerman 2000:17)*

To conclude, Temmerman (2000:132) also describes the formation of new concepts. As a new concept appears, in order to define it an initial univocity is aimed at. Near-synonymy becomes then inevitable, as the result of a deeper knowledge of the concept, and of an increasing precision of the speaker to describe aspects of it. Synonymity and concept multidimensionality are therefore not only real, but also functional to the expression of the speaker's intentions and a successful communication (Temmerman 1997:77). Concurrently, the presence of near synonyms denotes a higher level of knowledge and understanding of the concept (Ibid.). In light of that, the distance between the initial prescriptive theory of terminology of Wüster (1979) and the later theories of Faber (2012) and Temmerman (2000) becomes evident. At the same time, an evolution in the discipline can be detected towards a more precise description of language in its own context, and a greater attention to the cognitive aspect of the conceptual organisation behind it.

1.6. Conclusions

This chapter provided an overview of the main historical and terminological topics which form the context of the present research. A few main topics are particularly key to remember. Regarding the historical context, the *Battle of styles* and the *Revival movements* will be evoked as central elements of the discussion reported in the following chapters. Concurrently, the figure of Carl Linnaeus will have paramount relevance as a reference in the debate. Not less important will be the concept of evolution and the process of scientisation of the disciplines, which will constitute the backdrop of the events presented here. At the same time, the theories of terminology introduced in the second part of the chapter should be considered as a source of inspiration for the present analysis. Indeed, the principles of terminology will be constantly compared in the following chapters to the events leading to the development of a new classification of English medieval architecture. In that, the main aim of this research will be to investigate the application of principles and theories of terminology to another discipline. Specifically, the English history of medieval architecture and the work of Edmund Sharpe.

Further, as Yanni previously argued, the testimonies presented here did not appear *'in a vacuum'* (Yanni 2014:228). Therefore, each volume, paper, term and nomenclature will be carefully inserted in a context from which its meaning is derived. As Sager (1990) confirmed, meaning exists only in context and so do concepts and terms. In line with this, in each chapter a frame is provided for the appearance of terms and classes. Indeed, the contextual, historical, social, cultural and scientific conditions are where concepts and terms appear and should be analysed for a full comprehension (see Faber 2012). In addition to that, a most relevant result of both the historical and scientific conditions presented here is the acknowledgement of the constant evolution of language in time. As Corbeil states (1980, in Cabré 1999: 214), language is a living being and as such it constantly evolves to adapt to exterior conditions. Consequently, the main purpose of terminology should be to provide conceptual structures so flexible to be constantly updated with the evolution of both language and specialised knowledge. Therefore, the process this research describes is actually a most natural one. An official nomenclature existed at the beginning, then knowledge evolved, and new nomenclatures appeared to update the previous one.

To conclude, it seems important here to remark how the basis of these theories is to be found in the application of a scientific and observational method to the classification of architecture. The nomenclatures which this research will deal with are not abstractly constructed, but rather solidly based on visual evidence from reality and on its careful description, which always precedes its categorisation. Concordantly, specimens are described, illustrated and discussed in order to elaborate a concept which comes from their observation.

2. On Thomas Rickman as the *'Linnaeus of English medieval architecture'* [9] or, about the establishment of the official nomenclature

2.1. Introduction

The present chapter will focus on the figure of Thomas Rickman and his central role within the practice of English medieval architecture periodization. Rickman, an English architect and historian, is mainly known for his role in the Gothic Revival in England (Bullen 2004, see section 1.3.4.) and for introducing the periodization and nomenclature still in use today in the classification of English medieval architecture. The main topic of this chapter will be Rickman's presentation of his nomenclature in the volume entitled *An Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England from the Conquest to the Reformation*, first published in 1817 and examined here in his third edition of 1825 (Rickman 1825).

In order to highlight the terminological standardisation process accomplished by Rickman, its analysis will be preceded by a discussion of the volume to which most of Rickman's nomenclature can be traced back, and which was appointed by Garbett as his main source of inspiration (Garbett 1851, see section 6.3.10.): George Millers' periodization from 1807 and his volume, *A description of the Cathedral Church of Ely with some account of the conventual buildings*, analysed here in its second edition (Millers 1808). The relevance of Rickman's operation is stressed, not because he introduced a naming system of his own invention, but rather because he fostered the much-needed stabilisation of an existing classification. Indeed, Rickman's nomenclature was already normally employed by the experts in 1817.

In the course of the chapter, the origin of Rickman's work will become evident, discussing fundamental topics for the further development of the classification of English medieval architecture. Concurrently, it will be possible to comprehend the fundamental role of Rickman's operation in the perspective of the future evolution of other nomenclatures. Within the present thesis, the highest significance is to be attributed to the choice of the window as a classificatory means, reintroduced here by Rickman and first proposed in the 17th century by John Aubrey in his *Chronologia Architectonica*[10] (Aubrey 1693, see Skipton-Long 2018; Horsfall Turner 2011). That choice is also the basis of Sharpe's studies, centred on widow tracery observation, illustration, comparison and classification (Sharpe 1849a, see section 4.2.). Concurrently, Rickman will also be the first to discuss the concept of transition among architectural periods, as a focus of the future debate among historians. Throughout the chapter, illustrations by other authors are provided of famous English specimens quoted by Rickman, since merely few illustrations were attached by the author to his volume. Indeed, the relevance of images for the description of architecture will be a central topic of discussion for Rickman's successive authors.

To conclude, the closing of the chapter is dedicated to the definition of Rickman as *'Linnaeus of English medieval architecture'* (Yanni 1997:211). This final remark focuses on the author's pivotal role in the practice of classification, contributing to the discipline's scientisation. By extension, it seems

[9] Yanni 1997:211.
[10] English translation: 'Architectural chronology'. In: Horsfall Turner 2011:172.

appropriate here to acknowledge that without Rickman's (and his predecessors') preparatory work no further development in the classification of English medieval architecture would have presumably occurred. Consequently, no opposition or evaluative comparison could reasonably be drawn between Rickman's nomenclature and the ones of the successive generation. Conversely, among them, an interdependent knowledge extension and evolution should easily be recognised.

Rickman's 1817 nomenclature presented in this chapter managed to become the official periodization of English medieval architecture. As a consequence, the terminological discussion this thesis is primarily concerned with – regarding numerous suggestions by different authors to update the official nomenclature – is to be read on the basis of the official classification and nomenclature presented by Rickman (1825). Indeed, future authors will take Rickman's classification as the traditional one on the subject, to which they will propose various changes. Similarly, the figure of Rickman is to be seen as pioneer and main reference of the English architecture classification practice (see Yanni 1997).

Regarding the theory of terminology, the chapter provides a reading of the introduction of Rickman's nomenclature as an attempt to standardise an existing nomenclature and periodization so as to facilitate efficient communication among experts – which resonates with Wüster's (1979) theories. Attention is also paid to the linguistic definition of concepts (Rey 2000), as opposed to their graphical representation (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012), a crucial issue when the aim is that of establishing a clear, official conceptual system and nomenclature. In connection to that, the audience's perception of the presented concepts is also discussed (Brewster & Wilks 2011), as are observations about text types and purposes, especially in relation to their context of production (Hoffman 1985, in Temmerman 2000).

Furthermore, denominative variation is examined, to be investigated not merely as a linguistic phenomenon, but also as a cultural and conceptual one (Freixa 2006; Faber & León Araúz 2016). Regarding the topic of neologies (Sager 1990), these are to be seen as a reintroduction of existent terms in a diachronic perspective (Temmerman & Van Campenhoudt 2014). A conclusive observation is devoted to William Whewell, an architecture enthusiast and science historian, who unites in his research the two topics discussed here: architectural history and the rising interest in terminology. Rey (1995) himself reflected on Whewell's role in the history of the introduction of terminology as a discipline, in his *Essays on Terminology* (Rey 1995).

2.2. George Millers and the inspiration for Rickman's nomenclature from 1807

With reference to the *'honour of precedence'* (Scott 1851b:590, see section 6.3.9.) of classification proposals, which Garbett defines in his letter to the journal *The Builder* quoting Scott (Garbett 1851:620, see section 6.3.10.), Rickman's nomenclature is not original and not composed of neologisms. Instead, it goes back, at least partially, to a classification presented by Reverend George Millers, and published in his volume, *A Description of the Cathedral Church of Ely with some account of the conventual buildings* in 1807 (Millers 1808). Indeed, as Yanni reports (1997), Rickman's declared aim was not to coin neologisms, but rather to standardise the existing terminology within the subject field of English medieval architecture and do so through a clearly defined classification system. Moreover, the use of

the window as main classificatory means for the English ecclesiastical buildings of the Middle Ages is not Rickman's invention. Instead, John Aubrey's *Chronologia Architectonica*[11] (Aubrey 1693), is believed to be the first chronological account of English medieval architecture, and also the first one to employ the window as a means of classification (Horsfall Turner 2011:171). Reverend Millers provides a description of the Cathedral Church of Ely (see Fig. 1) in an introductory chapter of his book, containing a classification of the principal styles of English architecture. This introduction has the declared intention to distinguish the different stylistic elements of the Ely Cathedral (Millers 1808). Additionally, it contains a reference to the so-called *Battle of styles* that was taking place in England at that time, which saw defenders of Classical and Gothic architecture contraposed (Millers 1808:1, see section 1.3.4.). Here, the belief that medieval architecture is devoid of construction rules is criticised:

> *[…] It has indeed been **vehemently** contended by the **devoted partisans of Grecian art**, that this admiration is misplaced. Not only affected pretenders to taste, but men of really great name, have spoken contemptuously, and even opprobriously, of Norman gloom and Gothic glare; of the **monstrous** want of proportion and harmony; of the **barbarism** of proportion and harmony; of the barbarism of points and pinnacles; of the offensive multiplicity of angular parts; and of many other **deformities**, deficiencies, redundancies and incongruities: in short, of the **total impossibility of reconciling those styles**, with a **system of rules** which our ecclesiastical architects never acknowledged, because they never knew. (Millers 1808:1)*

According to Millers (1808), one of the advantages of establishing a precise classification would be to prove the existence of construction rules not only in Classical architecture, as previously believed, but also in the medieval one. Indeed, Millers (1808) described Classical architecture as a model of exemplar classification. In the author's opinion, this was mainly due to the architecture's clear compositional principles, which could be thus easily classified. On the contrary, the apparent absence of rules of the Gothic could be labelled as one of Millers' motivations to try and systematise it.

Further lamenting a *'deficient'* description of architecture in previous works on the subject (Millers 1808:4), the author suggests describing the principles of medieval architecture in a more detailed, though not original, manner. Here Millers talks of previous works on architectural description:

> *On the elaborate works above mentioned, and on many others of the same sort, it is obvious to remark, that they are very **deficient** in **architectural description**. When Willis wrote that subject had so little engaged the attention of antiquaries, that it is no wonder we do not find in his book, an **accurate discrimination** of **styles**[12]. Mr Bentham's valuable work made, indeed, an important addition to the public knowledge of ancient architecture[13] […]. His description of the Church is*

[11] English translation: 'Architectural chronology'. In: Horsfall Turner 2011:172.
[12] The reference is to Browne Willis (1682-1760), English antiquary and author. The volume here mentioned is probably: Willis 1718.
[13] Bentham 1771.

> ***short*** *and* ***scanty****, if mine be more* ***ample*** *and* ***particular****, I am sure that those who are most competent to judge, will not be inclined to allow me much more merit, than that of having industriously applied the general principles I have learned from him. […]. I lay no arrogant* ***claim*** *in the merit of* ***originality****, where a very great part of what I have to tell, has been told before. (Millers 1808:4)*

By the author's own admission, all proposed terms are indeed already employed by experts in the discourse on the subject. In the light of Millers' declaration, it seems appropriate to state that no term was ever proposed as a pure neologism, but rather as a standardised form of terms already in use in the scientific community. The most interesting part of the volume is what the author presents as *'A Sketch'* (Millers 1808:6) of the principal features of English architecture. In this list of features, Millers remarks that the system reflects the way buildings are usually classified and the English medieval architecture is divided, thus underlining the declared non-originality of his system. A note about the structure of the volume is in order here. After a general introduction to the nomenclature, each style is described in detail, by enumerating its most salient compositional features. This introduction is followed by a list of each style's elements to be found in the Ely Cathedral (see Fig. 1), together with a presentation of the principal English buildings representative of each style. Significantly, the same method and volume structure will be later adopted – with adjustments – by both Rickman (1825) and Sharpe (1851a):

> *A* ***Sketch*** *of the principal Characteristic of ENGLISH CHURCH ARCHITECTURE, in the several ages into which it is* ***usually divided****: with a few introductory remarks to the whole; and, subjoined to each part, an enumeration of the specimens now to be seen at Ely, of the work of that age to which it relates. (Millers 1808:6)*

Before presenting his nomenclature, the author reflects on the concept of style evolution, as opposed to the diffused notion of imitation of precedent styles. This introductory reflection serves the purpose of explaining in advance two possible issues with his classification system. If every chronological division presents a certain degree of lability, the adoption of English kingdoms as exact chronological reference to classify styles could probably constitute a cause of future criticism:

> *If architects in different past ages, had, in their reparations of ancient edifices, aimed at imitating the* ***original style****, there is no reason to suppose that they would have produced closer* ***imitations*** *than those which we see in the present age. […] If this same incorrect* ***copying*** *had always prevailed, all distinctions between the productions of different ages, must have been utterly confounded long ago. It would have been* ***impossible*** *to make out any thing of the history of ancient architecture. […] As each of those* ***several styles*** *superseded, or rather, perhaps,* ***grew out of the preceding*** *gradually, it is not easy to fix for the termination of any one of them, and the commencement of the next, a certain and* ***definite date****, which shall not be liable to exception. […] As correct a line as any may be drawn by the* ***reigns of kings****. It will coincide, to a sufficient degree of accuracy, with history and records. (Millers 1808:10)*

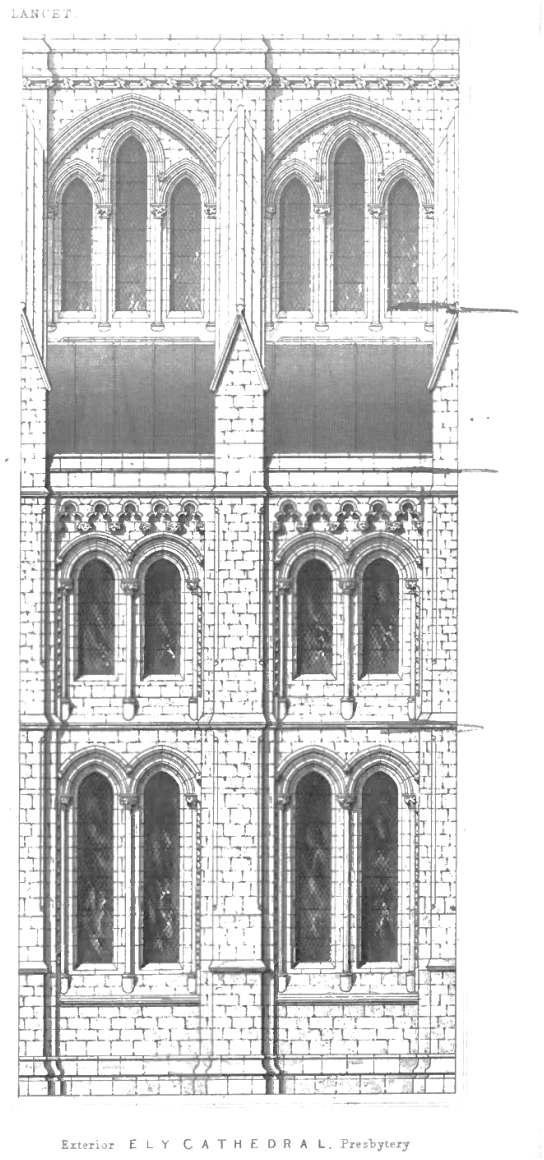


Figure 1: Ely Cathedral. Exterior Prospect of the Presbytery. Lancet period. Sharpe 1888. Page not numbered.

This observation is followed by a second introductory statement about the absence of *Saxon* specimens, due to a lack of original remains from the time. The misclassification of *Norman* buildings as *Saxon* unfortunately became a diffused phenomenon. The same position about the absence of *Saxon* specimens is confirmed in other authors' testimonies (see Freeman 1849), thus presumably explaining the elimination of the *Saxon* period from subsequent classifications. Among the authors who noted the absence of *Saxon* remains is Edmund Sharpe, who openly discards the period from his categorisation of Gothic mouldings (Sharpe 1871). Here Millers comments on the misclassification of *Saxon* specimens:

> *The reader is in particular requested to take notice, that what is advanced of the* ***Saxon*** *age, is given with much* ***caution*** *and* ***diffidence****. Genuine and indisputable remains of that age are very rare. It cannot be doubted that many small buildings erected in Norman times****,*** *have been* ***mistaken for Saxon****. (Millers 1808:14)*

The next passage holds fundamental significance within the frame of the present research. Here, Millers justifies the choice of his presented nomenclature and periodization as the one that is *'most generally agreed upon'* (Millers 1808:14) within the scientific community. The following explanations of the terms' choice as derived from historical events, appear of great interest:

> *One more thing seems proper in this place; and that is, to give a* ***reason*** *for the* ***nomenclature*** *which is adopted. It is that which seems to be now* ***most generally agreed upon****; and if there be authority for some few variations from it, both in* ***dates*** *and* ***adjunct terms*** *or qualifying* ***epithets****, they seem to minute and unimportant to make sensible differences, or to be at all worth contesting. The buildings erected in this country, during the prevalence of the* ***Saxon*** *and* ***Norman*** *invaders, are with perfect property,* ***denominated respectively from them****. When those two nations, in process of time, were blended into a third, in manners, language, arts, and laws, differing from both, and resembling each, it seems right that the architecture which then came into use, should bear a* ***correspondent*** *and significant* ***denomination****, and* ***be called English****. (Millers 1808:14)*

In particular, the substitution of the hypernym *Gothic* with the term *English* is examined in a deeper manner. As for other authors, the choice between the two terms holds central relevance for Millers and is apparently connected to his wish that English architecture be viewed as an independent subject (Rickman 1825). Therefore, in Millers' view, the term *Gothic* appears *'indefinite as well as absurd'* (Millers 1808:16) and should be discarded as soon as possible. Historical reasons are adduced for the terminological choice and, as previously declared, the author's admitted aim is for the term *English* to gain recognition and enter the general use:

> *The Goths, who had ceased many centuries before that time to exist as a distinct people having sunk into the population of the several nations they had over-run, could have no better claim to* ***give their name*** *to that style of building, than other nations of whom our ancestors at that time had never heard, the Peruvians or the Chinese,* ***The term Gothic*** *was not contemporary with the style; and was intended to be contemptuous and opprobrious. The Italians, who appear to have invented it,* ***indiscriminately*** *called every thing* ***Gothic*** *which was Grecian or Roman. Most of our topographical writes have used the word in the same* ***vague*** *and* ***general sense****. So that with them, it is* ***indefinite as well as absurd****. It is only within a few years that it has been exclusively appropriated to the pointed style; and the sooner it utterly disused the better. Since ecclesiastical architecture has been accurately and successfully studied, every man of taste and judgement has been dissatisfied with* ***so improper an appellation****. In the account of Durham Cathedral, published by the Antiquarian Society, the* ***more appropriate*** *and* ***honourable name English*** *was, I believe, first substituted for it, and most satisfactory reasons given for the substitution. This new term has since been used by other writers. The adoption of it by Mr Britton, in his Architectural Antiquities*

of Great Britain, seems likely to contribute greatly to its currency and establishment[14]*. I should not think myself and my work of importance enough but there is such authority for this change, so much property and consequent* ***probability of general usage*** *and* ***permanency****, that I cannot hesitate. (Millers 1808:16)*

After these premises, Millers presents his recommended periodization of English church architecture:

Sketch *of the characteristics of English church architecture:*

1. *Age –* ***Saxon****; from the conversion of the Saxons to the Norman conquest in 1066.*
2. *Age –* ***Norman****; from 1066 to 1200, comprehending the reigns of Will. I and Will. II. Henry I. Stephen, Henry II. And Richard I.*
3. *Age –* ***Early English****; from 1200 to 1300, comprehending the reigns of John, Hen. III and Edw. I.*
4. *Age –* ***Ornamented English****; from 1300 to 1460, comprehending a small part of the reign of Edw. I. and those of Edw. II. Edw. III. Rich. II. Hen. IV. V. and VI.*
5. *Age –* ***Florid English****; from 1460 to 1537, the dissolution of religious houses; comprehending the reigns of Edw. IV. And V. Rich. III. Hen. VII. And VIII. (Millers 1808:17)*

It is worth noticing that the adjective *English* is attached to the style's proper name. However, this starts only with the *Early English.* The reason behind this choice should be now comprehensible, considering the precedent discussion about the exact definition for these authors of English architecture (see Millers 1808:16). Introducing a model for the analysis of each style which will become usual in future volumes on buildings' classification (Rickman 1825, see section 2.3.), Millers analyses the main compositional elements of each style. A paragraph is dedicated to all main components, entitled respectively: Arches, Columns, Windows, Roofs, Ornaments, Form and Extent. This subdivision in clearly separated sections with titles reveals the didactic aim of the classification up to the details:

In all dimensions much ampler – with a general air of cumbrous massive grandeur – the ***Normans*** *were fond of stateliness and magnificence, and though they retained the other characteristics of the* ***Saxon*** *style, by this amplification of dimensions, they made such a striking change as might justly be* ***entitled*** *to the* ***denomination*** *it received at its first introduction among our Saxon ancestors of '****a new kind of architecture****'. Enlarged dimension is the only* ***criterion*** *which has been established, between the Saxon and the Norman styles. It has been thought* ***too vague****, and certainly is so; for it is perceptible only in large edifices, […] But there are many parish churches, built in the Norman age, which, from the simplicity of their form, and the smallness of their dimensions,*

[14] See Britton 1807.

have been taken for Saxon buildings; and which, having none of the grander Norman features, it is ***extremely difficult to discriminate****. (Millers 1808:26)*

At this early stage of architectural studies, the discrimination of *Saxon* and *Norman* periods clearly constitutes a primary question for these authors. Consequently, different categorisation methods are discussed by Millers. In addition to that, the author also appoints in his volume alternative means of classification for the English ecclesiastical building of the Middle Ages. If Millers defends the recognition of the *Saxon* as an independent style, Rickman will discard it in favour of a chronologically extended *Norman* style, explaining the choice with the absence of original *Saxon* remains. In this sense, Rickman's system represents an innovation over his predecessor. As an example, Millers (1808) quotes here William Wilkins, an English architect and archaeologist, who in 1796 suggested to distinguish *Saxon* and *Norman* buildings based on the proportions of their columns (Wilkins 1796):

Mr ***Wilkins****, in his excellent paper in the twelfth volume of the Archaeologia, proposes* ***another distinction****, more* ***precise*** *and* ***scientific:*** *the different proportions of the* ***columns****. He states the height of the Saxon column to be from four to six diameters, and that of the Norman only two. He does not seem to admit any difference, in this respect, in Norman buildings. (Millers 1808:27)*

In conclusion to his volume, Millers (1808) emphasises a particularly significant concept for the purposes of the present research: the difference between *Norman* and *Early English* style. The described shifting from an architecture of *'strength and solidity'* to one of *'lightness and elegance'* (Millers 1808:30) – though not signalled explicitly by the author here – represents nothing less than the fundamental passage between *Romanesque* and *Gothic,* the two main ages of medieval architecture:

This is as proper a place as any to observe, that the ***transition*** *from the Norman to the early English style, was from one* ***extreme*** *to another. In the former, everything seems intended to give an idea of* ***strength*** *and* ***heavy solidity****; in the latter, of* ***lightness*** *and* ***elegance****. Yet the one is said to have* ***risen*** *immediately* ***out of the other****, as has been before remarked, by the production of the* ***pointed arch*** *in the intersections of the* ***semi-circular****. (Millers 1808:27)*

In spite of the early stage (1807), Millers confirms the modernity of his thought, and eventually acknowledges the derivation of the *Gothic* from the *Romanesque,* as a stylistic evolution. In doing so, he appoints the *Early English* as *'the parent germ'* of all subsequent English styles (Millers 1808:31). The similitude is not his own, but belonged to John Milner, an English Roman Catholic bishop and controversialist, who published his theories in *A Treatise on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of England during the Middle Ages,* first appeared in 1811[15]:

[15] The exact quote was not found. The reference should be to Milner, John (1811) *A Treatise on the Ecclesiastical Architecture of England during the Middle Ages, with ten illustrative plates*. London, Printed for J. Taylor Architectural Library. From the same author see also: Milner, John (1801) *The history, civil and ecclesiastical, & survey of the antiquities, of Winchester*. Volumes I and II. Winchester, J. Robbins.

*This, as happily observed by that learned antiquary, Mr Milner, of Winchester, was '**the parent germ**', from which all that has been here described, and yet remains to be described, arose by easy and **natural** connection. (Millers 1808:31)*

The comparison between architecture and nature and the reference to the evolution of styles as gradual and natural phenomenon will be a central topic of discussion for future authors (see Poole 1850b and Sharpe 1852, in section 3.2. and 3.3.). If, according to Garbett (1851:620), Rickman's nomenclature was primarily inspired by Millers (see section 6.3.10.), credits are also to be given to another work, dating back to almost a century and a half before, when the study of English medieval architecture apparently began (Horsfall Turner 2011). As reported by Skipton-Long (2018), the window was originally proposed in this work as a way of classifying Gothic buildings. This volume, the *Chronologia Architectonica*[16] (Aubrey 1693), is referred to as the first chronological account of English medieval architecture (Horsfall Turner 2011). There, Aubrey develops *'a method for deducing the date of a medieval building by analysing the shapes of its windows'*, and considers the windows *'as evidence of what we might call broad stylistic types and as unmistakable signs documenting the process of time'* (Skipton-Long 2018:175). Unfortunately, as Horsfall Turner asserts (2011), Rickman's knowledge of the volume cannot be ascertained. Aubrey's (1693) classification method of medieval buildings based on the description of windows will be developed by Sharpe and other authors (see section 4.2.). To conclude, if the relevance of Millers' work for Rickman will become clearer in the next pages, a focus on his early reflections seemed inevitable, given the prominence of the theories put forward therein.

2.3. Rickman's *Attempt to discriminate the Styles of English Architecture* [17]

In reference to the relevance of Rickman's main volume for this research (1817), it seems appropriate to first reflect on its title: *An Attempt to discriminate the Styles of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Reformation.* While the term *attempt* makes the reader aware of the presented classification's experimental character, as well as of the implicit possibility of alternative classification systems, the title makes it explicit that the nomenclature's applicability is limited to England exclusively. The volume, first published in 1817, is here examined in its third edition of 1825 (see Rickman 1825).

As Yanni (1997:211) points out, the main aim of Rickman's volume was to bring English medieval architecture to the standardisation level enjoyed at the time exclusively by Classical orders or, in other words, to stabilise the current nomenclature employed in the practice of English ecclesiastical buildings' description, so that it could be studied with a similar level of precision. In view of these premises, the comparison to Classical architecture, both Grecian and Roman, represents a constant component in Rickman's work (see Table 1). This comparison serves two purposes concurrently: it highlights the volume's didactic purpose, and proposes an ennobling vision of medieval architecture, by acknowledging it as a phase of the history of architecture, on a par with the Grecian and Roman ones:

[16] English translation: 'Architectural chronology'. In: Horsfall Turner 2011:172.
[17] Rickman 1817.

*[…] Architecture may be said to treat of the planning and erection of edifices, which are composed and embellished after two principal modes, **1st**, **the Antique**, or **Grecian** and **Roman**, **2nd**, **the English** or **Gothic**. […] it will be proper to make a few remarks on the difference between mere housebuilding and that high character of composition in the **Grecian** and **Roman orders**, which is **properly styled** Architecture. (Rickman 1825:1)*

In the introductory note which follows, Rickman sets the chronological limits of English architecture from an historical point of view. There, he defines as *English* the architecture that followed the Roman domination of the British Isles, reached its climax with the *Decorated* period and terminated when, according to the author, no principle of construction could be recognised anymore:

*When the Romans left the island, it was most likely that the attempts of the Britons were still more rude; and endeavouring to imitate, but not executing on principle, the Roman work, their architecture became debased into the **Saxon** and the **early Norman**, intermixed with ornaments perhaps brought in by the Danes. After the conquest, the rich Norman barons erecting very magnificent castles and churches, the execution manifestly improved, though still with much similarity to the Roman mode debased. But the introduction of shafts, instead of the massive pier, first began to approach that lighter mode of building, which by the introduction of the pointed arch, and by an increased delicacy of execution and boldness of composition, **ripened at the close** of the twelfth century into the simple yet beautiful **Early English style**. Toward the end of another century, this style, from the alteration of its windows by throwing them into large ones divided by mullions, introducing tracery in the heads of the windows, and the general use of flowered ornaments, together with an important alteration in the piers, became **the Decorated English style**, which may be considered as **the perfection of the English mode**. […] at the close of the fourteenth century we find those flowing lines giving way to perpendicular and horizontal ones. The use of which continued to increase, till the arches were almost lost in a continued series of panels which at length in one building – the chapel of Henry VII […] The Restoration, occasioning the destruction of many of the most celebrated buildings and the mutilation of others, […] seems to have put an end to the **working of the English style on principle**. (Rickman 1825:4)*

However, what seems to primarily concern Rickman is the difference in meaning between the terms *order* and *style*, for which he provides definitions. Not to be forgotten is the ennobling view of medieval architecture the author suggests, through a constant comparison of it to the Classical one:

*In dividing the Grecian and Roman architecture, **the word order** is used, and **much more properly** than **style**; the English styles regard not a few parts, but the composition of the whole building, but a Grecian building is denominated Doric or Ionic, merely from its ornaments; and the number of columns, windows &c. may be the same in any order, only varied in their proportion. (Rickman 1825:8)*

Each Classical order is followed by a list of building specimens, as is done for every English style in the following chapters (Rickman 1825). A second-level categorisation of stylistic variants within each order is also presented, as the *Roman Doric*, or the distinction between ancient and modern *Ionic* capitals (Rickman 1825:13). In a most interesting conclusion, the author presents the Classical solution for categorising specimens not suitable to any order, the *Composed* orders. Understandably, these orders owe their denominations the combination of heterogeneous features characterising them:

> *Having gone through the forms and distinction of the orders, it is proper to say, that, even in Greece and Rome, we meet with specimens whose proportions and composition* ***do not agree*** *with any of them. These are comprised under the* ***general name*** *of* ***Composed orders****. (Rickman 1825:32)*

The following remark and its prescriptive purpose are most relevant to understand Rickman's approach to the practice of classification. The author's aim is to supply the reader with representative examples, defined by the author as *'standards'* or *'models'* (Rickman 1825:35) with which to compare specimens from reality. In line with this, model illustrations are provided in his volume (see Fig.2). The different means employed in the explanation of concepts, such as linguistic definitions or illustrations, will constitute a major difference between Rickman's and Sharpe's approach to classification (see section 4.2.). Indeed, the fundamental role of illustrations in Sharpe's conceptual system will mark a new vision of categorisation and buildings' description. An example of Rickman's standard illustration is provided in Figure 2 and will be resumed for comparative purposes at a later stage (see section 4.2.):

> *[…] it has by no means been intended to mention* ***every*** *valuable remaining* ***example****; all that has been aimed at, is to give a general view of those remains which must be considered as* ***standards****, and to excite in the* ***pupil*** *that persevering attention to* ***the best models****, which is the only way of arriving to a* ***complete knowledge*** *of these very interesting sources of architectural science. (Rickman 1825:35)*

Regarding its structure, Rickman's volume appears clearly articulated in two halves. Following a first description of Classical orders, a second part is dedicated to English architecture, structured similarly to the first one. Firstly, the author's preference for the term *English* is explained, contrasting the hypernym *Gothic* to its local varieties. The attention paid to the relation between the two terms, *Gothic* and *English*, could presumably also be due to Millers' influence (see Millers 1808:15, in section 2.2.):

> *It may, however, be proper here to offer a few remarks on the* ***use of the term English,*** *as applied to that mode of building* ***usually called the Gothic****, and by some the pointed architecture. Although, perhaps, it might not be so difficult as it has been supposed to be, to show that the English architects were, in many instances, prior to their continental neighbours, in those advances of styles about which so much has been written, and so little concluded; it is not on that ground* ***the term is now used****, but because, as far as the author has been able to collect from plates, and many friends who have visited the Continent, in the edifices there. (more especially in those parts which have not*

been at any time under the power of England, the architecture is of a very different character from ***the pure simplicity*** *and* ***pureness of composition*** *which marks the English buildings. […] a very attentive observation of the* ***continental buildings called Gothic****, would enable an architect to lay down the regulations of* ***French****,* ***Flemish****,* ***Spanish****,* ***German*** *and* ***Italian styles****, which were in use at the time when the English flourished in England. (Rickman 1825:37)*

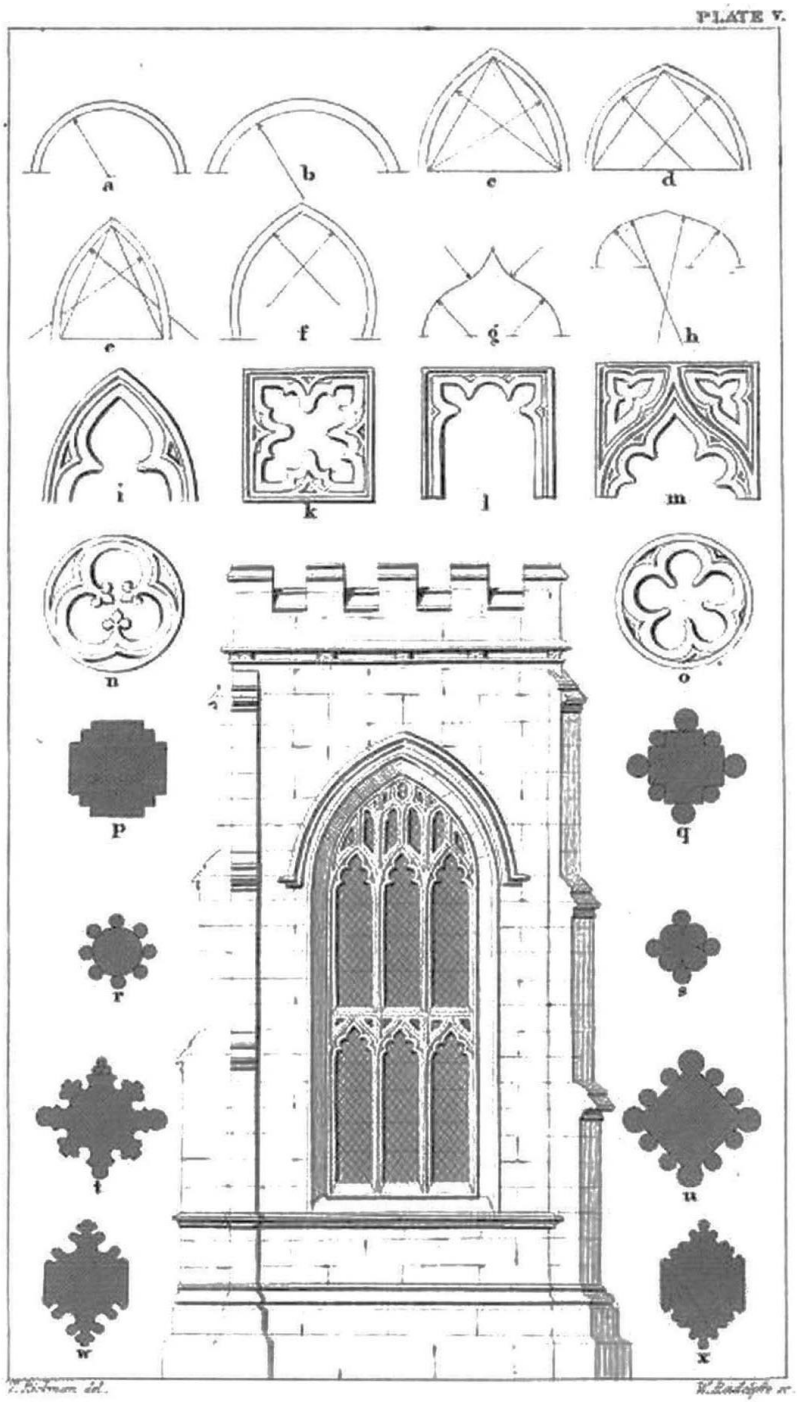


Figure 2: A perpendicular window with didascaly of all elements. Rickman 1825. Plate V. Page not numbered. *'A: the semi-circular arch; B: the segmental arch; C: the equilateral arch; D: the drop arch; E: the lancet arch; F: the horse-shoe arch; G: the ogee arch; H: the four-centred arch. Then follow foliations or featherings: I: a plain arch, trefoiled; K: a square quatrefoil pannel, double feathered; L: a square window-head, cinquefoiled, M: a transom, with ogee-head to the light, cinquefoiled, and the spandrels*

trefoiled; N: a trefoiled circle: this is of early English character, and the points flowered; O: a cinquefoiled circle; P: plan of a plain Norman pier; Q: a Norman pier with shafts; R: an Early English pier with a centre; S: an Early English pier from Salisbury; T: a Decorated English pier from Chester; U: A Decorated English pier from York; W, X: Two Perpendicular English piers'. (Rickman 1825:114). See Skipton-Long 2018:164.

Despite the general interest in a rigid and clear-cut classification which characterises his work, Rickman recognises the gradual stylistic evolution as a key principle of architectural history. However, this principle seems not to be reflected in his classification system, which, differently from its successors, appears to be based on models of finite forms and not to admit intermediate phases of stylistic mixture:

A careful examination of a great number of Norman buildings will also lead to this conclusion – that the style was constantly assuming a lighter character, and that the ***gradation*** *is so gentle into Early English, that it is* ***difficult*** *in some buildings to* ***class them****, so much have they of both styles […] that seems to be a convincing proof that the styles were the product of the* ***gradual operations*** *of a* ***general improvement****, guided by the hands of a genius, and not a foreign importation. (Rickman 1825:38)*

The attempt to classify English medieval architecture is finally proposed:

English architecture may be divided into ***four distinct periods****, or styles, which may be named,*
1st, the ***Norman style****,*
2nd, the ***Early English style****,*
3rd, the ***Decorated English style****, and*
4th, the ***Perpendicular English style****. (Rickman 1825:39)*

Following this passage, a glossary of the most used terms for the architectural description is presented. This is of great interest from a terminological perspective. Glossaries of architectural terms are present in numerous publications of the time (see Parker 1836). The didactic purpose of Rickman's volume was evident (it was conceived as a manual), which should serve as a guide for the student in his architectural tours) but becomes even more so in these recommendations on term usage[18]:

Before we treat the styles separately, it will be necessary to ***explain*** *a few* ***terms*** *which are employed in* ***describing*** *the churches and other buildings which* ***exemplify*** *them. (Rickman 1825:39)*

After listing the main compositional elements which are going to be described in detail – Doors, Windows, Arches Piers, Buttresses, Tablets, Niches and Ornamental Arches or Pannels, Ornamental Carvings, Steeples and Battlements, Roofs, Fronts and Porches – an overlook of the principal discriminating features of each style is proposed. The missing numeration of the *Perpendicular English* period is noteworthy. As previously mentioned, the reference to English reigning monarchs serves here

[18] As to be expected, a small glossary of terms is to be found in Sharpe's volume too (Sharpe 1851a), whose work clearly finds inspiration in Rickman's own also concerning the contents' organisation (Rickman 1825).

the purpose of providing precise chronological delimitation of styles, a methodological choice which will be criticised as inappropriate by the following generation of historians:

> ***1st, the Norman style**, **which prevailed to the end of the reign of Henry II, in 1189**: distinguished by its arches being generally semi-circular; though sometimes pointed, with bold and rude ornaments. This style seems to have commenced before the conquest, but we have no remains really known to be more than a very few years older.*
> ***2nd, the Early English style, reaching to the end of the reign of Edward I, in 1307**; distinguished by pointed arches, and long narrow windows, without mullions; and a peculiar ornament, which, from its resemblance to the teeth of a shark, we shall hereafter called the toothed ornament.*
> ***3rd, Decorated English, reaching to the end of the reign of Edward III, in 1377**, and perhaps from ten to fifteen years longer. This style is distinguished by its large windows, which have pointed arches divided by mullions, and the tracery in flowing lines forming circles, arches, and other figures, not running perpendicularly; its ornaments numerous, and very delicately carved.*
> ***Perpendicular English.** This is the last style, and appears to have been in use, though much debased, even as far as to 1630 or 1640, but only in additions. Probably **the latest whole building** is **not later than Henry the VIII**. The **name** clearly **designates this style**, for the mullions of the **windows**, and the ornamental pannellings, run in perpendicular lines, and form a **complete distinction** from the last style; and many buildings of this are so crowded with ornament, as to destroy the beauty of the design. (Rickman 1825:44)*

Reminiscent of the discussion in Millers' volume (Millers 1808:14, see section 2.2.), Rickman also clarifies the absence of the term *Saxon* in his proposed classification:

> *It may be necessary to state that, though many writers speak of **Saxon** buildings, those which they describe as such, are either known to be Norman, or are so like them, that there is **no real distinction**. But it is most likely, that in some obscure country church, some real Saxon work of a much earlier date may exist; hitherto, however, none has been ascertained to be of so great an age. (Rickman 1825:45)*

A remark on the significance of the passage from *Early English* to *Decorated* follows this specification. Quoting a well-known example – the east window of Lincoln Cathedral and its uncertain stylistic classification – Rickman seems to prefigure here the opinion of the *Geometrical* period's supporters (see section 3.2.). We could thus reasonably venture to affirm that, anticipating an upcoming evolution in medieval architecture history, Rickman was presumably already able to perceive a certain *transitional* character in this window presenting elements proper to two different styles (see section 3.3. and Fig. 3):

> *It appears that the double window, with a circle over it, sometimes pierced and sometimes not, began to be used early in the style, for we find it at **Salisbury**; and this continued the ornamented window till the latest period of the style; it was indeed only making a double door into a window.*

In the more advanced period, it was doubled into a four-light window – at ***Salisbury****, in* ***the cloisters*** *and* ***chapter-house****; and the* ***east window*** *of* ***Lincoln cathedral*** *is of eight lights, formed by doubling the four-light, still making the circle the ornament****.*** *This window is in fact* ***a decorated window,*** *but together with the whole of that part of the choir is singularly and beautifully* ***accommodated to the style*** *of the rest of the building. (Rickman 1825:59)*

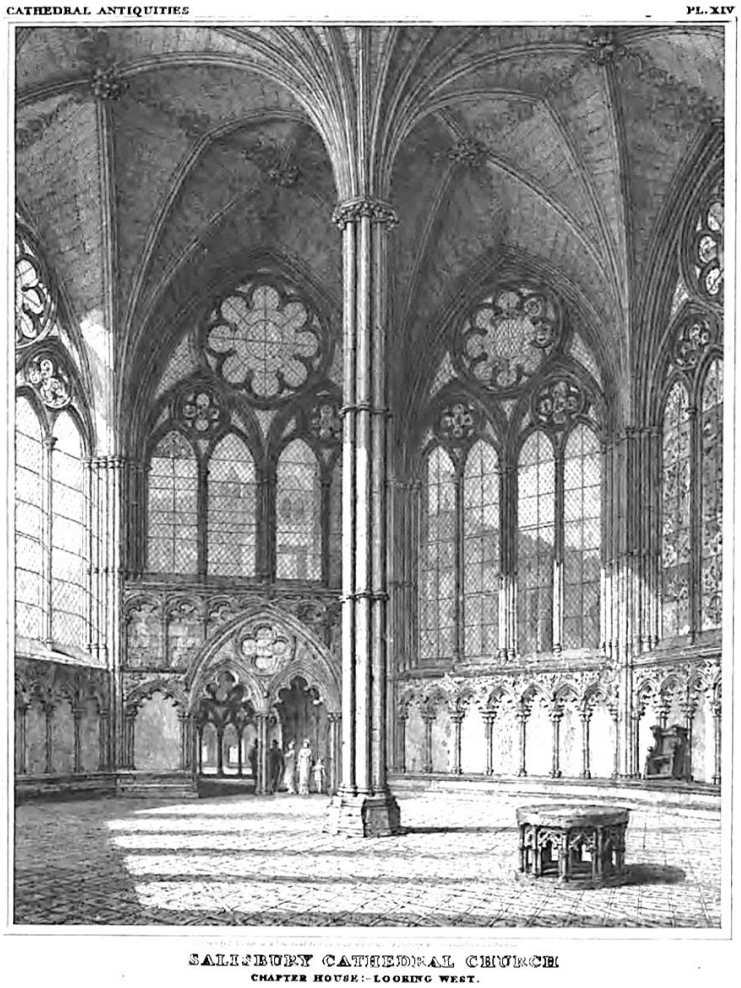


Figure 3: Salisbury Cathedral. Interior of the Chapter House. Britton 1814. Plate XIV. Page not numbered.

Considering the window as the most determinant classificatory means for medieval architecture, as he declared in a methodological statement in the same volume (Rickman 1825:37), Rickman proposes a further sub-division of the *Decorated English* style into *Geometrical* and *Flowing*. In particular, the term *Geometrical* (Rickman 1825:74), referred to the eastern choir at Lincoln, as well as Exeter Cathedral (see Fig. 4) anticipates a further topic of discussion (see section 3.2.). At this further stage of the debate, recognition will be asked for the *Geometrical* not as a mere stylistic sub-category, but as an independent style. The acknowledgement of the *Geometrical* as an independent stylistic period prefigures the next generation of nomenclatures:

There may be observed ***two descriptions of tracery****, and although, in different parts, they may have been worked at the same time, yet the first is generally the oldest. In this first division, the figures,*

such as circles, trefoils, quatrefoils &c. are all worked with the same moulding, and do not always regularly join each other, but touch only at points. This ***may be called geometrical tracery****; of this description are the windows of the nave of* ***York****, the eastern choir of* ***Lincoln****, and some of the tracery in the cloisters at* ***Westminster*** *abbey, as well as most of the windows at* ***Exeter****. The second division consist of what may* ***be truly called flowing tracery****. (Rickman 1825:74)*

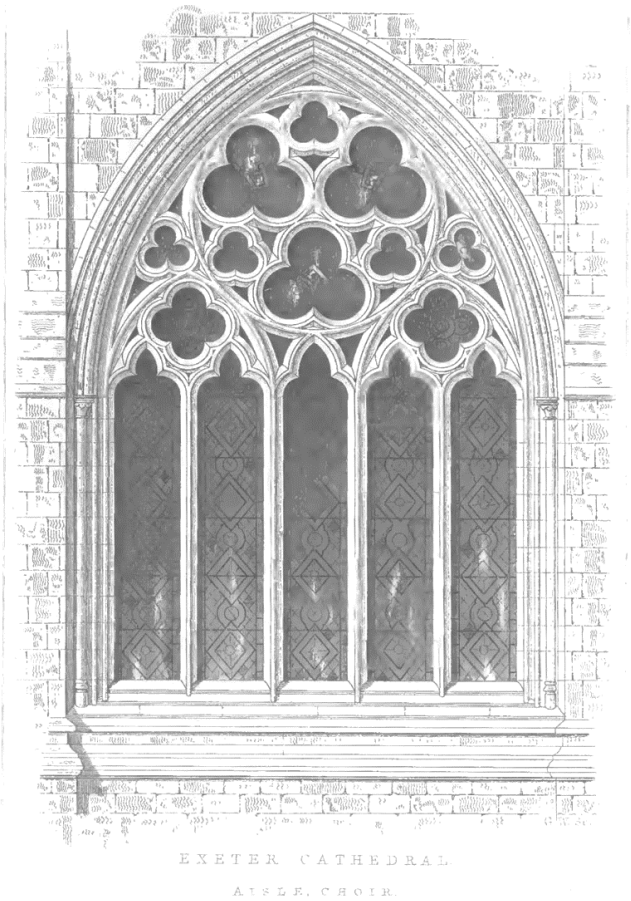


Figure 4: Exeter Cathedral. Aisle Choir window. Sharpe 1849b, Plate 36. Page not numbered.

In addition to that, a certain stylistic commixture is perceived by Rickman also in *Perpendicular* windows, as in the example of York (see Fig.5). The discussion of examples of stylistic copresence seems to refer to the previously mentioned *Composed* orders of Classical architecture:

Towards the ***end*** *of this style, and perhaps after the* ***commencement*** *of the next, we find* ***windows of most beautiful composition****, with parts like the Perpendicular windows, and sometimes a building has one end Decorated, the other Perpendicular; such is Melrose abbey, whose windows have been extremely fine, and indeed* ***the great east window of York****,* ***which is the finest Perpendicular window in England****, has still some traces of flowing lines in its head. This window has also its architrave full of shafts and mouldings, which kind of architrave for windows is seldom continued far into the Perpendicular style; and therefore, when a Perpendicular window has its architraves so filled with mouldings, it may be considered early in the style. (Rickman 1825:75)*

Figure 5: York Minster. Perspective on the Choir's Great East Window. Poole 1850a. Page not numbered.

The following passage presents a remarkable explanation for the choice of the term *Decorated*, together with a focus on the difference between *Decorated English* and *Florid English*. The discriminating features of the two styles are, according to Rickman, most evident in their decorations, listed among the compositional elements of the periods. Concurrently, in the author's opinion, the two styles are clearly independent from one another, since their divergent characters go far beyond their ornaments:

> *As **the word Decorated** is used to designate this style**,** and particularly as the next **has been called florid**, as if it were richer in ornament than this, it will be necessary to state that though ornament is often profusely used in this style, yet these ornaments are like Grecian enrichments, and may **be left out** without destroying the grand design of the building, as pannels, buttresses &c, than the curved ornaments used in this style. (Rickman 1825:81)*

Warning about the risks related to discriminating buildings merely by their ornaments, Rickman reaffirms the concept of so-called *'completely transitional'* (Rickman 1825:82) buildings. Attention should be paid, at this stage of the present analysis of Rickman's work, to the meaning given by the author to the term *transitional*. The denomination describes here the presence of elements belonging to more than one style in a single specimen (Rickman 1825). By contrast, Sharpe will identify as *'transitional'* the whole series of window forms belonging to a period, in the stage where they are

transforming into the next one (Sharpe 1851a:4, see section 5.3.). In view of this, it could be stated that Rickman's and Sharpe's use of the term *transition* differ substantially. If Rickman's *transitional* specimens are external to a definite style, inspired by the Classical *Composed* orders, Sharpe and the next historians' generation will claim that – potentially – every single specimen could be called *'transitional'*, if understood in the perspective of a constant style evolution (see Scott 1851b:590, in section 6.3.9.). The present observation, as well as the multiple points of view on the concept of transition constitute central subjects of discussion for the scientific community at the time:

> *It is seldom safe to **judge of date** solely by the character of the ornamental carvings, yet in many instances these will be very **clear distinctions**. It is extremely difficult to **describe**, **in words**, the different characters of Early English and Decorated foliage, yet anyone who attentively examines a few examples of each style, will seldom afterwards be mistaken, unless in buildings so **completely transitional** as to have almost every mark of both styles. (Rickman 1825:82)*

Related to the concept of transition, Rickman successively addresses the question of the *'purity'* of style. In his words, the term *pure* seems to be the contrary of *transitional*:

> *There are many small towers and spires which appear to be Decorated; but there are so many of them altered, and with appearances so much like the next style, that they require more than common examination before they are **pronounced absolutely Decorated**; and there does not appear (as far as the author has been able to examine) any rich ornamented tower of large size remaining, that is a **pure Decorated** building. The west towers of **York minster** come the nearest to **purity**, though the tracery of the belfry windows and the battlements are decidedly **Perpendicular**. […] As an example of **transition** from this style to the next, the **choir of York** may be cited; the piers and arches retain the same form as the **Decorated** work in the nave, but the windows, the screens, and above all, the east end, are clearly **Perpendicular**, and of very excellent character and execution. (Rickman 1825:83)*

Rickman finally acknowledges the gradual passage from one style to the other. This recognition has central relevance within the topic of the present thesis. Indeed, the evolution of styles from one another could be said to constitute one of the main effects of evolutionary theories from natural sciences on the study of architecture. This innovative and evolutive conception of history and architectural styles is here first introduced but will be better addressed by Sharpe and his contemporary authors (see section 4.3.):

> *[…] as one style **passed gradually** into another, there will be here and there buildings **partaking of two**, and there are many buildings of this description whose dates are not at all authenticated. (Rickman 1825:108)*

In the following statement Rickman reintroduces the means of classification for English medieval buildings that had been previously already adopted by Aubrey (1693): the window. Conscious of the

alterations every building has been subject to during its history, Rickman identifies the window as the element by which each pertaining building portions could be classified. Exactly as Classical architecture is classified according to the forms of its capital, English medieval architecture should be thus classified according to its windows. In this, the declared main purpose of Rickman's volume (1825) is evident, i.e. to bring the categorisation of medieval buildings to the level of Classical specimens:

> *It will be proper to add a few words on the **alterations** and **additions** which most ecclesiastical edifices have received: and some practical remarks as to judging of their age. The general alteration is that of **windows**, which is very frequent; very few churches are without some Perpendicular windows. We may therefore pretty safely conclude that **a building is as old as its windows**, or at least that part is so which contains the windows; but we can by no means say so with respect to the doors, which are often left much older than the rest of the building. (Rickman 1825:109)*

Before introducing a list of building specimens proper to each style, Rickman devotes a final remark to the main purpose of his system of classification. In the impossibility of classing every single building specimen, he provides, not simply the reader, but *'the world'* (Rickman 1825:109) with a precise nomenclature for the categorisation of English ecclesiastical edifices. As already stated, the author's aim to present models of stylistic *'purity'* (Ibid.) has thus been accomplished:

> *In a sketch like the present it is **impossible** to notice every variety; but at least the author now **presents the world** with a **rational arrangement** of the details of a mode of architecture on many accounts valuable, and certainly the most proper for ecclesiastical edifices. Still further to enable the reader to **distinguish the principles of Grecian and English architecture** he adds a few striking contrasts, which are formed by those principles in buildings of **real purity**, and which will at once convince any unprejudiced mind of the impossibility of anything like **a good mixture**. […] The object of this essay being to **lead the student** to examine and judge of buildings for himself, it has appeared advisable to refer him to some buildings in almost every part of the Kingdom; and in forming this list […] it has been rather sought to refer to **examples of good character** than to swell the number by those which were doubtful; […] the **alterations** which are continually taking place, may make some of the reference incorrect, It is possible, that on the borders, some churches may be placed in a wrong county, from the division not being well known. (Rickman 1825:109)*

In conclusion, a comparative chart of *Grecian* and *English* architecture is attached by the author as a content summary. While remarking the main topics of description, the comparison serves the purpose of promoting the proximity of *Classical* and *English* architecture, in an ennobling perspective:

Grecian	*English*
The general running lines are horizontal.	*The general running lines are vertical.*
Arches not necessary.	*Arches are a really fundamental principle, and no pure English building or ornament can be composed without them.*
An entablature absolutely necessary, consisting of two, and mostly of three distinct parts, having a close relation to, and its character and ornaments determined by the columns.	*No such thing as an entablature composed of parts, and what is called a cornice, bears no real relation to the shafts which may be in the same building.*
The columns can support nothing but an entablature, and no arch can spring directly from a column.	*The shafts can only support an arched moulding, and in no case a horizontal line.*
A flat column can be called a pilaster, which can be used as a column.	*Nothing analogous to a pilaster; every flat ornamented projecting surface, is either a series of pannels, or a buttress.*
The arch must spring from a horizontal line.	*No horizontal line necessary and never any but the small cap of shaft.*
Columns are supporters of the entablature.	*Shaft bears nothing, and is only ornamental, and the round pier still a pier.*
No projections like buttresses, and all projections stopped by horizontal lines.	*Buttresses essential parts and stop horizontal lines.*
Arrangement of pediment fixed.	*Pediment only an ornamented end wall and may be of almost any pitch.*
Openings limited by the proportions of the column.	*Openings almost unlimited.*
Regularity of composition on each side of a centre necessary.	*Regularity of composition seldom found, and variety of ornament universal.*
Cannot form good steeples, because they must resemble unconnected buildings piled on each other.	*From its vertical lines, may be carried to any practicable height, with almost increasing beauty.*

Table 1: Comparison of main features of Grecian and English architecture. Rickman. 1825:110-111, emphasis added.

2.4. On the *'Linnaeus of English medieval architecture'* [19] and William Whewell's appreciation for Rickman's standardisation effort

Within the frame of the present discussion on the relevance of Rickman's nomenclature for future systematisation attempts, a final mention is in order of the article *'On Nature and Nomenclature'*, by architectural historian Carla Yanni (Yanni 1997). There, Rickman is compared to Carl Linnaeus, not only as a central figure in the practice of classification, but also for the systematisation effort accomplished by the two scholars in their respective field of studies (Yanni 1997:211). Additionally, Yanni (1997) discusses William Whewell's endorsement for Rickman's classification attempt.

Whewell (1794 – 1866), an English philosopher and science historian, is also known for his interest in the rising discipline of terminology in England, which he applies to his architectural studies. He thus represents a prominent figure in the current discourse about nomenclature and classification

[19] Yanni 1997:211.

systems in general, and in the subject of English architectural history in particular, as acknowledged by Yanni (1997, see section 1.4.1.). As Yanni (1997) further reports, the connection between architecture and botany is originally due to Whewell, as he compared medieval buildings to plants and denounced the English architecture's need for a *'consistent nomenclature'* (Yanni 1997:211). The choice of botany is due to the prominent role of Carl Linnaeus in the practice of classification, already considered the father of scientific methodology (Yanni 1997). It seems here appropriate to underline the crucial relevance hold by Yanni's study (1997) in the structuring of the present research, as well as in framing the diffused interest in nomenclature and categorisation. The historical context in England, in which this research is set, could be said to be primarily characterised by this interest:

> ***Botany*** *was not a random choice –* ***Linnaeus****, the renowned Swedish taxonomist who was seen by Victorians as the father of natural history, was a botanist, and naming was considered a crucial and respected part of science after Linnaeus.* ***The Linnaeus of English medieval architecture*** *course,* ***Rickman****, whom* ***Whewell*** *singled out as the scientific thinker who would set the standard for architectural nomenclature. (Yanni1997:211)*

In his volume, first published in 1830, *Architectural Notes on German Churches,* examined here in its third edition (Whewell 1842), Whewell discusses the need of English architecture for a more stale and detailed terminology and puts forward his periodization proposal for German architecture (Yanni 1997). In doing so, he draws a comparison of the present architectural classification studies to Carl Linnaeus' research in botany and taxonomy. As highlighted by Yanni (1997), Whewell's appreciation for Rickman is therefore relevant not only within the frame of the discussion at the time of Whewell on architectural history's scientisation, but also in view of Whewell's interest in categorisation and naming:

> *We may learn from the* ***descriptive sciences****, as for instance* ***Botany****, how much may be taught by means of a* ***copious*** *and* ***scientific terminology****. (Whewell 1842:41)*

Not differently from Rickman (1825), Whewell, too, expresses his preference for concepts' linguistic definitions over their graphical representation (Whewell 1842). Indeed, both authors seem to believe in the power of linguistic description and choice of right terminology to convey concepts. According to them, language would also be able to reach a much wider audience than illustrations, to which only architects are accustomed. We should therefore not be mistaken in affirming how this underlines the authors' belief in the explanatory potential of language. Indeed, in Whewell's (1842) opinion, linguistic description is significant not only for terminological standardisation and discipline scientisation, but also to reach a wider audience, beyond the architectural community accustomed to drawings, as this is the case. At the same time, the following statement justifies the almost complete absence of illustrations in both Whewell's and Rickman's volumes (Rickman 1825, Whewell 1842). As we will later discover, Sharpe and the next generation's opinion on illustrations will change dramatically (see section 4.1.):

His [Rickman's] classification of the styles of English architecture, with his ***selection*** *of the* ***distinctive characters*** *of each style, and his* ***fixation*** *of the* ***language*** *of the science, were strokes of* ***genius*** *which quite changes the aspect of the subject, as soon as their influence was generally diffused. Instead of a wavering use of* ***vague terms****, and a loose reference to undefined distinctions, which had previously prevailed in works on Christian Architecture, Mr Rickman offered to the world a* ***phraseology*** *so exact that, as he said, '****the student should be able to draw the design from the description****', and a division of styles, followed out into its characters in every member of the architecture. He thus enabled his reader to acquire a knowledge of details as precise as that possessed by practical builders, while at the same time this study of particulars was made subservient to the most comprehensive views of antiquarian criticism; and by this means the literary and the practical architect were brought to a* ***mutual understanding****, which has been of immense service to both. (Whewell 1842: XIV, in Yanni 1997:211)*

As previously acknowledged (see section 2.3.), Rickman's (1825) volume was not aimed at an accurate architectonical description of buildings, but rather at the stabilisation of a classification for English medieval architecture. Beyond that, Rickman systematically pursues his prescriptive goal to convince *'the world'* (Rickman 1825:109) to adopt his nomenclature. Moreover, as Whewell affirms in the previous quote, Rickman provided the student with a valuable instrument for the linguistic description of architecture. Not less relevantly is the goal of a *'mutual understanding'* (Whewell 1842: XIV), as a further remark of the importance of communication. Indeed, at the time of Whewell, the perspective of an international comparison among buildings and communication among experts throughout European countries is introduced in the architectural tours, students embark on (Yanni 1997). Lastly, as Yanni argues (1997), Rickman's merit also consisted in responding to the need of an official nomenclature for the discipline, since architectural history was occupied for centuries in classifying Classical buildings.

Whewell's terminological analysis of Rickman's work goes even further, as Yanni reports (1997). While recommending Rickman's terms *Early English*, *Decorated* and *Perpendicular*, Whewell disagrees with the term *Norman*, which, in the author's opinion, is too narrow in meaning to comprise all buildings of the period (Yanni 1997). To that, he prefers the term *Romanesque* (Gunn 1819), attributed to William Gunn and which designated indiscriminately all buildings between the fourth and the twelfth century A.D. As Yanni points out (1997), Whewell motivates his choice quite logically:

The first of these styles [Norman] is found prevailing all over Europe, and is plainly a debased imitation of ***Roman*** *art, whence we may, in this wider view of it, term it* ***Romanesque****. (Whewell 1842:232, in Yanni 1997:212)*

As a nomenclature enthusiast, Whewell notes the inherent inconsistency of Rickman's terms choice. As Yanni recalls (1997), if the term *Early English* refers to an historical moment, *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* are descriptive adjectives regarding the styles' compositional characters. In Whewell's opinion, the resulting nomenclature thus suggests no logical progression from one to the other (Yanni

1997). At the same time, Whewell praises Rickman's decision to pick terms from general language use and compliments him on *'not wanting the progress of architectural history slowed down by competing naming systems'* (Yanni 1997:212). In conclusion, Whewell proposes his own nomenclature for German architecture, in view of the fact that Rickman's system unfortunately is not applicable in Germany. This, however, is at odds with what he had previously asserted about competing naming systems:

> *In architectural description I have ventured to employ* ***a few new phrases*** *[…] and I have fixed and* ***limited the meaning*** *of some [old] phrases […] I hope the courteous reader will not consider this to be a* ***criminal assumption*** *of* ***philological power****. (Whewell 1830:41, in Yanni 1997:212)*

Whewell (1830) himself proposed to divide German medieval architecture chronologically, into an *Early*, *Middle* and *Late* period [20], as Yanni (1997:212) underlines. However, he did not recommend an alternative classification of English architecture, expressing his appreciation for Rickman's nomenclature (Whewell 1830):

> *Mr Rickman's terms '****Early English****', '****Decorated****', '****Perpendicular****' architecture have been objected to. It is a sufficient reason for continuing to employ* ***these words****, that they have been so much more accurately* ***defined*** *and* ***discriminated*** *than any other* ***terms of classification****. But I conceive that some of the objections that have been raised against these names, have arisen from not attending precisely to the views with which they were imposed. They were apparently intended to* ***distinguish each style*** *from the preceding one: and for that purpose, they are significant enough. The* ***Decorated*** *differs principally from the* ***Early English*** *in exhibiting a greater degree of decoration; the* ***Perpendicular*** *varies from the later Decorated mainly in having certain perpendicular members, mullions, which in the Decorated are not perpendicular throughout. And the term* ***Rectilinear****, which has been suggested, would not apparently be an advantageous* ***substitute*** *for* ***Perpendicular****; for the mullions, the only members to which the description applies distinctively, are rectilinear only so far as they are perpendicular. The term* ***Early English*** *have accidentally a peculiar property, inasmuch as this style if found almost exclusively in England: at least it does not occur in Germany. (Whewell 1830:21, in Yanni 1997:212)* [21]

In agreement with Rickman, Whewell then highlights the importance of concepts' linguistic description:

> *Mr. Rickman has shown, that by the* ***careful use of terms*** *well selected and previously defined, language may convey almost as* ***exact*** *and* ***complete*** *an* ***idea*** *of a building as can be got from* ***reality or the pencil****: but in order to do this with the greatest advantage, our* ***architectural vocabulary*** *should be much extended. (Whewell 1842:41, in Yanni 1997:212)*

[20] Whewell 1830. The original quote was not found.
[21] Whewell 1830. Original preface: I – XXXIV.

In view of the relevance of the terminological development for the purposes of the present research, the conclusion drawn by Yanni (1997) holds even higher significance. In this, the wish of these historians for their discipline to become scientific should also be bear in mind:

> *The advancement of medieval architectural knowledge required* ***accurate words****;* ***good terminology*** *would allow the new discipline to become a* ***science****. (Yanni 1997:213)*

In line with this, the absence of illustrations in all works of the generation of architecture historians analysed here – Millers, Rickman and Whewell – can be more easily understood. As Yanni presumes (1997), these authors' urge for an official and codified nomenclature could be better envisioned within the frame of their interest in linguistic description:

> *The claim that* ***language*** *would almost replace* ***illustrations*** *may have been a deliberate overstatement, a* ***rhetorical strategy*** *to make his point about* ***accurate nomenclature****. (Sharpe 1834, in Yanni 1997:213)*

The present claim will be resumed at a later stage of the present research (see section 6.2.). There it will be compared to the opinions of future authors, as the best method to represent concepts will be discussed within the debate on the pages of *The Builder* (see section 6.3.). To conclude, bearing in mind the comparative perspective in which nomenclatures are studied in the present research, a table comparing Millers' and Rickman's classifications is attached here for completeness. Similar comparative tables will be proposed in chapter 5 and 7 (Table 3 and 4): these tables serve the purpose of facilitating comparison of the different classifications and nomenclatures examined in this thesis:

George Millers 1807	**Thomas Rickman 1817**
Saxon – to 1066 A.D.	Norman – to 1189 A.D.
Norman – 1066 – 1200 A.D.	Early English – 1189 – 1307 A.D.
Early English – 1200 – 1300 A.D.	Decorated English – 1307 – 1377 A.D.
Ornamented English – 1300 – 1460 A.D.	Perpendicular English – 1377 – 1630/1640 A.D.
Florid English – 1460 – 1537 A.D.	

Table 2: Comparison of Millers' and Rickman's nomenclatures for English medieval architecture.

2.5. Terminological aspects or, the importance of models and exact definitions

From the terminological point of view, the chapter discussed themes related to the practice of categorisation, and specifically to the standardisation of existing objects categories and their corresponding linguistic denominations[22]. As Cabré (1999:195) points out, normalisation was a primary concern when terminology as a discipline and as a practice made its first steps, aiming concurrently at

[22] See Rickman 1825:35: '[…] all that has been aimed at, is to give a general view of those remains which must be considered as standards'.

assuring unambiguous communication. Indeed, the terminological operation this chapter dealt with follows the declared purpose of providing a standard nomenclature of the terms used in discourse, in order to ultimately enable the communication among experts[23].

Concurrently, Rickman's first attempt at classification seemingly foresees a standardisation process as Wüster (1979) wished for in the *General Theory of Terminology* (GTT): that is to say, an operation aimed at unifying concepts and concepts' systems, reducing homonymy, avoiding synonymy and standardising terms of specialised language to make them *'efficient tools of communication'* (Wüster 1974:15, in Cabré 2003:165). If –Cabré states (1999:7) – the origin of terminology lies in concept systematisation through exact linguistic definitions and creation of concept models, the operation accomplished by the presented authors seems to prefigure future terminological practices[24] .

In light of this, the main concern emerging from the chapter and underlying Rickman's effort is that of defining precise categories of objects. All authors discussed here wish to stabilise nomenclature by providing standard definitions, to which every real specimen should be compared. This purpose justifies the absence of illustrations, or their limited application[25]. Indeed, the topic of concepts' graphical representation will be a central one in the debate. The importance of visual representation is discussed for instance by Faber and López Rodríguez (2012), who argue how linguistic and graphical representation are linked to each other and should be combined in order to better represent the concept and its relation to other related concepts. Not less relevantly, linguistic and graphical representation of concepts also convey their multidimensional nature, or, their possibility to be described and classified in multiple manners and according to different criteria (Faber et al. 2007).

In this sense, what Rickman addresses as *'real purity'* of style (Rickman 1825:109) could be associated with the concept of *'semantic clarity'*, discussed by Cabré (1999:111). Indeed, in the case presented here, linguistic description, exact definitions and the reference to real building specimens also through their graphical illustrations jointly cooccur to the highest possible clarification of the concept. The primary purposes of this are general understanding and unambiguous communication (Cabré 2003:179). The underlying idea seems to be that without precise concept models, no description of real examples could ever be possible. Additionally, the role of linguistic definition compared to illustration is underlined for instance by Whewell, in his appreciation of Rickman's work[26]. As already stated, the present approach significantly differs from the one adopted by successive authors, which will employ illustrations in a highly descriptive manner (see Sharpe 1849a, in section 4.2.). As a further interesting

[23] See Whewell 1842: XIV: '[…] by this means the literary and the practical architect were brought to a mutual understanding, which has been of immense service to both'.
[24] See Rickman 1825:109: 'In a sketch like the present it is impossible to notice every variety; but at least the author now presents the world with a rational arrangement of the details of a mode of architecture on many accounts valuable, and certainly the most proper for ecclesiastical edifices'.
[25] See Rickman 1825:35: '[…] all that has been aimed at, is […] to excite in the pupil that persevering attention to the best models, which is the only way of arriving to a complete knowledge […]'.
[26] See Whewell 1842:41: 'Mr. Rickman has shown, that by the careful use of terms well selected and previously defined, language may convey almost as exact and complete an idea of a building as can be got from reality or the pencil'.

topic, concern about the audience perception of the presented nomenclatures is also expressed. For instance, Millers adduces a general agreement of his nomenclature by his audience, to justify his proposal (Millers 1808:14, in section 2.2). Like Millers, the other authors mentioned in the chapter also ponder on the best method for concept representation, with a view to facilitating audience understanding. This is a subject on which Brewster and Wilks (2011) will later reflect, in their theory of terminology. Aiming at clarity and prescription, it should hence not surprise how Rickman's nomenclature (1825) managed to become official and to identify with general use[27].

The precise construction of descriptive definitions could be appointed as another central subject of the texts analysed[28]. In line with this, a reference to the topic of definition within the theory of terminology is due here. In the introduction to Sager's (2000) *Essays on Definition*, entitled *Defining Definition*, Alain Rey provides an interesting perspective on multiple kinds of definition (Rey 2000). Quoting Paul Valéry (1941–42), the author firstly depicts the practice of definition as a comparison to a model to which every specimen necessarily shares a certain degree of resemblance: *'ce qui ne ressemble à rien n'existe pas'* [29]. Accordingly, the same wish for resemblance can be perceived as Rickman presents *'the world'* (Rickman 1825:109) with models of styles in his volume. Indeed, conscious of the evident impossibility of describing every single building specimen in England, Rickman supplies his reader with a model description of each style, to which then the encountered buildings should be compared, in order to ascertain the resemblance they share with the provided model.

Another way of conceiving definition according to Rey (2000) is as conceptual delimitation, i.e. connecting each single concept to other related ones, or bordering with it. Similarly, we reviewed in the chapter attempts at telling apart classes of objects in the most precise manner possible according to chronological and stylistic criteria: this is what Rickman for instance does as he describes the styles of his classification proposal[30]. Among other authors, the definition as conceptual delimitation is addressed by Faber (2014:17). According to the author, definition does not only fix and describe a concept, but it also automatically connects each concept to other ones (Antja 2000:113–115, in Faber 2014:17).

Focusing then on the topic of specialised language, Rey represents definitions as tools *'which attach a particular meaning to the terms of a special language'* (Rey 2000:10). Here, the separation between definition of words and definition of things is recalled. The same concept by Rey (2000) is then further developed into the acknowledgement of an inherent connection between the defining term and the defined object in terminology. As Rey asserts (2000), in an effective definition, word and thing – in this case, linguistic definition and real building specimen – must be understood as two aspects of the

[27] See Millers 1808:16: 'I should not think myself and my work of importance enough but there is such authority for this change, so much property and consequent probability of general usage and permanency, that I cannot hesitate'.
[28] See Whewell 1842:41: '[…] by the careful use of terms well selected and previously defined, language may convey almost as exact and complete an idea of a building as can be got from reality or the pencil'.
[29] Valéry, Paul (1941-42) *Mauvaises pensées et autres*. Paris, Editeur Gallimard: 163. In: Sager, Juan (ed.) (2000). Proposed translation by the author: 'What looks like nothing does not exist'.
[30] See Whewell 1830:41: 'In architectural description I have ventured to employ a few new phrases […] and I have fixed and limited the meaning of some [old] phrases […]'.

same concept, which they actually are. Rey (2000:11) also recalls an interesting quote on the issue by Quintilianus, singling out the internal bond between concept definition and object of description:

> *Namtumest certumde nomine, sed quaeritur, quae res ei subjicienda sit tum res est manifesta: et quod nomine constat.*[31]
> *(When the name is known with certainty, look to what thing it applies; if, however, the thing is manifest, look for the word that suits it.)*

Text type and purpose also hold central significance in the chapter. Rickman, who is perfectly aware of the prescriptive nature of his volume, organises it so as to make it suitable as a student's main reference (see section 2.3.)[32]. Among others, Faber and Léon-Araúz (2016) recall how Hoffman (1985, in Faber and Léon-Araúz 2016:15) underlines the dependence of a text on its context of creation. By extension, the text could be interpreted as both an instrument and a result of a specific context (Ibid.). Indeed, every text examined here could be seen as the product of a necessity originated by a knowledge progress in the corresponding field of specialisation, e.g. If Rickman's (1825) volume had the standardisation of a first and simple nomenclature as main purpose, the volumes produced by the successive generation of historians will primarily aim at a detailed description of real building specimens[33] (see section 4.1.).

Different specialised texts are thus to be interpreted not only as serving different purposes, but also as products of different contexts (Hoffman 1985, in in Faber and Léon-Araúz 2016:15). As Roelcke (1999) argues, each one of the present texts truly constitute the expression of a subject field specialisation stage (Roelcke 1999). Moreover, regarding the origin of terms, as Sager maintains (1990), neology is not the only way to create new designations: indeed, existing linguistic resources can be reused, or modified, as seen in this chapter. These authors' wish to be remembered and for their nomenclature to enter the history of their discipline were openly declared and guided the authors in defending their proposals. Nonetheless, an undeniable interdependence is recognisable among their systems: in most cases, newly proposed terms could be reconducted to previous authors' work[34].

Another topic emerged in the chapter is what Freixa terms denominative variation (Freixa 2006). According to the author, the concept identifies a phenomenon where more terms exist for the same concept, mirroring also its multiple possibilities of categorisation and interpretation. At the same time, a semantic difference among these variants is acknowledged, as linguistic denominations of multiple

[31] Quintilianus. De institutione oratoria, 1. VII, Ch.3. Translation into English from the original volume by Alain Rey 2000:11.
[32] See Rickman 1825:109: 'The object of this essay being to lead the student to examine and judge of buildings for himself, it has appeared advisable to refer him to some buildings in almost every part of the Kingdom; and in forming this list […] it has been rather sought to refer to examples of good character'.
[33] See Yanni 1997:213: 'The advancement of medieval architectural knowledge required accurate words; good terminology would allow the new discipline to become a science'.
[34] See Millers 1808:4: 'I lay no arrogant claim in the merit of originality, where a very great part of what I have to tell, has been told before'.

aspects of the concept (Freixa 2006)[35]. Consequently, the multiple causes behind the use of term variants should also be investigated, under the premise that each term represents a different interpretation of the same concept (Freixa 2006). Indeed, considering as concepts the different periods of English architecture, the multiple terms and nomenclatures proposed by these historians can be considered an example of denominative variation. Accordingly, also Faber and León-Araúz (2016) warn that term variation is mostly due to communicative and cognitive factors. Therefore, it should not be interpreted as a merely linguistic preference by the authors:

> *[…] term variation should not be regarded as a linguistic phenomenon* ***isolated*** *from conceptual and cultural representations since it is one of the manifestations of the* ***dynamicity of categorization*** *and expression of specialized knowledge. (Fernández-Silva et al. 2014, in Faber & Léon-Araúz 2016:12–13)*

Lastly, the topics of hypernymy and the possibility of multiple classification levels also surfaced in the chapter, foreseeing a reflection by Faber and León-Araúz (2016). In particular, the choice between the hypernyms *English* and *Gothic* (see section 2.2.) could be seen as an example of denominative variation, opposing divergent interpretations of the same concepts (Freixa 2006). In this case thus, denominative variation and hypernymy appear to be connected to one another[36]. In line with this, the present study of nomenclatures in a diachronic perspective (Temmerman & Van Campenhoudt 2014) can thus be seen as an example of both their innovative character, and their dependence on previous authors' work. Indeed, as new terms and classification are presented, they seem to primarily address a communicative necessity. This appears to follow Temmerman's theory, according to which, linguistic changes in most of the cases respond *'to human needs'* (Temmerman & Van Campenhoudt 2014:3). As it happens, in proposing new terms and classes of building an evident necessity of further categorisation appears to be expressed by the authors, with the main purpose of an accurate description of real building specimens.
To conclude, a final reflection is to be devoted to the work of William Whewell, and to his relevance within the rising interest in the practice of naming in England during the 19th century (see section 1.4.1.).

A central figure in both the architectonical debate, and the process of classification and naming of objects of study at his time in England, Whewell seems to bring together the two main aspects of the present thesis: the interest in the emerging practices of classification and naming as part of the scientific method in all fields of knowledge, and the study of English architectural history and its progress towards becoming a science. Whewell's role in the history of terminology is underlined in Rey's *Essays on terminology* (Rey 1995). Here, the author reports that the modern meaning of the word *term* (Rey

[35] See Millers 1808:16: 'The term Gothic was not contemporary with the style; and was intended to be contemptuous and opprobrious. The Italians, […] indiscriminately called every thing Gothic which was Grecian or Roman. It is only within a few years that it has been exclusively appropriated to the pointed style […] In the account of Durham Cathedral, […] the more appropriate and honourable name English was, I believe, first substituted for it, […]'.
[36] See Rickman 1825:4: 'It may, however, be proper here to offer a few remarks on the use of the term English, as applied to that mode of building usually called the Gothic, and by some the pointed architecture'.

1995:15) seemingly originated in England and specifically, in Whewell's writings, who gave the word its scientific connotation. Rey refers here to Whewell's 1837 *History of the Inductive Sciences*, where the author, in a section entitled *Linnaean Reform of Botanical Terminology* (Whewell 1837:307), describes – in an interesting statement – the meaning of the words he employs in his volume:

> *It must be recollected that I designate as* ***Terminology****, the system of* ***terms*** *employed in the description of objects of natural history; while by* ***Nomenclature****, I mean the collection of the* ***names*** *of species. (Whewell 1837: 307, in Rey 1995:15)*

As the author then notes (Rey 1995:15), the use in the same sentence of words like *'system'*, *'object'* and *'science'*, gave *'term'* the scientific connotation it has today. In addition to that, Whewell is the author of numerous other terms still in use today (see section 1.4.1.).

2.6. Conclusions

In order to understand the future progression of English medieval buildings categorisation, three things must be remembered of Rickman's attempt at discrimination from 1817 (Rickman 1825).

First, its prescriptive method, based on providing models and standard definitions of each style. The author's approach to classification is exemplified significantly in the few standard illustrations he attaches to his work (see Fig. 2). In line with this, great importance is attributed by all authors, Millers (1808), Rickman (1825) and Whewell (1830), to linguistic descriptions and the choice of right terms. Consequently, graphical representation is merely aimed at providing models to which all specimens from reality could be compared (Rickman 1825). The historians that will come later on will develop this prescriptive method into a descriptive one, where all real variants of the stylistic models will be studied, each considered singularly and uniquely. Secondly, the descriptive approach to architectural classification is to be considered as a logical evolution of Rickman's prescriptive one. In the impossibility of classifying all real specimens using Rickman's labels, future authors will search for alternative methods of description. In order to be able to describe reality in all its details, a more descriptive and detailed terminology will be needed, and therefore introduced.

Lastly, the introduction of the concept of stylistic *'transition'* (Rickman 1825:234) by Rickman is to be remembered. At this early stage of research on building classification, transitional specimens are for Rickman those which cannot be identified with the existing models, as the buildings of the Classical *Composed orders* (Rickman 1825:32). In the works of future authors, the concept of transition will be understood in a radically new way, and transitional building specimens will be classified in a completely different manner (see Sharpe 1851a, in section 5.3.). In view of this, it is here important to remark how each nomenclature analysed here was based – or at least partially inspired – by previous authors and contextual research. In a similar manner, terms are never proper neologisms. Instead, they were already recognised by the experts' community as part of the specialised vocabulary of their discipline. This justifies the *'diachronic perspective'* (Temmerman 2008:116) adopted in the analysis

presented in this chapter: in order to highlight its significance within the framework of building classification studies, Rickman's system was not analysed as self-standing, but rather in connection to a previous periodization proposal and its main source of inspiration, and more in particular the work of George Millers (1808, see section 2.2.).

Looking on to a theme that will become central in the following chapter (see section 3.1.), the role of the window as a discriminating means of classification was discussed. Based on the window, many successive authors will try to realise *'pictorial taxonomies'* of English ecclesiastical buildings (Skipton-Long 2018:165, see section 4.2.). There, a constant process of comparison and contrast will take place, not only among specimens of different periods, but also among variants within the same period. And yet, all nomenclature proposals will have to be considered against the backdrop of Rickman's official one, referred to as tradition, or general use. As it happens, Rickman's nomenclature will have to be updated and specified by the next generation of historians. In doing so, they will be influenced not only by their own subject field's progress, but also by evolutionary theories appeared in natural sciences, bringing new impulses to the interpretation of architectural history.

In conclusion, if the revolutionary thought of Sharpe and his contemporary authors constitute the main subject of this thesis, they could not be discussed without first presenting their most immediate predecessors. Namely, the origin of Sharpe's work had to be underlined in Rickman's previous own, not merely in relation to the proposed nomenclature and classification, but also in the most important choice of the window as classificatory means. Indeed, Rickman's (1825) classification of English medieval architecture can be considered as the first official attempt on the subject, as confirmed by the reference role Rickman's volume will play for successive authors (see Freeman 1849 and Sharpe 1851a, in Ch.5).

3. *On the Claims of the Geometrical to be treated as a distinct Style* [37] or, on the appearance of new conceptual categories

3.1. Introduction

This chapter concentrates on the recognition of the *Geometrical* period as an independent stylistic phase of English medieval architecture. Inspired by Rickman's (1825) reintroduction of the window as a key feature in the classification of English ecclesiastical architecture, and after his nomenclature became established as the official one, a class of well-known window specimens was identified as belonging to a *Geometrical* period. This class was absent from Rickman's official periodization and presented visual features which could not be subsumed under any existing category. Thus, it needed to be acknowledged by the experts' community and appropriately termed. Based on the observation of real specimens, the classification of these windows as separate entities holds central relevance towards a more descriptive and comprehensive approach to future periodizations of English architecture (see section 4.1.).

The *Geometrical* period, which is located chronologically between Rickman's (1825:39) *Early English* and *Decorated English* periods, was not assigned a proper term by Rickman himself, who referred to it as *'transition to the Decorated'* (Rickman 1825:234). The recognition of more specific classes of windows corresponds to that *'advanced state of knowledge'* (Sharpe 1851a: VIII) included by Sharpe among his reasons for updating Rickman's system (1825). Indeed, the chapter will demonstrate how a phase of stylistic evolution and a distinctive character of composition are perceived by numerous authors in that exact time span then termed as the *Geometrical* period of English architecture.

Within the limits of the collected material, the chapter deals with two testimonies representative of the discussion about the existence of a period to be called *Geometrical*. The first one, *On the Geometrical Period of Gothic Architecture* is presented by Sharpe in 1848 (Sharpe 1848b)[38]; the second is by George Ayliffe Poole, published in 1850 *On the progressive development of Geometrical Tracery; and on the Claims of the Geometrical to be treated as a distinct Style* (Poole 1850b). Both argue in favour of the *Geometrical* period as a distinctive phase of stylistic production, and are corroborated by other authors, whose views will also be quoted. These two testimonies by Sharpe and Poole introduce the concept that a period not officially named yet can be distinguished on the basis of features derived from real specimens. Therefore, the first innovative element introduced by these works is their reference to reality, as opposed to a classification suggested only on a theoretical level. The *Geometrical* period is thus described through famous window specimens located throughout England.

However, the most innovative element appears to be the idea of conceiving the architectural style as a living being (Poole 1850b). Under the influence of evolutionary theories coming from natural sciences, the rigid classes of Rickman's official nomenclature (1825) are superseded by a more descriptive approach, characterised by nearer reference to reality (Yanni 2014). Indeed, the conception

[37] Poole 1850b:65.

[38] The speech is first published in full length in *The Architectural Journal* in 1852 (see Sharpe 1852). A reduced version of the speech already appeared in *The Builder* on August 12th, 1848 (see Sharpe 1848b).

of architectural history as constant evolution, existing only in its continually muting phases, gains popularity. In line with this, each style represents a different phase of architectural evolution, from birth to death. In that, as Yanni recalls (2014). the testimonies of Poole (1850b) and John Addington Symonds (1890) are particularly illuminating. The vicinity of architecture and natural sciences initiated by the two historians will be a constant in the works of future authors (see section 1.3.2., cf. section 4.2. and 4.3.).

Regarding the terminology theory, the chapter discusses the definition of new concepts and their integration in the official nomenclature. Specifically, it deals with the identification of a new conceptual category, the *Geometrical* period, needed to describe specimens not assignable to any existing class. The chapter also discusses how categorisation can be key in the development of a scientific discipline as a method employed by humans to understand reality (Kageura 2002). Indeed, terminological variation is connected to the knowledge advancement in a given specialised field, signalling the appearance of new concepts (Temmerman 1997). Moreover, categorisation is described as the possibility to recognise similarities among real specimens through a mental process of comparison and contrast (Taylor 1995).

Most relevantly, the chapter depicts terminology, similarly to language, as an entity in constant evolution, never static, and which continuously reflects the cultural status of its users (Faber 2012). Moreover, the approach applied to the definition of the *Geometrical* period is defined as onomasiological. This develops indeed from a concept most experts agree upon, to its appropriate term (Cabré 2003). In this respect, the chapter provides an example of the multidimensionality of concepts, defined as their possibility to be classed in different manners (Temmerman 2000). Lastly, the issue of synonymy is discussed with reference to the rise of a new concept. According to Wüster's *General Theory of Terminology*, terminology is bound to avoid synonymy and look for the best term in a determined context (Wüster 1974, in Sager 1990). In line with this, real synonymy seems not to exist, since each single term describes a particular and different aspect of a concept (Kageura 2002). To conclude, a final remark is devoted to the definition of language as a living being (Corbeil 1980 in Cabré 1999), characterised, like architecture, by a constant evolution and a continuous relation to reality.

3.2. Sharpe 1848 – *On the Geometrical period of Gothic architecture* [39]

Sharpe's declared objective in updating Rickman's (1825) traditional terminology was to allow *'a more detailed and accurate division'* of English medieval architecture (Sharpe 1851a: IX). To do so, he subdivides Rickman's styles into more specific periods. The results of this operation are for instance the *Transitional* period (1145-1190 A.D.) as well as the *Geometrical* one, discussed here (1245-1315 A.D.). While the *Transitional* period and the concept of *transition* itself will be soon discarded by Sharpe in agreement with the scientific community (see Scott 1851b:590, in section 6.3.9.), the *Geometrical* period will gain recognition among experts, and is of paramount importance within the general debate about English medieval architecture periodization. The *Geometrical*, as all of Sharpe's periods, owes its name to the forms of its window tracery (Sharpe 1851a, see section 5.3.). Indeed, the concept of a period of

[39] Sharpe 1852:170.

window tracery characterised by geometrical forms and distinct from both Rickman's (1825) *Early English* and *Decorated English* periods, appears in the work of numerous authors. Specifically, the scientific community discusses the recognition of the *Geometrical* as independent stylistic phase in the years between 1848 and 1851, through several papers on the topic (see Sharpe 1852; Poole 1850b).

In light of this, we could actually venture to claim that the recognition of the *Geometrical* as a separate period constitutes the origin of all successive classification proposals by Sharpe's contemporary authors (see Sharpe 1851a, Freeman 1849). As affirmed by Skipton-Long (2018), the new generation of historians needed a more detailed and comprehensive classification, able to describe all specimens observed in reality. A series of window specimens was recognised as different from all others and could not be classified under any existing category. Indeed, the impossibility to describe reality in a precise and detailed manner constitutes the main criticism to Rickman's terminology (see Sharpe 1851h, in section 6.3.8.). Thus, contemporarily to the publication of Sharpe's innovative periodization (Sharpe 1851a), other authors express themselves in favour of the *Geometrical* period to be separated from the previous and the following one: Rickman's *Early English* and *Decorated English* (Rickman 1825:39).

Among the collected testimonies, the first one to assert the existence of an additional period of English architecture is Sharpe, in his speech *'On the Geometrical Period of Gothic Architecture'*. The speech, held in July 1848 at the Lincoln Meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), was published in its full version in 1852 (Sharpe 1852). However, a reduced version of it appeared in *The Builder*, a popular weekly journal for architecture, on August 12th, 1848 under the tile *On the Geometrical Period of English Church Architecture – A.D. 1245 – A.D. 1315* (Sharpe 1848b). In the speech, the *Geometrical* period is introduced with the declared purpose of altering both the traditional nomenclature and the general habit. Both are understandably identified with Rickman's system (1825):

> *We have been **so long accustomed** to speak of our national architecture in the terms and according to the classification bequeathed to us by Mr Rickman, and **those terms and that classification** are so well understood, and have been so universally adopted, that any proposal to supersede the one or to modify the other, requires somewhat more than a mere apology. To disturb **a nomenclature of long standing**, to set aside **terms in familiar use**, and to set up other in their place which are **strange**, and therefore at first **unintelligible**, involves an interruption of **that facility** with which we are accustomed **to communicate** with one another on any given subject, that is only to be justified by reasons of a cogent and satisfactory nature. (Sharpe 1852:170)*

The modification of the general use holds central significance within the authors' discussion. Indeed, users must be first convinced, and then educated, to abandon not only a traditional nomenclature but also a concept system of much longer standing than Rickman's (1825) publication, in order to adopt new ones (see section 2.3.). At the same time, the relevance of Rickman's work as didactic reference is reminded, underlining its suitableness at his time and correspondent state of knowledge:

*The **sufficiency** of **Mr Rickman's nomenclature** and divisions, and their **suitableness at the time** and for the **purpose** for which they were made, are best evidenced by the fact, that, although the attempt to supersede them have been both numerous and preserving, they have remained for nearly half a century the **principal guide to the architectural student**; and Mr Rickman's 'Attempt to Discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England' is still the text-book from which the greater part of the popular works of the present day have been compiled. (Sharpe 1852:170)*

In the next passage, Sharpe addresses the difference between his attempt to update Rickman's system (1825) and other previous attempts. While the latter could be described as mere *'change of name'* (Sharpe 1852:170) for Rickman's same concepts, his proposal is based on a different conceptualisation and chronological division (Sharpe 1851a). In this speech, Sharpe already hints at a new periodization – or conceptual system – for English architecture, for which he then also proposes innovative terms. The importance of the conceptual organisation is best evidenced by the fact that Rickman's nomenclature persisted in time and was adopted as traditional by other authors, even if the terms used to identify the periods were changed by some of them (see Parker 1836 and Garbett 1851, in section 6.3.10.):

*Although they propose **to change the nomenclature of his different styles**, or **to subdivide them**, his main division of English architecture into four great periods or styles, is adopted by all, and still remains undisturbed. No point, therefore, has been hitherto proposed to be gained by these alterations beyond a **change of name**; and this may be taken as a sufficient reason why none of these attempts have been successful. **Men are not willing to unlearn a term with which they are familiar, however inappropriate, in order to learn another, which after all, means the same thing**. (Sharpe 1852:170)*

The previous statement holds fundamental relevance for both the present work, and the further development of the discussion among historians. Therefore, it will be resumed at a later stage for comparative purposes (see Sharpe 1851a, in section 5.3.). Hereafter, the main motivations adduced by Sharpe in introducing his new classification are described: if one aims at making knowledge progress in the discipline, a more precise and descriptive categorisation of English architecture is needed:

*Although, however, **Mr Rickman's simple division of Church Architecture into four periods** or styles, may perhaps be the one best suited to his time, and to the **elementary state of knowledge** of the subject possessed by the best informed archaeologists of his day, it may with property be questioned how far such a division is suited to the exigencies of writers of the present day, or to the present **advanced state of the knowledge** on the subject. […] Whether Mr Rickman's system fulfils all the conditions essential to one calculated for popular and universal use and whether we should therefore seek to perpetuate it, or whether **the time has arrived for the adoption of a more detailed and accurate division** of the long and noble series of buildings which contains the history of our national architecture from the Heptarchy to the Reformation. (Sharpe 1852:171)*

This quote makes us aware of Sharpe's ultimate purpose: he wants his classification to become official and to reach the recognition that Rickman's classification currently enjoys among scholars and students. Subsequently, Sharpe presents the term *Geometrical* for the newly identified period. In that, he notably anticipates his upcoming publication and nomenclature proposal (Sharpe 1851a). Additionally, he justifies the necessity of the *Geometrical* period within English architecture periodization by referring to well-known specimens in England belonging to that class. Indeed, in order to clarify the concept, he brings the example of its most popular specimen: the window of the Presbytery's East End in Lincoln's cathedral (see Fig. 6). In the illustrative plates accompanying his *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849b), he will define this window as *'the largest and most beautiful example of Early Geometrical tracery in the kingdom'* (Sharpe 1849b: Plate 11, see Fig.6).

A mention is due at this point to a tendency on the part of several authors to refer to the same window specimens in describing the *Geometrical* period. Specifically, the Presbytery' East End Window at Lincoln and the Chapter House's window at Westminster Abbey are repeatedly appointed as examples (see Fig. 6 and 8). It is thanks to these windows, that it becomes evident how both the concept and features of the *Geometrical* period are shared by the authors. This common understanding is of paramount relevance for the purposes of the present research. Indeed, despite not being able to agree on a name for the period, these authors manifestly share the same concept of it. For the sake of precision, it seems appropriate to underline that the speech presented here was given by Sharpe at a meeting in Lincoln[40]. The reference to its cathedral would thus presumably find great appreciation there:

> *An enquiry of this kind forms the subject of a little work which is now in the press, in which I have ventured* ***to recommend a nomenclature and a classification*** *differing somewhat from that of Mr Rickman, and* ***a division of church architecture into seven periods instead of four****. The object of the present paper is more particularly to describe and to illustrate one of those periods, which, for reasons that will be obvious to many of my hearers, and which can be made, I think intelligible to all,* ***I propose to call the GEOMETRICAL PERIOD of English church architecture****; and I have selected this for our consideration, because I conceive that no country possesses in greater abundance the materials necessary to illustrate and define it than this country, and that no building in the kingdom contains a nobler example of it than* ***Lincoln Cathedral****. (Sharpe 1852:171)*

In the following passage, Sharpe's attitude to Rickman's nomenclature (1825) appears controversial. While addressing his classification as *'simple'* (Sharpe 1852:172), presumably referring to the limited state of knowledge on the subject at the time, he praises his predecessor for the choice of the window as the most significant means of classification for English medieval buildings (Rickman 1825). The choice of the window – and specifically of window tracery – as classificatory element is one of the most relevant contributions by Rickman to the periodization of English medieval architecture (see Rickman 1825:109:

[40] July 1848, Lincoln Meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

'We may therefore pretty safely conclude that a building is as old as its windows, or at least that part is so which contains the windows', in section 2.3):

> *In **Mr Rickman's simple classification** his Norman style comprises the whole of those buildings in which the circular arch was used, whilst those in which the pointed arch was employed were divided into three styles or classes, namely, the Early English, the Decorated and the Perpendicular, The **titles** of the two last mentioned, namely, the Decorated and the Perpendicular**,** Mr Rickman professed to derive from **the character of their windows**, conceiving, no doubt justly, that no part of a building exhibits **peculiarities** of style in so **prominent and characteristic a manner as its windows**. (Sharpe 1852:172)*

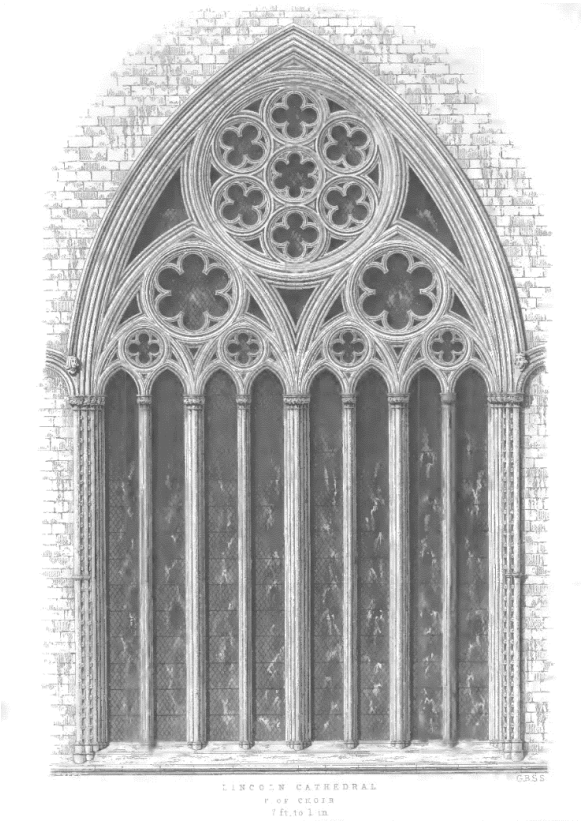


Figure 6: Lincoln Cathedral. Presbytery's East End window. 1256 -1288 A.D. Sharpe 1849b. Plate 11. Page not numbered.

While recognising its fundamental contribution in the practice of classification, Sharpe criticises two main aspects of Rickman's (1825) system in the following quote: it is not precise enough as a didactic support for the architectural student, and it seems not to allow building comparison at an international level (Sharpe 1852). It is worth remarking here that the international applicability of nomenclatures will become a central topic later on in the discussion, for instance in the debate in *The Builder* in 1851 (see Scott 1851a, in section 6.3.6.). There, the possibility to compare buildings from different countries, especially between England and the Continent, will be examined in detail:

> ***Had Mr Rickman gone a step further*** *and classed the whole of the buildings of pointed architecture, according to the form of their windows, under* ***four heads*** *instead of* ***three****, he would have obtained* ***a classification equally simple*** *but* ***more intellegible*** *and* ***consistent****: he would have obviated much that is confused and indefinite, and therefore perplexing, to the architectural student, in his description of buildings which belong to the class to which we are now referring; and would have* ***enabled us to compare the buildings*** *of* ***our own country*** *with those of the* ***corresponding character****,* ***and nearly contemporaneous date*** *on the* ***Continent****, in a manner that would have established an analogy between them, which, according to the present classification, has no apparent existence. (Sharpe 1852:172)*

As it is mostly the case, the necessity of a term originates when the existing ones do not suffice in the description of reality. The same happens to the historians at the stage of the debate presented here. Since no existing term describes the stylistic phase separating the *Early English* and *Decorated English* periods, Rickman himself refers to the *Geometrical* as a *'transition to the Decorated style'* (Rickman 1825:234) while describing the Lincoln Cathedral (see Fig.6), as also noticed by Sharpe (1852:172). Indeed, Rickman (1825) describes the concept, or paraphrases it, for lack of an appropriate term.

In the next quote Sharpe's (1852:172) use of the term *'transition'* is noteworthy, referring to the evolution of a style into the next one. Additionally, he warns on the value of each style, to be examined separately from its previous and successive ones, as an independent stylistic phase. In the author's view, discriminating the two internal classes of the *Decorated* style, the *Geometrical* and the *Flowing*, is exactly as important as differentiating *Decorated* windows from *Perpendicular* ones. Naturally, this reflection is mainly aimed at stressing the importance of acknowledging the *Geometrical* period:

> *He [Rickman] appears to have had some* ***difficulties*** *occasionally* ***in his descriptions****, and to have been at a loss in fact* ***to know where to draw a line*** *between Early English and Decorated work. Thus in speaking of the Presbytery of the* ***Lincoln Cathedral*** *he describes it as a sort of '****transition to the Decorated style****', and of many other similar buildings which may be ranked as amongst the finest in the kingdom, as belonging to the same class. Again, no one who has paid much attention to the buildings of the* ***Decorated*** *style, or who has consulted the descriptions of such buildings given in Mr Rickman's Appendix, can fail to have observed that the windows of this style are divisible into* ***two classes****: one in which the leading lines of the tracery are of simple* ***geometrical****, and the other in which they are of* ***flowing*** *character. […] whether we consider their general design or their detail, that the points of difference which distinguish Perpendicular windows from Decorated windows are* ***not greater*** *than those which separate these two classes of windows from one another****. (Sharpe 1852:172)***

In order to remark the *Geometrical* period's relevance within English medieval architecture, Sharpe tries to define the limits of the concept more in detail (Sharpe 1852:173). In his opinion, the period could be identified through its widow tracery based on the geometrical form of the circle. On the contrary, the

following period, termed by Rickman *Decorated English* (Rickman 1825:39), sees the introduction of another curve in substitution of the circle: the *ogee*. Therefore, the stylistic difference between the two periods appears evident, as well as the consequent need of classing them separately:

> *There exist a large and important class of buildings, characterised by the* ***geometrical forms*** *of their window-tracery, which has hitherto been treated as belonging partly to the Early English and partly to the Decorated styles but which is, in reality,* ***distinct from both****, and pre-eminenlty entitled, from the number and beauty of its examples,* ***to separate classification****. To this class of buildings than* ***I propose to assign a Period****, embracing the latter portion of Mr Rickman's Early English Period, and the earlier part of his Decorated Period, commencing at the point where* ***tracery****,* ***properly so called****, began to be used, and terminating at the point where the leading lines of the tracery began to be no longer* ***circular but flowing****. (Sharpe 1852:173)*

Eventually, Sharpe presents his division of *Pointed architecture*, a synonym for *English* and *Gothic*. This classification is the same that the author will elaborate on in a more extensive manner in his upcoming volumes (see Sharpe 1849a; 1851a). There, it is interesting to notice, the level of detail in the description of the periods increases. If in the next passage the classes are not termed yet, their names and characters will become clearer in future volumes, mirroring a more precise and consistent definition of the concepts behind them (see Sharpe 1849a; 1851a, in section 4.2. and 5.3.):

> *Supposing this period to be adopted as that of a distinct style, we then have the buildings of Pointed architecture divided into* ***four classes****, which are characterised by their windows, and therefore easily distinguished. We have* ***1st,*** *those in which the* ***lancet window only*** *appears;* ***2ndly****, those which contain windows having* ***simple geometrical tracery****;* ***3rdly****, those which have windows of* ***flowing tracery****;* ***4thly****, those in which* ***the leading lines of the window tracery are vertical and horizontal****. (Sharpe 1852:173)*

The following passage plays a most relevant role for the purposes of the present work. In it, Sharpe explains the substitution of Rickman's term *Perpendicular* (Rickman 1825:39) with his own term *Rectilinear* (Sharpe 1852:173). Even if the concept and meaning are not varied, retaining an old term within a new nomenclature seems methodologically wrong to the author. In doing so, Sharpe basically contradicts his previous statement, according to which a mere change of name would not be worth recognition within the experts' community (see Sharpe 1852:170: *'No point, therefore, has been hitherto proposed to be gained by these alterations beyond a change of name'*).

Indeed, the two terms, *Perpendicular* and *Rectilinear*, are both descriptive adjectives and refer to the straight elements typical of this period's window tracery. Even if Sharpe presents his term, *Rectilinear*, as a better and more appropriate one, the substitution appears only justifiable by a prescriptive purpose, and will cause huge criticism in the years to come (see Sharpe 1851c, in section 6.3.1.). A presumable *'confusion'* (Sharpe 1852:173) in maintaining only part of a traditional

nomenclature is adduced by Sharpe to justify the proposed alteration. In addition to that, he wishes for his proposed terms to be *'not strange'* and possibly *'self-explanatory':*

> *To designate any of these periods except the last [Perpendicular], by any of the* ***terms*** *hitherto in use, appears to be objectionable, as tending probably to cause* ***confusion and misapprehension****; and to retain the last if the others be abandoned, and* ***a better and more appropriate term can be found****, appears to be still less desirable. At the same time, it is much to be preferred that the terms we use should* ***not*** *be altogether* ***strange****, and, if possible,* ***self-explanatory****. These two conditions are such as to render it difficult to find terms such as to be in all respects perfectly satisfactory, and perhaps* ***no system of nomenclature*** *could be framed so perfect as to be* ***entirely free from objection****. (Sharpe 1852:173)*

Since the experts do not perceive a difference between the traditional term *Perpendicular* and the new one *Rectilinear* proposed by Sharpe, the author's proposal is prevented from success (see section 6.3.2.). The previous considerations explain that. Sharpe is suggesting the substitution of a term from the general use with a near synonym (see Sharpe 1852:170), an operation which, it could be argued, represents a deliberate act of synonymy creation. Since two very similar terms name the same concept, problems of understanding may arise in communication. In light of Sharpe's sensitivity towards classification and communication problems, one may wonder as to the reasons behind Sharpe's preference for *Rectilinear* as *'a better term'* (Sharpe 1852:173) over the previous term *Perpendicular* adopted by Rickman. Successively, the author illustrates the meaning of the terms *Geometrical and Curvilinear*. While the first contains mainly circular forms, in the latter tracery is based on the ogee:

> *In thus adopting the term* ***Geometrical****, I should wish to be understood as using it* ***in the conventional sense*** *in which it has been applied by Mr Rickman and his followers, and understood by all archaeologists of the present day; and the term* ***Curvilinear****, as* ***conveying*** *more satisfactorily perhaps than any other word* ***the undulating form*** *both of the tracery and mouldings of this period, in which the* ***curve of contra-flexure****, or the* ***ogee****, as it commonly called, is the characteristic feature. (Sharpe 1852:174)*

With reference to that, the comparison picture presented in Figure No.7 is part of Sharpe's (1849a) *Treatise on the Rise and Progress of Decorated Window Tracery*. The picture presents *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear* traceries compared. Indeed, the comparison of *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear* window specimens in Sharpe's volume denotes the importance of the two periods and their distinction at the time. Similarly, fundamental concepts and style differences are always exposed by the authors of Sharpe's generation by means of illustrations, underlining the relevance of visually representing concepts (see Parker 1840; Freeman 1851a, in section 4.3.). If Rickman aimed at substituting drawings with words, shifting the focus on the linguistic definition of concepts (see Whewell 1842, in section 2.4.), Sharpe's method is based on the illustration of real specimens. Needless to say, the comparison is

aimed at highlighting the distinctive character of the *Geometrical* period (see Fig.7). As stated by Sharpe in the previous quote, the term *Geometrical* was already employed by Rickman with the same meaning about thirty years before (Rickman 1825). The term was inspired by general use or, as Sharpe puts it, it was used *'in the conventional sense'* (Sharpe 1852:174). Hereafter, Rickman's original words from 1825 are reported, where the author addresses the concept of geometrical tracery:

> *In this first division, the figures, such as circles, trefoils, quatrefoils & c. are all worked with the same moulding and do not always regularly join each other but touch only at points. This may be called* ***geometrical tracery****; of this description are the windows of the nave of York,* ***the eastern choir of Lincoln****, and some of the tracery in the cloisters at* ***Westminster abbey****, as well as most of the windows at Exeter. (Rickman 1825:74)*

It seems evident from the passage that Rickman already employed in 1825 the term *Geometrical* with the same meaning as Sharpe in 1852. Interestingly, the adjective was referred to the same specimens as those mentioned by Sharpe: those in Lincoln Cathedral and Westminster abbey (see Fig 6 and 8).

Apart from declaring the independence of the *Geometrical* period, the speech by Sharpe seems aimed at preparing the audience for the presentation of his nomenclature. In it, the author declares that he is to try and improve different aspects of Rickman's traditional classification. Among others, a central criticism to Rickman's official system relates to its dating structure. Indeed, Rickman's periods are not dated according to buildings' dates of construction, but to the sequence of English reigning monarchs. Sharpe proposes an alternative method of dating (cf. Garbett 1851:620, in section 6.3.10.):

> *It is clear that an objection may be taken to this mode of making* ***the duration of a style coincident with the life of a monarch****, the death of the one having not the remotest connection with the close of the other. These dates, therefore, are not to be looked upon as* ***precisely and historically fixed*** *by any particular architectural fact, but as indicating simply the time about which the style became changed. A preferable course appears to be to fix the commencement of a style by one or more examples of sufficient importance and well authenticated date, or, where it is impossible, to fix it by* ***the collective testimony afforded by buildings*** *of authentic date somewhat earlier and somewhat later than that of the supposed change. (Sharpe 1852:174)*

With the presumable goal of differentiating his system from Rickman's own (1825), Sharpe subsequently remarks the main aim of his paper (Sharpe 1852), i.e. to affirm the existence of the *Geometrical* period as based on the observation of real specimens. This statement also highlights the progress made in the classification. A periodization based on the observation and description of real building specimens constitutes the actual innovation of the new descriptive nomenclatures of Sharpe's generation (see Sharpe 1849a, in section 4.2.):

> *My principal task then is* ***to name*** *to you some of* ***the principal buildings*** *of the* ***Geometrical*** *period; to point out to you those peculiarities which* ***entitle them to separate classification****, and to explain*

*those points of **resemblance** and **contrast** which, on the one hand, assimilate them, and on the other distinguish them from those of the preceding and following styles. […] The tracery of their windows, to which, as consisting generally on the simplest geometrical figures, **the term Geometrical** has been given. It is distinguished in this respect, therefore, from the **Lancet period**, in which tracery was never employed, as well as from **Curvilinear**; in which the forms of the tracery are almost invariably of a **flowing** or **undulating** character. (Sharpe 1852:175)*

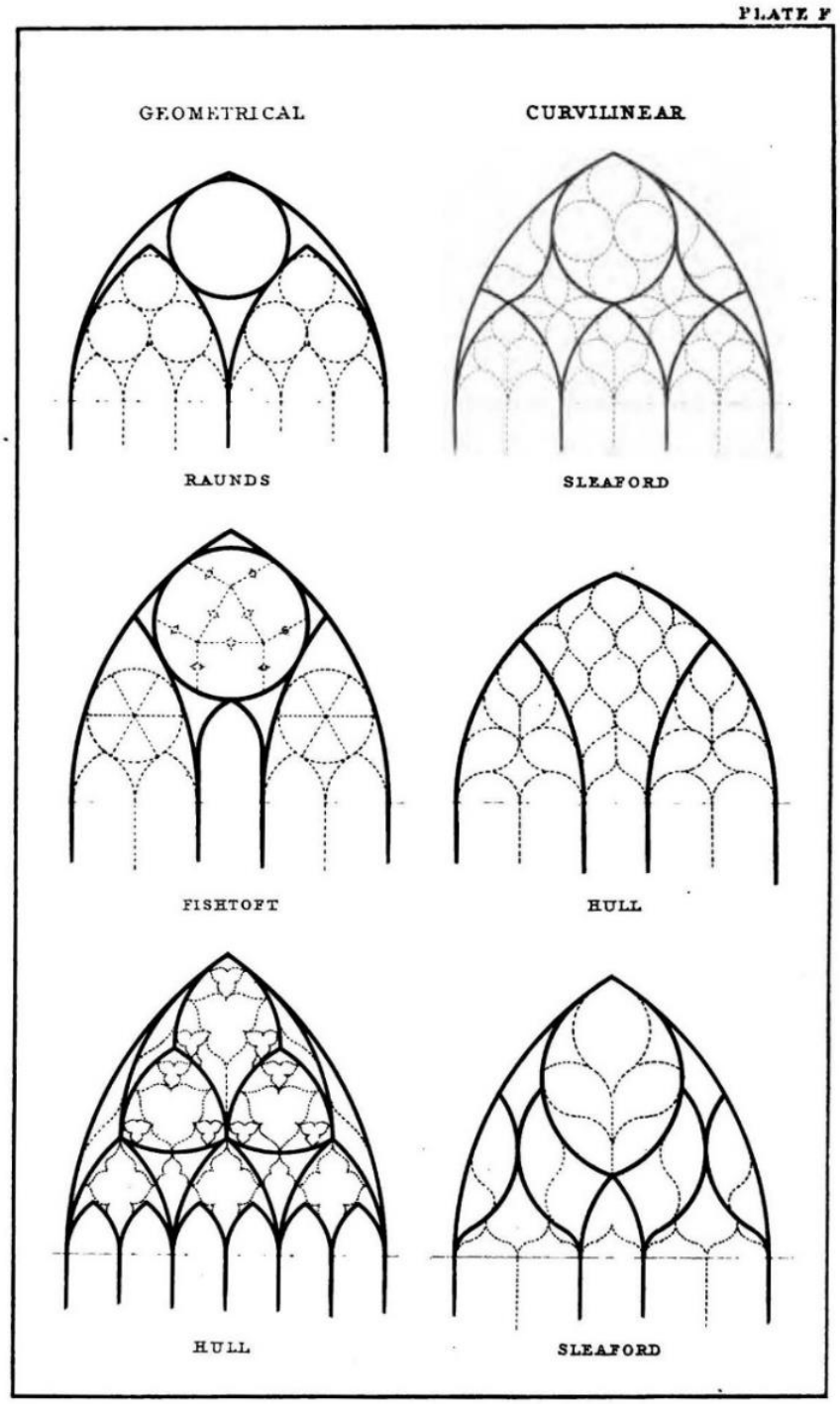


Figure 7: Geometrical and Curvilinear windows compared. While the Geometrical is based on the circle, the Curvilinear adopts the ogee as basic form. Sharpe 1849a:93. Plate F. See Skipton-Long 2018:171.

The final part of Sharpe's (1852) paper is devoted to the definition of the *Geometrical* period's chronological extension. Start and end dates are discussed quoting a popular example as the window of the Chapter House at Westminster Abbey, classified chronologically as the first specimen of the period (see Fig.8). In this, the evident and undeniable dependence of Sharpe's classification from the reference to specimens in reality can be remarked (see Sharpe 1849a, in section 4.2.):

> *[…]* ***Westminster Abbey*** *furnishes us with sufficient authority for assuming that the* ***appearance of geometrical tracery*** *was one of the earliest indications of the* ***impending change of style****, and therefore one of the fittest marks by which to characterise the new period; or that the commencement of this period may be stated to be at least as early as the year 1245. (Sharpe 1852:176)*

To conclude, a final word of warning is presented by the author to his audience. This regards the ascertained presence of window specimens which will contradict the proposed categorisation, i.e. exceptions. In spite of that, Sharpe renovates his proposal for the new period and term:

> *I am disposed to take the year 1315, the mean, in fact, between 1310 and 1320, as that of the commencement of the* ***Curvilinear*** *period, premising, however, as before, that it is quite possible that a few windows of geometrical outline may be found in buildings* ***constructed after this date****. The interval, then, between these limits – that is to say, the period of seventy years intervening between the years 1245 and 1315 –* ***I propose to call the Geometrical period of English Church Architecture****. (Sharpe 1852:177)*

As acknowledged by Skipton-Long (2018:165), it will become evident at a later stage how Sharpe's generation of authors uses dates in quite an arbitrary manner. As can be argued from the previous quote, dates are employed as mere chronological limits to each period. Indeed, they are not attributed fundamental relevance, since the author is well aware of the presence of specimens of each period constructed beyond its assigned chronological limits, or dates, as remarked in the previous passage.

Notably, this acknowledgement is due to the study and description of a great number of real specimens. Indeed, what primarily matters to these authors is the exact description of each specimen, over the definition of precise chronological phases. As it happens, it is worth stressing here that the new classifications are genuinely based on visual features and the description of real specimens. Conversely, Rickman's nomenclature, which had the merit of initiating the method founded on the discrimination of window specimens, contented itself with a more general division of styles (Rickman 1825). There, possible evolutions and further categories within the same style were ignored for the sake of simplicity. Indeed, the observation of reality and the effort towards a more detailed categorisation represent the knowledge advancement which allows us to discriminate between an old and a new generation of classifications and methods for their implementation.

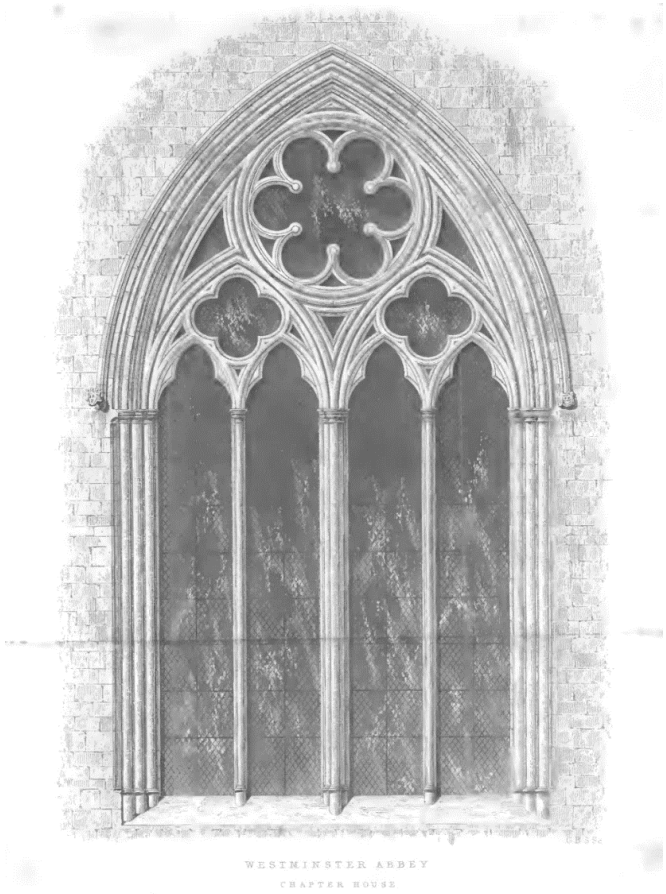


Figure 8: Westminster Abbey. Chapter House window. 1256 A. D. Sharpe 1849b. Plate 7. Page not numbered.

3.3. Poole 1850 – *On the Progressive Development of Geometrical Tracery; and on the Claims of the Geometrical to be treated as a distinct Style* [41]

Most relevant within the discussion about the definition of an independent *Geometrical* period is the paper by George Ayliffe Poole M.A. Vicar of Welford. Read on October 10th, 1850 at the Public Autumn Meeting of the Architectural Society of the Archdeaconry of Northampton and entitled *On the Progressive Development of Geometrical Tracery; and on the Claims of the Geometrical to be treated as a distinct Style* (Poole 1850b:65).

Sharpe's volume on the *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a), which categorised English architecture according to the successive forms of its window tracery, has just been published and is quoted by Poole as a reference. However, Poole's (1850b) paper adds a further element to it, namely, the description of architecture as a living being. Specifically, architectural styles are compared to species of the animal kingdom. This could be appointed as a presumable consequence of the influence exercised by Charles Darwin's evolution theory on other sciences' contemporary development (see Yanni 2014; Skipton-Long 2018 in section 1.3.2.). Architectural history results from this paper as a process of constant evolution, where each period exists – exactly as a living being – from a moment of birth to one of extinction. The concept of evolution thus inherently belongs to this representation of architecture. It

[41] Poole 1850b:65.

can be recognised in the connection of one stylistic phase to its preceding and successive one and rigid classification categories from the past do not suit this dynamic, evolving conception of style anymore. Accordingly, Poole (1850b) shifts the focus of the analysis to the legitimacy of using terms such as *transitional* to define a single period, as connected to the concept of stylistic transition. In line with this, also the nature of the limits of each period – chronological, constructive and visual – is analysed in the perspective of a seamless and continuous stylistic evolution in time with no exact boundaries.

The language employed in building description changes accordingly. As stated in section 1.3.2., the emergence of a new linguistic form of architectural description is perceivable in the work of Sharpe's contemporary authors. This topic was mainly addressed by Yanni (1997; 2014) in her research on Victorian architecture (see section 1.3.2.). In the author's opinion, the use of a language *'borrowed from* science' (Yanni 1997:208) was part of the strategy applied by architectural historians towards the *'scientization'* of their discipline (Yanni 1997:207), which could be appointed as their ultimate purpose. A most significant example of this new language inspired by natural sciences is found in a letter written by Sharpe to Whewell in December 1833, (Yanni 1997:208, in section 2.4.), where he reports on the architectural tour of Germany, he embarked on in 1833:

> *The little church at Lahnstein at the mouth of the Lahn is full of interest, which chiefly arises from its dilapidated state: the walls and vaults are quite* ***laid bare****, and the whole construction and materials entirely exposed, thus affording, as it were, an* ***excellent anatomical preparation*** *for a church. (Sharpe 1833, in Yanni 1997:208)*

Influenced by natural sciences, in his speech examined here, Poole (1850b:65) presents his way of understanding medieval architecture periodization through a comparison of styles to animal species. The two main classes of architecture, entablature and arch architecture, are compared in their importance to vertebrate and moluscous in the animal kingdom. These two architectural classes could be respectively identified with Classical and Medieval architecture. To that follows a secondary division, namely the one regarding English architecture, in which its periods are compared to animal genera and species. These secondary division can be considered as a specification of the primary one, or a secondary level of classification. As confirmed by Poole (1850b:65), indeed, exactly as for animal species, further and more specific varieties, or species, can be identified also in the architecture within the two main classes of Classical and Medieval architecture. Hence, within English medieval architecture, further styles are recognised, compared to species of the animal kingdom.

Moreover, it could be asserted that the reference to animal species made by Poole (1850b:65) in his paper is primarily aimed at enhancing comprehension of the newly introduced classes of medieval buildings. Presumably, the audience is well acquainted with the animal kingdom, which could be assumed as part of general knowledge, and could thus benefit from such a comparison. This categorisation through similarities and dissimilarities reflects the development of knowledge in scientific fields taking place in Victorian Britain, as Lightman and Zon explain (2014). As it happens,

in the authors' opinion, evolution was not only a scientific theory, but *'a symbol of humanity's progress'* (Lightman & Zon 2014:7). The application of the evolutionary theory to architectural history is thus probably perceived by the historians' community as a progress in knowledge of their own discipline:

> *Having again and again felt, […] the* ***inconvenience of the arrangement of Rickman****, and of every architectural classification, where the period which intervenes between the* ***Early English*** *and the fully-developed* ***Decorated*** *is concerned, I shall now endeavour […] to prove that there is such a generic difference between the style of that period and the Early English and Decorated, on either hand, that it ought to have a* ***distinct place*** *in an architectural system, and a* ***distinct name*** *in an architectural nomenclature. […] the* ***divisions of Gothic architecture*** *are but* ***sub-sections, or species****, not kingdoms, or genera. They are not analogous with* ***the divisions of animals into vertebrate and moluscous****, for this is parallel with the* ***primary division of architecture into that of the arch and of the entablature****. These grand divisions, then, being based on organic differences, it does not seem incongruous that the minor features of a building, — even, if necessary, features far inferior in use and in powers of expression, to the windows should afford the* ***differentials of genera and species****. […]* ***It is easy to separate, in general terms, between a plant and an animal; it is easy to define the difference between the architecture of the arch and of the entablature;*** *but there is a debateable province in both cases -* ***in architecture the whole class of Romanesque buildings, in Ontology the countless species of Zoophytes****. Again, it may be as easy to distinguish, in general, between* ***Decorated and Perpendicular as between a beast and a bird;*** *but the buildings are* ***countless*** *which have as many of the* ***characters of each style*** *as the* ***Ornithorhynchus*** *has of* ***the mole and of the duck****. (Poole 1850b:65)*

Not less relevantly, at the close of the previous quote, Poole also acknowledges the presence of specimens with mixed features, both in the architecture as in the animal kingdom. This is indeed a further interesting topic of classification. Introduced in this paper by Poole, it is symptomatic for the present generation of historians' approach to categorisation: As much as classes exist, there are also specimens which, due to the presence of mixed features, could belong to more than one period. In line with this, the approach of these authors can be considered descriptive. The description of building specimens does not, indeed, always end with the univocal categorisation of a specimen to one single style, or period. In fact, more often, it leads to the acknowledgment that each real specimen represents the result of successive building phases and therefore elements, added in time and coming from successive styles.

What is more, Poole's (1850b:65) comparison between animals and architectural styles denotes an innovative attitude towards the periodization of the history of architecture. In refence to that, Poole specifically addresses the necessity of discrimination of the *Geometrical* period. Indeed, after the observation and study of real specimens, the *Geometrical* is recognised as an independent phase of style, equally to all other already comprehended in the official nomenclature. Indeed, its visual features are as specific and individual as the ones of its precedent and successive style. The *Geometrical* thus deserves

a separate classification. In this, Rickman's classification of the *Geometrical* as transitional style (Rickman 1825:234) is criticised by Poole. In fact, as Poole admits, each style can be considered a phase of transition, from a previous to a following form (Poole 1850b:67). As it happens, in this innovative conception of stylistic transition resides a most relevant difference between this and Rickman's precedent generation of historians: every style can be considered *'transitional'* (Poole 1850b:67), since the style is now conceived as a living being, constantly changing and evolving in time:

> *[…] the* ***change from Early English to Geometrical****, and the* ***change from Geometrical to flowing Decorated*** *— both demand to be treated as the* ***differentials of a style****; the first, that is the mere introduction of tracery, as being, so far as windows are concerned,* ***even more important*** *than the difference between Norman and Early English; the latter, the change of the laws which govern the formation of tracery, as being* ***at least as important*** *as any difference which separates Perpendicular from Decorated. In other words, the Geometrical is more* ***unlike Early English, than Early English is unlike Norman****; and so, ex abundanti,* ***Geometrical and Early English should be separated****: and, again, Geometrical is as unlike flowing Decorated, as flowing Decorated is unlike Perpendicular, and, therefore,* ***if the two latter should be distinguished, so also should the two former****. And yet the* ***Geometrical*** *is almost always treated as* ***transitional****; (which indeed* ***every style but the first and last must be****, in some sense ; but I mean that this is so treated as transitional, as if it had* ***no claim to a name and station of its own*** *it gets no better title than late Early English, or early Decorated, as the case may be;* ***the term Geometrical being only adjected to the generic term Decorated****, as marking,* ***not a genus, but a variety****. […] A style which deserves, but does not obtain, a* ***substantive position****, is sure to be defrauded of more substantial proofs of the estimation in which it ought to be held. (Poole 1850b:67)*

Subsequently, Poole underlines the difference between *Geometrical* and *Decorated* windows, as Sharpe previously did in his paper (see Sharpe 1852:175, in section 3.2. and Fig.7). Indeed, the contrast to its successive period, is similarly employed by both Sharpe and Poole in order to further define the *Geometrical* period in an even more precise manner:

> *The first impression conveyed by a* ***Geometrical*** *window and a flowing* ***Decorated*** *window, side by side, is, that while the former is obviously drawn wholly* ***with the compasses****, the latter seems at least to be drawn in some degree* ***libera manu****. […] I shall propose not, that is, the* ***apparent absence of a law****, but the real existence of a law of a very different kind. […] In designing a Geometrical window, at least during the first portion of the style, the architect adhered to true circles, or to parts of true circles,* ***never flowing off into another curve, struck from another centre****. The* ***ogee*** *was unknown, and that for so long a time, that awkward forms were sometimes tolerated, which might have been remedied by its use. (Poole 1850b:69)*

As previously announced, the main element characterising the *Decorated English* (Rickman 1825) or *Curvilinear* (Sharpe 1849a) period is the *ogee*. This curve is an example of the same concept identified with two different terms in their two respective specialised contexts. Indeed, as Sharpe interestingly points out, if architects know the curve under the term *ogee,* mathematicians call it *the curve of contra-flexure* (Sharpe 1848b:386). Similarly, William Whewell, an English philosopher and science historian, terms the period which comprehends both Rickman's (1825) *Early English* and *Decorated English* as the *Complete Gothic* (Whewell 1842:128) and defines as *geometrical* the window tracery employed during this period. Whewell is another protagonist of the present debate about English architecture periodization and the scholar who coined some of the most significant terms (see section 1.4.1.). This vision of the *Geometrical* period as Gothic's stage of completeness seems to be quite diffused within the specialists' community. Indeed, as Yanni reports (2014:240), John Addington Symonds, an English literary critic and poet, will resume the same concept at a later stage and compare the Geometrical, as *Complete Gothic* period, to the mature years of a living being (Symonds 1890).

In the following passage, Poole illustrates his choice of the term *Geometrical* for the discussed period. His explanation is particularly interesting. According to the author, the principle of construction of this window tracery is based on a geometrical series (see Fig.9), which justifies the style's denomination. Notably, the example chosen to explain this concept is again Lincoln (see Fig.6):

> *[…] A four-light window is a two-light window* ***multiplied into itself****. (I. and III.) An eightlight window (as at* ***Lincoln****) is again the four-light window multiplied into itself, so that,* ***true even in this to their name, they follow a Geometrical series, and may be expressed by Geometrical notation as a, a ^{2}, a ^{3}****. With no less precision the six-light window is two three-light windows set together, with the constantly recurring* ***circle*** *between their heads; and the five or seven-light window is but the four or six-light, with a central light placed between the two complete sides. (Poole 1850b:70)*

It seems necessary to underline at this point that all window traceries were based on the serial repetition of an elementary feature and a basic design. Evidently, for constructive and practical reasons, this was most certainly not an exclusive feature of the *Geometrical* (see Fig.9). More likely, the comparison Poole draws between tracery and a geometrical series seems merely to serve the author's purpose to convince his audience of the existence of a period to be reasonably named *Geometrical* (Poole 1850b). To that follows an explanation of the difference between *Geometrical* and *Decorated* period. If the *Geometrical* is based on the circle, the ogee forms a so-called *flowing* tracery in the *Decorated* period (see Fig. 7). Indeed, the period is also known as *'Flowing'* or *'Flowing Decorated'* (Freeman 1847:36):

> *And, in fact, a* ***revolution*** *is not only at hand, but it is clearly indicated, notwithstanding Mr Sharpe's remark that no symptom is betrayed of the* ***approaching change****. We have already drawn circles from centres sometimes within and sometimes without the resulting figure: presently we*

shall not only do this, but also let those ***circles glide into one another, so as to form complex curves****, and we shall have the* ***flowing tracery*** *or the* ***fully-developed Decorated****. (Poole 1850b:72)*

In addition to that, Poole (1850b) presents his division of the *Geometrical* period into two varieties as a great innovation. Specifically, he proposes to term them *Concentric* and *Excentric* respectively. Notably, Poole was one of the few authors to suggest this subdivision, together with Freeman in 1847 (see Freeman 1847), as described later on in this chapter. However, this subdivision was probably not perceived as particularly relevant and did not find recognition in other authors' works:

For the ***generic term****, or that including the whole of that tracery which is formed of circles, or parts of circles, secants and tangents of one another, but never flowing into one another, we cannot hesitate in taking that* ***commonly in use, i. e., Geometric****.* ***To supply names for its two sub-divisions is not so easy.*** *[…] I ventured to suggest the terms* ***Concentric*** *and* ***Excentric****, to express the* ***opposite characters of the two divisions****. The first, you will observe, is of patterns formed of circles, or parts of circles, all the centres of which are within the resulting figure ; and, as the figures are all uniform, even the subordinate parts must be repeated with the same necessary relation to the general centre. […] All form one system bound by a sort of* ***centripetal force*** *to one centre. The term* ***Concentric*** *is, therefore, at least intelligible, as applied to this variety of geometrical tracery. The other variety is formed by a combination of curves, some of which are struck from centres without the resulting figures; […] these other centres fall within other patterns in the same window, giving, by a* ***centrifugal influence****, to the curves to which they belong a place in another system with another centre. And the term* ***Excentric*** *seems sufficiently appropriate to this development of tracery […] We have, therefore* ***Geometric for the whole style,*** *and* ***Concentric and Excentric for its two varieties****. (Poole 1850b:73)*

Despite the fact that this distinction was not recognised by other authors, Poole's (1850b) subdivision of the *Geometrical* period in two further varieties evidently underlines the existence of a *Geometrical* period. To Poole, the concept seems so clear that he goes as far as to detect internal varieties of it. The use of the term *Geometric* (Poole 1850b:73), instead of Sharpe's *Geometrical* (1852:177), presumably denotes Poole's wish for his work to be terminologically independent, or to claim originality for his nomenclature. A final mention deserves in Poole's paper also the fundamental role played by observation and description of window specimens. Having read Poole's (1850b) paper we would, indeed, venture to affirm that without nearer study, observation and description in detail of real window specimens, no further division of styles would have presumably been possible for these authors, Indeed, the *Geometric* period is acknowledged by Poole though the observation of real specimens, for which he recognises distinctive characters, different from the ones of both *Curvilinear* and *Perpendicular* window specimens. In a similar manner, the description of the visual differences between a circle and an ogee is only possible through their careful observation and examination. Eventually, Poole concludes his paper by mentioning other authors supporting the notion of the *Geometrical* as a separate style. The first to be

recalled is obviously Sharpe with his newly published *Treatise on the Rise and Progress of Decorated Window Tracery in England* (Sharpe 1849a):

> *Mr. **Sharpe**, […] in his work on **Decorated Window Tracery**, (to which 1 cannot allude without adding a word of very high commendation,) having defined the difference between the windows in what used to be called **Early and Late Decorated**, I had hoped, indeed, that, before this, Mr. Sharpe would have published, with ample illustrations, his own arrangement and nomenclature. […] I doubt not that he will soon formally claim **the title Geometrical**, not only for a certain **character of window tracery**, but for **the style of architecture** in which they are found. (Poole 1850b:75)*

In this last statement, Poole refers to the formalisation of Sharpe's system in his volume, *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a, see section 5.3.). Announced by the author in 1848 both in the paper discussed in section 3.2. (Sharpe 1852) and in *The Builder* (Sharpe 1848b), the volume is already known among experts of architecture, though not published yet. After Sharpe, the next author cited by Poole is Edward Augustus Freeman and his volume, *A History of Architecture* (Freeman 1849). It is worth noticing how Freeman gives the *Geometrical* period no proper name. Despite that, a moment of significant stylistic change is perceived in his periodization in the same phase referred to by others as *Geometrical*. This is what matters in the discussion: that several authors perceive a moment of change in style at the same point in history. Also due to the increased interest in naming, that moment cannot simply be described, as Rickman did, as a *'transition'* (Rickman 1825:234) to the successive style. Indeed, what primarily matters in the debate is not agreeing on a name, but rather that the same concept of a period to be called *Geometrical* is acknowledged by all experts in the same timeframe:

> *[…] Mr. **Freeman**, in his History of Architecture, where he divides all Gothic architecture into **two great classes**. **Discontinuous and Continuous**, actually places his one broad **line of demarcation**, where at present all distinction is sometimes denied, between **Geometrical and flowing Decorated**. (Poole 1850b:75)*

In what follows, Freeman's (1849) original words are reported. Remarkably, the author uses another variant of the term *Geometrical*: namely, *Geometrical Decorated* (Freeman 1849:339). In the division of what Freeman (1849) calls the *Early Gothic* period into two sub-categories, *Early English* and *Geometrical Decorated*, the concept of a *Geometrical* phase of style seems nevertheless evident. The division of the Gothic architecture, also called *English* by Rickman (1825:1, see section 2.3.), into two main periods is a diffused one. Indeed, in the passage, Freeman quotes Whewell (1830), who divided the *Gothic* into a *Discontinuous* and a *Continuous* period. Moreover, the classification proposed here by Freeman (1849) is the same Reverend John Louis Petit previously presented in his 1841 volume entitled *Remarks on Church Architecture* (Petit 1841):

> *The division which will be here adopted, one practically identical with that drawn out by Mr **Petit**, and which has, implicitly at least, the further sanction of Dr **Whewell**, will recognize but **two***

***distinct forms of Gothic architecture**, those namely which Mr Petit has described as the **early complete** and the **late complete gothic**. These **I call the Early** and **Continuous Gothic**, the former answering to the to the **Early English** and **Geometrical Decorated** of the common nomenclature, the latter including flowing **Decorated**, **Flamboyant** and **Perpendicular**. (Freeman 1849:339)*

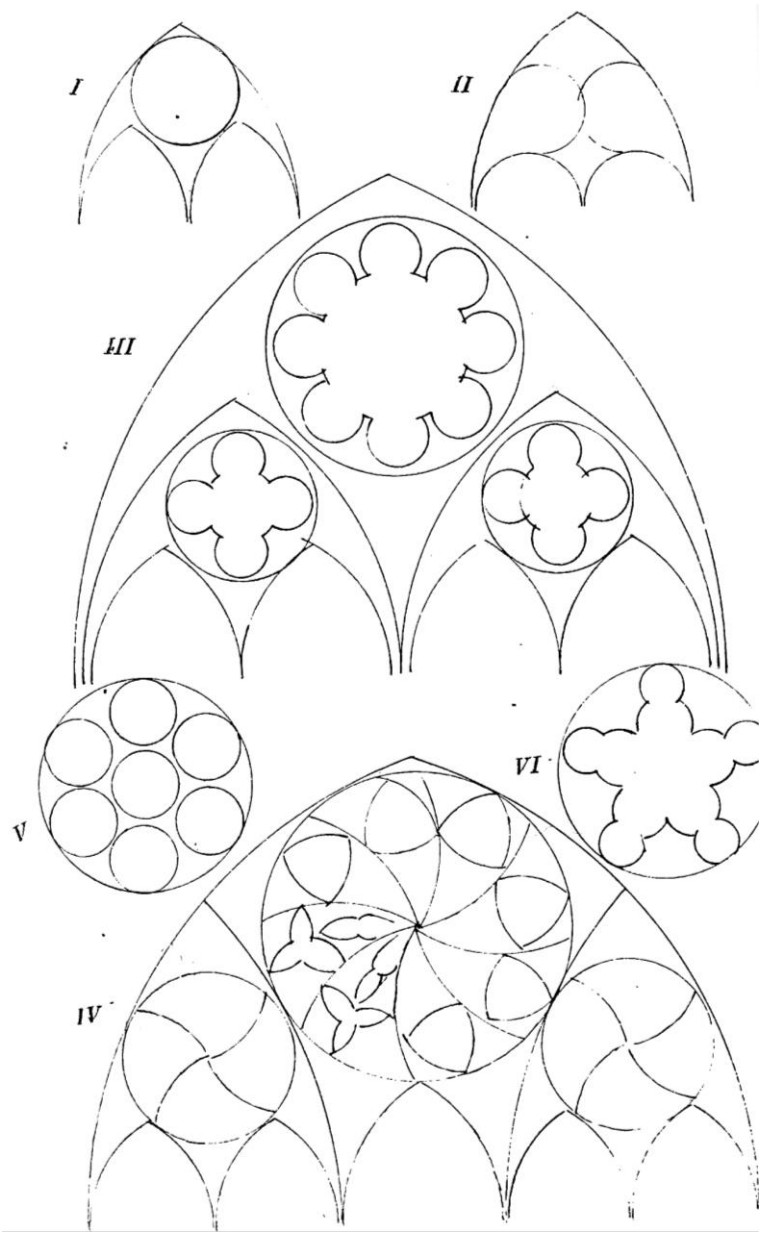


Figure 9: The origin of the Geometrical period. Drawings. I to III represent the Geometrical series according to which *'a four-light window is a two-light window multiplied into itself and so on'.* No. IV: *'a central light placed between two complete sides.'* No. V, VI: Examples of Geometrical Concentric tracery. Poole 1850b:68.

A further contribution by Freeman to the topic comes from a letter the author addressed to the editor of *The Ecclesiologist*, journal for ecclesiastic architecture, in 1847 and called *The Nomenclature of Geometrical and Flowing Tracery* (Freeman 1847). While denouncing the difficulties encountered in classing specimens into the existing categories, Freeman acknowledges the existence of the *Geometrical* as a distinctive phase of style. In fact, he goes even further, and divides the *Geometrical* into two

variants, as Poole will do later on, in the paper examined here (see Poole 1850b:70). He, too, refers to Lincoln (Ibid.) as example of the variant of the style he terms as the *Pure Geometrical* (see Fig. 6):

> *I mention all this to show the extreme difficulty of the investigation; not so much in the detection of certain types, which is comparatively easy, but in the* ***confusion****, which necessarily results in an* ***attempt to class existing instances under them****. […]* ***Geometrical tracery*** *in its widest sense may be defined as that in which the figures in the head above the lights have no connexion with the lights below but are simply put in independently to fill up the vacant space. […] Geometrical tracery contains two principal subdivisions:* ***Pure Geometrical****, in which the whole tracery is composed of actual geometrical figures, chiefly in England circles, but also spherical triangles and spherical squares.* ***The east end of Lincoln cathedral is the finest example of this style*** *and Foil tracery, in which the tracery is composed not of figures plain or foliated, but where the foils are themselves the figures; that is trefoils, quatrefoils &c, are inserted without any containing figures. (Freeman 1847:34)*

Eventually, the last defender of the *Geometrical* period mentioned by Poole is Sir George Gilbert Scott and specifically his main work, *A Plea for the faithful Restoration of our Ancient Churches* (Scott 1850). The volume, based on a paper read by the author before the Architectural and Archaeological Society of the County of Bucks at their annual meeting, was published in 1850:

> *Finally, Mr.* ***Scott****, in his 'Plea for the faithful Restoration of our ancient Churches', a work which has few rivals in importance and interest, claims not only a place, but* ***the highest place****,* ***for the Geometrical style****. (Poole 1850b:75)*

In the following quote, the same passage is proposed in Scott's original words (Scott 1850). According to the author, the existence of a *Geometrical* period is so evident, that he suggests for it nothing less than the recognition and adoption at a European level (see Scott 1851a, in section 6.3.6.):

> *If, again, as it is now fashion amongst us, we chose our flowing tracery as the great element of beauty, we shall again find ourselves at fault with our neighbours, for here we had made, in our turn, a stride in advance of them all; while if we choose with Mr, Freeman our perpendicular style, we shall fail to find a vestige of it in any country but our own. If, then, our choice must be one* ***fitted for European adoption****, we must be content to rest at the point in which is the era of our '****geometrical****' or '****early middle pointed style****'. (Scott 1850:91)*

To conclude, Poole (1850b) remarks the necessity of the *Geometrical* to be acknowledged as a separate style of English architecture. This need for a class of windows to be recognised as independent and accordingly named, could be defined as the moment of birth of all successive periodizations. Indeed, it

is from this moment on, and from this urge for an update of old terminology, that all future proposals adopt a more descriptive and detailed approach to classification and naming (see section 4.1.):

> *Let us uphold the right of the **Geometrical** to a place, and that **the highest place**, among the distinct styles of Gothic architecture. (Poole 1850b:76)*

For the sake of completeness, among the architecture historians perceiving a phase of stylistic change between the end of Rickman's (1825) *Early English* and the beginning of the *Decorated English* period, a reference is due to John Addington Symonds, as Yanni reports (2014:240). As a defender of the Classical revival during the *Battle of styles* (see section 1.3.4.), Symonds published in 1890 an essay entitled *On the Application of Evolutionary Principles to Art and Literature* (Symonds 1890). Here, the author claimed that, although Darwin's theory could not be completely applied to another science, the theory of evolution was able to explain the progress of art. In this, the vicinity of natural sciences' evolution theory to the contemporary progress of other disciplines is evidenced (see section 1.3.1.). Indeed, Symonds compared the artistic style to an embryo, using Darwin's theory of evolution to explain the development of medieval architecture (Darwin 1861). Interestingly, the author, too, appeared to perceive a moment of stylistic change in the passage between *Early English* and *Decorated English* (Rickman 1825), which he does not term. Hereafter Yanni (2014:240) quotes Symonds' original words:

> *The key idea here was that **an artistic style began with an embryo**, that **grew into maturity**, then fell into a **moribund state** (the dotage of **decrepitude**). This sequence was possible only if favourable conditions for its development [were] granted. (Symonds 1890:28–33, in Yanni 2014:240)*

In conclusion, Yanni comments on Symonds' opinion about the evolution of medieval architecture (Yanni 2014:240). Here, the author quotes Symonds' acknowledgment of the *Early Pointed* as climax of the *Gothic* style. In the passage, the term *Early Pointed* seems to be used as a synonym of *Geometrical* and of Whewell's *Complete Gothic* (Whewell 1842:128):

> *The sequence **from birth to death** was inexorable, but the environment mattered in getting **life** to **take root**. Symonds explained how the Gothic style **rose up** out of the Romanesque; how it was marked by pointed arches and piers; how its **mature stage** was the period called the **Early Pointed**, when constructional principles held sway. He perceived a slight **decline** in the **Decorated** period, then a **dissolution** (inevitably from Symonds's point of view) in the English Perpendicular and the French Flamboyant. In these late decadent phases, the core concept of truth to construction was disregarded and the '**type could hardly advance further without committing suicide**'. (Yanni 2014:240, quoting Symonds 1890:45)*

3.4. On the birth of a new concept from a terminological perspective or, on language and architectural history as *'living organisms'* [42]

The question addressed in the chapter concerns the definition of conceptual categories. More precisely, the introduction of a missing category of classification, identified by discussing the concept to which it is associated. The new concept needs to be acknowledged by the scientific community and appropriately termed, since it finds no terminological correspondent within the existing nomenclature. Among others, Kageura (2002) addresses the topic of the systematisation of concepts. According to the author, from Aristotle on (4th BC), every science felt the need to identify categories of concepts in order to understand reality. The opinion is shared by Faber, in whose understanding *'[c]ategorization enables humans to understand the world'* (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:19). Here, Faber recalls Taylor's (1995) definition of understanding, according to which humans' comprehension of reality occurs by means of its categorisation. By extension, the need for a more detailed classification expressed by the historians presented in the chapter could be reasonably interpreted as the search for a deeper understanding of reality, and for an advancement of knowledge in the discipline[43].

Similarly, Temmerman (1997) addresses terminological variation as a signal of an advanced stage of knowledge in a discipline. Indeed, the appearance of different terms – not applied before in the subject field – cannot be regarded as a merely linguistic preference. Instead, these terms manifest an evolution in the corresponding subject (Temmerman 1997:62). In line with this, according to Faber's theory (2012), terminology is never static, but reflects the *'cultural, social and professional status of a group of users'* (Faber 2012:14), so that every change in terminology mirrors an improvement in knowledge on a specific subject. Against this backdrop, it could be claimed that the more profound knowledge of medieval architecture reached by the historians presented in this chapter is naturally reflected in a more detailed conceptual and terminological classification of the subject. To that more detailed conceptual system belong, indeed, new concepts, as the result of a more extensive knowledge of the topic of medieval architecture and its real building specimens. These new concepts, not included in previous conceptualisations, are addressed and discussed in search for suitable terms to identify them, as, for instance, the *Geometrical* period addressed in the present chapter.

In line with this, terminological and conceptual evolution seem to be perfectly natural and foreseeable processes. In this case, they originate from a need for additional terms which would allow a more detailed description of building specimens observed in reality. The best example of that is the window of the Lincoln Cathedral (see Fig.6). For lack of a better term, the window, previously appointed

[42] Corbeil 1980, in: Cabré 1999:214.

[43] See Sharpe 1852:171: 'Mr Rickman's simple division of Church Architecture into four periods or styles, may perhaps be the one best suited to his time, and to the elementary state of knowledge of the subject possessed by the best informed archaeologists of his day, it may with property be questioned how far such a division is suited to the exigencies of writers of the present day, or to the present advanced state of the knowledge on the subject'.

by Rickman as *'a sort of transition to the Decorated style'* (Rickman 1825:234) is now one of the most representative examples of the *Geometrical* period[44].

Moreover, the approach described here for the creation of a new class of window specimens, the *Geometrical* period, could be defined as manifestly onomasiological, as Cabré asserts (Cabré 2003:168). Starting from the description of a concept, comprehension is enhanced through the discussion of real specimens incarnating that concept. Concurrently, the best term to describe the concept is discussed. Within this approach, in order to be defined as clearly as possible, the concept is isolated from the other ones, and the shared features of its specimens are evidenced[45].

Regarding the appearance of new concepts, the definition of new conceptual categories is discussed by Kageura (2002). As the author affirms, the appearance of these categories is connected to the initial development of a specialised discipline, which needs to define its primary objects of study and systematise its field of knowledge. In the author's opinion, during this process, human cognition orders items from reality into categories through similarities and diversities (Kageura 2002). Indeed, the identification of a new class of window specimens seems to reflect this cognitive process. Accordingly, Taylor (1995), too, defines categorisation as *'the ability to see similarity in diversity'* (Taylor 1995: IX). That is to say, a mental process enabling us to classify entities by comparing and contrasting their features. In view of this reflection, it could be argued that the establishment of the *Geometrical* period as class of window specimens within future nomenclatures is the product of a similar process of categorisation. Similarities were acknowledged among its specimens and, at the same time, undeniable differences with respect to the features of the periods into which they were until then classed[46].

Another main topic emerging from the chapter is the *'multidimensionality'* of concepts, as theorised by Temmerman (2000:31) or, to rephrase it, the possibility to classify concepts according to different principles. An example could be detected in the numerous classifications of the *Geometrical* period proposed by the authors: if Rickman defines it as a phase of *'transition to the Decorated'* (Rickman 1825:234), Sharpe, on the contrary, claims the necessity of its recognition as an independent period, to which a proper name should be given. On the contrary, Freeman acknowledges the existence of a *Geometrical* phase of style but categorises it as a variety of the *Decorated* period. Specifically, in Freeman's nomenclature, the *Decorated* period presents two internal varieties: a first *Geometrical Decorated* and a following *Flowing Decorated* phase (see Freeman 1849:339 in section 3.3.).

[44] See Sharpe 1852:172: 'He [Rickman] appears to have had some difficulties […] in his descriptions, […] in speaking of the Presbytery of the Lincoln Cathedral he describes it as a sort of "transition to the Decorated style", and of many other similar buildings which may be ranked as amongst the finest in the kingdom, as belonging to the same class'.

[45] See Poole 1850b:70: 'A four-light window is a two-light window multiplied into itself. (I. and III.) An eightlight window (as at Lincoln) is again the four-light window multiplied into itself, so that, true even in this to their name, they follow a Geometrical series, and may be expressed by Geometrical notation as a, a ^{2}, a ^{3}'.

[46] See Poole 1850b:65: 'Again, it may be as easy to distinguish, in general, between Decorated and Perpendicular as between a beast and a bird; but the buildings are countless which have as many of the characters of each style as the Ornithorhynchus has of the mole and of the duck'.

In line with this, the discussion underlines another worthwhile topic, namely, the presence of several levels of classification specificity depending, as Kageura affirms (2002), on the purpose of the discrimination within a scientific field. Here, it is worth reminding that to class what Rickman's simplistically called *'transition to the Decorated'* (Rickman 1825:234), Sharpe and his contemporaries authors need to define an independent and equivalent period. In particular, the value of the *Geometrical* period is underlined by the authors, as equivalent to the one of all other periods, already acknowledged in the official nomenclature. Indeed, one of the arguments adduced by Sharpe in favour of the *Geometrical* period is the evidence of its difference from other periods. Naturally, this evidence comes from the observation of real building specimens and in particular of their windows[47].

As will become clearer at a later stage, this operation of classification causes an apparent issue of synonymy. Namely, even if the concept is shared, each author tries to promote his own term for it to become official. As regards the *Geometrical* period, multiple terms refer to the same concept. In that, Freixa's (2006) concept of denominative variation seems to be prefigured. According to Freixa's definition, denominative variation configures as the phenomenon in which the same concept is referred to by different denominations within the same specialised field (Freixa 2006:51). Based on this definition, however, it would be wrong to talk about synonymy, since each term expresses a particular aspect of the concept. Moreover, following Freixa (2006:51), denominative variation can be due to multiple reasons, some of which seem to be mirrored in the present case. Indeed, divergent perceptions of reality are recognised as one of the causes of denominative variation. As confirmed by the author, terminology has always assumed that our vision of reality is personal and arbitrary. These multiple points of view on reality result in different term to name it. The same seems to happen in the present case of different terms proposed by the historians for the same periods. Moreover, with particular reference to specialised domains, Freixa (2006:62) sees to the creativity of scientists as possible reason for the presence of multiple denominations. According to Ducháček (1979: 118, in Freixa 2006:62), indeed, the creativity of specialists in using or inventing terms is justified by the purpose of emphasising specific aspects of a concept, or to express a singular point of view on it. As far as the authors presented here are concerned, each of them can be assumed to express his own perspective on the classification of architecture, and to highlight specific aspects of the examined specimens of buildings.

A similar perspective on the issue of synonymy is provided by some authors (Ullmann 1962; Lyons 1977; Sparck Jones 1986; Cruse 1986, in Kageura 2002:185) believing that no absolute synonymy exists in reality and that *'different linguistic representations identify different concepts'* (Kageura 2002:185). This is a rather attractive point of view within the present discussion about new terms and different nomenclatures. Indeed, new terms are proposed for which the habit of the community needs to be changed, while no difference in meaning, and consequently no advantage for the users, is

[47] See Sharpe 1852:172: 'Had Mr Rickman gone a step further and classed the whole of the buildings of pointed architecture, according to the form of their windows, under four heads instead of three, he would have obtained a classification equally simple but more intellegible and consistent'.

perceived[48]. It seems thus logical to conclude that, in order to find recognition, new concepts should be presented and not merely new terms for the existing concepts. As a matter of fact, if one of the purposes of terminology according to Wüster's (1979) *General Theory* is to avoid synonymy through terminological standardisation, the terminological operation conducted here by Sharpe seems to go on the opposite direction (Sharpe 1848b). Indeed, with his newly proposed term *Rectilinear*, Sharpe identifies the same class of windows that Rickman (1825) previously described using the term *Perpendicular*. Therefore, Sharpe introduces a new term, but clearly not a new concept, inevitably creating an apparent synonymy. However, the operation conducted by Sharpe (1852, see section 3.2.) seems to have a different purpose. Namely, to propose a better term for the same period, previously called *Perpendicular*. This proposal by Sharpe seems to anticipate the definition of the onomasiological approach provided by Sager (1990). According to the author, indeed, the onomasiological approach to classification avoids synonymy and *'searches for the best term in a given context'* (Sager 1990:58). In a statement previously analysed, Sharpe's suggestion seems to follow a similar principle [49].

Even more interesting is Sager's reflection on the property of concepts arising from their *'relation to other concepts'* (Sager 1990:25). Bringing the example of terms such as *'uncle'* or *'cousin'* (Ibid.), the author explains how concepts most frequently inherently entail in their own definition a relation to other concepts. The same seems to happen for the concept of a *Geometrical* period, which is identified by these authors as different from both its preceding *Early English* and subsequent *Decorated English* style, in Rickman's (1825) terms[50]. This is the revolutionary reflection that changes everything: *Geometrical* window specimens are different from all other existing categories of windows and, consequently, cannot be classed in any of them. It should be thus reasonable to affirm that it is primarily its relation to other concepts, or architectural periods, that defines the concept of a *Geometrical* period.

Apart from the relation to its confining concepts, the *Geometrical* period is clearly identified through its representative window specimens in England (Sharpe 1852:171). The reference to the same real specimens in more volumes testifies that the concept is common and agreed upon by all authors (see Fig. 6 and 8). Precisely the existence of a shared concept seems to be the reason for the period to be included in several future nomenclatures (Freeman 1849 and Sharpe 1851a, see section 5.3.).

In this perspective, following the words of Sager (1990), the role of the authors quoted here could be rightly assimilated to the one of a scientist *'who has to find a name for a new concept'* (Sager 1990:56) within his proper field of specialisation. Remarkably, what stands out in the papers presented

[48] See Sharpe 1852:170: 'Men are not willing to unlearn a term with which they are familiar, however inappropriate, in order to learn another, which after all, means the same thing'.
[49] See Sharpe 1852:173: 'To designate any of these periods except the last [Perpendicular], by any of the terms hitherto in use, appears to be objectionable, as tending probably to cause confusion and misapprehension; and to retain the last if the others be abandoned, and a better and more appropriate term can be found, appears to be still less desirable'.
[50] See Sharpe 1852:173: 'There exist a large and important class of buildings, characterized by the geometrical forms of their window-tracery, which has hitherto been treated as belonging partly to the Early English and partly to the Decorated styles but which is, in reality, distinct from both, and pre-eminenlty entitled, from the number and beauty of its examples, to separate classification'.

in this chapter is that they refer to the same examples from reality. With the common purpose of providing their audience with well-known models, several authors mention the same window specimens in order to identify in reality the concept that they describe in theory. Namely the Presbytery East End window of the Lincoln Cathedral and the one of Westminster Abbey (see Fig. 6 and 8). Indeed, what seems to primarily emerge from the presented discussion about the *Geometrical* period is that all authors identify it with the same building specimens. Therefore, we would venture to assume that a univocal concept of *Geometrical* period is shared by all authors. Indeed, the discussion described in the chapter could configure as a terminological one, where different terms are proposed to officially name a period, or concept, already recognised in its characters. In reference to that, as Felber addresses it, a necessary condition of communication is that the meaning of concepts is shared among all participants:

> *Unambiguous communication is only possible if the **concepts**—the elements of thinking—have the **same meaning** for all who participate in the communication process. (Felber 1984b, in Cabré 1994:194)*

A final mention is due here to Corbeil's vision (1980 in Cabré 1999) of language as a living being. According to the author, language is never stable, but experiences a slow and constant evolution. Quoting Corbeil (1980), Cabré (1999:214) acknowledges the constant state of change language is subject to, in order to keep up with the reality it serves to describe. Naturally, this description of language appears to reflect the process with which this chapter dealt. As terms and nomenclatures evolve through the eras of Rickman (1825) and Sharpe (1851a), to adapt to the description of reality aimed at by the authors, the architectural style – as a living being – constantly mutes into successive forms, each of them being origin and consequence of its previous and successive stage:

> *Language phenomena tend to **evolve very slowly**. At first glance, language seems static and unchanged day after day. […] History shows us, however, that **language**, like all other **living organisms**, is constantly **changing** in a never-ending effort to **adapt** to the continuously evolving reality that it must convey. (Corbeil 1980, in Cabré 1999:214)*

3.5. Conclusions

The chapter focused on the emergence of the *Geometrical* period as separate stylistic phase. Even if already acknowledged by authors in the past (Rickman 1825), this style had been till now ignored by the official nomenclature. Hence the papers by Sharpe and Poole presented here shared the objective of persuading experts to recognise the *Geometrical* as a proper style, and to name it consequently.

The emergence of a new class of objects to be included in the official periodization of English architecture is of paramount relevance for the construction of future periodizations (see Freeman 1849 and Sharpe 1851a, in section 5.2. and 5.3.). Influenced by natural sciences and evolutionary theories, from this moment on, the conception of architectural styles changes dramatically (Yanni 1997; 2014).

Therefore, in order to fully appreciate the further efforts of historian towards the definition of more descriptive and comprehensive nomenclatures, three main elements are to be remembered.

First, the concept of a *Geometrical* period based on the observation of reality. This concept, expressed through the reference to well-known window specimens (see Fig. 6 and 8), is discussed and termed. The most important consequence of the observation of reality is indeed the appearance of new classes of objects, which the theory alone was not able to detect. From now on, that seems to change the authors' approach towards categories defined in theory and their application to reality. Indeed, the classificatory difficulty examined here appears not to reside in the identification of a class of specimens (i.e. a concept): authors seemed to agree that a stylistic change was evident. However, the problem consisted in categorising that group of specimens using the existing categories provided by the theory. At that stage, the need for a further period is commonly acknowledged (see Sharpe 1852; Poole 1850b).

Secondly, the innovative conception of history of architecture as a living being. If the comparison between styles and animals appears as a merely rhetorical instrument (Poole 1850b:65, in section 3.3.), the conceptual improvement lying behind this analogy is of paramount importance for the future conception of architectural history and its periodization, as reported by Yanni (2014).This evolutionary understanding brings two main benefits to the discipline. On the one side, architectural history – like a living being – is now conceived as going through successive stages of evolution in time. On the other side, it is acknowledged that an inherent connection of cause and effect exists among these stages. Following this thought, no style could reasonably be considered independent anymore, but rather as an evolution of its previous one, preparing the way for the future (Symonds 1890, in Yanni 2014:240).

Lastly, the origin of a new concept was investigated in the chapter as the result of descriptive and communicative needs, as it is usually the case (Cabré 1999). Indeed, according to Cabré, a new concept is originated both in a necessity of description by the user, as in an attempt to communicate something (Cabré 1999:203). Of great relevance here is the paraphrasis Rickman (1825) employs to describe the window at Lincoln Cathedral (see Fig.6). Before the introduction of the term *Geometrical*, the window is addressed as *'a sort of transition to the Decorated style'* (Rickman 1825:234). Interestingly, its mixed character between *Early English* and *Decorated English* is perceived by Rickman, though not termed yet. Indeed, the concept of a *Geometrical* period first arises as historians start to observe specimens from reality, and to notice their difference with respect to the styles presented in theory (see Rickman 1825). Apparently, this is also the moment in which window illustrations start to be used more frequently in volumes on the subject (see Sharpe 1849a; Freeman 1851a). Moreover, authors become aware of the insufficiency of existing terms for a satisfying description of reality.

It is mainly from the recurrent reference to the same window specimens that we are able to detect the shared idea of a *Geometrical* period (see Fig. 6 and 8). Since the concept exists and is agreed upon by numerous authors, the discussion develops throughout the chapter into a terminological one, where the most appropriate term is searched among different suggestions. If the concept is there, divergent naming proposals are advanced for it, such as *Complete Gothic* (Whewell 1842:128),

Geometrical (Sharpe 1852:177) and *Geometric* (Poole 1850b:73). This phase of conceptual definition and naming is particularly relevant for the further stages of the discussion this work will deal with. As it happens, the diffused need for additional concepts to the official nomenclature will inspire a series of future attempts of classification and conceptual systematisation (see Garbett 1851, in section 6.3.10.).

To conclude, the relevance of the connection between window specimens and the concept of *Geometrical* period is to be borne in mind. In this, the relevance of the two specimens in this chapter, Lincoln and Westminster (see Fig. 6 and 8), prefigures the importance of visual representation in the descriptive method adopted in the upcoming periodizations (see Sharpe 1849a; Freeman 1851a, in sections 4.2. and 4.3.). If window specimens from reality constitute the most evident expression of the concept of a period, the importance of visual representation illustrated by Faber within frame-based terminology should be recalled (Faber 2012; in section 1.5.6.). Indeed, visual representation is introduced to underline the importance of real specimens in order to understand the concept of each period. This interconnection of concepts and the real objects can be explained in the words of Felber (1984, in Temmerman 2000):

> *Concepts are mental representations of individual objects, and individual objects are specimens (examples, exemplars) exemplifying the concept. (Felber 1984:120, in Temmerman 2000:6)*

In the case of the *Geometrical* period, concept and real specimens are inherently interrelated and cannot be separated from one another.

4. On Sharpe's *Decorated Windows* [51] on a comparative method or, on the creation of *'pictorial taxonomies'* [52] of English medieval architecture

4.1. Introduction

In the debate about the categorisation of the *Geometrical* period a new perspective on architectural history and its evolution emerged (see section 3.1.). The present chapter expands on the innovative method of architectural studies that originated from that perspective. Specifically, it examines Edmund Sharpe's approach to the classification of English medieval architecture and highlights how it was primarily based on the description of specimens observed in reality and hence adopted a descriptive stance, in contrast to that of his predecessors. In that respect, the centrality of the visual representation of concepts is discussed in Sharpe's work and that of his contemporary historians.

This chapter concentrates on Sharpe's publications of 1849, considered as a manifest of his descriptive method: *A treatise on the Rise and Progress of Decorated Window Tracery in England* (Sharpe 1849a), and the series of illustrations attached: *Decorated Windows. A Series of Illustrations* (Sharpe 1849b). Inspired to Rickman's (1825) reintroduction of the window as main classificatory means for ecclesiastical buildings (see section 2.3.), Sharpe's method is centred on the comparison and categorisation of windows. His later volume, *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a) will be based on the same categorisation, and there the author will formalise his update proposal of Rickman's official nomenclature (see section 5.3.). Indeed, the three volumes (Sharpe 1849a; 1849b; 1851a) should be considered as the single product of the author's innovative approach to the practice of classification. Defined by Skipton-Long as the creation of *'pictorial taxonomies'* (2018:165), Sharpe's method incorporates numerous ground-breaking aspects. Among others, the relevance attributed to illustrations of real specimens and a constant comparison of examples are central, in an attempt to understand the relations of specimens within that continuous stylistic evolution which is now history of architecture (see Poole 1850b, in section 3.3.). In line with this, other authors are quoted for having developed similar, yet not as effective, graphical taxonomies of English medieval windows: all of them take Rickman' classification system as a main reference (Rickman 1825). In view of Freeman's influence on Sharpe's work (Garbett 1851, see section 6.3.10.), his *Essay on the Origin and Development of Window Tracery in England* (Freeman1851a) is also examined, along with a selection of authors inspired to Skipton-Long's overview of descriptive nomenclatures (Skipton-Long 2018).

With regard to the terminology theory, the introduction of a descriptive method of classification is central here. From Rickman's (1825) more prescriptive approach to Sharpe's (1849a) eminently descriptive one, the chapter prefigures the two purposes of terminology, as a discipline either oriented to the prescription of terms in a specialised context, or the description of reality through language (Faber 2009). Similarly, the importance of visual representation of concepts to convey their multidimensional nature is discussed, especially in the light of Faber and López Rodríguez' (2012) work within frame-

[51] Sharpe 1849a.
[52] Skipton-Long 2018:165.

based terminology. In addition to that, Rey's (1995) reflections on the connection of knowledge advancement and naming are quoted. In this respect, naming is conceived as an exploratory practice (Rey 1995). A further perspective on categorisation is provided by L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne (2012), as the authors reflect on the practice of differentiating objects according to shared features. Specifically, the activity is regarded as the creation of ontologies. Indeed, this operation seems to reflect the one described in the chapter, when dealing with the addition of concepts to an existing classification. Lastly, not less crucial is the interpretation of neology as due to the appearance of new concepts which need to be named (Cabré 1999). Eventually, a closing remark is devoted to the inherent dependence of conceptual structures, or ontologies, and terms. If, following Rey (1995), concepts can only be named after appropriate denominations are created, the present chapter seems to confirm also the opposite: indeed, the appearance of new names hints at an evolution of the conceptual structure behind them.

4.2. On Edmund Sharpe's descriptive method in 1849: The *Rise and Progress of Decorated Window Tracery in England* [53] through a series of illustrations

Sharpe's 1848 volume, which precedes the texts with which this chapter is mainly concerned, deserves a preliminary mention. The volume, called *Architectural Parallels* (Sharpe 1848a), is a collection of 121 plates in large format, and contains illustrations of whole churches and their details, thoroughly categorised into seven periods. These same periods will constitute the author's classification of English architecture (Sharpe 1851a, see section 5.3.). The full title exemplifies both Sharpe's approach to architectural history as constant evolution, and the importance of illustrating and comparing concepts graphically: *Architectural Parallels: Or the Progress of Architecture in England Through the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Exhibited in a Series of Parallel Examples Selected from the Following Abbey Churches etc*. (Sharpe 1848a). Here, the author's attitude to the study of real specimens and to a classification based on observation is exposed and anticipates the method he will apply to his studies.

The publication of a volume entailing exclusively images is also noteworthy. Linguistic definitions, so crucial for Rickman to substitute *'reality or the pencil'* (Whewell 1842:41, see section 2.4.) clearly lose relevance in favour of visual illustrations. As will become evident in the course of the chapter, Sharpe will constantly refer to images, in order to clarify concepts expressed in text. Accordingly, illustrations will no longer be mere appendixes attached at the end of the volume, as in previous works (see Rickman 1825, in section 2.3.). Instead, they will be positioned as near as possible to the concepts they exemplify. In addition to that, reference to real specimens is a constant. Within the texts examined in the present research, we could therefore venture to affirm that for no other author the connection of image and text was as relevant as for Sharpe.

Moving on to the central text that will be discussed here, *A treatise on the Rise and Progress of Decorated Window Tracery in England* (Sharpe 1849a) primarily deals with the classification of medieval windows, specifically traceried ones, and consists of two parts. The first, *The Classification*

[53] Sharpe 1849a.

of Traceried Windows and their several Parts, divides windows into three classes, according to the form of their tracery: *Geometrical*, *Curvilinear* and *Rectilinear*. After that, the origin and definition of tracery are examined. The second part, *A Chronological account of the principal traceried windows in England*, describes the *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear* periods. Here, the author presents a further subdivision of both periods. While the *Geometrical* is divided into *Early* and *Late Geometrical*, following a suggestion by Whewell (1842, see section 2.4.), the *Curvilinear* period entails Class I, II and III. Indeed, this subdivision of Rickman's *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* periods into *Geometrical*, *Curvilinear* and *Rectilinear* constitutes the origin of Sharpe's periodization for English architecture (Sharpe1851a, see section 5.3.). Notably, Sharpe presents his work as a specification, not a substitution, of Rickman's system, first formulated in 1817 (Rickman 1825). There, windows featuring tracery were simply defined as *'Decorated English Windows'* (Rickman 1825:73).

The introduction to Sharpe's treatise clarifies its dual scope. First, a collection of windows is presented to be compared; secondly, Rickman's nomenclature is specified, with respect of its referential role, as the first classification of English medieval architecture (Rickman 1825). As previously stated, no new concept is ever proposed by these historians without placing it within the frame of works by previous authors, especially on the topic of English medieval architecture. For instance, in the following passage from Sharpe's introduction (1849a), the importance of Rickman's (1825) volume as a reference work on the subject is acknowledged through the admitted use of his phraseology by the author:

> *In originally describing this work as a* ***collection of examples*** *illustrative of the* ***Window Tracery*** *of the* ***Decorated Period of English Architecture****,* ***a mode of phraseology*** *was employed which would be* ***familiar*** *to all who have of late years been engaged in the study of the Church Architecture of this country, and would therefore satisfactorily convey the intentions of the Publisher […]. (Sharpe 1849a:1)*

Sharpe's proposal, at least initially, was not intended to substitute Rickman's classification (1825). In fact, it was suggested as an extension to it, a more detailed division, within the frame of Rickman's more general classification. Notably, attempts to substitute, or specify, Rickman as main reference on the subject of English medieval architecture periodization were not unusual, as Sharpe himself observes:

> *It is to Mr.* ***Rickman*** *that we are indebted for that classification of the styles of English Architecture and that system of* ***Nomenclature*** *which has been almost exclusively used by recent writers on the subject. The excellence of this* ***Classification*** *and* ***Nomenclature****, and their sufficiency for the purpose for which they were intended, are best evidenced by the fact, that, although the* ***attempts to supersede*** *them have been both numerous and persevering, Mr Rickman's 'Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England,' still remains* ***the best guide*** *of the Architectural* ***Student*** *in his first inquiries into the History of Art, and the principal text-book from which most of the popular publications of the day on the subject have been compiled. (Sharpe 1849a:2)*

Conscious of the attempts to overcome Rickman's nomenclature taking place at the time, Sharpe addresses the divergent opinions about the official nomenclature. Curiously, a similar debate will follow his own classification proposal (Sharpe 1851a). In those years, Sharpe's contemporary authors will once more discuss the possibility of updating Rickman's official nomenclature from 1817 (see section 6.3.):

> *In estimating however the value to us, at the present time, of Mr **Rickman's Classification**, and the advantage of retaining it, regard must be had to the object with which it was originally proposed, and the **amount of knowledge** possessed on the subject at the time he wrote. One of the prevailing **errors** of earlier writers was an **anxiety to discover** such distinctive marks in different buildings belonging to the same style as should entitle them to **separate classification**. The **imaginary nature** of these distinctions, and the **variety** and **discrepancy of the opinions** held be different writers upon this point-scarcely two of them **agreeing to use the same nomenclature**, to recognize the same distinctions, or to apply the same rules as a text in regard to date – were all circumstances tending to confuse and to distract rather than to fix the attention of the architectural student. (Sharpe 1849a:2)*

Since knowledge advanced, Sharpe expresses the need of a new system of classification. In that, the role of the observation and description of real specimens is crucial for contemporary historians (see Fig. 11 and 12). Sharpe's reference to them as *'descriptive writers of the present day'* is exemplar of that:

> *Although, however, the sufficiency of Mr Rickman's Classification for the purpose for which it was intended, has been thus satisfactorily proved, and his reputation, as the first eminent Historian of the Art, permanently established, it may be a question how far a division so simple as to fix the attention of early students, and, on that account, so necessary for preliminary inquiry, is one that, in the **present advanced state of knowledge** on the subject, is calculated to satisfy the requirements of **descriptive writers of the present day**. (Sharpe 1849a:3)*

In the next passage, Sharpe notes that the simplicity of Rickman's (1825) division might constitute the main reason for its success. However, this simplicity seems not to suit the new evolutionary idea of English architecture anymore. What should be updated and specified is thus not only the nomenclature, but the whole conception of architectural history as being subject to a constant progression in time (Poole 1850b, in section 3.3.). In other words, the acknowledged transitional character of English architecture should be reflected in a more comprehensive and precise classification. Remarkably, the arbitrariness of every possible periodization as an expression of its author's opinion is also acknowledged:

> *[…] Mr **Rickman** might, with equal correctness, have divided the entire duration of the Medieval Styles into **five, six, or even seven Periods instead of four**, had he chosen to do so. It is probable, however, that the **simplicity** of his system was the chief element of its **success**, as well as his reason for adopting it. He must, nevertheless, have known, what is now beginning to be generally admitted,*

that our National Architecture, from its earlier infancy to the period of its entire debasement, was in a ***constant state of regular progression or transition****, and that this progress was not only uniform and constant, but carries out in different parts of the country very nearly simultaneously. We have been so much in the* ***habit of classing our buildings*** *according to their leading peculiarities, in one or other of these four styles, that we have been* ***apt to overlook*** *this fact, and its important bearing upon the* ***gradual development of our knowledge*** *upon the subject. (Sharpe 1849a:4)*

Wishing for a nomenclature which reflects his discipline's progress, Sharpe speculates on the upcoming developments in classification. If classes are further specified as knowledge advances, periodization will soon be based on decades, rather than centuries. Here, reference is made to Rickman's system, where each style generally lasts as its corresponding century (Rickman 1825:39, see section 2.3.):

It would not be too much to predict, that, classing our buildings, as we do at present, in ***four large groups****, we may, at no great distance of time, be able to class them, not by* ***centuries****, but by* ***decades*** *of years. Whether, looking at the additional information we already possess,* ***the time has now arrived for a more detailed division*** *of the Church Architecture of this country, than that which has been bequeathed to us by Mr Rickman, and which has hitherto* ***served our purpose*** *so well, is a question which manifestly lies out of the limits of the present essay. (Sharpe 1849a:5)*

The next statement clarifies Sharpe's method, centred on the comparison of real specimens. Similarities and differences should be recognised to divide such specimens into classes or, alternatively, to assign them to the general category of the *Decorated* style (Rickman 1825:39). The author's approach to classification is thus open to multiple classing possibilities. Indeed, nothing more than the method and approach to classification appears to separate Sharpe's (1851a) and Rickman's (1825) periodization for English architecture (see section 2.3.):

It has become, in fact, our legitimate ***task****, now that the* ***series of examples*** *which have been periodically presented to our readers is completed, to consider* ***how we shall classify them****; to examine their points of* ***contrast and resemblance****; to inquire whether the peculiarities which distinguish some from others are not such, and so great, as to render it difficult and inconvenient, if not actually incorrect, to comprehend the whole of the Tracery of the so-called 'Decorated' Period in* ***one undivided class****, and under* ***one general denomination****. (Sharpe 1849a:5)*

After that, Sharpe presents his alternative classification and nomenclature. In the author's opinion, a first subdivision of Rickman's *Decorated* style (1825:39) in two classes, *geometrical* and *flowing*, should be evident. Naturally, the subdivision is based on visual characters of the windows:

No one who has paid much attention to the buildings of the Decorated Style, or who has consulted the descriptions of such buildings given in Mr Rickman's Appendix, can fail to have ***observed*** *that*

*the windows of this style are divisible into **two classes**: one, in which the leading lines of the **tracery** are **geometrical**; and the other, in which they are of **flowing** character. (Sharpe 1849a:6)*

Interestingly, Sharpe adds in a footnote that the two terms, *geometrical* and *flowing*, were in fact originally introduced by Rickman (1825:74), and are still employed in current publications:

*These terms '**geometrical**' and '**flowing**' are used here **in the same sense** as that in which they were used by Mr Rickman and are still used in most of the publications of the present day. (Sharpe 1849a:6)*

In Sharpe's opinion, Rickman's (1825) division of traceried windows, also known as *Decorated Windows*, into his two styles *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* should be substituted with a threefold one. As already hinted at, the proposal is based on the classification of the main lines of window tracery into three classes: *circular*, *flowing* and *straight*. The premises of this division of window tracery are the same lying behind the recognition of the *Geometrical* as an independent phase of style (see section 3.2.):

*[…] these **points of difference** are not confined to the Windows alone, but extend also to the buildings to which these Windows respectively belong; and having arrived at this point, we shall not be long in coming to the conclusion that there exists a **large and important class of buildings**, characterized by **the Geometrical forms of their Window tracery**, which has hitherto been treated as belonging partly to the Early English and partly to the Decorated Styles, but which is, in reality, **distinct from both**, and pre-eminently entitled, from the number and beauty of its examples, to **separate classification**. Instead, therefore, of following Mr Rickman's division of Traceried Windows into **two** classes, **DECORATED** and **PERPENDICULAR**, I propose to divide them into **three**; in the first and earliest of which the leading lines of the tracery are generally **circular**; in the second, **flowing**: and in the third, **straight**. (Sharpe 1849a:7)*

The next passage holds central relevance for this work, since it is where Sharpe justifies his substitution of Rickman's terms in his nomenclature and proposes alternative terms corresponding to the three main forms of tracery previously acknowledged. These new terms exemplify the correspondence between the visual characters of windows and the period denominations in Sharpe's classification:

*To **retain** the term **Decorated** for the second of these classes would tend to confusion; as it at present embraces a portion of the first, and has been so long applied to so many buildings of this character, that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, **to limit its future signification** to the extent and in the manner required. Moreover, it was adopted by Mr. Rickman as **a fit term** to express the contrast between the rich head of a mullioned Window, and the plain lancet-head of his earlier style; a contrast which cannot be said to exist to the same extent between circular and flowing tracery. Neither does it appear **necessary** or **desirable** to retain **the term Perpendicular***

for the third style, if one more correctly expressive of the character of the tracery of this Period can be found. I propose, then, ***to name*** *these three styles of Window tracery, GEOMETRICAL, CURVILINEAR, and RECTILINEAR; and to allot the following periods to them:* ***GEOMETRICAL*** *A. D. 1245 – 1315;* ***CURVILINEAR*** *A. D. 1315 – 1360;* ***RECTILINEAR*** *A. D. 1360 – 1500. (Sharpe 1849a:8)*

In a most interesting methodological footnote, Sharpe then remarks the origin of his proposal in the work of past authors. In particular, he mentions an 1826 article featured in *The British Critic*, a journal on theology and related topics, which suggests the terms *Curvilinear* and *Rectilinear* as substitutes to Rickman's *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* (Gothic architecture 1826:378). The following chapter opens with Sharpe's definition of tracery. There, the main principle of window tracery design is defined as *'a circle carried by two pointed arches'* (Sharpe 1849a:9):

THE ***elemental principle*** *of the design of by far the greater number of the earliest Traceried Windows is that of* ***a circle carried by two pointed arches****. This feature, or some modifications of it, is found throughout the whole of the Geometrical Period, and is not entirely lost sight of in many of the most beautiful examples of the Curvilinear Period. (Sharpe 1849a:9)*

The definition of this design principle seems to echo Rickman's frequent practice of providing definition of his terms of discussion. Nonetheless, Sharpe's attitude in this volume appears primarily oriented to the description of real specimens, from which his nomenclature results. Indeed, terms are introduced by the author as the result of description, thus coherently explained and motivated. An explanation of the evolution of *Lancet* windows into *Traceried*, or *Decorated* ones, follows. Therein, Sharpe's excitement for the evolution of English medieval windows is openly expressed (see Fig. 11 and 12):

There are few circumstances in the ***History of Architecture*** *more deserving of attention than* ***the rapid and remarkable changes of form through which the Window passed between the 11th and 14th centuries****; and it is on this account that it may be taken more readily than any other prominent feature of a building to denote its age and character. (Sharpe 1849a:13)*

In line with this last statement, Sharpe applies his descriptive method to argue that *Lancet* windows evolved into *Decorated* ones. Indeed, this progress is explained by means of illustrations of real specimens, positioned right next to the text (see Fig.10):

The collection of five lancets under one arch at the east end of the old ***Guildhall at Chichester*** *shews the same progress in the last stage but one, and the east Window at* ***Etton Church*** *shews the perforation in the Window-head complete. The former being* ***a group of five Lancets****, and the latter* ***a Lancet Window of five lights****. (Sharpe 1849a:18)*

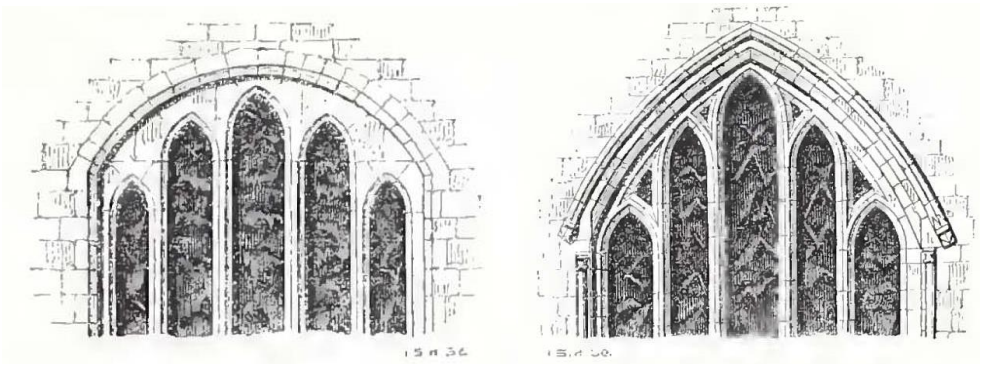


Figure 10: Old Guildhall at Chichester and Etton Church. Windows. Sharpe 1849a:18.

Moving on to the next chapter, window tracery is presented as an evolution of *Lancet* windows. This stylistic progress is also explained through illustrated plates (see Fig. 11and 12). Due to their importance within the descriptive method here discussed, the plates deserve a more detailed explanation. Plates A and B (see Fig. 11 and 12) describe the origin and evolution of window tracery in English ecclesiastical buildings, from the basic form of the *Lancet* window up to advanced *Geometrical* examples. These illustrations do not serve a mere comparative purpose. In fact, they also exemplify the chronological evolution of the window from an elementary design, the *Lancet*, which by Sharpe's own admission, could not yet be termed as tracery (Fig. 10), to the more complex forms of window tracery.

In doing this, as argued by Skipton-Long (2018:175), Sharpe applies Carl Linnaeus' comparative method (Linnaeus 1737). Conceived for the construction of a taxonomy of botanic species, the method is applied here to window tracery and is taken a step further, as Skipton-Long argues. Specifically, Linnaeus' method would not accept a classification of variants within the same class of objects: this is due to its being primarily centred on typological classification, and not on the chronological dimension of evolution (cf. Fig. 11, 12 with Fig. 13). By creating a taxonomy able to show not only different classes, but also the formal evolution occurring in time among variants belonging to the same class, Sharpe thus refines Linnaeus' method (Skipton-Long 2018:175). Concurrently, as Skipton-Long remarks (2018:177), Sharpe's images are not totally realistic: a certain grade of abstraction is present, since they are not depicted on a scale. Hence, they become symbols, or icons, evidencing discriminating features, and letting the student concentrate on comparison, instead of dimensions (see Fig. 11 and 12). Notably, comparison and contrast are encouraged by Sharpe through constant reference to illustrations:

> *[…] It was in the side aisles that the* ***practice of pairing Windows****, and perforating the wall above them with a circular, or other opening, an early example of which we have recorded in the first section of this chapter [Window Tracery], found a ready acceptance. Following at first the same course in the dual arrangement as in the case of a plurality of Lancets, we find them* ***first placed in juxtaposition*** *(****Plate B., Fig,1****); next,* ***united by a continuous hood-moulding*** *(****Fig.2****); and subsequently in a similar manner* ***combined under one arch*** *(****Fig.3****). (Sharpe 1849a:19)*

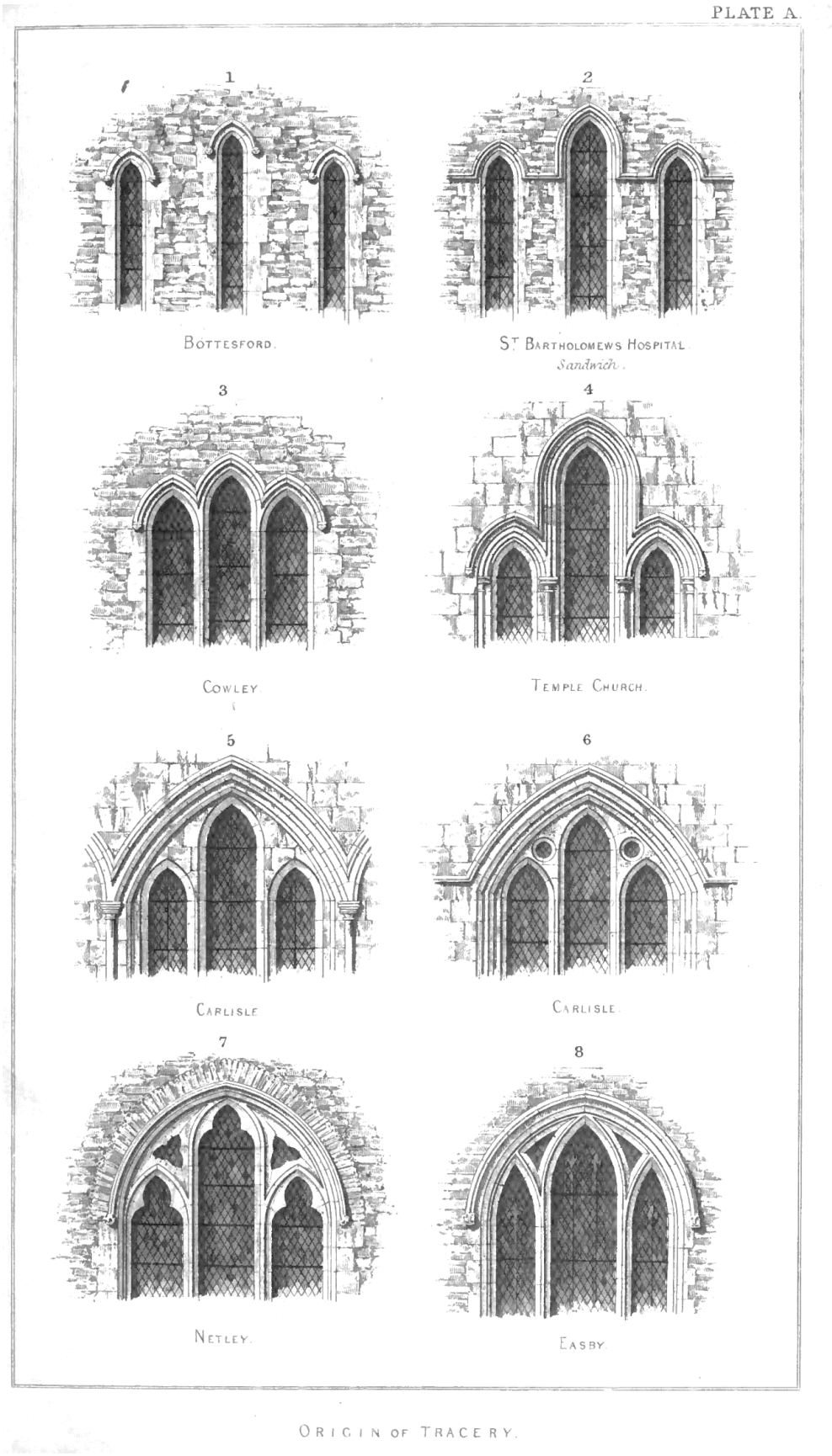


Figure 11: Origin of Tracery. Comparison of window forms. Plate A. Sharpe 1849a:17. See Skipton-Long 2018:166.

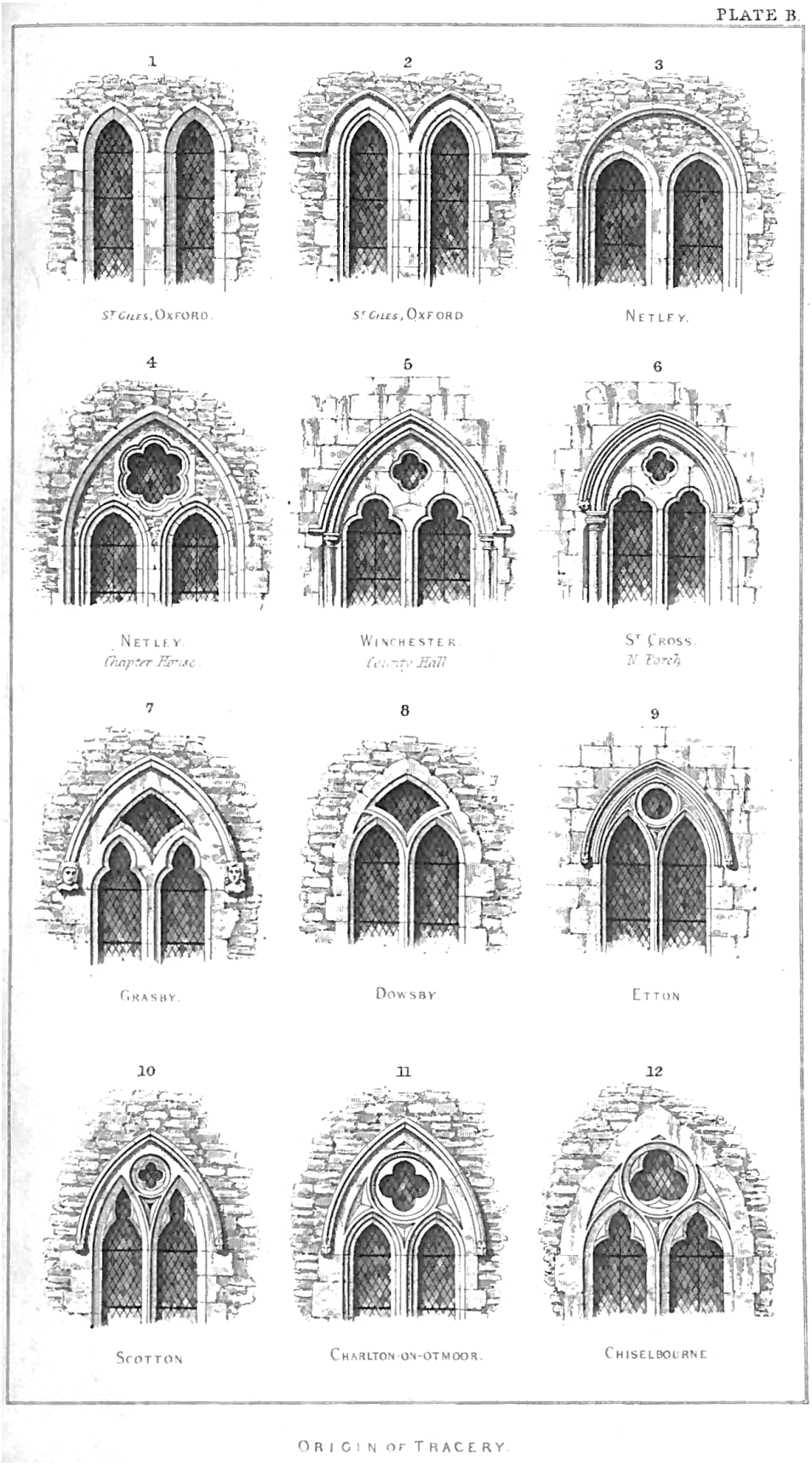


Figure 12: Origin of Tracery. Comparison of window forms. Plate B. Sharpe 1849a:19. See Skipton-Long 2018:167.

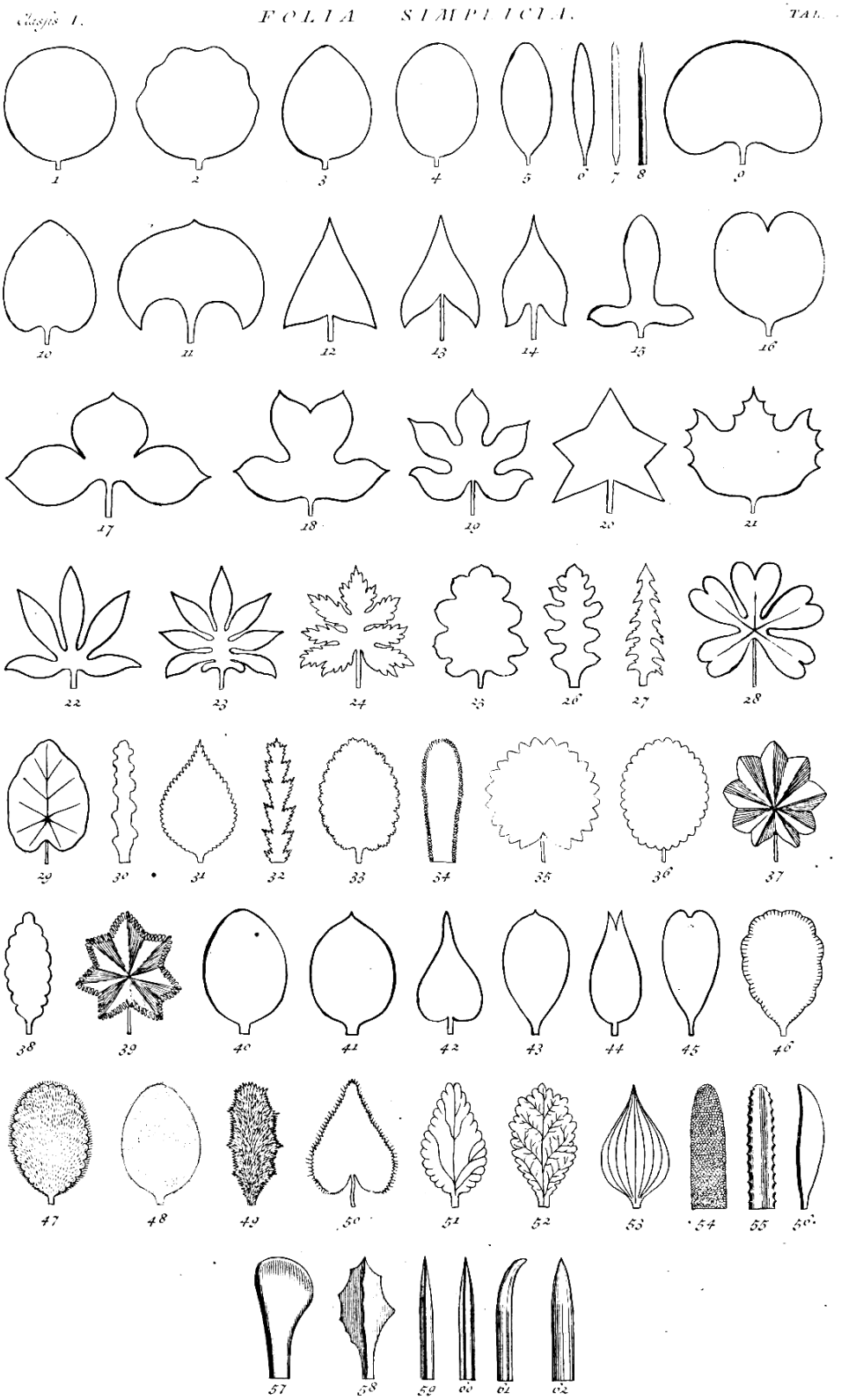


Figure 13: Table I: Classis I – Folia Simplica. Linnaeus 1737, in Skipton-Long 2018:176.

The following passage is devoted to Sharpe's definition of window tracery. Here, the reference to real specimens and visual features is worth noticing. Additionally, reminiscent of the importance of linguistic definitions for his predecessors (see section 2.4.), Sharpe enumerates all necessary conditions for a window design to be termed as tracery. By extension, the process of formal evolution of a window leading to the appearance of tracery is underlined (see Fig.11 and 12). Indeed, the *'approaching change'* (Sharpe 1849a:20) that the author mentions seems to be the beginning of window tracery. In that respect, Willis' (1835:49) definition of tracery in his *Remarks on the Architecture of the Middle Ages* is recalled:

> *It was thus, then, by the joint operation of these two important results, namely, the* ***conversion*** *of a group of Lancets into One Window of many lights, and the combination of a Circle and Two Lancets under One Arch, that the way was prepared for the* ***approaching change****. […] A WINDOW cannot be said to contain* ***Tracery*** *unless the whole of the Window head is pierced through to the plane of the glass, so as to leave no plain surface, or solid mass of stone, in the spandrels between the principal Tracery-bars and the Window-arch. This* ***rule****, which is nearly identical with that laid down by* ***Professor Willis*** *[…] contains a* ***definition of Tracery*** *that is at once* ***simple*** *and* ***obvious*** *and enables us to class the Windows of this Period upon an intelligible principle. (Sharpe 1849a:20)*

In an extremely noteworthy attempt to further specify his definition, Sharpe also describes what should *not* be termed as window tracery. Here, too, he resorts to illustrations (see Fig.10 and 11). In this precise linguistic definition, as well as in the reference to a rule, or principle, governing the formation of tracery, echoes of Rickman's (1825) prescriptive approach seem perceivable:

> *A Window cannot, however, be said to contain tracery in which the foregoing condition is complied with simply by piercing the spaces that lie between the heads of three or more Lancet that lie under one arch, as in the East Window of* ***Etton Church****, or the* ***East Window of Easby*** *Church (****Fig. 6, Plate A****), the* ***term*** *conveys something more that the mere vertical continuation of the mullions above the spring of the Window-arch, and their termination of in Lancets in the end of that arch; it* ***necessarily*** *implies the existence of a* ***consistent design of perforation*** *commencing at the spring of the arch, and occupying the entire Window-head. (Sharpe 1849a:21)*

Resuming his subdivision of window tracery, Sharpe then presents his own periodization of English medieval architecture, based on characters of the window (see Sharpe 1851a, in section 5.3.):

> *[…] it is proposed to apply the term* ***GEOMETRICAL*** *to a large number of Windows which have hitherto been described and considered as* ***EARLY ENGLISH****; but which contain Tracery, in the sense in which the term is explained in the fourth chapter of Part 1. The* ***advantage*** *resulting from this* ***division*** *of our earliest Pointed Windows, and the application of the* ***term Tracery****, as now sought to be established, are obvious; for we are thus enabled not only to limit and describe the Windows of the earlier Period by a* ***term sufficiently characteristic****, but also to class, in a simple*

manner, the whole of the Windows of Pointed form ***under four heads****, and to denominate them according to their leading features: I.* ***LANCET****; II* ***GEOMETRICAL****; III.****CURVILINEAR****; IV.* ***RECTILINEAR****. (Sharpe 1849a:57)*

As previously specified, a general periodization is not enough for the *'descriptive writers'* (Sharpe 1849a:3) of Sharpe's generation. Instead, the value of a classification seems at present to be directly related to its level of detail and the quantity of specimens it comprehends. Hence, a further division of the *Geometrical* period into *Early* and *Late Geometrical* is proposed by Sharpe (1849a:60). The use of date-based adjectives appears to recall the chronological division of German architecture proposed by Whewell (Whewell 1842, see section 2.4.). Moreover, the subdivision of the *Geometrical* period echoes the one suggested by Poole in his paper in defence of the *Geometrical* as a separate style (Poole 1850b, see section 3.3.). Here, an internal subdivision of the *Geometrical* seems to mirror a better knowledge of the period, achieved by the author:

These Windows of ***Westminster Abbey Church*** *may be taken as the type of a large class of* ***Geometrical*** *Windows, the Tracery of which is entirely composed of plain or foliated circles, and which may be said to constitute the* ***first subdivision*** *of the Geometrical Period, and may be denominated accordingly,* ***Early Geometrical****. (Sharpe 1849a:60)*

Shifting then to the *Late Geometrical*, Sharpe proceeds to enumerate the five internal varieties of the period. Here, the absence of clear denominations for the variants is noteworthy. Instead, a description of each variant's main visual features is provided. The limiting nature of a name could explain that, together with the intention of avoiding possible criticisms on naming choices on the part of other authors:

The simplicity and similarity of outline which characterized the Early Geometrical Windows is not to be found in those of ***Late Geometrical*** *date; they exhibit, on the contrary, great diversity and originality of design; they admit, however, of a certain* ***classification****, and may be grouped, according to their* ***leading peculiarities****, principally under* ***four or five heads****:*

1. *Those retaining the large circular centre-piece. […]*
2. *[…] those which contain what has been called intersecting Tracery. […]*
3. *Throughout the whole of the Geometrical Period are to be found Windows whose Tracery is formed entirely by Foliation. […]*
4. *In the countries of Gloucester and Hereford there exist a series of Windows of Late Geometrical date, which deserve separate classification. Their peculiarity consists in the redundant use which is made of the Ball-flower in their design. […]*
5. *Towards the close of the Geometrical Period there occurred some singular attempts at originality in the designs of Window Tracery. […] several fanciful experiments were tried by the builders of this Period, which, […] present - under forms which may be still termed*

> *Geometrical in the **conventional sense of the term** – very little similarity in their general outline to the examples which we have hitherto been considering. (Sharpe 1849a:75-89)*

In a similar manner, a subdivision is constructed for the *Curvilinear* period. Here, however, a further progress in the classification method is perceivable. In the evident impossibility of proposing convincing terms for the classes, Sharpe identifies each of them with a widely known English specimen. In doing so, the concept presumably finds more easily appreciation in the public, well-acquainted with famous English buildings. Within the division, the connection of text and images is visible. Indeed, the number of each example refers to the sixty illustrated windows attached to the volume (Sharpe 1849b):

1. *Those in which the window head is occupied by a large and prominent centre-piece carried by two independent arches, as in **LINCOLN** (No. 11), **HOWDEN** (No. 14), **RIPON** (No. 16) and **GUISBOROUGH** (No. 17).*
2. *Those in which the Window-head is divided by two main arches of the same curvature as the Window-arch, into two equal and symmetrical portions, as in **TINTERN** (No. 12), **BEDALE** (No. 13) and **WHITBY** (No. 32).*
3. *Those in which the Window-head is filled with Tracery, having no such equal division of its parts by means of arches, as in **HULL** (No. 29) and **CARTMEL** (No. 23). (Sharpe 1849a:93)*

Sharpe's incapability in finding appropriate names for specimens' classes brings to the fore an issue in the practice of classification. In connection to that, a closing remark is devoted by Sharpe to the infinite variety of forms impossible to classify within a nomenclature. The author seems here to try and justify the existence of specimens not suitable to a univocal classification:

> *No description, however, can convey an adequate idea of their **unlimited variety**, nor any given **set of terms** define the endless changes of form they are made to assume according to the fancy of the architect, or the nature of space they are designed to fill. It may perhaps be convenient for the **purpose of description** to have **particular terms** by which to designate their relative position in a Window-head; thus the term **convergent** may be aptly applied to those openings, the heads of which **incline to the centre** of the compartment […] In the same way, those openings, the heads of which **diverge from the centre**, […] may with propriety be termed **divergent**; […] Again, the term **reversed** may be applied to those openings, the heads of which hang down. (Sharpe 1849a:109)*

The *'vital principle of variety'* (Sharpe 1849a:111) is what the author opposes to each possible univocal categorisation, and the attached series of illustrations mirrors this principle. In this volume, *Decorated Windows: A series of illustrations* (Sharpe 1849b), a detailed description is provided for each specimen, which is not blindly assigned to a period. Instead, an entire page is dedicated to its complete visual discrimination. Its form and composition, partially even its history of construction is discussed, and each

element is assigned to a period. This approach to description based on observation seems indicative of Sharpe's innovative conception of architectural history and its study:

> *The **accompanying series**, small as it is, and selected out of the many hundreds of beautiful examples which exist, may still serve to illustrate this **vital principle of variety**, so **inherent** in the design of these Periods. (Sharpe 1849a:111)*

At this point it appears necessary to stress the relevance of Sharpe's recognition of an internal variety to each period. There lies the innovative attitude to historical progress and reality description which characterises his method of classification. Moreover, precisely the recognition of this *'principle of variety'* (Sharpe 1849a:111) differentiates Rickman and Sharpe's approaches to classification. Sharpe is not interested in defining rigid classes of specimens, but rather in improving this first classification level and investigate categories more in depth. This is what he does in the volumes presented here and through his windows' classification. However, the limits of his method become evident in the absence of names at more detailed levels of classification, or in his use of chronological divisions (*Early and Late Geometrical*, see Sharpe 1849a:60). Notably, Sharpe himself refused Rickman's 1817 official term *'Perpendicular'* (Rickman 1825:39) to substitute it with his more descriptive *'Rectilinear'* (Sharpe 1849a:7). In that respect, the choice of right terms seemed indeed of primary concern to Sharpe.

To conclude, it must be remembered that the innovation of classificatory practices cannot be attributed to Sharpe's efforts alone. In fact, architectural tours and information exchanges brought the contemporary generation of historians to discover the variety of reality, and the necessity of a more detailed nomenclature to describe it (see Yanni 2014). In line with this, the next paragraph offers an overview of Sharpe's contemporary works presenting similar *'pictorial taxonomies'* of window tracery (Skipton-Long 2018:165), inspired by the one introduced by Skipton-Long in her 2018 article. These volumes manifest the widespread application of the innovative descriptive method in the discipline of English architecture periodization at the time.

4.3. On a generation of visual nomenclatures, or on Freeman's 1851 *Essay on the Origin and Development of Window Tracery in England* [54] and others

Rickman's (1825) reintroduction of the window as discriminating element for English medieval buildings inspired a series of authors. Among them, a focus on Freeman's *Essay on the origin and development of window tracery in England* (1851a) seems appropriate (see Fig. 14). Indeed, as far as the classification of English architecture is concerned, Sharpe and Freeman appear to have common purposes (see section 4.1.). Namely, the two authors both publish in the same years, i.e. 1849 and 1851, a periodization proposal and a treatise on the categorisation of window tracery in England. While Sharpe wrote a treatise on *Decorated Windows* in 1849 (Sharpe 1849a) followed by a periodization proposal in 1851 (Sharpe 1851a), Freeman published his periodization proposal first in his *History of Architecture*

[54] Freeman 1851a.

(Freeman 1849), and then a systematisation of Gothic window tracery in his *Essay on the Origin and Development of Window Tracery in England* in 1851 (Freeman 1851a, see section 5.2.). Accordingly, Freeman's nomenclature is appointed by Garbett as Sharpe's source of inspiration, since their proposed terms share a degree of similarity (Garbett 1851, see section 6.3.10.).

Though not published until 1851, an article appears in 1847 in *The Ecclesiologist*, a journal for ecclesiastic architecture, introducing Freeman's classification of window tracery in English medieval architecture (Freeman 1847). As mentioned in Section 3.3., the paper, called *The Nomenclature of Geometrical and Flowing Tracery* is the same in which Freeman presented his opinion on the *Geometrical* period (Freeman 1847). Here, a *'condensed view'* (Freeman1847:33) of his classification of window tracery is proposed by the author. In turn, the article is based on a paper Freeman read before the Oxford Architectural Society, named *'On the History of Geometrical window tracery'* [55]:

> *[...] it might not be inconsistent with the designs of The Ecclesiologist to give insertion to a condensed view of my system [...] relating to the* ***Geometrical*** *and the* ***Flowing*** *forms. The* ***want of some division and nomenclature*** *for their almost* ***innumerable varieties*** *is one which I have constantly felt, my attention having at all times been directed more especially to the investigation of window-tracery than to any other branch of ecclesiastical science; [...] I have endeavoured to supply for my own use, and have ventured to offer as an* ***assistance*** *to my fellow* ***students*** *in ecclesiastical architecture. I am fully aware of its imperfections, but it appears to me that it is highly important that* ***some nomenclature****, however* ***imperfect,*** *should be suggested to the ecclesiologists, which, if it has no further value, may at least be a ground-work on which some more competent person may construct one less open to objections. (Freeman 1847:33)*

Moreover, Freeman reaffirms the central role of the window for the classification of English ecclesiastical buildings. Since each window represents a *'stage of transition'* (Freeman 1847:34) the concepts of transition and stylistic evolution through different periods are clearly remarked (see section 3.3.). Additionally, Rickman's inspiration in the study of windows is perceivable:

> *Every conceivable* ***stage of transition*** *from earlier to later forms, and more than this, every conceivable mode of combining [...] contemporary ones is to be found among the* ***countless shapes*** *afforded by our ancient windows. In fact, a window constructed consistently on* ***one principle*** *is actually less frequently met then one which combines two or three. (Freeman 1847:34)*

An overview of Freeman's classification of window tracery in *The Ecclesiologist* is reported in the following schematisation (Freeman 1847). The level of detail of its subdivision is noteworthy, together

[55] Freeman, Edward A. (1846) *On the History of the Geometrical window tracery.* Paper read at the meeting of the Oxford architectural society on November 4th, 1846.

with the descriptive purpose Freeman shares with the contemporary authors, exemplified in the detailed definitions (see Sharpe 1849a; 1849b). Some of these definitions are reported as examples:

1. **Geometrical Tracery**

   1.1 Pure Geometrical: *The east end of Lincoln Cathedral is the finest example of this style […]*

   1.2 Foil Tracery *[…]*

2. **Flowing Tracery**

   2.1 Divergent Tracery *[…]*

   2.2 Convergent Tracery *[…]*

   2.3 Reversed Tracery *[…]*

   2.4 Reticulated Tracery *[…]*

   2.5 Ogee Tracery: *This is in Flowing tracery analogous to the Arch form, being in fact Arch tracery, employing for the simple Arch the ogee as being more adapted to the Flowing line. It admits two varieties, corresponding to those of the analogous forms:*

   2.5 A. *Where the ogee arches intersect, and the apex of one coincides with that of the window arch. This variety is very rare and very unsightly. […]*

   2.5 B. *Where the ogee arches are left imperfect, and no apex coincides with that of the window, so as to leave in three-lights windows (the most common form), a large vesical in the head and large spandrils. […]*

3. **Arch Tracery:** *Contemporary with Geometrical tracery, and indeed with Flowing and Perpendicular is Arch Tracery, in which the tracery is formed by mere arched lines. This […] enters into combination with all styles but seems to have an especial affinity with Geometrical. It does not enter into its definition, […] but its hard-curved line gives it an analogy with that style, and its combination with it are very numerous.*

3.1 Pure Arch Tracery *[…]*

3.2 Intersecting Tracery *[…]*

3.3 Arch and Foil Tracery: *From the union and combination of these forms result the varieties of **Early Decorated** (**Middle Pointed**) tracery; […] But to enumerate every kind of combination would be almost to enumerate every Geometrical window: I must, however, mention one remarkable form in which a skeleton of Arch Tracery is more or less completely filled with its distinctive foils; this I denominate Arch and Foil: the east window at Trumpington is a fine example. (Freeman 1847:34)*

Naturally, Freeman's future periodization will be based on a categorisation of window tracery, too (Freeman 1849, see section 5.2.). However, a precise visual representation of window specimens is not as central in Freeman's system as in Sharpe's (cf. Fig. 11 and 12 with Fig.14). Interestingly, Freeman's conclusion, like Sharpe's, is devoted to the presence of exceptions to his categorisation (Freeman 1847:35). While claiming that his system encompasses all specimens he has studied within his proposed

classes, Freeman concurrently admits the existence of exceptions and unclassifiable examples, named as *'vagaries'* (Freeman 1847:35) by the author:

> *These classes in their different combinations will be found to exhaust nearly* ***all the forms*** *of Decorated (Middle Pointed) window with which I am acquainted, with the* ***exception*** *of a few* ***vagaries*** *[…], which neither agree upon themselves, nor can be reduced to any class. (Freeman 1847:35)*

In addition to that, a mention is due to the preface to Freeman's *Essay on the Rise and Progress of Window Tracery in England* (1851a), dated by the author November 20th, 1850. This document offers valuable reflections. Conscious that his work is compared to that of Sharpe (1849a), Freeman laments an absence of detail in his colleague's work, which he tries to overcome in his classification:

> *[…] Mr* ***Sharpe*** *attempts hardly any classification of the* ***minutest varieties*** *of tracery; and his scheme involved but a very slight notice of the Flowing style, and none at all of the Flamboyant and Perpendicular. […] I have never yet found* ***any systematic arrangement and nomenclature of the numerous divisions and subdivisions of Gothic tracery****; to supply the want of such an one first led me to the present undertaking. It is something to have made some* ***classification and nomenclature****, however* ***imperfect****, if it be only as a groundwork for others indefinitely to improve upon. (Freeman 1851a:VI)*

The main goal of Freeman's (1851a) division is precisely a high level of detail. This precision, however, appears not to be mirrored in his illustrations (see Fig.14). He then presents his periodization of Gothic architecture, which he had already published in a separate volume in 1849 (Freeman 1849). Indeed, Freeman's periodization is the same as Sharpe's one (see Freeman 1849; Sharpe 1851a, in section 5.2.):

> *In my classification I have assumed the same* ***four divisions of Gothic Architecture****,* ***Lancet****,* ***Geometrical****,* ***Flowing*** *and* ***Perpendicular****, which I took as the groundwork of the Gothic portion of my History of Architecture. And I am well pleased to see this view gradually* ***gaining adherents*** *among those who are most competent to pronounce upon such a subject. First and foremost, I may reckon Mr* ***Sharpe*** *himself. (Freeman 1851a: VII)*

Subsequently, in a most valuable terminological note, Freeman expresses his appreciation for Sharpe's nomenclature. However, the author criticises Sharpe's term *Curvilinear*, judged as not descriptive enough. In Freeman's opinion, indeed, the *Geometrical* period could equally be described as *Curvilinear*. Hence Freeman resorts to an alternative and commonly used term: *Flowing*. As previously remarked, the debate is not only concerned with an issue of classification. Instead, it often reveals divergent opinions among the quoted historians about the choice of the right terms and the practice of naming (see section 6.3.):

Mr Sharpe's division ***coincides with mine*** *as far as it goes. But I cannot admire his name of '****Curvilinear****' to denote the later Decorated style; the* ***Geometrical*** *being equal* ***Curvilinear****, the division is thus rendered unnecessarily* ***illogical****; I have therefore retained the old and expressive term '****Flowing****'. I regret having to differ with Mr Sharpe on this point, as he has done me the honour to approve my nomenclature of several of the minor subdivisions. (Freeman 1851a: VII)*

Besides Sharpe (1849a) and Freeman (1851a) other authors tried to build similar comparative and visual taxonomies of window tracery. As reported by Skipton-Long (2018:162), chronologically, the first to be remembered is Professor Willis, and his *Remarks on the Architecture of the Middle Ages* (Willis 1835). Though focusing on the Gothic architecture in Italy, the author presents a comparative chart of Classical and Gothic architectures, which closely mirrors the one previously proposed by Rickman (1825:110-11, see Table 1 in section 2.3.). In 1840, also John Henry Parker will publish a volume of illustrations to be attached to his most famous *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836). There, among other compositional elements, numerous window specimens are illustrated and compared (see Fig.15).

Parker's graphical work in his volume, the *Glossary of architecture* (Parker 1836) merits particular attention. Despite supporting Rickman's (1825) periodization of medieval architecture based on English monarchs, Parker understands the necessity of a more precise classification. He thus produces a volume about the history of architecture commonly referred to by contemporaries as the *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836). There, terms are accurately defined and illustrated, also by means of comparative charts, enumerating typological variants of the same element. To that, an additional volume of illustrated plates is attached in 1840: *A Glossary of Architecture. Part II: The Plates* (Parker 1840). There, elements as capitals, mouldings, doors and windows are drawn next to each other, in a comparative perspective (see Fig.15).

In light of the importance recovered by graphical illustration in the descriptive method of architectural history, a praise is due to Parker's (1836) efforts. Naturally, the innovative character of his work is only perceivable through its comparison with previous volumes on the subject, which were only composed of text and almost deprived of illustrations (see Rickman 1825; Whewell 1842). Lastly, as Skipton-Long (2018:170) further points out, Sir Banister Flight Fletcher writes in 1896, *A History of Architecture on the comparative method* (Fletcher 1905). The volume constitutes a most valuable work within the frame of the innovative method of architectural description presented in this chapter. With over a thousand illustrations attached, the work entails examples of architecture from around the world, including English decorated windows, examined through a comparative method (see Fig.16). In addition to that, a special mention is due here also to Fletcher's famous schematisation of the world's history of architecture, known as *'The Tree of architecture'* (Fletcher 1905, see Fig.17). The diagram, also included in the first edition of his volume in 1896, illustrates the evolution of architectural styles as branches of five initial periods from all over the world. In this sense, Fletcher's proposed theory of architectural evolution is at the same time chronological and seen in an international and cross-cultural perspective (Fletcher 1905, see Fig.17).

In conclusion, it can be claimed that a common curiosity and interest in the description and consequent classification of reality unite all authors presented in the chapter. In this respect, great attention is paid also to the practice of classification and compilation of glossaries attached to almost all volumes of the time (see Parker 1838, Sharpe 1851a). Inspired by the work of Viollet-Le-Duc (1854) and his most famous volume, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'architecture française du XIe au XVIe siècle* (see section 1.3.4.), the compilation of glossaries could be seen as part of both a descriptive and a prescriptive approach by these authors. Indeed, while terms are the evident result of a careful observation and description of real architectural specimens, these same terms are then systematised in glossaries in order to be used by the reader in the description of other specimens.

Rickman first, defined his volume as a companion to the student in his architectural tours (Rickman 1825:112). Indeed, the practice of proposing a glossary of terms could also be traced back to Rickman's work, which did present a glossary (Rickman 1825). Interestingly, these glossaries do not regard windows alone, but all typical architectural elements of a church (see Sharpe 1851a, Parker 1836, Fig. 23). In fact, this concern for categorisation of elements of ecclesiastical buildings appears at times even to supersede the one in periodization and period naming. Or better, the periodization seems to naturally follow as a result from the description of architecture Sharpe and his contemporary authors devote themselves to. In view of this interest in description, these authors' ultimate urge for an updated and refined version of Rickman's nomenclature and periodization, originally published in 1817, can probably be better comprehended and envisioned.

4.4. *Terminological Parallels* [56] or, on the art of comparison

As far as the theory of terminology is concerned, a focus on the introduction of a new method of classification is central to enable further understanding. While Rickman provided *'the world'* (Rickman 1825:109) with his nomenclature, prescribing terms to become official, Sharpe (1849a) seems to shift the attention of historians on the observation of reality for the sake of description. If both authors wish for their terms to gain recognition among experts, a genuine curiosity towards a respectful description of reality appears to be the main interest of Sharpe's generation of historians (see section 5.3.). Indeed, while Rickman felt the urge of giving his discipline a simple – but usable – first periodization, Sharpe was not concerned with that. Instead, the author's main aim, was to try and improve Rickman's existing nomenclature into a more descriptive and comprehensive classification.

These divergent approaches to categorisation and naming seems to prefigure the two natures of terminology: a prescriptive and a descriptive one (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:12). As suggested by Faber and López Rodríguez (2012:12), terminology is either interested in prescribing terms to be used with a specific meaning and context, or alternatively, in describing reality through naming it in an increasingly specific manner. These natures reflect the difference between the presented generations of

[56] Cf. Sharpe 1848a.

authors[57]. A further difference between Rickman's (1925) and Sharpe's (1849a) approach to classification is the relevance attributed to graphical representation of real specimens. According to Faber (2009) frame-based terminology (FBT) specifically deals with the role of images in conveying the meaning of specialised concepts. There, linguistic and graphical representation cooccur in the concept's clarification. In addition to that, this diversified illustration of the same concept evidences its multidimensional nature (Temmerman 2000:31). Concurrently, as Faber (2009:127) claimed, visual representation of concepts enhances the understanding of conceptual relations within the same conceptual system or specialised domain:

> *The inclusion of different types of **visual representation** is extremely useful in specialised knowledge fields because images enhance textual comprehension, complement the linguistic information […] and generally facilitate knowledge acquisition. Given the **crucial role of images** in knowledge representation, graphical material should be selected so as to be **consistent with linguistic description**, the level of specialisation of the text and the recipient's previous subject knowledge. (Marsh & White 2003: 652–654, in Faber 2009:127)*

Moreover, the vicinity of text and illustrations seems symptomatic of Sharpe's (1849a) attitude towards graphical description of concepts. Indeed, similarly to what Faber asserts, the maximal comprehension of each period, or concept, is pursued and every means of explanation should be employed to that goal:

> ***Linguistic information** is not the only means of describing concepts. **Images** are also useful for this purpose, particularly in certain domains, such as engineering, **architecture** and medicine. The inclusion of types of **visual representation** enhances **textual comprehension** and complements the linguistic information provided in other data fields. (Faber & Montero Martínez 2019:21)*

Faber (Faber et al. 2007:49) reflects also on the grade of abstraction of visual representations of concepts. In this process of abstraction, determined aspects of the concept are chosen to become part of its abstracted image, in order to enhance the concept's understanding. These attributes determine thus the image resemblance to the concept, or to a *'real-world entity'* in reality:

> *[…] it is more useful to categorize images in terms of their most salient functions (Anglin et al. 2004) or in terms of their relationship with the **real-world entity** that they represent. We have thus based our typology of images on the criteria of **iconicity**, **abstraction** and dynamism as ways of referring to and representing specific **attributes** of specialized **concepts**. (Faber et al. 2007:49)*

In this respect, the selection of attributes to be included in the representation is crucial towards their understanding and connection to other concepts (cf. also Faber et al. 2007:63; Prieto Velasco & Faber

[57] See Sharpe 1849a:3, on Rickman's (1825) system: '[…] how far a division so simple as to fix the attention of early students, and, on that account, so necessary for preliminary inquiry, is one that, in the present advance state of knowledge on the subject, is calculated to satisfy the requirements of descriptive writers of the present day'.

2012:239). Similarly, Cabré defines the degree of abstraction of a special language, as depending on *'the subject field, the recipients of the information, and the sender's communicative purpose'* (Cabré 1999:65). Hence, the author seems to imply the possibility of more degrees of abstraction of a term from its correspondent concept, which could be defined as concept's representations. In line with this, the heterogeneous representations of windows proposed by the historians presented here can be conceived as mirroring divergent degrees of abstraction defined by Cabré (1999:65), due to a different selection of visual attributes in the process of abstraction.

Furthermore, in reference to Faber's multiple grades of abstraction (Faber et al. 2007), a mention is due to Sharpe's (1849a) choice to build visual taxonomies of medieval windows out of scale (Skipton-Long 2018:177). Indeed, the abstraction applied by Sharpe to windows has comparison as its focus, and thus includes only visual features needed for classification. In this, Faber's abstraction seems to find its practical application (see Fig. 11 and 12). In addition to that, also Rey (1995) discusses the relation between knowledge progress and naming in a discipline. A similar knowledge development appears to be reflected in the examined nomenclatures[58]. According to Rey, naming occurs concurrently to a knowledge advancement. Or better, as new concepts are discovered, they need to be named. Therefore, categorising – or differentiating – as he calls it (Rey 1995:47) – and naming objects with shared features, implicates a better knowledge of them and of the subject field in general:

> *The construction of objects of knowledge occurs through a discursive and logic activity by means of signs. In our cultural experience we have used the signs of language, and especially nouns for this purpose;* ***we name in order to differentiate, to recognise and finally to know****. (Rey 1995:47)*

It appears thus reasonable to identify Rickman's (1825) and Sharpe's (1849a) nomenclatures with successive stages of knowledge evolution. If Rickman's categorisation was simpler and the expression of a still rather superficial knowledge on the subject, thirty years afterwards, further studies of architectural history allowed a more detailed classification. This seems to find confirmation in Rey (1995), who highlights the relation of conceptual advancement and terminology in specialised fields:

> *[…] there is no discovery, […] without an adequate* ***terminological apparatus*** *appropriate to its purpose […] even the philosophical discourse […] can only become properly philosophical by the prior construction and use of a terminology.* ***It is impossible to name without names; it is impossible to name scientifically without terms*** *[…]. (Rey 1995:56)*

Following this last quote of Rey (1995), a constant process of naming seems necessary to keep up with the constant evolution of knowledge in specialised disciplines[59]. Indeed, as in architectural history, the

[58] See Sharpe 1849a:2: 'In estimating however the value to us, at the present time, of Mr Rickman's Classification, and the advantage of retaining it, regard must be had to the object with which it was originally proposed, and the amount of knowledge possessed on the subject at the time he wrote'.
[59] See Sharpe 1849a:5: 'We may, at no great distance of time, be able to class them, not by centuries, but by decades of years'.

terminology of a specialised discipline will always appear *'inadequate'* (Rey 1995:56) and in need of updates. In connection to that, the definitions presented by these historians seem to improve with knowledge, too: not only is Sharpe now able to define window tracery, but even to describe what should not be called window tracery. This relevance given by Sharpe to the definition of window tracery recalls not only Rey's (2000, see section 2.5.) reflection on the different kinds of definition, but also the one fundamental feature of a term according to Cabré (1999): namely, the existence of its opposite[60].

A further worthwhile topic, investigated by the theory of terminology, is how different conceptual interpretations originate multiple terms for the same concept. In Freixa's opinion (2006:53), innovative terms manifest their author's own vision of the concepts lying behind them. Or, they express a personal point of view on the concepts. In this respect, Sharpe's substitution of Rickman's quite identical term seems exemplar (see Sharpe 1849a:8, in section 4.2.). Indeed, except for a personal preference, Sharpe seems not to have a further reason for the substitution. As a matter of fact, the term is perceived by his audience as a synonym in the debate in *The Builder* (see Scott 1851a:480, in section 6.3.6.). As a consequence, other authors question its adoption[61].

Moreover, the classifications with which this chapter was concerned seem to anticipate the definition of ontologies proposed by L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne (2012:5), who, quoting van Rees (2003), define ontology as the differentiation of objects into classes. Following this definition, Sharpe's (1849a) classificatory operation appears to resemble the construction of an ontology, which focuses on classing objects with shared similarities, more than on labelling them[62]. Indeed, in Sharpe's volumes, both terms and chronological limits of the periods seem not as relevant to the author as the definition of the shared features of specimens in the same class (see Sharpe 1849a; 1851a):

> *In **ontologies**, the focus of the description is placed on the classes (or concepts) and ontologists go to great lengths to capture the properties of the objects they present in such way that each class becomes distinct from others and refer to a **closed set of objects**. This explains why **labels are secondary**. […] Ontologies, because it is essential that they capture the **specificity of classes**, are **highly structured** entities, and the **relationships between classes** must be clearly, logically and consistently defined. (L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne 2012:19)*

Notably, L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne (2012:20) also address the topic of adding new concepts, or classes, to an ontology. This seems to reflect the addition of concepts to the presented periodizations of

[60] See Sharpe 1849a:20: 'A WINDOW cannot be said to contain Tracery unless the whole of the Window head is pierced through to the plane of the glass, so as to leave no plain surface, or solid mass of stone, in the spandrels between the principal Tracery-bars and the Window-arch'.
[61] See FSA 1851a:387: 'Rectilinear period (1360 – 1550): This is merely a change of name without any object and the dates are not well chosen. Or Scott 1851a, in 6.3.6.: Thus far our vernacular, conversational nomenclature is identical with that adopted by Mr Sharpe, and the two remaining divisions we only differ upon so far as name go, calling one "Flowing" vice "Curvilinear", the other "Perpendicular" instead of "Rectilinear". Where then we do practically differ?'.
[62] See Sharpe 1849a:5: 'It has become, in fact, our legitimate task, now that the series of examples which have been periodically presented to our readers is completed, to consider how we shall classify them; to examine their points of contrast and resemblance'.

English architecture. Indeed, the process described hereafter by L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne (2012) appears to mirror the previous discussion about the *Geometrical* period (see section 3.4.):

> *The construction of an ontology is mostly* ***top-down*** *and requires that a* ***clear delimitation of concepts*** *be made (at least for the most important concepts) before starting to populate it).* ***Adding a new class****, especially at a high level of the hierarchy, often leads to* ***a redefinition*** *of parts of the modelling. (L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne 2012:20)*

Furthermore, a genuine curiosity for the observation and description of reality by the authors presented here cannot be denied. The substantial graphic apparatuses in their volumes (see Sharpe 1849a; Freeman 1851a) testify to their belief in the necessity of a multidimensional representation of concepts (see Temmerman 2000:31; Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:20). In fact, their interest in description appears sometimes so evident, that the naming of periods and building specimens gets less relevant in their volumes. Hence, labels, or terms, as dates, become secondary (see Sharpe 1852:177, in section 3.2.).

As Hirst (2009, in L'Homme and Bernier-Colborne 2012:18) argues, terms in specialised fields tend to be structured more easily, as specialised terminology is closer to its correspondent ontology than everyday language. Specifically, Hirst (2009) claims that concepts' interpretation and classifications can vary among experts. Similarly, as Rey (1995) suggests, denominations, like concepts, are not the same for everyone. Indeed, the use of a term hints at a specific concept's interpretation (L'Homme 2015). Hence, the contrasting nomenclatures presented here should be interpreted as divergent and personal perceptions of the concepts behind them, and consequently of reality.

Interestingly, Cabré (1999), too, reflects on the development of concepts and terms in specialised fields, where knowledge constantly evolves. Specifically, the author addresses the creation of neologies as contemporary to the elaboration of new concepts: *'The appearance of a new concept coincides with the appearance of a new designation'* (Cabré 1999:203). In the author's opinion, the appearance of a new term would thus signal the presence of an innovative concept. Hence, the great number of terms in the examined volumes should also be the representation of new concepts, or at least of divergent opinions on the shared ones. In line with this, as Freixa affirms (2006) within the frame of denominative variation, each classification of reality is admittedly arbitrary and personal. Indeed, quoting Guilbert (1975:130, in Freixa 2006:64), Freixa defines denomination as a *'personalisation of thought'.* According to the author, every time a denomination is formulated for a concept, it inevitably corresponds to a personal and specific vision of it by its author. This same personal vision and arbitrariness of concepts and their denominations could be detected in Sharpe's and his contemporary authors' reflections on the periodization of English medieval architecture[63].

Lastly, the creative forms of classification systems presented in the chapter deserve a final mention. As Rey acknowledges, for complicated topics, *'non-linear'* (Rey 1995:139) diagrams or

[63] See Sharpe 1849a:4: 'Mr Rickman might, with equal correctness, have divided the entire duration of the Medieval Styles into five, six, or even seven Periods instead of four, had he chosen to do so'.

classification models are needed, in particular, so-called *'tree structures'* (Ibid.). In this diagram, each term is described as a node, which is then further developed. In a complicated subject such as English medieval architecture periodization, the efforts of the historians in elaborating different forms of diagrams to reflect the specificity of their studies should be praised (see Fig. 11 – 17). A great example of this seems Fletcher's famous *'Tree of Architecture'* (Fletcher 1905, see Fig.17). Accordingly, one may conclude that, if, following Rey (1995:59), no naming is possible without names, the principle seems to work for the present case also the other way around. Namely, terms arise exclusively when new concepts have previously been elaborated and require to be linguistically defined.

4.5. Conclusions

In examining the presented nomenclatures, their context of production must be envisioned. Indeed, as all texts, these nomenclatures constitute the product of descriptive needs. Rickman's 1817 nomenclature was aimed at providing English architecture with the same level of classification as the Classical one (Rickman 1825, see section 2.3.), in order to prove its value within the context of the *Battle of Styles* (see section 1.3.4.). In a similar manner, thirty years afterwards, knowledge developed and evolutionary theories in natural sciences promoted an innovative perception of reality, influencing studies in other disciplines (Yanni 2014). Concurrently, the interest of historians shifted from the definition of models and standard categories – now seen as limited and overruled – to a more descriptive method, able to effectively portray reality and accommodate not only standard examples, but also exceptions and rarities. Consequently, the purpose of new classification's attempts is not language standardisation anymore, but a terminology as descriptive, detailed and comprehensive as possible (Sharpe 1851a:IX).

In order to be correctly perceived, also Sharpe's work in 1849 (Sharpe 1849a; 1849b) requires contextualisation. A periodization of English medieval architecture existed already, defined by Rickman in 1817. However, its limitedness was clearly evident to other authors, and an update seemed necessary (Sharpe 1851a). Concurrently, other disciplines were evolving towards a more descriptive approach to reality, where also specimens deviating from the known standards needed to be described and categorised (see Yanni 1997). Thus, like other scientists, architectural historians are confronted with the challenge of describing reality through principles merely defined in theory.

In order to find appreciation within the scientific community, the only solution seemed thus the definition of a classification based on reality observation and description (Yanni 1997). In addition to that, in order to allow further understanding, five elements of Sharpe's method (1849a) should be remembered. First, its primary descriptive purpose. In that, description is based on observation, as on the comparison and contrast among real examples. While evidencing the progress of styles in constant evolution in time, this approach assures the relativity and maximal comprehensiveness of definitions. Secondly, the central relevance of concepts' visual representation. Indeed, illustrations are not mere graphic embellishments anymore, but become crucial towards the concepts' comprehension. The position of images in Sharpe's volumes is thus noteworthy. They are no longer included in appendixes at the end of a volume as in previous works on the subject (cf. Rickman 1825, Whewell 1842). Instead,

images lie right next to the text, as important as linguistic description towards a concept's explanation, which is always specific and related to the specimen represented in the illustration (see Sharpe 1849a). Thirdly, Sharpe's volumes presented here, the *Decorated Windows* and its attached illustrations (Sharpe 1849a; 1849b) could be reasonably considered as an introduction to Sharpe's 1851 proposal for a classification update of Rickman's official nomenclature (Sharpe 1851a, see section 5.3.). As it happens, this systematisation of windows specimens paves the way for Sharpe' periodization of English architecture based on window tracery. Specifically, Sharpe's 1849 volumes appear to be aimed at presenting the descriptive method he is going to apply for the construction of his periodization. The three volumes (Sharpe 1849a; 1849b; 1851a) thus seem to constitute a single publication, or the joint product of an innovative method for the classification of reality proposed by the author.

Lastly, if Rickman (1825) aimed at defining categories through precise descriptions and exact chronological limits, Sharpe (1849a) tries to understand the stylistic progress lying behind them. He looks inside Rickman's categories, searching for subcategories and stylistic and visual evolution. This, as pointed out by Skipton-Long, is also the reason behind Sharpe's *'rough dates'* (Skipton-Long 2018:165): no exact chronological limit can be assigned to a period, since everything constantly evolves. As Skipton-Long (2018:177) further claims, chronological evolution is central in Sharpe and his contemporaries' work: Sharpe applies Linnaeus' (1737) method of categorisation and develops it, taking into consideration the evolution of architecture in time. Indeed, Linnaeus compared leaves of different species, without considering the evolutionary dimension, since his main purpose consisted in defining a taxonomy of visual features. On the contrary, in the case presented here, a primary classification of medieval architecture already existed, codified by Rickman in 1817. Hence, Sharpe is able to do something Linnaeus could not have done, as Skipton-Long (2018:165) explains. Namely, while comparing windows of subsequent periods, he also investigates the variety inherent to each period, and the successive forms that the same category takes on, considering in this also the evolutionary component in time of the specimens. Therefore, Sharpe's plates could be considered simultaneously as comparative taxonomies and illustrations of the evolution of decorated windows.

In conclusion, if, according to Yanni, Rickman is *'The Linnaeus of English medieval architecture'* (Yanni 1997:211), the difference between his and Sharpe's method becomes evident in Sharpe's detailed study of each period's internal varieties (see section 4.2.). Indeed, Sharpe's main legacy could be said to consists in a respectful description of reality and its innumerable aspects, which do not entirely fit in categories defined in theory. This will culminate in the recognition by the author that no stable form exists in reality, but merely a constant state of transition, in which each form is continually muting into something different. In this, each stylistic phase should be seen as *'transitional'*, bridging from a previous to a subsequent form (Sharpe 1851h:557, see section 6.3.8.). Indeed, while observation and description become central, the limits of a rigid categorisation are perceived when applied to reality. In this, the influence of natural sciences is evident, and the wish to elevate architectural history to the scientization level enjoyed by other disciplines (Skipton-Long 2018, see

section 1.3.1.). Following the examples selected by Skipton-Long (2018), an overview was provided in this chapter of some of the volumes inspired by Rickman's (1825) reintroduction of the window as classificatory means for English medieval and ecclesiastical architecture. Indeed, a methodological shift appears to be occurring at that stage of the history of architecture: the precedent prescriptive approach is muting into a descriptive one, where each specimen needs to be illustrated and described to be accordingly classed and named.

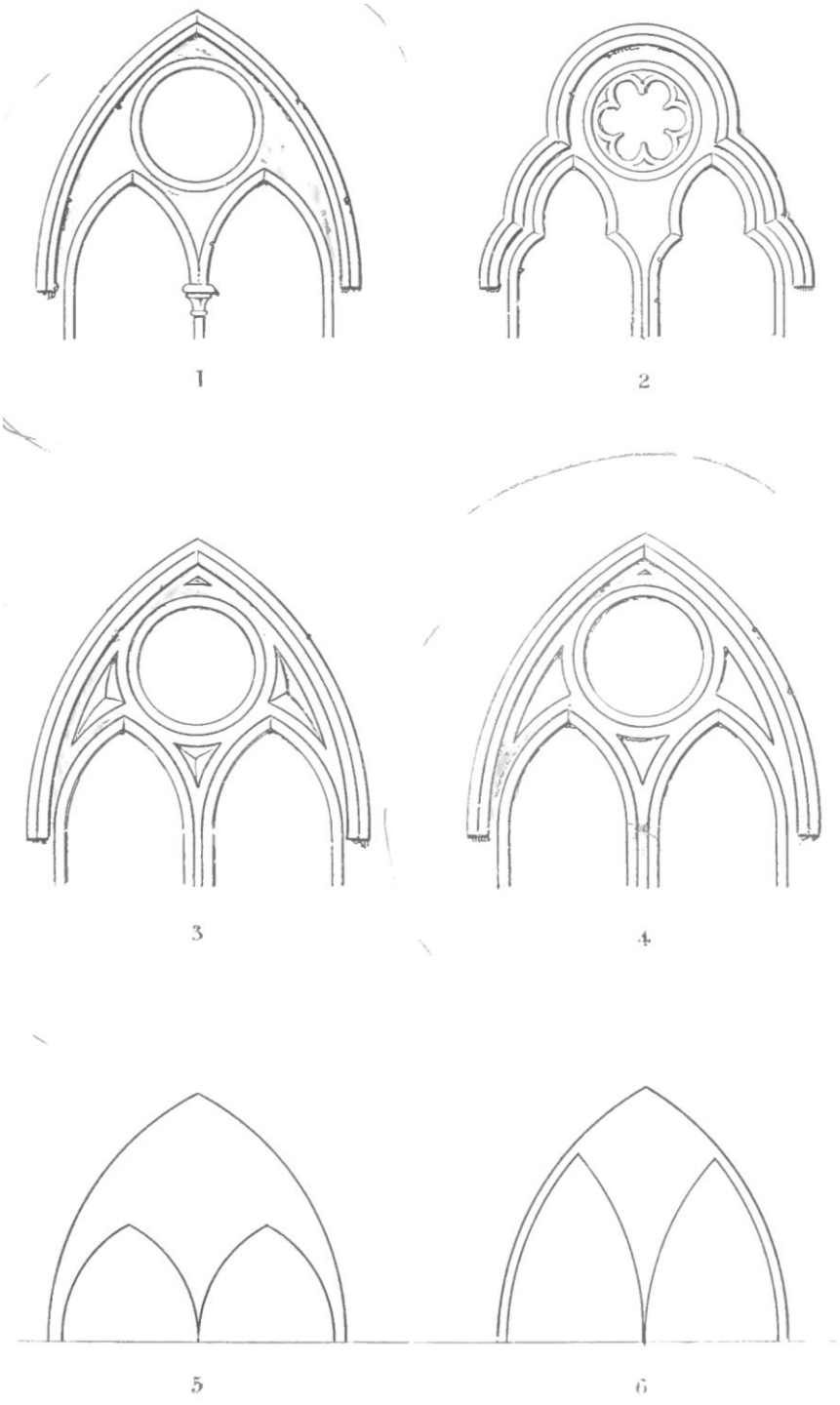


Figure 14: On the origin of Geometrical tracery. Plate I. Freeman 1851a:9. See Skipton-Long 2018:173.

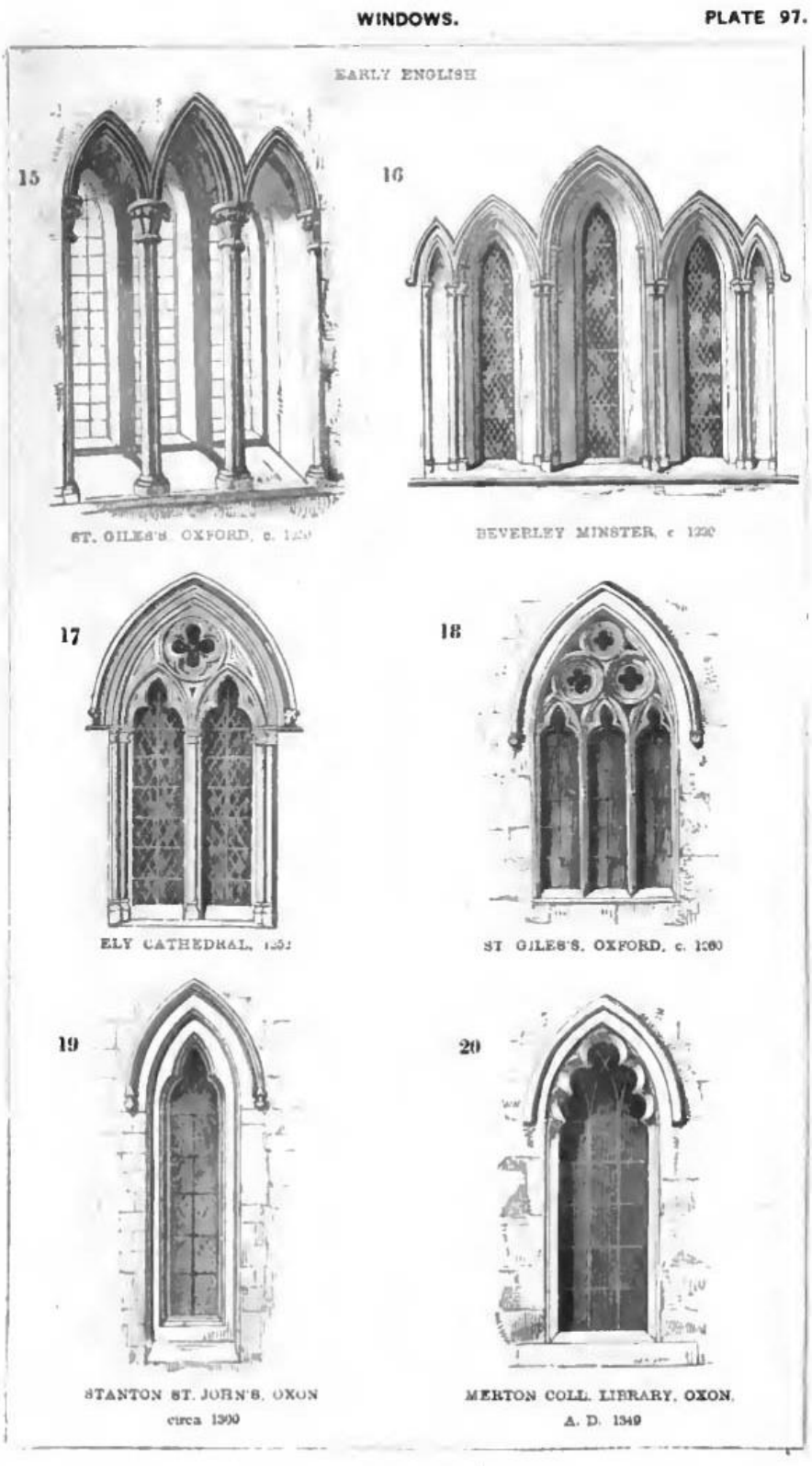


Figure 15: Comparison of Early English Windows. Parker 1840. Plate 97.

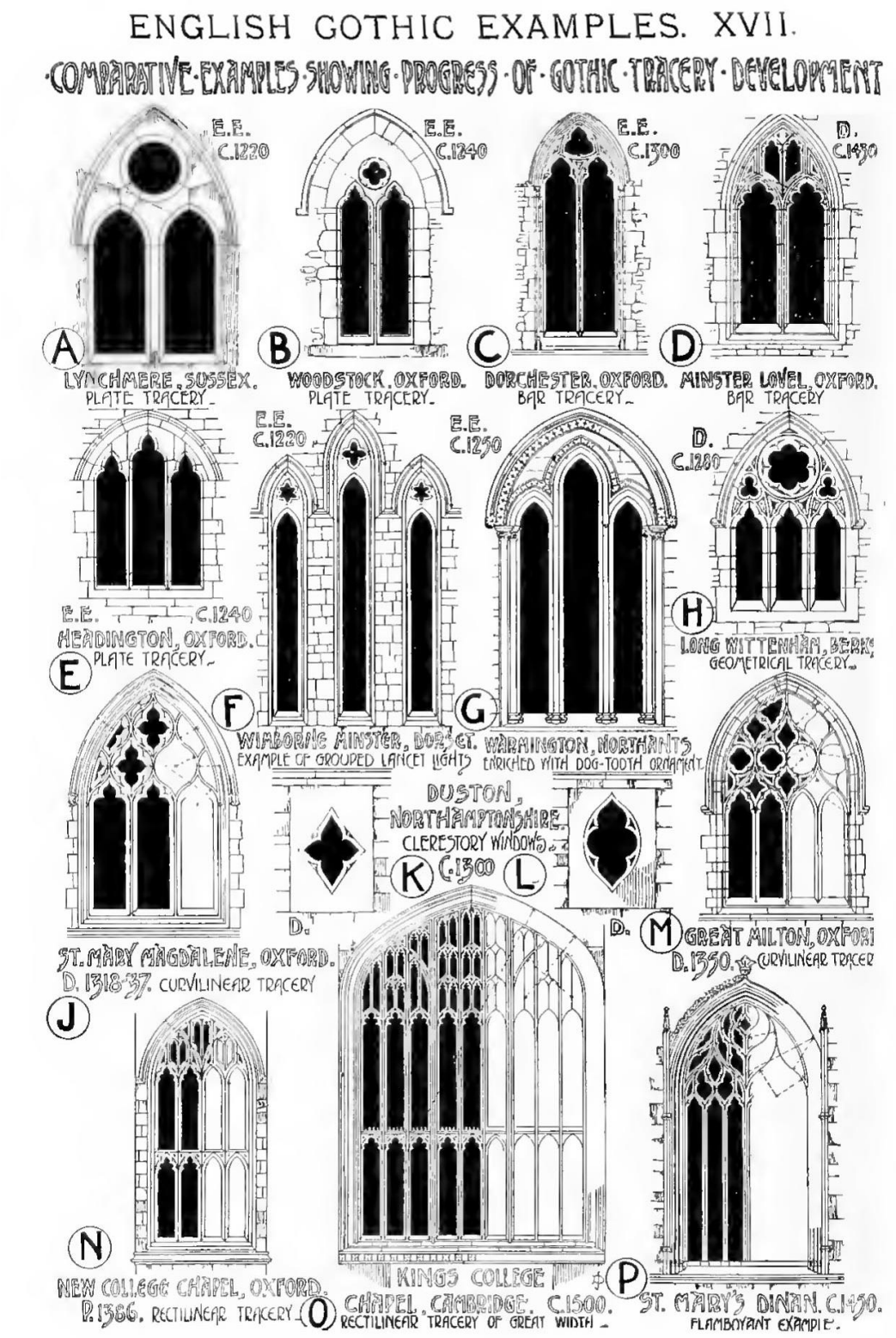
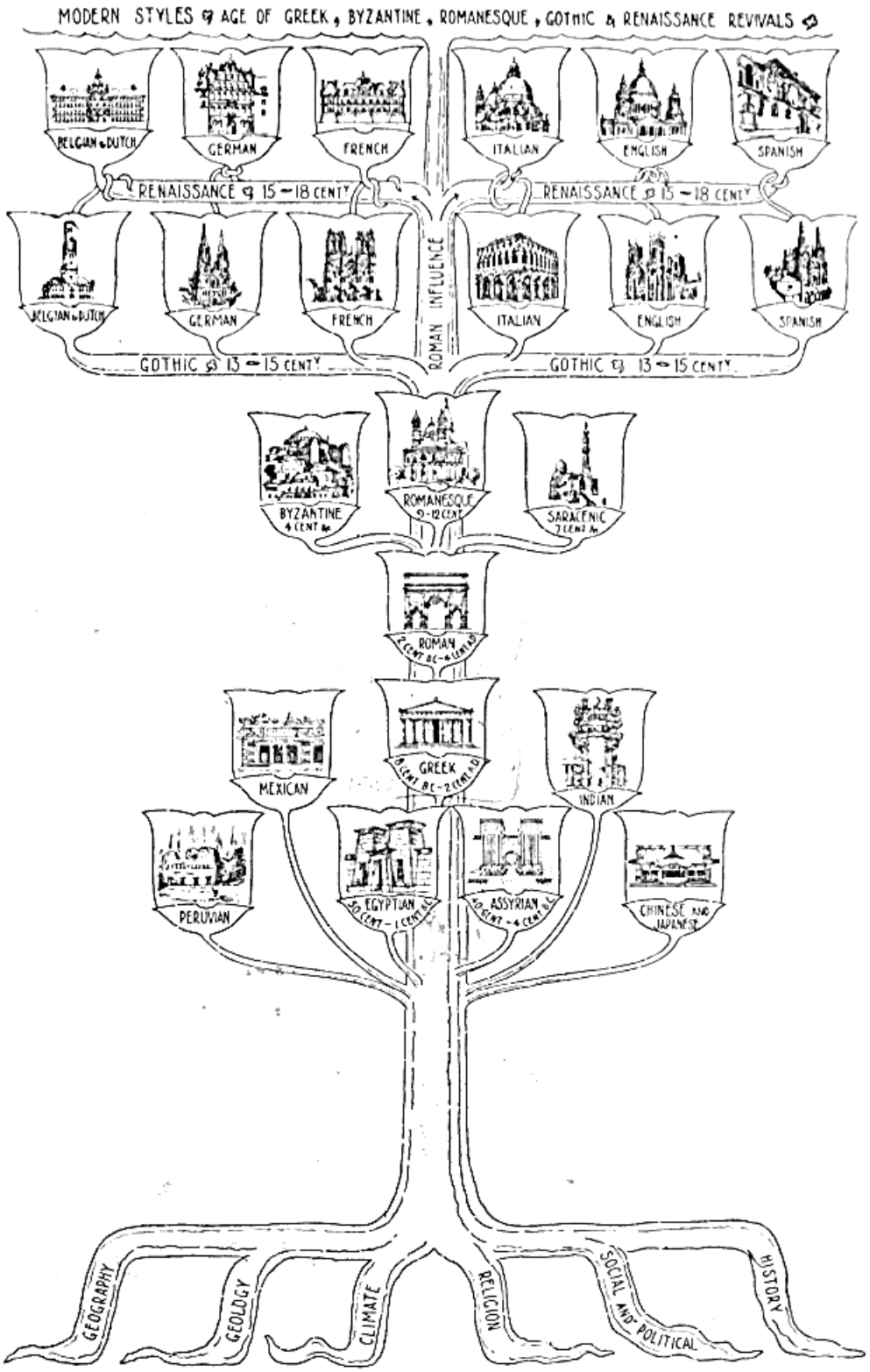


Figure 16: English Gothic Examples XVII. Comparative examples showing the progress of Gothic Tracery development. Plate 142. Fletcher 1905:340. See Skipton-Long 2018:174.



THE TREE OF ARCHITECTURE,
Showing the main growth or evolution of the various styles.

Figure 17: The Tree of Architecture. Fletcher 1905. Page not numbered.

5. On Sharpe's *Seven Periods of English Architecture* [64] or, on the necessity of a detailed classification of English ecclesiastical buildings of the Middle Ages

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents Edmund Sharpe's proposal for an alternative periodization and nomenclature of English medieval architecture. This suggestion for an update of Rickman's (1825) official periodization is the main topic of the present research, together with the comparison of Sharpe's 1851 proposed classification with other contemporary classifications. Sharpe's nomenclature is contextualised within a group of contemporary proposals concerning terms and periodizations related to Gothic architecture, arising in the years around 1851. Sharpe devotes a volume to his periodization: *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a), which constitutes the main object of this chapter.

In this volume, Sharpe suggests a division of English architecture of the Middle Ages into seven periods. As each single term or concept discussed in the previous chapters, the origin of Sharpe's nomenclature goes back to the work of previous authors; concurrently, it is based on the classification of visual features of English traceried windows. Inspired by Rickman (1825), Sharpe committed himself to a systematisation of the characters of window tracery of English ecclesiastical buildings, from which his nomenclature is derived. The results of these observations are published in three volumes: The *Decorated Windows* with the attached illustrations (Sharpe 1849a; 1849b, see section 4.2.), and *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a), which is the object of this chapter. As previously mentioned, the three volumes could be considered as a single work, whose contents deeply interrelate. Indeed, the previous chapter and this could be considered to deal with the same topic: namely, Sharpe's theory regarding the periodization of the architecture of the Middle Ages in England.

Not differently from all previously examined texts, Sharpe's nomenclature and volume (1851a) are not analysed on their own, but rather are contrasted to other contemporary nomenclatures, in order to highlight their value in perspective. Specifically, a comparison is drawn between Sharpe's work and a similar periodization and nomenclature of English architecture published by Edward Augustus Freeman two years before, in his *History of Architecture* (Freeman 1849). The choice is not arbitrary, but based on a suggestion by Edward Lacy Garbett, an architectural theorist (Garbett 1851, see section 6.3.10.). In the course of this chapter, the vicinity of Sharpe and Freeman's periods and terms will become evident. Concurrently, a central topic of this research will be brought to the fore: not a single term, concept, or even nomenclature is proposed by these authors that is not derived from general use, the practice of architectural description, or inspired by the work of previous historians.

Moreover, the importance of comparison, introduced in the discussion on Sharpe's *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a, see section 4.2.), is here remarked once again. Any single architectural element or building is not relevant if analysed on its own, but rather as a term of comparison to similar ones. Other works by Sharpe are therefore quoted, in order to stress the multifaceted applicability of his

[64] Sharpe 1851a.

nomenclature. In this respect, Sharpe's 1851 paper on the classification of Gothic mouldings is examined, a document presenting his nomenclature before the Royal Institute of British Architects (Sharpe 1851b). In addition, Sharpe's 1871 application of his nomenclature to the classification of British mouldings of the Middle Ages is quoted (Sharpe 1871). Eventually, the author's influence on the future practice of English architecture periodization and buildings comparison is hinted at through an overlook of Banister Fletcher's reflections on the classification of English medieval architecture, first published in 1896 (Fletcher 1905). Indeed, Fletcher defines a classification of medieval architecture *'after Sharpe'* (Fletcher 1905:330), attesting to the importance of the author's contribution to the subject.

Regarding the theory of terminology, the main aspect arising from the comparison of Freeman's (1849) and Sharpe's (1851a) nomenclatures is the problem of consistency among terms of the same nomenclature. As it happens, the issue affects all aspects related to naming, from terms to the conceptual structure and classification theory expressed through them (Sager 1990). In connection with this, Temmerman's (2000) reflections on the univocity ideal of terminology are addressed, in reference to the multitude of different terms proposed by the historians considered here. In this respect, the necessity of descriptive terms to univocally define concepts is discussed through the words of Cabré (1999).

Additionally, unambiguous terminology is identified as a necessary condition to allow communication and progress of a scientific discipline such as history of architecture (Felber 1984b, in Cabré 1999). Indeed, as scientific discourse and the communication of concepts become international, the necessity of terms to allow a widespread understanding becomes urgent and is recognised as a primary scope of official nomenclatures (Felber 1984b in Cabré 1999; Wüster 1979). Moreover, a reflection is dedicated to the similarity between the relation of terms and architectural elements in the work of Sharpe (1851a) and the semiotic triangle, connecting objects from reality, terms and concepts (Ogden & Richards 1923, in Campo 2012). In this respect, the presented approach to the description of architecture is defined as onomasiological, starting from the definition of a concept and proceeding to the discussion of the best term to identify it (Sager 1990). Eventually a final mention is devoted to the central role of comparison within the practice of naming. As it happens, not only the definition of a concept, but its comparison to similar ones is vital towards its recognition and definition with a term (Wüster 1979, in Campo 2012). As the chapter will attempt to prove, this applies both to the theory of terminology and the present study of English medieval architecture.

5.2. On Freeman's *History of Architecture* [65] and his periodization of English architecture in 1849

As mentioned in Chapter 4, in 1851 Edward Augustus Freeman, an English architecture historian, published an *Essay on the Origin and Development of Window Tracery in England* (Freeman 1851a, see section 4.3.). Significantly, the publisher of the volume is John Henry Parker, author of the *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836), who also printed Rickman's volume with his official classification of English architecture in 1817 (see Rickman 1825). As a powerful publisher at the time, Parker will play

[65] Freeman 1849.

a central role in the discussion on the periodization of English architecture, as will become evident in the next chapter (see Ch.6). Notably, Freeman's classification of window tracery is based on a previous volume, where the author proposes his periodization of English medieval architecture (Freeman 1849).

Indeed, as Garbett points out (Garbett 1851, see section 6.3.10.), the origins of Sharpe's nomenclature lay in Freeman's proposal. As it happens, in Freeman's 1849 volume about the history of world architecture, a chapter deals with the British Middle Ages. In that, worth noticing is the discrimination of varieties of Gothic architecture. As Yanni (1997) states, the appearance of a new language for architectural description *'borrowed from science'* (Yanni 1997:208) is evident in Freeman's production (see section 1.3.2.). References to life and nature are frequent, as well as to a progressive evolution among successive styles. Referring to that innovative language, the beginning of Freeman's chapter on Gothic architecture is illuminating (Freeman 1849). Here, the *Gothic* is addressed as the *'noblest offspring of human art'* (Freeman 1849:295), unifying religion and patriotism. The connection to God and religion plays a most relevant role in the study of Gothic architecture. Indeed, the Gothic as *'a testament of God's greatness'* (Yanni 1997:205) will be a main argument of the *Gothic Revival*, within the contemporary *Battle of Styles* in England (see section 1.3.4.):

> *We have now come to the **Gothic** style, that **noblest offspring of human art**, a style hallowed by every association of **religious and national feeling**, the pure and undisputed **possession** of **our Teutonic lineage** and **Christian faith**. (Freeman 1849:295)*

In a most important passage regarding the adoption of the term *Gothic*, Freeman quotes the term's definition proposed in *The Churchman's Theological Dictionary* by Reverend Robert Eden (Eden 1845). Notably, Eden's *Dictionary* belongs to a series of prescriptive volumes intended to provide the student with an appropriate vocabulary for the description of architecture (see section 2.3.). As Yanni (2014) remarks, the volumes were a major production at the time, on a par with Parker's *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836) and Viollet-le-Duc's *Dictionnaire Raisonné de l'architecture française* (1854). It should be noted that glossaries on the components of a medieval church were also featured in most volumes about English medieval architecture (see Rickman 1825, Sharpe 1851a, in section 2.3.).

In the following passage, Freeman explains how the term *Gothic* originated in the dominion of the Goths in England after the Romans. From the terminological point of view, the discussion is impressive since alternative terms for the hypernym *Gothic* are discussed, as *'Pointed'*, or *'Christian'* (Freeman 1849:298). In that respect, the adoption of the term *Pointed* has a logical consequence worth noticing. Namely, that the *Romanesque* should be then called *Round*, for consistency reasons. Indeed, the consistency of terms within a nomenclature appears to majorly concern for the authors presented here. Or at least, it seems to be perceived as a way to improve on Rickman's official classification:

> *I allude to **the term Gothic**, which a self-sufficient age bestowed on the highest of all forms of architecture, alike in contempt of its beauties and ignorance of its origin. Yet here, as in many other cases, we may be well content **to adopt a name** bestowed originally by the malice of enemies.*

*We need to suppose, with the author of the '**Churchman's Theological Dictionary**' that Gothic architecture was 'a method of building introduced by the Goths, when they had entirely overrun the Roman Empire, on the decline of the architectural art among the latter people;'[…] and yet we consider the name '**Gothic**', to be on the whole the most appropriate title that can be given to the style. '**Christian**' architecture is incorrect, as involving the position that Bonn and Peterborough are not Christian buildings; it is besides, if it were to be made a general term, not a little affected and pedantic. And the term '**Pointed**', now frequently used, does not describe either the history, or the **meaning**, or the principles of the style, but simply certain of its details; besides it requires **Romanesque** to be called, **for consistency's sake**, the '**Round**' style, which has been defended in theory, but which no one yet has ventured upon in practice. But Gothic does most certainly express better than any other name the fact that the style so called was, […] **the peculiar heritage of the Teutonic race**, that it came to its **perfection** among them alone, never flourishing among the Romance nations of the South; that it is the style of feudal and ecclesiastical Europe, of the days when the Gothic or Teutonic spirits animated all Western Christendom. (Freeman 1849:298)*

The next paragraph is dedicated to the subdivision of the *Gothic* architecture. Before introducing his own terms, Freeman discusses those proposed by other authors. First, Rickman's (1825) official terms are addressed as absurd (Freeman 1849:339). Secondly, the terms adopted by *The Ecclesiologist*, a journal for theology and related topics, are discussed: there, the Gothic is defined as *Pointed* architecture and following Rickman's (1825) three-fold division of the Gothic, the three styles are termed *'First, Middle and Third Pointed'* (Freeman 1849:339). Indeed, the *'Middle Pointed'* period was used by Freeman in his discrimination of window tracery as a synonym of his own *Early Decorated* period in an article in *The Ecclesiologist* (Freeman 1847:34). The fact that he was writing in *The Ecclesiologist* justified the reference to the nomenclature adopted by the journal (see section 4.3.).

In *The Ecclesiologist's* nomenclature, an issue of consistency among terms can also be detected, specifically regarding the second variety, which is termed *Middle Pointed* instead of *Second Pointed*. The preliminary discussion by Freeman about other nomenclatures seems to be aimed at highlighting the superiority of his own. Eventually, Freeman expresses his agreement with the primary two-fold division of the Gothic proposed by Reverend John Louis Petit in his *Remarks on Church Architecture* (Petit 1841). Indeed, Petit firstly divided the Gothic into *Early Complete Gothic* and *Late Complete Gothic*. Further, this primary two-fold division is said to be approved by the famous historian William Whewell (see section 1.4.1.). However, while Petit's two-fold division of the Gothic is maintained conceptually, Freeman substitutes Petit's terms with his own: *Early Gothic* and *Continuous Gothic.*

A further central element of the following passage is the introduction of the international perspective of communication for the official nomenclature. Indeed, Freeman's twofold division of the Gothic contains both English and French varieties. Freeman disagrees with *The Ecclesiologist's* proposal to adopt the terms *Early, Middle and Third Pointed* not only in England, but in all Europe. The discussion of the topic of international communication and comprehensibility of terms is nonetheless

noteworthy. From now on, several authors will start to reflect on international communication and thus on the necessity of a shared nomenclature (see Scott 1851a, in section 6.3.6.):

> *The **forms of Gothic architecture**, as they occur in this country, are usually stated as **three**: **Early English**, **Decorated** and **Perpendicular**. The **absurdity** of the names has been already sufficiently exposed, and another nomenclature, namely **First-Pointed**, **Middle-Pointed** and **Third-Pointed** has been latterly used in the publications of The Ecclesiological Society. This is intended to be applied not only to English architecture, but to Gothic architecture in general. In this I cannot but think that it fails. […] On the other hand, the division which will be here adopted, one practically identical with that drawn out by Mr **Petit**, and which has, implicitly at least, the further sanction of Dr **Whewell**, will recognize but **two** distinct forms of Gothic architecture, those namely which Mr Petit has described as the **Early Complete** and **Late Complete Gothic**. These I call the **Early** and the **Continuous Gothic**, the former answering to **Early English** and **Geometrical Decorated** or the common nomenclature, the latter including **Flowing Decorated, Flamboyant** and **Perpendicular**. (Freeman 1849:339)*

Notably, the passage between *Early Complete* and *Late Complete Gothic* can be identified here with the change from the *Geometrical* to the *Flowing* style. Indeed, in this phase of stylistic evolution, the single elements of the *Geometrical* tracery are united and become *Curvilinear* tracery. As argued in Chapter 4, stylistic passages have paramount relevance in each proposed classification, marking the progress from a discontinuous to a continuous window tracery. The division of the Gothic into *First*, *Middle* and *Third Pointed* is also noteworthy. The system had been adopted for some years by the Cambridge Camden Society, in their journal, *The Ecclesiologist*. In its tenth volume in 1850, a letter by Freeman and Poole from 1849 is published (Freeman & Poole 1849). There, the authors criticise *The Ecclesiologist's* division of the Gothic as inappropriate and complex. Moreover, they lament the Ecclesiological Society's attempt *'to force'* (Freeman & Poole 1849:140) this division into general use. In the system, Rickman's (1825) threefold division of the Gothic is adopted, though under different terms. The conceptual structure behind the nomenclature is most logical, revealing its practical purpose. Its main goal seems indeed to be a univocal and chronological division of the Gothic. Despite the criticism, *The Ecclesiologist* sticks to the system for the years to come:

> *Of rival terminologies, there is but one which assumes an aggressive attitude; and this I should leave to its own merits, except that there are indications of a disposition on the part of some portion of the Oxford Society to adopt it. It is proposed to call the three styles, which are still those of Rickman, **First**, **Middle**, and **Third Pointed**; each style admitting three **subsections**, called **Early**, **Middle**, and **Late** respectively. Thus we have **Early First Pointed**, **Middle First Pointed**, **Late First Pointed**, **Early Middle Pointed**, **Middle Middle Pointed**, **Late Middle Pointed**, **Early Third Pointed**, **Middle Third Pointed**, **Late Third Pointed**. In which series of vocables, the first thing*

*that strikes us is the **baldness** and **cacophony** of each term, and of the whole **complexity** of terms. There are, however, still stronger objections to the use of these names, which have been well stated by Mr. Freeman in a communication to the Oxford Architectural Society. I shall myself only add that this series of terms is neither **good enough** nor **bad enough** to be profitably or safely adopted; and that the Ecclesiological Society seems to me to have given no greater proof of its vitality than its continuing to exist, after having committed itself to such a **singularly infelicitous nomenclature**, and after having endeavoured to **force** it into **general use**. (Freeman & Poole 1849:140)*

In the next passage Freeman addresses the issue of the consistency of a nomenclature. The topic of consistency in relation to the terms proposed for the periodizations of English architecture is discussed by different authors. For instance, Sharpe will point out the inconsistency of Rickman's (1825) term *Early English* with respect to the other descriptive terms of his division: *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* (Sharpe 1851a). Freeman addresses the criticisms received on his term *Early Gothic* not being consistent with its opposite: *Continuous Gothic*. The author's explanation is illuminating. In Freeman's opinion, the term *Early Gothic* is descriptive. Specifically, it defines an initial stage of a still imperfect style which needs to develop further. Naturally, in this vision, the concept of style as a living being is recalled (see Symonds 1890, in section 3.3.):

*An objection has been made that the two names to not exactly **harmonize** or **balance** each other, and I quite feel that a **descriptive name** for the Early English, could I have found an **appropriate** one, would have rendered it **less imperfect**. Yet Early may be taken to be to a certain extent **a descriptive term**; it may very well imply a period when the architecture is actually complete, having the Gothic principle sufficiently developed to mark it as not **belonging to an imperfect style**, and yet when it has **not fully developed** its capabilities. (Freeman 1849:339)*

Summoning Rickman's (1825) position on the centrality of windows for classification, the characters of Freeman's two varieties of the Gothic are defined through the form of their window tracery. If the circle identifies the *Early Gothic*, the point, or angle, characterises the *Continuous Gothic*. Hence, the window is assumed as the element from which a nomenclature of the varieties should be derived:

*[…] as Mr **Petit** has drawn out at length, in the **Early** style the **circle** predominates in tracery and in sections of mouldings; in the **Continuous**, the **point** or **angle**. But the feature in which after all the principles of the styles are most readily to be discerned is the tracery of windows. Here they are earliest carried out, as the progress of development is almost always quicker in them than in any other portion of a building, as is withal more regular and steady, […] And above all, the **distinctions** as seen in **tracery** are brought more **palpably** and **intelligibly** before us; they are more readily discerned and admit of more satisfactory **definition** and **nomenclature**. Hence, they seem to be the feature on which a **nomenclature of the subordinate styles** may be most safely constructed. (Freeman 1849:345)*

Additionally, the main visual characters of the two periods are compared: the distinctness of the *Early Gothic* and the connectedness of the *Continuous Gothic*. The two-fold division of the Gothic is also justified. The continuity of elements of the *Continuous Gothic* is common to all its varieties: *Flowing*, *Flamboyant* and *Perpendicular*. Notably, the French *Flamboyant* style counts as a variant of the *Continuous Gothic*, even though it does not apply to England. As far as *Gothic* architecture is concerned, the connection between England and France seems to be so evident for Freeman (1849:345), that it does not even need to be explicitly addressed:

> *In the Early style the separate existence of parts is* ***most strongly marked*** *in the* ***windows****; they are either actually distinct* ***lancets****, or windows with tracery in which* ***the most severe distinctness*** *still prevails. […] In a* ***Continuous*** *window […]* ***every part is brought into relation*** *with, and is fused into, every other part; there is no break between the lights and the tracery; […] It would be* ***impossible to conceive any portion separate****: each exists only as a part of the whole, and in connection with every other part. Instead of geometrical figures touching one another, we have piercings with a long tracery-bar common to more than one, and which consequently* ***cannot exist apart****. All these characters are common alike to its* ***Flowing****,* ***Flamboyant*** *and* ***Perpendicular*** *varieties. (Freeman 1849:345)*

After this first-level division of the Gothic into *Early* and *Continuous*, a further subdivision is proposed by Freeman (1849). The exact same division of the Gothic into four sub-varieties will be presented by Sharpe two years later, in his *Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a, see section 5.3.):

> *Having thus marked out the chief points of distinction between the two great forms of Gothic architecture, we will endeavour to trace the* ***subordinate shapes*** *which they assumed, which may be* ***best named from the windows****, as the feature in which the principles appear earliest, and are most clearly developed. (Freeman 1849:352)*

The first two varieties described are the ones of the *Early Gothic*: The *Lancet* and the *Geometrical* style. From the terminological perspective, the description is most engaging. First, the *Lancet* style, is said to be named *'by the revival of an old name'* (Freeman 1849:352). This statement testifies how the terms proposed by these authors are almost never actual neologisms, but rather terms already known and in general use, to which an innovative or slightly different meaning is bestowed. Secondly, the *Geometrical* is defined as *'in some sort a transition to the next style'* (Ibid.). This definition notably recalls Rickman's description of the same *Geometrical* period as *'a sort of transition to the Decorated style'* (Rickman 1825:234, see section 3.4.). As previously mentioned, Rickman's statement caused the appearance of numerous contributions addressing the need of the *Geometrical* to be recognised as a proper style, not merely a transitional phase (see section 3.2. and 3.3.). Moreover, although the *Geometrical* is now recognised as independent by Freeman, a certain agreement with Rickman's thesis seems to emerge. It appears natural to conclude that Freeman did not share Sharpe's conception of architectural history as a

constant state of transition (Sharpe 1852, see section 3.2.). Or at least, Freeman does not explain why the *Geometrical* should be considered more transitional than other styles. As customary, window specimens from English cathedrals are mentioned as examples. Indeed, proving the existence of a shared and acknowledged concept of a *Geometrical* period, the main examples of that period are again Westminster Abbey and the Lincoln Cathedral (see Fig. 6 and 8, in section 3.2.):

> *The first form of the Early Gothic than is the **Early English** or **First-Pointed**, which I would, **by the revival of an old name**, designate as the **LANCET** style. In this the window is single, often group into combinations, but not divided by mullions and tracery. This style in all its details exhibits the fullest development of **distinctness** of parts: Salisbury Cathedral and the **Presbytery of Ely** may be considered as its most perfect types. The **second variety** of **Early Gothic** has tracery in its windows, consisting of Geometrical figures filling up its head, but not springing from the mullions, or fused into each other. This may be called **GEOMETRICAL**. In its earliest examples, some of which are contemporary with the prevalence of the Lancet style, its minor details hardly differ from it, as in **Westminster Abbey** and the **Presbytery of Lincoln**. […] **Gradually** the tracery, though still Geometrical, becomes more complicated, and the details lose the great distinctness of the Lancet style, **being in some sort a transition to the next style**. (Freeman 1849:352)*

Subsequently, the *Continuous Gothic* is divided by Freeman into *Flowing* and *Perpendicular* style. Stating a diffused interest of these authors, the necessity of an international and shared periodization and nomenclature is also addressed. Indeed, the comparison to the Continent, in particular France and Italy, is gaining paramount relevance for Sharpe's contemporary authors. Presumably, this is due to the more frequent architectural tours, as well as to the increased interest in the observation of reality (Yanni 2014, see section 1.3.2.). The urge for comparison at an international level follows as a consequence. Hence, Freeman points out how the English *Flowing* style actually corresponds to the French *Flamboyant* style. Indeed, the same *'principle of continuity'* (Freeman 1849:354) constitutes the basis of both varieties:

> *The **Continuous style** appeared first in a form which, from the lines of its window tracery, I denominate **FLOWING**. The mullions are continued in the tracery, which may be said to consist of **figures melted together** […]. The other details **gradually** approximate to the next style, but **no hard line** can be drawn between them and those of the last. The octagon choir and Lady Chapel of Ely are among our best specimens. The fully developed Continuous styles of **England** and **France** are respectively known by the **familiar** and **appropriate names** of **PERPENDICULAR** and **FLAMBOYANT**. […] the best specimens of both present the same great features of **continuity**. The tracery no longer consists of figures, but is merely a prolongation of the mullions, in the one case in straight, in the other in curved lines […]. (Freeman 1849:353)*

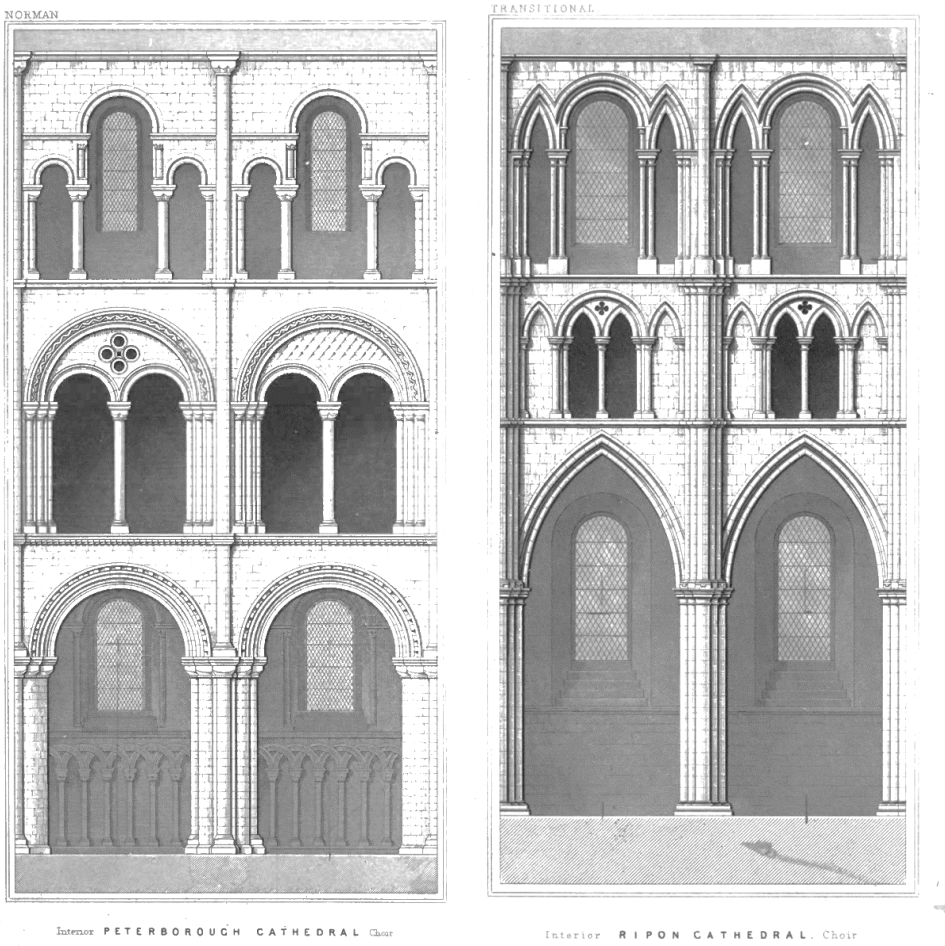


Figure 18: Norman and Transitional periods. Peterborough and Ripon Cathedral. Sharpe 1851a. Plates. Page not numbered.

A few pages later, Freeman remarks the same point, by providing a worthwhile explanation of the origin of the term *Flamboyant*. Naturally, the term comes from the forms of the correspondent window tracery:

> *The **Continuous style** of **France** is not **Perpendicular**, but **Flamboyant**; the Flowing form hardly exist as a distinct style, Geometrical tracery having been retained much later than in England. The name is derived from the **flame-like forms** assumed by its panelling and tracery. (Freeman 1849:395)*

The topic of the following reflection by Freeman is the *Decorated* style of English architecture. Here, the author expresses his opinion on the concept of stylistic transition. Since its characters could not be univocally defined, no *Decorated* style of English architecture exists in Freeman's understanding. Indeed, as the author will assert in his letter to *The Builder*, the term *Decorated* seems misguiding to him, since theoretically each style could be described as decorated (Freeman 1851b, see section 6.3.3.). As it happens, the *Decorated* exists in Freeman's opinion exclusively as a phase of transition between the *'Pure Geometrical'* and the *'fully developed Flowing'* (Freeman 1849:353). Here, the adjective *'pure'* is added by the author for mere clearness purposes and does not belong to the style's name. In

connection to that, Freeman addresses the concept of stylistic transition. According to the author, a transition of style could be defined in two different ways. It could represent the passage between two principles of construction, as the Roman and the Gothic. Alternatively, it could describe the stylistic change occurring between two different applications of the same principle. Indeed, in the next passage, the latter type of stylistic change is addressed, as the transition between *fully developed Flowing* and *Pure Geometrical* is defined as *Decorated* (Freeman 1849:353):

> *I completely* ***ignore the existence*** *of a* ***Decorated*** *or* ***Middle-Pointed*** *style as a* ***philosophical division****, At the same time, in describing churches, it is almost necessary* ***to retain some such names****; for distinct as are the* ***fully developed Flowing*** *and the* ***Pure Geometrical****, Ely Choir and Lichfield Nave, totally opposite as are their principles, it is utterly* ***impossible to draw a hard line of demarcation*** *between one and the other […] where the one style overcomes the other it is impossible to say, In fact, if we retain a* ***Decorated*** *style, it can only be as one of* ***transition****, but of course not a transition of the same kind as that from Grecian to Roman, or Roman to Gothic, Those were attempts to combine a new principle of construction to an old principle of decoration; the present transition is not between two principles, but* ***between two applications of the same principle****. And it is to the constant commingling of the two applications, both being for a time in simultaneous use, and indeed often employed in the same structure, that I attribute the* ***notion of the Decorated as a definite style****: a class of buildings is marked negatively, as being neither Lancet not Perpendicular, and which agree pretty much in some points of detail. (Freeman 1849:353)*

Subsequently, Freeman discusses the substantial difference existing between the *Pure Geometrical* and the *Pure Flowing* (Freeman 1849:354). Again, the adjective *pure* attached to the style name identifies the pureness of its characters, as opposed to more transitional and mixed forms. According to Freeman, the *Decorated* should be articulated in two classes: one resembling the *Geometrical*, the other the *Flowing*. During the phase of transition known as the *Decorated* style, an undeniable stylistic change happens in the author's opinion. Indeed, at that moment, the continuity of the previous style cannot be pursued further and becomes a *'corruption'* into something different (Freeman 1849:354).

Therefore, according to Freeman, the definition of the *Decorated* as a single style is merely a theoretical instrument, which he does not recognise in his periodization. In fact, what for simplicity purposes is called *Decorated* period, comprehends two opposing phases: one more *Geometrical* and the other more *Flowing*. This passage, between *Geometrical* and *Flowing* styles, is according to him, the most relevant of the whole Gothic. As a further element, in the following quote, Freeman addresses the central topic of the *'number of styles'* (Freeman 1849:354). Curiously, according to the author, these periodization attempts seem to have developed into a mere theoretical exercise of the authors to identify a certain number of styles, with no other purpose than to propose alternative nomenclatures and classifications, which Freeman defines a *'test in fixing the number of styles'* (Freeman 1849:354):

Their union in one style is most convenient in practice, as avoiding the necessity of attempting a ***most painful and often fruitless discrimination of details****; but investigated on philosophical principles,* ***the unity of the Decorated style*** *falls to the ground. It has been objected that '****the principle of continuity****' which, for a while one of development, changed into a* ***corruption****, was ever at work from the first; and consequently, its greater or less prevalence can be no* ***test in fixing the number of styles****. With this reasoning I cannot agree. […] the moment, I presume, when the '****development****' became a '****corruption****'; I cannot but think the change is one calculated to be '****a test in fixing the number of styles****'. Continuity does not merely become more relevant in degree but has a new kind of application brought within its reach, the principle on which hitherto parts only were constructed, is now extended to the whole, and detail is modified accordingly. The existence of a* ***change is a fact****; whether it were a change for good or for evil,* ***a development or a corruption****, is an entirely distinct question. No such* ***broad change*** *in principle separates the Lancet from the Geometrical, or the Flowing from the Perpendicular, as divides* ***Pure Geometrical*** *from* ***Pure Flowing****. These two last cannot be called in any sense one style with definite marks; the mere induction of instances, without reference to principles, could only bring them together negatively* ***as a transition style****. (Freeman 1849:354)*

A final consideration should be devoted to the principle of the derivation of each style from the previous one. The use of terms *'borrowed from science'* (Yanni 1997:208) implies a vision of style as an evolution of previous forms, with which they are inevitably connected. This language, adopted by both Freeman and Sharpe, mirrors the new evolutionary conception of architectural style as a living being (see Symonds 1890, in section 3.3.). With reference to that, in this volume, Freeman also discusses the natural evolution of the *Perpendicular* in England and the *Flamboyant* in France, from the styles that preceded them. This reflection is central within the conception of architectural history as a constant progress:

Our only business is with the question of fact, whether ***Perpendicular*** *was or was not a* ***natural offspring*** *of the* ***Flowing Decorated****. This as the writer in 'The Ecclesiologist' already quoted, maintains is the case with Flamboyant, though he looks upon that style as a* ***very degenerate descendant****; while Perpendicular he considers as no development at all, but a distinct invention which* ***sprang at once to life and to maturity*** *from the brain of the greatest of English architects, - prelate, statesman, founder, – William of Wykeham of famous memory. (Freeman 1849:376)*

Freeman closes the presentation of his classification of English architecture with a mention to other elements of Gothic churches worth classifying. A chapter is then dedicated to these elements respectively as arches, pillars, mouldings and mullions. To conclude, even if Sharpe's periodization represents the central focus of this research, a mention was due to Freeman's work, considered as Sharpe's main source of inspiration (Garbett 1851). Indeed, it should be worth remembering that a mutual influence seems to be exercised by the two authors on each other, as both attempt to systematise

English medieval architecture, by means of a classification of its window specimens. Ultimately, in the following examination of Sharpe's periodization, Freeman's (1849) previous one should be borne in mind and will be recalled at a later stage of this chapter for comparative purposes (see section 5.6.).

5.3. On Sharpe's main work: *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* [66] in 1851

The volume entitled *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* constitutes Sharpe's main contribution to the periodization of English architecture, as well as the work for which the author is mainly remembered. Indeed, Sharpe's 1851 volume could be presented as a development of Rickman's system of classification (Rickman 1825), motivated by an advancement in knowledge on the subject of English medieval architecture. The preface to Sharpe's volume, dated by the author on January 1st, 1851, is worth a preliminary mention. There, Sharpe uses the same words as his 1848 paper, read before the Royal Institute of British Architects in Lincoln (Sharpe 1848b). That paper was devoted to the recognition of the *Geometrical* as an independent period of English architecture (Sharpe 1848b, see section 3.2.). The initial words of the preface are reported to reintroduce the context of Sharpe's proposal:

> *We have been **so long accustomed** to speak of our National Architecture in the terms and according to the classification bequeathed to us by **Mr Rickman**, and those terms and that classification are so well understood and have been so **universally adopted**, that any attempt to supersede the one, or to modify the other, requires somewhat more than a mere apology. **To disturb a Nomenclature of long standing**, **to set aside terms in familiar use**, and to set up others in their place which are **strange**, and therefore at fist **unintelligible**, involves an interruption of that facility with which we are **accustomed to communicate** with one another on any given subject, that is only to be justified by reasons of a cogent and satisfactory nature. (Sharpe 1851a:V)*

In Sharpe's initial reference to Rickman, two elements are central for further understanding. First, Sharpe sees no advantage in altering Rickman's nomenclature for a mere *'change of name'* (Sharpe 1851a:V). In the author's opinion, an update of the official nomenclature should only occur to reflect a progress of the conceptual structure and chronological division of the styles. The relevance and necessity of a change in the conceptual structure of the periodization, compared to a change of terms, is remarked by Sharpe in the following passage:

> *In referring, however, to these attempts to supersede Mr Rickman's system, […] although they propose to **change the Nomenclature** of his different styles, or to **subdivide** them, his main division of English Architecture into **four great Periods or Styles**, is adopted by all, and still remains undisturbed. No point, therefore, has been hitherto proposed to be gained by these alterations, **beyond a change of name**; and this may be taken as a sufficient reason why none of these attempts*

[66] Sharpe 1851a.

have been successful: ***men are not willing to unlearn a term with which they are familiar, however inappropriate, in order to learn another, which, after all, means the same thing.*** *(Sharpe 1851a:V)*

The purpose of Sharpe's introduction to his volume seems evident. Namely, to make the reader aware of the necessity of a more detailed nomenclature of English medieval architecture. Indeed, Rickman's (1825) nomenclature seems not to reflect the present advanced stage of knowledge anymore:

> ***Simplicity*** *was doubtless the object Mr Rickman had in view in his subdivision of English Architecture into four Styles only. […] it behoves us to consider well, […] whether Mr Rickman's system fulfils all the conditions essential for one calculated* ***for popular and universal use****; and whether we should therefore seek to confirm and to perpetuate it, or whether* ***the time has not arrived for the adoption of a more detailed and accurate division*** *of the long and noble series of buildings which contain the History of our National Architecture from the Heptarchy to the Reformation. (Sharpe 1851a:VI)*

Most relevantly, Sharpe evidences the presence of building specimens which cannot be classified under Rickman's classes and described with his terms. In particular, the author refers to two classes of buildings which should be added to Rickman's (1825) classification, even though he does not provide further details yet, the *'two large classes of Buildings'* (Sharpe 1851a: VIII) quoted by the author seem to represent the *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear* periods of Sharpe's periodization:

> *[…] there are* ***two large classes*** *of Buildings containing distinctive marks of* ***peculiarity of character****, which* ***find no place in Mr Rickman's system****, but which nevertheless for the number and importance of their examples, are pre-eminently* ***entitled to separate classification****. […] and which* ***cannot be described in any of the terms prescribed*** *by Mr Rickman. (Sharpe 1851a:VII)*

While Rickman is praised for the choice of the window as discriminatory element for the classification of English medieval architecture, his division of the Gothic into three styles seems questionable to Sharpe. First, Rickman's terms choice is inconsistent. The topic of consistency, previously addressed by Freeman (1849), has paramount relevance in Sharpe's (1851a) work, too. If both terms *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* describe visual features of the respective styles, the term *Early English* refers purely to a chronological phase of style, while it does not give indications on its characters:

> *Mr* ***Rickman*** *divided the whole of the buildings of Pointed Architecture into* ***three Styles or Classes*** *which he denominated '****Early English****,' '****Decorated****,' '****Perpendicular****'. The* ***titles*** *of the* ***two lasts*** *he professed to derive from the* ***character of their windows****, conceiving, no doubt justly, that no part of a Gothic building exhibits peculiarities of style in so prominent and characteristic a manner as its windows. In strict accordance with this rule, which may be assumed to be a correct and valuable one, it has already been shown, that* ***had Mr Rickman gone a step further*** *and classed the whole of the buildings of Pointed Architecture according to the forms of their Windows* ***under four heads****, instead of three, he would have obtained a classification equally simple, but more*

> ***intelligible*** *and* ***convenient****; he would have obviated much that is confused and indefinite, and therefore perplexing to the Architectural Student […]and would have enabled us to* ***compare*** *the buildings of our own Country with those of corresponding character, and nearly contemporaneous date on the* ***Continent****, in a manner that would have* ***established an analogy*** *between them, which, according to the present classification, has no apparent existence. (Sharpe 1851a: VII)*

Secondly, the impossibility of classifying two classes of buildings – presumably the *Geometrical* and the *Curvilinear* (Sharpe 1851a: VIII) – is indicated by Sharpe as the major issue of Rickman's (1825) nomenclature. Therefore, a more detailed division is needed, into seven periods instead of four. This further classification originated from a descriptive necessity of numerous authors. However, if a more detailed conceptual structure and nomenclature meet the necessity of most authors, Sharpe does not expect that the same authors agree on his proposed terms. International communication is also considered in the choice of terms. An innovative official nomenclature is needed, in order to enable comparison and analogy with other countries. Eventually, Sharpe also declares openly that he hopes his terms will enter general use:

> *The* ***inability to describe or speak*** *of any of the buildings belonging to either of* ***these two classes****, including some of the finest in the kingdom, otherwise than as examples of an intermediate and anomalous character, exhibiting the peculiarities partly of one style and partly of another, but belonging specifically to neither, must be admitted to be a* ***serious defect*** *in all hitherto recognised systems of Architectural Nomenclature, and there are, probably few Architecturalists who have not frequently* ***felt the inconvenience*** *arising from the want of* ***more explicit and definite terms*** *than at present exist, by means of which to describe the buildings of the two classes. It is to remedy this defects, and to provide for this want, that the following division of the History of our National Architecture into* ***Seven Periods instead of Four****, is now formally proposed, under the belief that some such Division as this, by whatever terms it may be characterised, will sooner or later* ***force itself into universal adoption****. With respect to the terms themselves it would be unreasonable to expect the same* ***unanimity****; the following considerations, however, would seem to bring their selection within narrow limits. (Sharpe 1851a:VIII)*

In a further passage, Sharpe introduces another reason for the substitution of Rickman's (1825) term *Perpendicular* with his own *Rectilinear*. If all other terms by Rickman are discarded, it seems methodologically wrong and confusing to the author to retain only the one term *Perpendicular*. Especially since he considers his own *Rectilinear* to be a more descriptive alternative:

> *It would appear, in the first place,* ***unadvisable*** *to designate any of the later Periods, except the last,* ***by any of the terms hitherto in use****, as tending probably to* ***confusion*** *and* ***misapprehension****, from the difficulty of limiting their signification to the extent proposed in the minds of those who have been accustomed to use them in a more ample sense: and* ***to retain the last****,* ***if the others be***

***abandoned**, and a more **appropriate** or analogous term can be found, appears to be still less desirable. (Sharpe 1851a: IX)*

The next section of Sharpe's volume is dedicated to the explanation of his selected terms. Again, the article appeared in 1826 in *The British Critic* is mentioned by the author (Gothic architecture 1826). There, Rickman's terms *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* were substituted for the first time with the alternative *Curvilinear* and *Rectilinear*, which Sharpe adopts in his system. In this respect, he also addresses the topic of arbitrariness of nomenclatures: if every division and selection of terms are arbitrary, no nomenclature can exist without objections. Consequently, the reference to the origin of terms, or to other authors sharing his same preference, appears to be a strategy by Sharpe to justify his proposal and, at the same time, to prevent criticisms:

*[…] It is much to be desired that the terms we use should be **not** all together **strange**, and, if possible, **self-explanatory**. These two conditions are such as to render it difficult to find terms such as to be in all respects perfectly satisfactory; and perhaps no system of Nomenclature could be found to be so perfect as to be **entirely free from objections**. The reasons which have caused the adoption of the terms made use of the following system, are fully given in their proper place, and it only remains for the Author to notice that the terms '**Curvilinear**' and '**Rectilinear**' were first proposed by a writer in the '**British Critic**', some years ago as a substitute for Mr Rickman's terms '**Decorated**' and '**Perpendicular**'. (Sharpe 1851a:IX)*

The first chapter of Sharpe's (1851a) volume is dedicated to the presentation of his purposes. The main one is the comprehensiveness of his nomenclature, which is supposed to underline the gradual evolution to which the *Gothic* style is subject during its history. Not less relevant is the application of the seven periods as a means of comparison of English architecture to the architecture of the other countries. Naturally, all concepts are exposed by the author with reference to real specimens throughout England. Sharpe also presents here the illustrations attached to his volume (Sharpe 1851a, see Fig. 18 – 20). Significant portions of famous English ecclesiastical buildings were selected to enable comparison:

*To present at a glance of **comprehensive view** of the History of English Church Architecture from the Heptarchy to the Reformation, […] in a manner which, without taxing too seriously the memory of the student, may enable him to fix in his mind the limits, and the general outline of the enquiry he is about to enter upon, is **the object of the present treatise**. […] a certain portion only of such a building has for this purpose been selected, and so exhibited in the garb in which it appeared at successive intervals of time, as to present the reader a **means of comparison** that will enable him readily to apprehend the **gradual change of form** through which it passed from the Eleventh to the Sixteenth Centuries, and at once to recognise the **leading characteristics** of the **several Periods** into which it is here proposed to divide the History of our National Architecture […] to become familiar with those **niceties of distinction**, the detection of which, - escaping, as they do, the eye of the general observer, - contributes so materially to the enjoyment of the study, and a perfect*

acquaintance with which is so absolutely essential to a correct understanding of the true History of the Art. (Sharpe 1851a:1)

Secondarily, the constant evolution of English church architecture of the Middle Ages is remarked by the author, as well as the impossibility of an exact and univocal periodization, and the necessity for an official nomenclature to allow the description of reality:

CHURCH ARCHITECTURE in England, from its earliest existence down to the Sixteenth Century, was in a ***state of constant progress****, or* ***transition****, and this progress appears to have been carried on, with certain exceptions in different parts of the country, very nearly simultaneously. […] it is* ***impossible to divide*** *our National Architecture into any number of distinct Orders or Styles; and secondly, that any division of its History into a given* ***number of Periods****, must necessarily be an* ***arbitrary*** *one. It is nevertheless absolutely essential for the purpose of* ***conveniently describing*** *the long series of noble monuments which remain to us, that we should adopt some system of* ***chronological arrangement****, which may enable us to group, and to classify them in a distinct and intelligible manner […]. (Sharpe 1851a:3)*

As Sharpe (1851a) points out, the primary division of medieval architecture into *Romanesque* and *Gothic*, according to the form of the arch, is already part of general use. Therefore, it is also adopted as basis of this further classification. In this respect, Sharpe sees no purpose in altering the general use:

One ***principal Division*** *of Church Architecture has been recognised and adopted by all who have studied and written on the subject; that, namely, which separates Ecclesiastical Buildings into* ***two classes****, in the first or earlier of which the* ***circular arch*** *was exclusively employed; and in the second, or later, the* ***pointed arch*** *alone was used. To the former of these two Classes, the term* ***ROMANESQUE*** *has been given, and to the latter, the term* ***GOTHIC****. The division is so simple and at the same time so strongly marked, that without entering into a discussion as to the* ***value*** *or* ***property of the terms*** *themselves, and contenting ourselves with the fact that they are* ***already in general use****, we can have little hesitation in adopting this primary division as the groundwork of our system. (Sharpe 1851a:4)*

However, this primary division into *Romanesque* and *Gothic* is addressed by Sharpe as *'not sufficiently minute'* (Sharpe 1851a:4) for the descriptive purposes of the contemporary historians. Hence, a further subdivision is needed. Regarding the *Romanesque*, the traditional *Saxon* and *Norman* periods are deemed to be still valid. By contrast, the passage from *Romanesque* to *Gothic* is addressed as one of the two periods not included in Rickman's nomenclature (1825) which needs to be introduced. In Sharpe's understanding, this period represents the evolution from the circular to the pointed arch and should thus be named *Transitional*. Indeed, the period constitutes the main transition of medieval architecture and deserves to be accordingly termed (see Fig.18).

Sharpe's choice of the term *Transitional* appears noteworthy. In view of his considerations on the concept of transition, each period should be considered equally transitional (Sharpe 1849a, see section 4.2.). Hence, the term *Transitional* will be subject to further discussion in the debate on the pages of *The Builder* (see Ch.6). Naturally, also the passage between *Norman* and *Transitional* period is illustrated by Sharpe through images attached to his volume (see Fig.18). While the *Norman*, being still *Romanesque*, uses the circular arch, the *Transitional*, employs circular and pointed arch at the same time. In connection to that, it appears here important to underline how the descriptive method introduced by Sharpe in the *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a, see section 4.2.) is applied by the author in his classification of English architecture. Indeed, each period is illustrated in the volume by means of visual proof from well-known English ecclesiastical buildings. Moreover, each illustration is attributed to one of the described periods, in order to enhance comprehension. The name of the period is reported on the left corner above each image (Sharpe 1851a, see Fig.18 – 20).

Sharpe's 1851 volume presents the same structure as his *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a). Periods are illustrated through building portions at the end of the volume, and additional figures are placed within the text. Moreover, to enhance comprehension, both the interior and the exterior of buildings are illustrated. Interestingly, Sharpe's 1851 volume also contains a small glossary. This comprehends the main elements of a church of the Middle Ages in England and, naturally, terms are associated to an illustration (see Fig.23). Therefore, the interrelation of images and concepts is again present. It should be remembered that architectural volumes produced at the time were conceived as companions to students during their architectural tours through Europe, and they were needed to observe, understand and describe unknown and foreign buildings:

> *[…] it is manifest, that, for purposes of* ***description****, it is* ***not sufficiently minute****; and that* ***a further subdivision is necessary****: it is also clear, that it excludes a large class of buildings that were erected during the period which intervened between the first appearance of the pointed arch, and the final disappearance of the circular arch. As regards the buildings of the* ***Romanesque Period****, no subdivision of them can be more satisfactorily than that which has already been for some time in use, and which divides them into those which were built before and after the Conquest and designates them accordingly* ***SAXON*** *and* ***NORMAN****. As regards the buildings of the Intermediate Period just mentioned, to none can the term* ***TRANSITIONAL****, so* ***aptly be applied*** *as to those erected under influences created by that remarkable contest between two great antagonistic principles, which, after having been carried on for a period of nearly fifty years, terminate in a complete revolution in the style of building at the end of the Twelfth Century. (Sharpe 1851a:4)*

Finally, Sharpe presents his periodization for Gothic architecture. An explanation is dedicated to the connection of each period's term to its visual features, from which it seems to be logically derived. For instance, the *Lancet* period, owes its name to its windows' resemblance to a lancet (see Fig.19):

For half a century or more, after the disappearance of the circular arch, the window appeared under a form, which from its general ***resemblance to a lancet****, in its length, breadth and general proportions, rather than from any uniform acuteness in the shape of its head, lead to the* ***universal application of that term*** *to all the windows of this Period. This observation applies equally to the window whether used singly, or in groups of two, three, five or seven; and equally also in the later as to the earlier examples of this Period. It is proposed therefore to denominate this the* ***LANCET PERIOD*** *of Gothic Architecture. (Sharpe 1851a:5)*

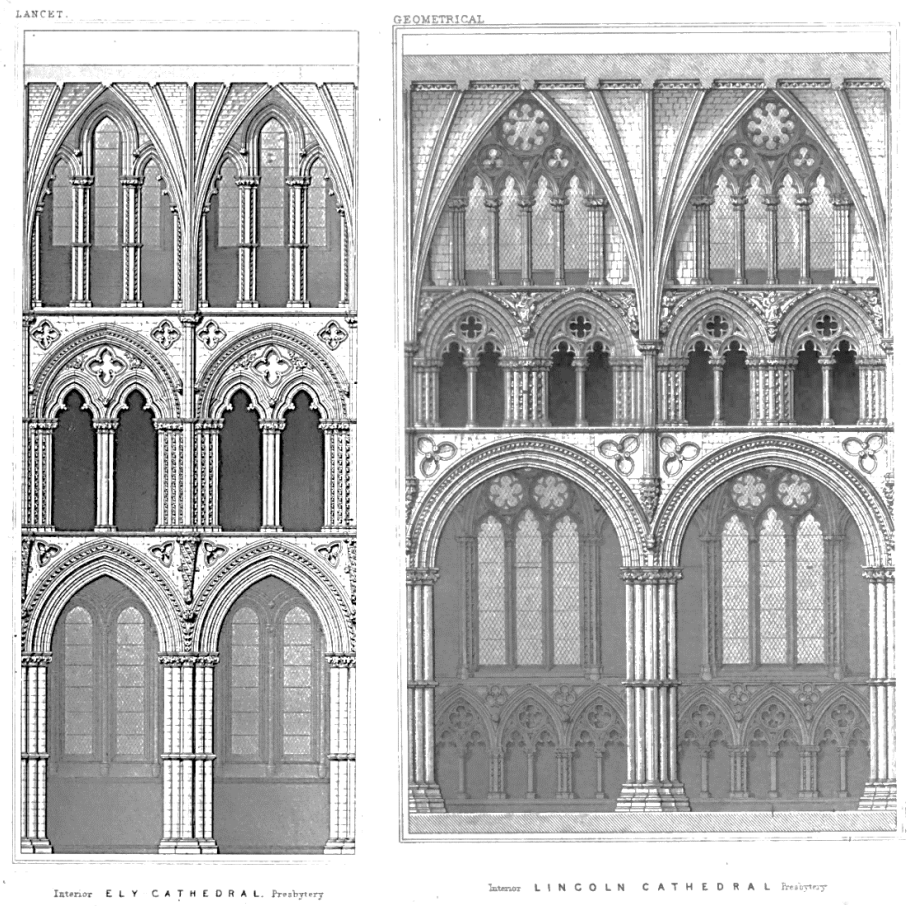


Figure 19: Lancet and Geometrical Periods. Ely and Lincoln Cathedrals. Sharpe 1851a. Plates. Page not numbered.

In the following period, the *Geometrical*, window tracery is based on the form of the circle. In 1851, the term is already diffused within the experts' community and its use seems justified by the presence of the circle as pre-eminent geometrical figure of the period's tracery (see Fig.19):

For nearly three quarters of a century after its introduction, the ***Tracery of Windows*** *contained forms in which that simplest of all geometrical figures, the* ***Circle****, was principally* ***conspicuous****: and although, in the latter part of this Period, the Circle does not obtain the same prominent place, in the centre of the window-head, and as the principal feature of the design, that is generally allotted to it in the earlier examples, yet the important part that it bears in the construction of the*

design of even the whole of these later examples, fully justifies the ***application of the term****, already* ***pretty generally in use****, to this class of windows: and entitles us to call this Period after that figure and 'par excellence', the* ***GEOMETRICAL PERIOD****. (Sharpe 1851a:6)*

The passage from *Geometrical* to *Curvilinear* period is marked by the substitution of the curve mainly employed in window tracery: the *circle* is replaced by the *ogee* (see Fig. 19 and 20). The sinuosity of this latter form contrasts the geometrical character of the previous tracery and earns it the denomination of *Curvilinear*. Interestingly, the ogee characterises not only window tracery, but also mouldings and other details of the ecclesiastical buildings of the *Curvilinear* period, as stated in the following quote:

At the close of the Period a feature began to make its way into the subordinate parts of the tracery […] the curve that mathematicians call the ***curve of contra-flexure****, and which is known among architecturalists as the* ***Ogee****. The* ***flowing nature*** *of this curve imparted to the Tracery a* ***grace****, and an ease which the* ***rigid outline*** *of the* ***Circle*** *denied it: and afford us a strong point of contrast whereby to distinguish the Architecture of the two Periods. The* ***sinuosity*** *of form which characterises the Tracery, pervades […] all the details of this Period, and enables us to designate it appropriately as the* ***CURVILINEAR PERIOD****. (Sharpe 1851a:7)*

As happened with the ogee for the *Curvilinear*, the beginning of the *Rectilinear* period sees the introduction of a further element in window tracery. Specifically, a horizontal bar, called *transom*, is positioned in the lower part of the window. Concurrently, vertical and straight lines start to substitute the sinuous curved profiles of the *Curvilinear* period. These elements characterise the last variety of *Gothic* architecture in England, called by Sharpe the *Rectilinear* period (see Fig.20):

In the latter part of the Period, a ***horizontal bar****, or* ***transom****, as it is called, was occasionally used in the lower part of the window. Whether this bar was introduced for the purpose of strengthening the mullions, or for the sake of proportion, it speedily grew into* ***frequent use****. […] vertical lines presented themselves occasionally in the Tracery; a new principle, in fact, had made its appearance, which rapidly overran not only the windows, but the doorways, the arcades, and every part of the building. The* ***straight line****, when once introduced, quickly superseded the* ***curved line****; square panels covered the walls, angularity of form pervaded even the mouldings and minor details, and to the round finish, the square edge was preferred. This, the last of the four Periods of Gothic Architecture which extended over a term or nearly two Centuries, we propose accordingly to call the* ***RECTILINEAR PERIOD****.* ***The History of our National Architecture will thus be divided into Seven Periods*** *the order and duration of which are as follows. (Sharpe 1851a:7)*

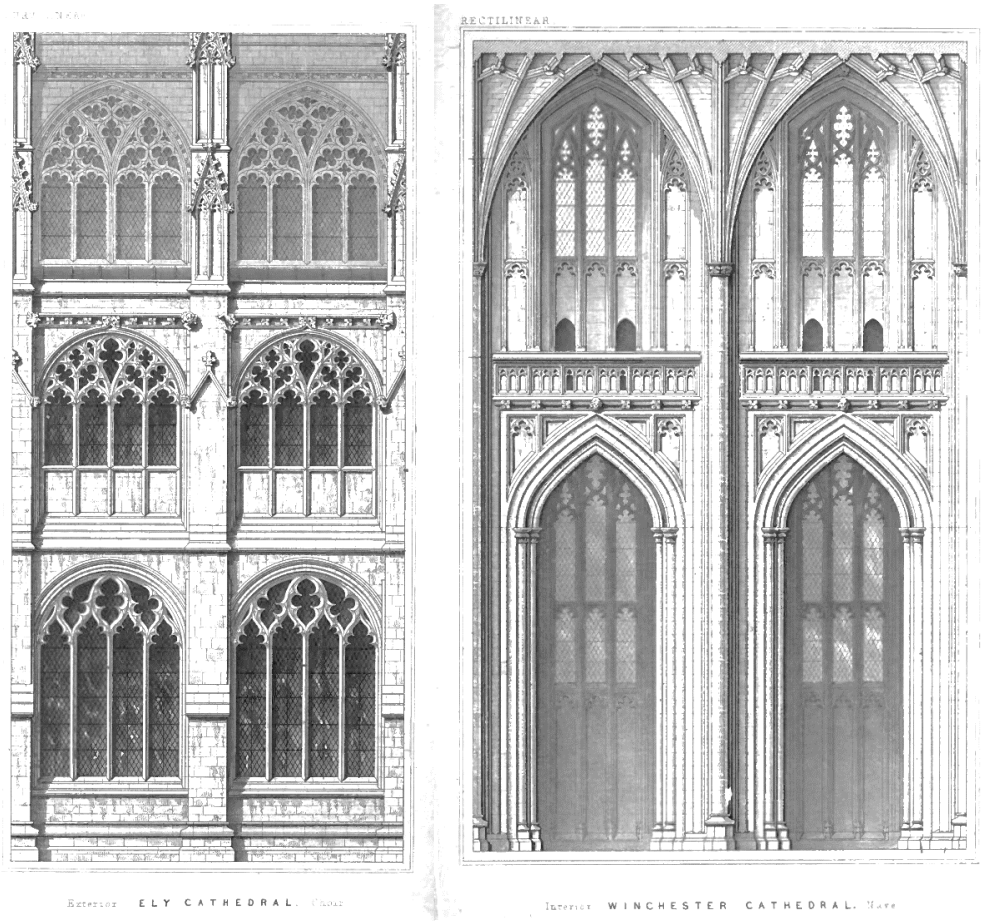


Figure 20: Curvilinear and Rectilinear periods. Ely and Winchester Cathedrals. Sharpe 1851a. Plates. Page not numbered.

Subsequently, a chapter is respectively dedicated to each of the seven periods. Under the tile of the chapter, except for the *Saxon*, the main period's features are reported as a brief summary (see Fig.21):

Saxon Period *– A.D. – to 1066 A.D.*

Norman Period *– Principal Characteristic: The universal use of the circular arch in every part of a building throughout the whole period.*

Transitional Period *– Principal Characteristic: The contemporaneous use, in the same building, of circular and pointed arch.*

Lancet Period *– Principal Characteristic: The Lancet window used singly, in couplets and triplets, and arranged in groups of four, five or seven.*

Geometrical Period *– Simple geometrical tracery in the heads of the windows, in panels and in arcades.*

Curvilinear Period*: Flowing tracery in the windows, and the prevalence of the ogee curve in all the details.*

Rectilinear Period *– The prevalence of straight lines, both horizontal and vertical, in the tracery of windows, in panels and arcades. (Sharpe 1851a:15)*

In the following passage, the importance of windows within Gothic architecture is remarked by the author. Windows do not only provide a valuable help in the chronological collocation and classification of the building portion in which they are placed, but they also constitute the most important element of the whole Gothic church:

> *The **Windows** are the most important features in the Churches of this Period. In the more important buildings, they are frequently of great size and elaborate design, and in the smaller buildings, the rest of the work seems often to have been impoverished **for the sake of the Windows**. The **infinite variety of design** that is contained in the Tracery of this Period is remarkable, and distinguished its Architecture, in a manner not to be mistaken, from that of **other nations** during the same Period. (Sharpe 1851a:33)*

Lastly, Sharpe's (1851a) and Rickman's (1825) different uses of the terms *English* and *Gothic* are worth a mention. According to Rickman, the term *English* should be substituted to *Gothic* in the denomination of the style following the *Romanesque*. Indeed, Rickman wanted to evidence the pre-eminently *English* character of *Gothic* architecture in England, by remarking its difference from the *Gothic* of the Continent. Conversely, Sharpe identifies *English* architecture with the whole architecture of England during the Middle Ages, comprehending both the *Romanesque* and the *Gothic*. In that, the emergence of a supra-national perspective seems perceivable. The necessity to distinguish English architecture from the *Gothic* of Europe is not relevant anymore for Freeman (1849) and Sharpe (1851a). On the contrary, an international dimension emerges, where England's nomenclature is put in relation to the French one by Freeman (1849), and an international comparability of terms is wished for by Sharpe (1851a). In that, the different meanings of the terms *English* and *Gothic* are probably to be attributed to a knowledge development. Sharpe's application of the terms *English* and *Gothic* can be better envisioned in the following Figure (Fig.21), attached at the end of Sharpe's volume (1851a):

THE SEVEN PERIODS
OF
ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE.

			A.D.		A.D.		YEARS.
ROMANESQUE.	I.	Saxon Period	from	——	to 1066,	prevailed	—
	II.	Norman Period . . .	,,	1066	,, 1145,	,,	79
	III.	Transitional Period . .	,,	1145	,, 1190,	,,	45
GOTHIC.	IV.	Lancet Period	,,	1190	,, 1245,	,,	55
	V.	Geometrical Period . .	,,	1245	,, 1315,	,,	70
	VI.	Curvilinear Period . .	,,	1315	,, 1360,	,,	45
	VII.	Rectilinear Period . .	,,	1360	,, 1550,	,,	190

Figure 21: The Seven Periods of English Architecture. Sharpe 1851a. Page not numbered.

To conclude, a comparison of Freeman's (1849) and Sharpe's (1851a) periodizations of English medieval architecture is proposed in the following table (see Table 3). From this comparison, three main topics emerge. First, Freeman's periodization presents an additional level of classification. Namely, the *Gothic* is first subdivided into *Early* and *Continuous*, and only then further varieties are introduced. The four varieties of the Gothic are, however, the same for both authors (*Lancet*, *Geometrical*, *Curvilinear* and *Perpendicular*). For the sake of precision, a further difference should be mentioned: Freeman's *Flowing* style corresponds to Sharpe's *Curvilinear* period, but the two periods have the exact same duration (1315 – 1360 A.D.).

Indeed, both Sharpe and Freeman presented a quite satisfactory explanation for their preference respectively for the terms *Flowing* and *Curvilinear*: While Freeman was inspired by the French *Flamboyant* (see Freeman 1849:353), Sharpe justified his term *Curvilinear* by evidencing how this period's tracery is mainly characterised by a curve, the ogee, or curve of contra-flexure (see Sharpe 1851a:6). The authors' reception and reuse of Rickman's (1825) official terms is also primarily relevant. While Freeman maintains the term *Perpendicular* for his last variety, he does not explicitly adopt the official subdivision of the *Romanesque*. In fact, he recognises the *Norman* as the highest point of the *Romanesque* but does not mention the *Saxon* as a proper period of English architecture (Freeman 1849). Sharpe (1851a), on the contrary, adopts Rickman's (1825) official division of the *Romanesque* into *Saxon* and *Norman* but sees it as methodologically wrong to retain the term *Perpendicular*. Hence, he substitutes it with his own *Rectilinear*, which he considers more appropriate:

Freeman 1849	**Sharpe 1851**
Romanesque – till 1190 A.D.	Romanesque – till 1145 A.D.
- Norman	- Saxon period – till 1066
Gothic 1190 – 1550 A.D.	- Norman period – 1066 – 1145
Early Gothic:	Gothic 1145 – 1550 A.D.
- Lancet style – 1190 – 1245	- Transitional period – 1145 – 1190
- Geometrical style – 1245 – 1315	- Lancet period – 1190 – 1245
Continuous Gothic	- Geometrical period – 1245 – 1315
- Flowing style – 1315 – 1360	- Curvilinear period – 1315 – 1360
- Perpendicular style – 1360 – 1550	- Rectilinear period – 1360 – 1550

Table 3: Freeman's (1849) and Sharpe's (1851a) periodizations for English medieval architecture.

The preface to Sharpe's *Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a) was reported also in an article in *The Builder*, a journal of architecture. The text appeared on June 7th, 1851 and was entitled *The Seven Periods of Church Architecture* (Sharpe 1851c). After the publication of his volume in 1851, this article should be reasonably considered as an acknowledgement by the journal to Sharpe's innovative periodization. Indeed, we do not know if the volume was already known to the experts' community before this presentation. What we do know, is that this article gave rise to the debate about an update

and substitution of Rickman's (1825) official nomenclature, taking place during the summer of 1851 on the pages of *The Builder* (see Ch.6).

5.4. On Sharpe's 1871 *Mouldings of the Six Periods of British Architecture* [67] and on his influence on future works on English medieval architecture

In this section, an overlook is provided of Sharpe's work on the classification of medieval mouldings. In addition to that, reference is made to Fletcher's comparison in 1905 concerning Rickman's (1825) and Sharpe's (1851a) periodization proposal for the English medieval architecture.

On May 19th, 1851 Sharpe reads a paper at the annual meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects. The document, *On the subordination and distinctive peculiarities of the mouldings of the seven periods of English architecture* (Sharpe 1851b), deals with the classification of Gothic mouldings in England. Sharpe's analysis is introduced by an overview of the seven periods into which he divides English medieval architecture (see Fig.21). Indeed, the classification of mouldings is meant to confirm Sharpe's window tracery-based periodization (Sharpe 1849a). Presumably with the intention of preventing criticism, Sharpe emphasises the constant state of transition to which architecture is subject, so that every possible periodization is necessarily arbitrary, though it is needed for the aim of description (see Ch.6). Further, the paper proposes a detailed description of the mouldings, whose features evidence their belonging to Sharpe's seven periods. As for window tracery, two classification possibility are presented: either the mouldings are classed according to their most relevant element, the arch, or they are just considered a continuous series without further distinction.

Both the construction and decoration of the mouldings' arches are examined. In introducing the analysis of the arches' decoration, Sharpe beautifully illustrates the descriptive method for his periodization of English architecture. Specifically, he underlines the connection between real specimens and his classification. The following reference to the *'language'* (Sharpe 1851b) of the history of English architecture seems to highlight the importance of the description of reality and the choice of the right terms. Everything is written in the building, for someone who is able to read and understand its language:

> *[…] I will proceed to consider the decoration of the medieval arches, how, to one who understands* ***the language*** *of the history of our national architecture, is as* ***clearly written in the mouldings*** *as it is in the general outline, and in those more prominent features of a building, which* ***strike the eye*** *of the general observer. (Sharpe 1851b, page not numbered)*

As a further result of his studies on mouldings, in 1871, Sharpe published a volume entitled *The Mouldings of the Six Periods of British Architecture* (Sharpe 1871). The title reveals an extremely relevant methodological statement by the author. Conceived as a classification of English medieval mouldings through full-size illustrations, the volume cannot cover the *Saxon* period, for lack of original remains. This is the reason why the periods of English architecture are reduced from seven to six. In this

[67] Sharpe 1871.

volume, Sharpe's definitive statement on his descriptive approach to architectural history is presented: no period can be acknowledged and described without evidence from reality and illustrations mirroring it. Therefore, unlike windows, which are divisible in seven periods, mouldings can only testify to six periods, as nothing is asserted in the volume which cannot be proved in the full-size drawings attached.

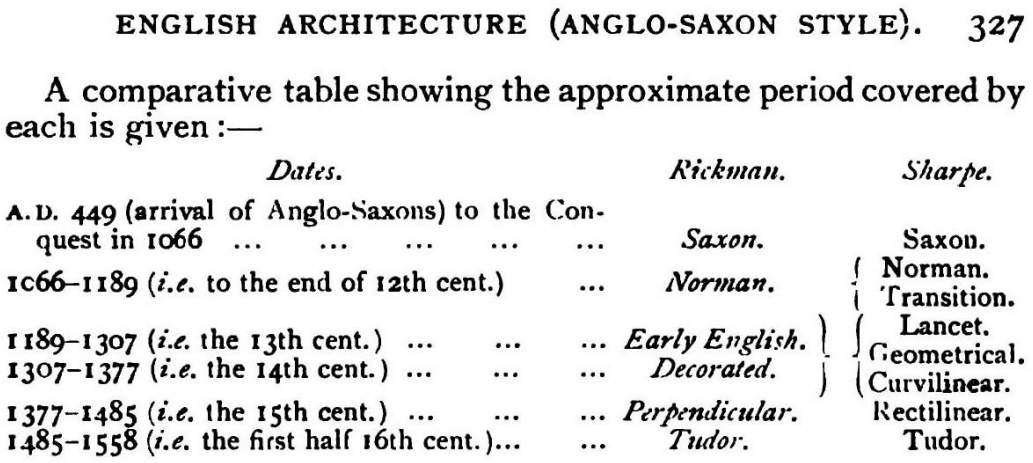
In the following quote, the history of English medieval architecture is compared to the prismatic spectrum of colours: like for colours, no clear line of demarcation can be drawn between periods. Instead, a *'blended whole blue'* (Sharpe 1871:1) can be perceived as the constant progress of architectural forms. Both, however, should be divided, no matter how imperfectly and arbitrarily, for descriptive purposes. The comparison will be reused by Sharpe as an explanation of his nomenclature to his colleagues in the debate in *The Builder* (see section 6.3.9. and Fig.27):

> *[…] the **use of colours** might be usefully carried a point further, by attaching a fixed signification to the employment of different colours, and by causing **a specific colour** always to represent **a specific Period of Architecture** […] no better basis could, in fact, be taken for such an application of colours than the **Prismatic Spectrum** itself, which, in a two-fold sense, is peculiarly adapted to represent the **gradual process** of Art in the buildings of the Middle Ages; first, because, as in the Prismatic Spectrum, it is difficult to say where one colour ends and the other begins, so in Church Architecture the **course of transition** was so gradual as to be almost imperceptible, and such as to render it difficult for us to draw **any exact line of demarcation** between the buildings of one style and those of another, or to permit us to say precisely, for example, where **Norman Art** ends, and where **English Art** begins; yet inasmuch as we are obliged, for **descriptive purposes**, to call certain portions of that **blended whole blue** green, yellow, and red, so are we, for the same reason, under the necessity of selecting and characterising in the same manner certain portions of the history of this continuous art, and of designating these parts by some such **specific terms** as those above proposed […]. (Sharpe 1871:1)*

The comparison of Rickman (1825) and Sharpe's (1851a) nomenclatures for English medieval architecture has made the object of numerous reflections of successive authors. Among others, the one drawn by Banister Fletcher is worth a mention (see Fig.22). In 1896, Fletcher writes an *History of Architecture on a comparative method* (Fletcher 1905), where the architecture of the whole world is described by means of visual comparisons. Specifically, the author's comparative method is exemplified by more than a thousand illustrations contained in the volume. Most of them are comparative tables, where numerous elements as window, doors or capitals are depicted next to each other to be confronted (see Fig.24 and 25). As reported by Skipton-Long (2018) regarding the Gothic architecture in England, Fletcher refers to Rickman's (1825) and Sharpe's (1851a) nomenclatures as the most famous ones (see Fig.22). In comparing them, he remarks the constant progress characterising English architecture of the Middle Ages. In line with the importance attributed to Sharpe's work, two comparative tables are dedicated in Fletcher's volume to the *'English Gothic cathedral architecture after Sharpe'* (Fletcher

1905:330, see Fig.24 and 25). There, Sharpe's same comparative method for the illustrations of his *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a) is evoked:

> *The architecture of England during the middle ages can be* ***divided into centuries*** *corresponding to the principal developments, which have their specially defined characteristics […]. There have been* ***various systems of classification*** *adopted by different writers, but those by Rickman and Sharpe are* ***the best known***. ***Rickman's*** *divisions are made to include periods corresponding to the reigns of English sovereigns, […] whereas* ***Sharpe's*** *divisions are governed by the character of the window tracery in each period. […]it must be remembered that the* ***transition*** *from one style to the next was* ***slow*** *and* ***gradual****, and can often hardly be traced, so minute are the differences. It is* ***only for convenience*** *in alluding to the different stages that the division is made, for it must not be forgotten that the medieval architecture of England in* ***one continuous style****. (Fletcher 1905:327)*



ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE (ANGLO-SAXON STYLE). 327

A comparative table showing the approximate period covered by each is given :—

Dates.	*Rickman.*	*Sharpe.*
A.D. 449 (arrival of Anglo-Saxons) to the Conquest in 1066	*Saxon.*	Saxon.
1066–1189 (*i.e.* to the end of 12th cent.) ...	*Norman.*	Norman. / Transition.
1189–1307 (*i.e.* the 13th cent.)	*Early English.*	Lancet.
1307–1377 (*i.e.* the 14th cent.)	*Decorated.*	Geometrical. / Curvilinear.
1377–1485 (*i.e.* the 15th cent.)	*Perpendicular.*	Rectilinear.
1485–1558 (*i.e.* the first half 16th cent.)... ...	*Tudor.*	Tudor.

Figure 22: Comparison of Rickman's (1825) and Sharpe's (1851a) periodizations of English architecture during the Middle Ages. Fletcher 1905:327.

Fletcher's comparison of Rickman's and Sharpe's periodizations is worth a final reflection. In view of Sharpe's periodization future, it should firstly be mentioned that Fletcher classes it as *'the best known'* (Fletcher 1905:327) classification, with Rickman's official own. Indeed, Fletcher acknowledges the existence of numerous attempts of classification of English medieval architecture at Sharpe's time, which he however does not report in his volume. Presumably even more relevant than that, is Fletcher's reference to medieval architecture as *'one continuous style'* (Ibid.). In this conception of medieval architecture an influence of Sharpe and his historian's generation seems perceivable: No matter how precise or comprehensive a periodization can be, it will always remain a merely theoretical instrument, since reality, and time, are in a constant change, as a living being, evolving from a form to the next.

5.5. On *'transparency and consistency'* [68] of nomenclatures or, on architectural terminology *'clearly written in the mouldings'* [69]

Numerous terminological aspects arise from the volumes analysed in this chapter. One of the first and most relevant issues is the consistency of the proposed nomenclatures. Consistency is a main issue of terminology. As Sager (1990) observes, transparency and consistency are main requisites of terms in special languages. Indeed, the process described by Sager in the following passage appears to reflect the one with which the present work also deals in Victorian Britain. Observation and description lead to the definition of concepts, which then require to be expressed by transparent and consistent terms:

> *The process of* ***scientific observation and description*** *includes* ***designation of concepts*** *and this in turn involves re-examining the meaning of words,* ***changing designations and coining new ones****. This concern with manipulating lexical forms leads to an attempt of reflecting* ***elements of thought*** *and perception in language. Designation in special languages, therefore, aims at* ***transparency and consistency****; often attempts are made to make designations reflect in their structure* ***major conceptual features*** *or characteristics of the concepts they represent. (Sager 1990:57)*

Concern about the consistency of the proposed terms is expressed mainly by Freeman (1849), in reference to the term *Pointed*, as a substitute for the hypernym *Gothic*. As stated by the author, the adoption of the term *Pointed* would require the *Romanesque* to be called *Round* for consistency reasons[70]. It seems appropriate here to also underline that a proposed nomenclature reflects the conceptual structure behind it. By extension, a nomenclature is underpinned by a specific way of classifying English architecture of the Middle Ages. In other words, the consistency of a classification and conceptual structure should be logically mirrored in a consistent nomenclature and set of terms. Indeed, as Cabré (2003) points out, the necessity of consistency is proper to all scientific theories, which should always be consistent and predictive: the periodization of English architecture is no exception.

Additionally, Cabré (1999) addresses the choice of the right terms during the process of naming. Each term must describe its concept univocally, tending towards that univocity ideal of the *General Theory of Terminology* elaborated by Wüster (1979). Moreover, as claimed by Cabré, the term should be as descriptive as possible of the concept it refers to:

> *Since it starts from the concept and then proceeds to the designation, terminology must be absolutely sure that it is* ***naming a specific concept*** *and not a similar one. As a result, terminological dictionaries favour exhaustive* ***descriptive definitions*** *of concepts which often also indicates the* ***relationships*** *among related concepts. (Cabré 1999:34)*

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[68] Sager 1990:57.
[69] Sharpe 1851b. Page not numbered.
[70] See Freeman 1849:298: 'And the term "Pointed", now frequently used, does not describe either the history, or the meaning, or the principles of the style, but simply certain of its details; besides it requires Romanesque to be called, for consistency's sake, the "Round" style […]'.

The same necessity for terms to precisely describe a concept is observed by Freeman (1849) and Sharpe (1851a) in the present chapter. Each term should be descriptive enough to convey the characters of the period, to be consistent with the other terms and to identify the period univocally, so as not to be mistaken with another one. Such a need for descriptive terms is addressed by Freeman in reference, for instance, to his term *Early Complete Gothic* (Freeman 1849:339) [71].

A further comment on the necessity of descriptive terms is provided by Packeiser (2009), who asserts that concepts *'are to be conceived and defined by means of terms'* (Packeiser 2009:57). In light of this, descriptive terms are not only necessary to convey the concept behind them, but also to put it in relation to other concepts within the same subject field. In this respect, Freeman's (1849) position can be better envisioned. The author is not only concerned with the scarcely descriptive nature of the term *Early Gothic*, but also with its lack of connection, or consistency, with its opposite term, *Continuous Gothic*[72]. A similar criticism will be addressed by Sharpe to Rickman's term *Early English* when compared to the more descriptive ones: *Decorated* and *Perpendicular* (see Sharpe 1851a: VII). Again, a problem of consistency is noted in Rickman's (1825) official nomenclature.

The phase of history this chapter dealt with sees a progress towards the *'scientization'* (Yanni 1997:207) of the history of architecture. Through architectural tours and an increasing interest in the observation of real specimens, knowledge has evolved, and the historians are confronted with concepts not known before. As Yanni puts it, this wished *'scientization'* (Yanni 1997:207) of their discipline is strongly dependant on unambiguous communication and, therefore, on unambiguous terminology. The same position is expressed by Felber (1984b, in Cabré 1999:194):

> ***Progress in science**, technology and economy is heavily dependent on **communication of information.** This communication of information, however, is strongly impeded by difficulties which arise because of **ambiguous terminology**. Unambiguous communication is only possible if the concepts—the elements of thinking—have the **same meaning** for all who participate in the communication process at the **national** or **international** level. (Felber 1984b, in Cabré 1999:194)*

As Felber (1984b, in Cabré 1999) underlines, unambiguous terminology must allow communication also at an international level. In the chapter, an important advancement in the discipline of architectural description is taking place: the introduction of an international perspective on the classification and nomenclature of medieval architecture. Indeed, authors start to consider the adoption of unambiguous terminology which would allow them to communicate internationally, and especially with the Continent. In this, the approach of Sharpe's generation of authors appears innovative with respect to Miller's (1808)

[71] See Freeman 1849:339: 'Yet Early may be taken to be to a certain extent a descriptive term; it may very well imply a period when the architecture is actually complete, having the Gothic principle sufficiently developed to mark it as not belonging to an imperfect style, and yet when it has not fully developed its capabilities'.
[72] See Freeman 1849:339: 'An objection has been made that the two names to not exactly harmonize or balance each other, and I quite feel that a descriptive name for the Early English, could I have found an appropriate one, would have rendered it less imperfect'.

and Rickman's (1825) generation. As previously claimed, Millers and Rickman were concerned with the substitution of the term *Gothic* with the more national *English*, to distinguish their national architecture from the rest of Europe. In their opinion, the *Gothic* style of the Continent was so different from their national one that more restrictive terms should be adopted not only in England, but in each other European country (see Millers 1808, in section 2.2.).

On the contrary, the authors of Sharpe's generation become aware of the necessity of international communication and comparison. In line with this, Freeman's attitude is exemplar. He does not even distinguish between English and French variants of the Gothic, but rather he implicitly adopts an international perspective when comparing the *Flowing* in England and the *Flamboyant* in France[73]. As it happens, international communication among experts is also one of Wüster's objectives in defining his *General Theory of Terminology* (Wüster 1979). Quoted by Cabré (2003:179), Wüster presents unambiguous terminology as a necessary condition of international communication. What Wüster aimed at in his *General Theory of Terminology* was the possibility to compare concepts and terms internationally. Therefore, comparison played a central role there, too. Since, for Wüster, the concept is central, and all national terms designate the same concept, these terms could be put in relation to each other through an underlying conceptual structure. Sharpe seems to pursue the same purpose as he proposes a more precise, though still national nomenclature to allow comparison with buildings on the Continent. As Campo (2012) asserts, Wüster's main aim in terminology was to create a concept system which would allow international comparison of concepts and terms. In this Sharpe's extension of Rickman's nomenclature seems to be reflected in Wüster's theory. Indeed, Sharpe and Wüster appear to share the purpose of allowing international communication and comparison:

> *For Wüster, **terminology** meant the concept system and the naming system of a specialized domain, including all specialist expressions in normal use. […] the discipline was defined by Wüster as a linguistic and pragmatic discipline, which at the **international level** provides **comparisons** between concepts and written terms in languages for special purposes. (Campo 2012:45)*

Since Sharpe laments that Rickman's (1825) simple classification in four periods would not allow international comparison and analogy, one of the motivations of his more detailed nomenclature could be assumed to be international comparability[74]. A further element retraceable in the volumes presented here is the reference to authors and works from the past. Indeed, in reintroducing old terms, a diachronic perspective on the history of classification of English architecture is adopted. In this, the necessity to

[73] See Freeman 1849:339: 'These I call the Early and the Continuous Gothic, the former answering to Early English and Geometrical Decorated or the common nomenclature, the latter including Flowing Decorated, Flamboyant and Perpendicular'.

[74] See Sharpe 1851a:VIII: '[…] had Mr Rickman gone a step further and classed the whole of the buildings of Pointed Architecture according to the forms of their Windows under four heads, instead of three […] would have enabled us to compare the buildings of our own Country with those of corresponding character, and nearly contemporaneous date on the Continent, in a manner that would have established an analogy between them, which, according to the present classification, has no apparent existence'.

study terms and concepts diachronically and as entities evolving in time is evident. As Faber (2012) asserts, within the socio-cognitive approach to terminology, since concepts and terms evolve in time, the perspective on them should necessarily be diachronic[75]. An example of that can be found in Freeman's (1849:352) resort to the *'revival of an old name'* (Freeman 1849:352) to term his *Lancet* style. In this a diachronic perspective on nomenclatures and classifications seems to be adopted also by the authors presented in this chapter. As already argued in previous chapters, no term or concept is actually proposed as new, but as a development of previous forms and nomenclatures by other authors.

Moreover, the diachronic perspective is employed by the authors also to justify their terms. In reference to the general habit of speaking, indeed, the reuse of an old term was presumably considered to be better perceived and more easily adopted by the scientific community, as Sharpe claimed (see Sharpe 1852:170, see section 3.2.) Following this, it should be reasonable to presume that what appeared as a mere discussion about terms and nomenclatures, is actually the proposal of new conceptual systematisations of their discipline by both Freeman and Sharpe. Consequently, terms are not newly invented, but rather an innovative meaning is attributed to them, in concordance with the new conceptualisation of the medieval architecture proposed by their authors.

A mention is due also to the primary connection of specimens from reality and terms in Sharpe's nomenclature (1851a). Within the theory of terminology, the relation between reality, concepts and terms is addressed for instance by Temmerman (2000), in reference to Johnson's (1987, in Temmerman 2000) theory on Western objectivism. According to Johnson, objectivism is the basis of Western thinking and objects are central in the world's understanding: *'The world consists of objects that have properties and stand in various relationships independent of human understanding'* (Johnson 1987:X, in Temmerman 2000:16). In order to describe this objective reality, language needs to express concepts *'that can map onto the objects in a literal, univocal, context independent fashion'* (Temmerman 2000:16). The same relation seems to exist between architectural specimens and concepts expressed by Sharpe (1851a). Indeed, in the present chapter, Sharpe evidences the strong relation existing between moulding and the history of English architecture[76].

In a similar manner, the relation of object, term and concept, expressed in the language of architecture *'written in the mouldings'* (Sharpe 1851b) could be represented through the semiotic triangle, visualised by Ogden and Richards in 1923 (Ogden & Richards 1989, cf. Wüster 1991). Also known as the triangle of meaning, the diagram is recalled in Wüster's successive *Dreiteiliges Wortmodell* [77] (Wüster 1991, see section 1.5.1.). Both these diagrams represent the interconnection of reality, concepts and terms. The importance for terminology of objects of reality presumably better

[75] See Freeman 1849:352: 'The first form of the Early Gothic than is the Early English or First-Pointed, which I would, by the revival of an old name, designate as the LANCET style'.
[76] See Sharpe 1851b: '[…] to one who understands the language of the history of our national architecture, is as clearly written in the mouldings as it is in the general outline, and in those more prominent features of a building, which strike the eye of the general observer'.
[77] English translation proposed by the author 'Three-part word model'. The English translation proposed in Temmerman 2000:58, by Felber 1984:100 is: 'Wüster's term model'.

explains the relevance of reality for the authors presented in this chapter. As previously acknowledged, according to Sharpe and his contemporaries, there is no point in establishing a classification if it is not based on the description of reality. Or, as Cabré puts it: *'The final objective of any theory must be to describe real data'* (Cabré 2003:178).

Moreover, the importance attributed to reality by these authors highlights the central role of comparison of building specimens in defining a periodization. Comparison is addressed by different authors within the theory of terminology. In Sager's understanding, for instance, the concept of *'comparability of knowledge'* (Sager 1990:103) is founded on the maximal comprehension of concepts and terms, which should be shared and common to all discussion's participants (Sager 1990:103). Indeed, as Sager (1990) refers to it, this comparability is assured among experts of a subject field by standardised terms and expressions, which allow the understanding. In the case here presented, even if terms are not standardised yet, knowledge seems to be comparable as the concepts appear to be shared by all authors, so as to enable discussion on the best terms to refer to them. In other words, if Freeman's (1849) and Sharpe's (1851a) concepts were not shared by the scientific community, the introduction of terms to name them would not have been possible, since terms like *First Pointed* or *Continuous Gothic* would not have been understood, and hence used and adopted. Conversely, when concepts are not shared, no univocal term can be assigned to them, as Sager puts it:

> *In the particular case of **communication between specialists** in a discipline, the existence of accepted standardised terms and expressions which the sender can assume the recipient to recognise is of considerable utility in ensuring **comparability of knowledge**, since the standard term presupposes **absolute comprehension** of its definition. (Sager 1990:103)*

Additionally, it seems appropriate to define the approach applied to the classification of architectural elements presented here as an onomasiological process. As defined by Sager (1990), the activity carried out by the historians in this chapter seems comparable to the one of a scientist, *'who has to find a name for a new concept'* (Sager 1990:56). Within the onomasiological approach, a concept is defined through the observation of some real features, and only then needs to be named appropriately. In order to be analysed, the concept necessarily must be compared to other concepts. Comparison, again, plays a major role in the definition of a concept. As Campo (2012) highlights, comparison and the onomasiological approach are central components of Wüster's theory of terminology:

> *The **onomasiological approach** to terminology has always been at the centre of Wüster's work. At the basis of the onomasiological approach is the concept that needs to be named. This means that one has to analyse the concept; its constituting elements **compared to others or related to others** and the relation to other concepts in the same conceptual field. (Campo 2012:212)*

Similarly, in the examined texts, the results of the application of an onomasiological approach can be perceived in the derivation of terms from principles of construction. Through the observation and

description of elements of architecture such as window specimens and mouldings, the authors of Sharpe's generation are able to recognise principles and recurrent features, from which then descriptive terms are derived. The main requisites of these term seem to be clarity and reciprocal consistency[78].

5.6. Conclusions

This chapter was devoted to the presentation of Sharpe's proposal for an alternative periodization of English medieval architecture in his most famous volume *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a). This alternative system is presented as an update and specification of Rickman's (1825) official classification and nomenclature for the ecclesiastical architecture of England during the Middle Ages. In order to provide a contextualisation, Sharpe's classification from 1851 was discussed alongside the text which is known to have served as its main source of inspiration: Freeman's periodization proposal in his *History of Architecture* (Freeman 1849). With the purpose of enhancing further comprehension, five main aspects introduced by Freeman's (1849) and Sharpe's (1851a) theories are to bear in mind. Firstly, the issue of consistency of the proposed nomenclatures. As Sharpe recalls, for the *'descriptive writers'* (Sharpe 1849a:3) of his own generation, an innovative nomenclature is not enough. On the contrary, since numerous updated nomenclatures are developed at the same time, the consistency of classes and terms, and thus also of concepts, will be central in determining the success of one of them.

Secondly, the introduction of an international perspective in the choice of the right nomenclature seems of paramount relevance. Inevitably, the future official nomenclature will have to allow comparability and analogy at a national and international level. Indeed, such a broad comparison was not possible using Rickman's (1825) old nomenclature, since it came from an era in which national architecture had to be investigated in isolation, and comparisons with foreign architectures was not possible yet. One possible factor explaining such widening of the perspective could be the recognition of the Gothic as an international style, common to all European countries. Indeed, architectural tours and information exchange among students enhanced comparison of national and foreign building specimens, which in turn lead to the necessity of a shared international nomenclature. This issue will be extensively discussed in the following debate among experts on the pages of the journal *The Builder* (see Ch.6). Hence, the consistency of terms is perceived as an issue at an international level too, and the question will require the attention of the experts (see Scott 1851a in section 6.3.6.).

Thirdly, the central role played by the practice of comparison in these innovative descriptive nomenclatures is revealed. Indeed, for the authors of this generation, comparing specimens to one another seems so important that knowledge appears to exist only thanks to comparison. Window specimens and mouldings are compared through linguistic descriptions and illustrations. Similarly, also famous English cathedrals are compared to one another as constructive examples of the different periods. Moreover, taxonomic tables are created in order to show one style's features as different from

[78] See Freeman 1849:352: […] we will endeavour to trace the subordinate shapes which they assumed, which may be best named from the windows, as the feature in which the principles appear earliest, and are most clearly developed'.

previous and successive ones. By extension, a nomenclature also appears more reliable when it can be compared with other ones. As a natural consequence, the search for the best innovative nomenclature will culminate in a debate where different nomenclatures, periodizations and opinions of the authors are compared. In this respect, the comparison drawn in this chapter by Banister Fletcher (1905) of Rickman's (1825) and Sharpe's (1851a) nomenclatures is noteworthy (see Fig.22).

Not less relevantly, the conception of the architectural style as living being in a gradual and constant state of evolution is remarked by both Freeman (1849) and Sharpe (1851a). Specifically, while Freeman reflects on the *Perpendicular* style as *'development'* or *'corruption'* (Freeman 1849:354) of its precedent style; both Sharpe (1851a) and Fletcher (1905) will remark the arbitrariness of each classification. Architecture, indeed, is perceived only as in a state of constant evolution.

Lastly, to enhance comprehension, the volumes by Sharpe (1851a) and Freeman (1849) need to be properly contextualised. As previously addressed from the terminological point of view, the addition of new terms and periods to the official nomenclatures is mainly due to an advancement in knowledge on the subject. Similarities and diversities have been recognised among specimens of buildings, windows and mouldings, which were previously grouped under the same general classes introduced by Rickman thirty years before. Now, the new descriptive approach does not make it possible to ignore variety any longer. Hence, more detailed classes are needed, which allow a specific description of reality. In conclusion, the fact that Freeman (1849) and Sharpe (1851a) propose the exact same division of *Romanesque* and *Gothic* architecture in England is noteworthy, as it reveals common purposes and a shared sensibility as far as the practice of classification is concerned. Now that all main topics were introduced, the upcoming discussion among experts on the pages of *The Builder* will be better contextualised in the next chapter (see Ch.6). There, all nomenclatures and periodizations proposed by the authors in the years around 1851 will be discussed. The scope of the debate will be to find the best nomenclature and periodization to precise and substitute Rickman's (1825) official classification. In the discussion, all relevant topics presented in this and the previous chapters will be resumed (see Ch.6).

To conclude, it seems appropriate to specify that the description proposed in this chapter was inspired by the comparative method adopted by Sharpe for the classification of his *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a, see section 4.2.), as well as by other contemporary authors. To them, a specimen is not valuable if described in its singularity, but rather it becomes unique when compared to other similar items, and their similarities and differences are confronted. According to these authors, description is only possible when accompanied by a constant comparison of concepts, terms and specimens from reality. The same method was applied here to the comparison of different nomenclatures and the work of their authors. Ultimately, this represents Sharpe's main lesson to his audience. Nothing is to be gained by the definition of clear-cut categories in theory, unless they are adaptable to exceptions and rarities that reality inevitably features. Accordingly, no knowledge exists that is not based on and in constant reference to the observation and description of reality.

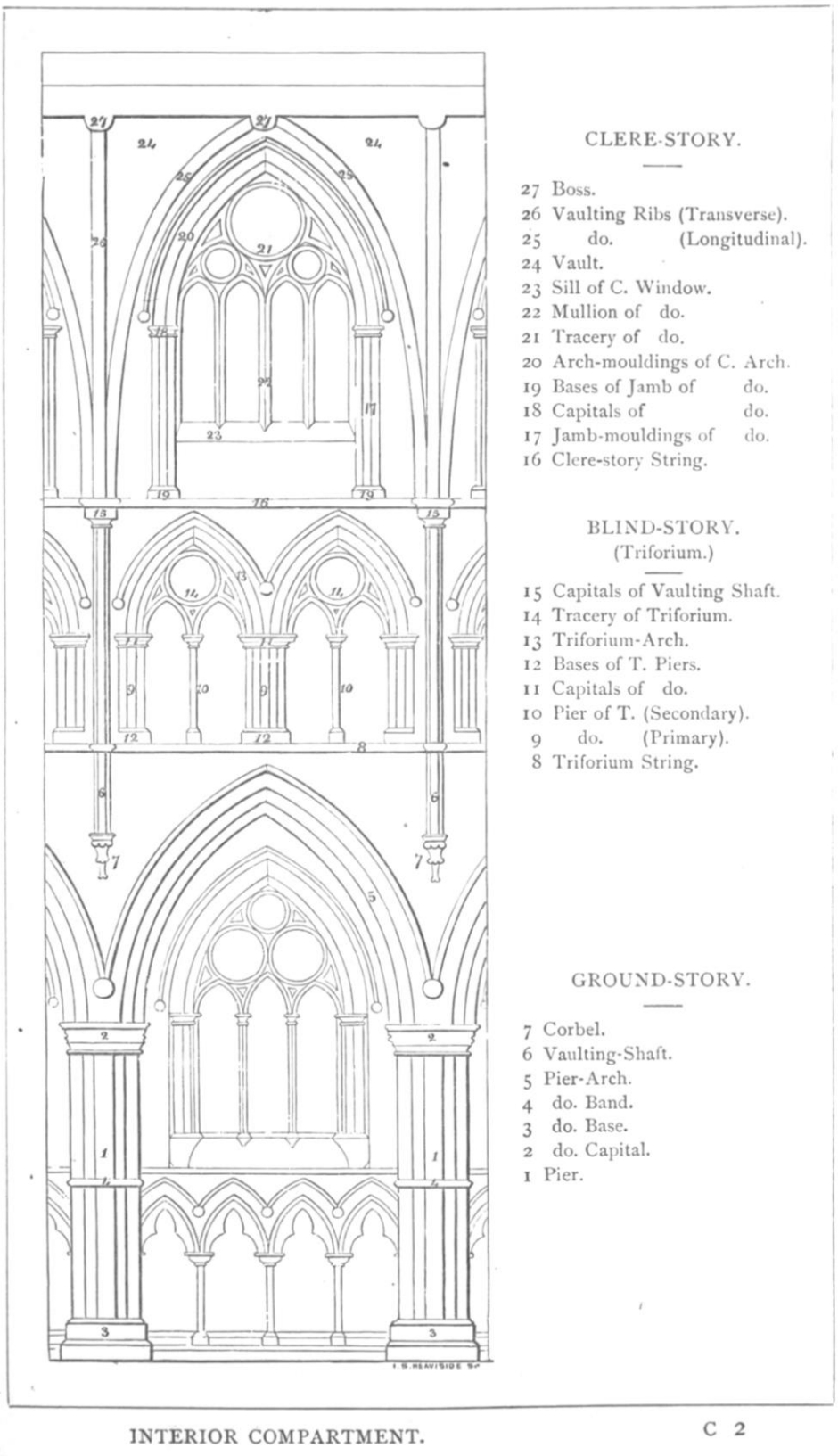


Figure 23: The Seven Periods of English Architecture. Interior Compartment of a church. Table C2. Sharpe 1888:9.

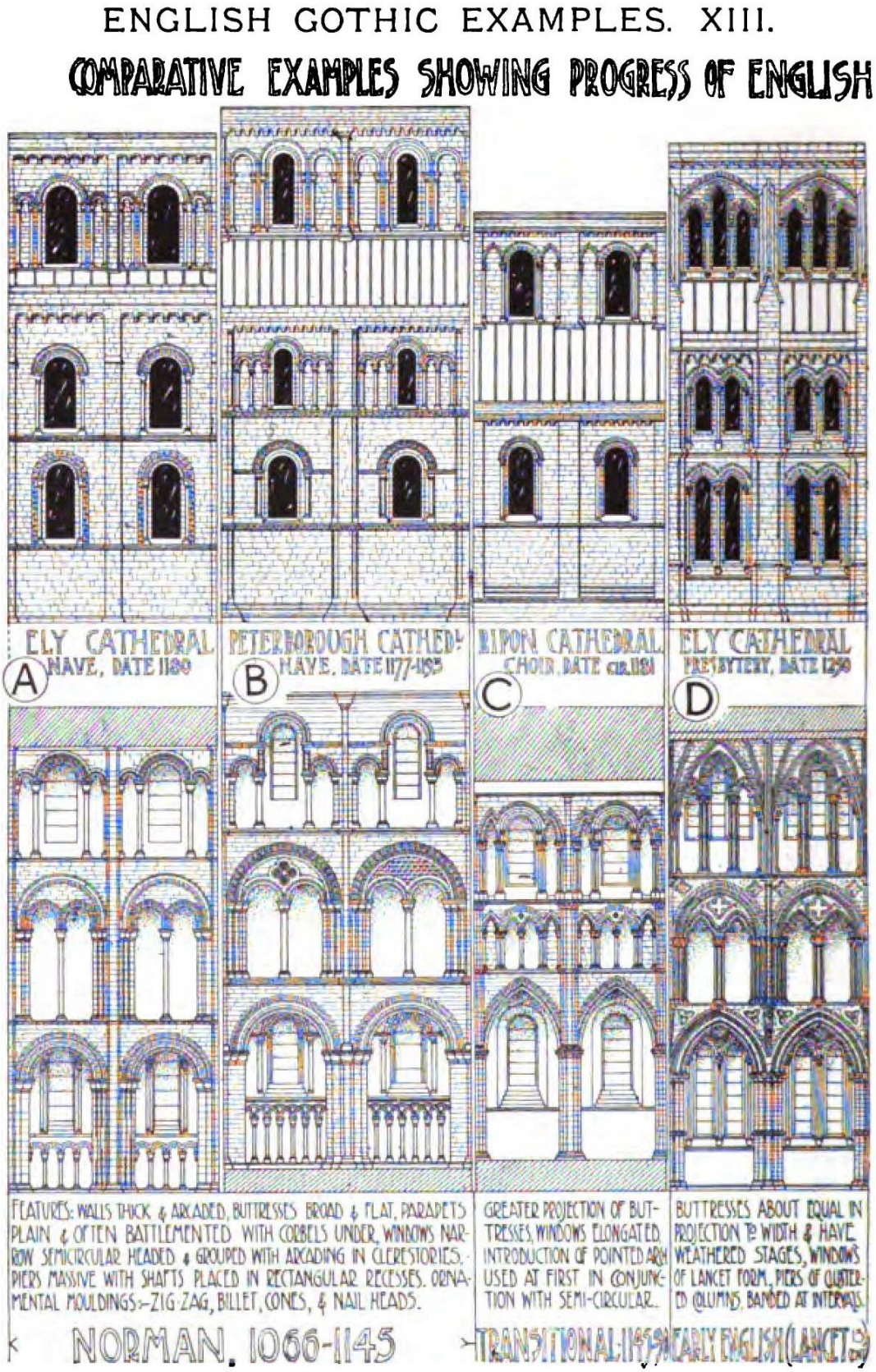


Figure 24: The Progress of English Gothic Cathedral Architecture after Sharpe. Table 136. Fletcher 1905:330.

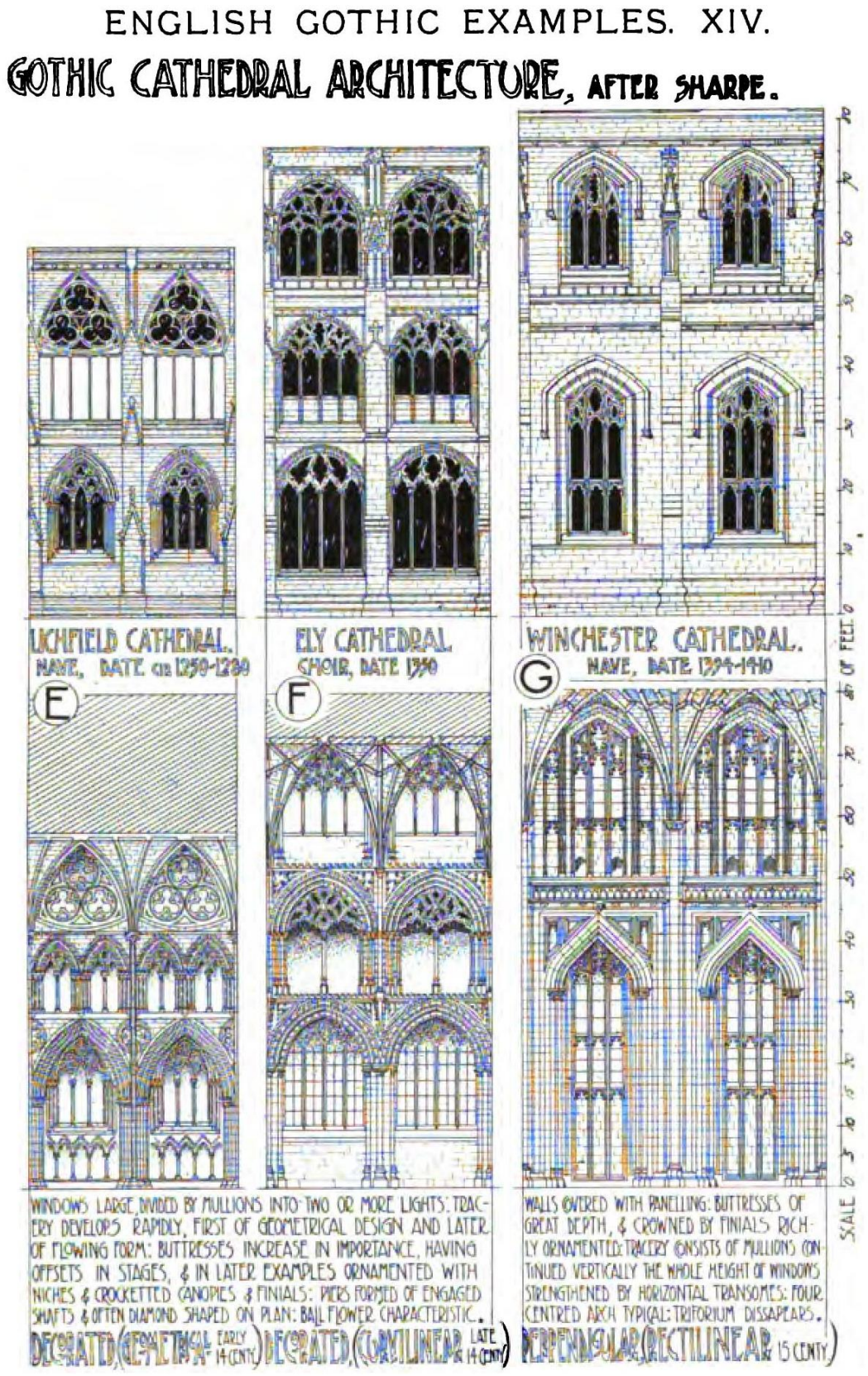


Figure 25: The Progress of English Gothic Cathedral Architecture after Sharpe. Table 137. Fletcher 1905:331.

6. The debate in *The Builder: an illustrated weekly magazine for the architect, engineer, operative and artist, archaeologist, constructor, sanitary-reformer and art-lover*. June – November 1851. A terminological discussion among experts of architecture

6.1. Introduction

The chapter is dedicated to the debate which took place in *The Builder* [79], a popular architecture journal, about Sharpe's proposal for a new system of classification of English medieval architecture. Sharpe's nomenclature is already known at this point since his volume, *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a), has just been published and presented by the architect at a conference of the Royal Institute of British Architects on May 19th of the same year (Sharpe 1851b). On June 7th, 1851, a first letter by Sharpe appears in *The Builder*, which agreed to give space to his classification proposal (Sharpe 1851c). As already happened for example in *The British Critic*, another architecture journal, the presentation gives rise to a terminological dispute about the legitimacy of Sharpe's thesis. The discussion lasts several months and sees the contributions of numerous authors. The reconstruction of the dispute is inspired by a similar one presented by Hughes in his volume about Sharpe (Hughes 2010).

Following Sharpe's initial letter (Sharpe 1851c), the present examination starts with the second letter of the debate about the introduction of a new periodization of English medieval architecture. In this second letter, a still unidentified person named FSA condemns *The Builder* for promoting Sharpe's proposal through its publication in a previous letter (Sharpe 1851c). Specifically, FSA's criticism concentrates on the dating of buildings and the issue of term originality in Sharpe's classification. Two weeks later, Sharpe responds questioning FSA's authority in determining the dates of construction of the buildings. There, FSA quotes Parker's *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836) as main reference volume on the dating the English ecclesiastical buildings.

In a third letter, Edward Augustus Freeman, an architecture historian and author of another proposal for a system of classification in a volume entitled *An essay on the Origin and Development of Window Tracery in England* (Freeman 1851a), participates in the discussion about the originality of the concept of a *Geometrical* style. After him also George William Cox, Late Secretary of the Oxford Archaeological Society, addresses the impossibility of an exact and universally agreed upon categorisation of all medieval buildings. To this letter follows a reply by Sharpe underlining the importance of the concept of transition in history and a subsequent one by FSA, lamenting the insufficient foundation of the new nomenclature to substitute the old one. From the fifth letter on (see FSA 1851c, in section 6.3.5.), the tone of the discussion worsens, and the nomenclature's didactic purpose is addressed by Sharpe and FSA. Bored with the attitude to the debate, George Gilbert Scott, architect and architecture historian, tries to end to it making two important points: while a secondary unofficial nomenclature, which he defines *'conversational'* (Scott 1851:480), exists already in the

[79] *The Builder: an illustrated weekly magazine for the architect, engineer, operative and artist, archaeologist, constructor, sanitary-reformer and art-lover.* First published by Joseph Hanson in London, December 1842 – 1966. Then continued by a journal named *'Building'*, still in existence.

general use next to Rickman's official one, a common European nomenclature is to be aimed for. In the following letters, Freeman, responding to Sharpe and lamenting the tone of the dispute, describes his own nomenclature. The next contribution constitutes a methodological statement by Sharpe. According to the author, given the constant evolution of knowledge in architecture, Rickman himself, a man of great experience, would have updated his nomenclature, if still alive. For the same reason, the term *'transitional'* (Scott 1851b:590) should be avoided, since it is potentially applicable to each period.

Two weeks later, Scott addresses the so-called *'honour of precedence'* (Scott 1851b:590) in periods naming and claims that nomenclature is arbitrary and proposes a simple numerical one. The 10th letter has a different author, Edward Lacy Garbett, architecture historian and author of a treatise about nature and architectural principles (Garbett 1850). This letter is terminologically very interesting: the difference between descriptive and non-descriptive names of the periods is discussed, as well as the consistency of Sharpe's terms and Garbett's own periodization. The next letter should have been the last one: here FSA reveals his identity and discusses the nomenclatures applicability at an international level. Eventually, Sharpe's last writing ends the dispute drawing a comparison of his own and Rickman's classifications. In a final statement, the author reveals the prescriptive purpose of his nomenclature.

Regarding the terminology theory, this debate appears to prefigure the process of *'terminologisation'* later theorised by Sager (1990:60). Specifically, Sager's secondary phase of term formation seems indeed to be mirrored in the discussion, as the communication and discussion of new terms occur through progressive stages of naming (Sager 1990). Considering the debate as a communicative situation, some of Sager's conditions for successful communication are recalled, such as the presence of a regulation authority or the correct behaviour of its participants (Sager 1990). Another worthwhile element is adduced, as the two purposes of terminology are identified contemporarily in the debate: prescription and description (Faber 2009). Indeed, these historians' wish for standardisation of their discipline's vocabulary is in opposition to terminological variation, which naturally belongs to language (Faber & López Rodríguez 2012; Cabré 1999). Moreover, the different categorisations of the same concepts proposed by these historians seem to evidence the multidimensional nature of concepts (cf. Temmerman 2000). Concurrently, the importance of the visual representation of concepts is highlighted here through reference to building specimens, recalling future reflections of frame-based terminology (Faber 2009). Ultimately, one of the funding principles of Wüster's terminology finds confirmation in this debate: New terms arise, as the existing ones turn out as insufficient for their primarily purpose of description and communication (Wüster 1968, in Cabré 2003).

6.2. A preliminary overview of recurring topics

At this point of the debate different concepts reflect divergent perceptions of reality. From the unclear definition of concepts, a great number of term proposals originates to identify them. Evidently, there is no standardisation authority to decide on the terms to use, and each author tries to convince the readers about the legitimacy of his own categorisation. The term *period* is adopted in the analysis to define the stages in which the history of medieval architecture is divided, following Sharpe's nomenclature.

Indeed, the discussion about the use of the term *period* or *style* is a central one in this work. At the same time, the term *period* seems to be connected with the concepts of time and history, while *style* is brought up in connection with a change in building practices. *Styles* are the classes to be identified with common features, *periods* are the transitional number of years intervening between one *style* and the other.

The didactic purpose of the official nomenclature especially with regard to architecture students is a recurring topic in the letters, as well as the different titles under which they are presented by the authors. As Hughes (2010) points out, Sharpe's presentation of his innovative periodization (Sharpe 1851c) originally caused the debate in *The Builder* we are now attempting to reconstruct. This *'bitter controversy'* (Hughes 2010:293), took on in the end such a nervous tone that the Editor of *The Builder*, George Godwin, will later have to stop it. Though no official explanation for the different titles with which the contribution to the debate are published on the journal is provided neither in the letters, nor by Hughes (2010), this change of title could be hypothesised as a way to lower down the tone of the discussion and draw the attention away from it. An additional element worth noticing in the titles of the upcoming letters are the terms *English* and *Gothic*. Used here as equivalent alternatives, their exact meaning and equivalence were already for Millers and Rickman a topic of discussion (see section 2.2.).

6.3. The letters

6.3.1. June 21st, 1851 – FSA, *The seven periods of church architecture*

In his first letter FSA criticises the choice of *The Builder* to present Sharpe's proposal:

> *The high reputation of The Builder and its large circulation amongst a class of persons who have not always the possibility of testing for themselves the statements it contains, renders it very desirable to avoid inserting anything as* ***a fact which cannot be proved*** *to be really as such. It is for this reason that I observe with regret that you have given curse to Mr Sharpe's theory of 'Seven periods of Church Architecture' without expressing any doubt as to whether* ***they will stand the text of examination by history*** *or not. (FSA 1851a:386)*

With reference to the *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836), a popular didactic work on the history of architecture, FSA asserts Sharpe's proposed categories to be contemporaneous and not successive to each other. Sharpe's system of dating of the periods, as well as their chronological succession are questioned by FSA. Indeed, arguing the authenticity of the proposed dates, the author questions the actual validity of Sharpe's proposal. In the future, this will be among the main topics of the debate:

> *Mr* ***Sharpe's divisions*** *are so* ***obvious****, so* ***easy****, and so* ***natural*** *that the merest tyro in looking through the plates of windows in the Glossary, or any other popular series, must most necessarily make them for himself; and it is much to be regretted that these divisions were* ***not successive periods****, but were* ***frequently contemporaneous*** *(as the Curvilinear with Geometrical and Perpendicular), as Is easily proved by* ***well-known*** *examples and* ***well authenticated*** *dates. (FSA 1851a:386)*

In the letter of presentation of his system Sharpe warned about the arbitrariness of his division, probably foreseeing the criticisms (from Sharpe's letter on June 7th, 1851, see Sharpe 1851c):

> *Church architecture was essentially an* ***architecture of transition****. A regular and gradual progress is observable throughout the six or seven centuries into which it is divided; and this appears to have been carried on simultaneously in different parts of the country. It is therefore* ***impossible to divide*** *our architecture into* ***any distinct number of orders or styles****. To arrange it in any given number of periods is a matter of difficulty and must necessarily be* ***arbitrary****; but it is essential for the* ***purpose of description*** *that we should divide and classify the buildings which are left to us. (Sharpe 1851c:356)*

This preventive statement by Sharpe on the purpose of his proposal is noteworthy. While warning about the arbitrariness of his division and the subjective character of every attempt at reality classification, he declares from the beginning that his terminology has *'description'* (Sharpe 1851c:356) as a purpose. Moreover, the first point of Sharpe's theory that was disputed is his twofold division of the Romanesque into *Saxon* and *Norman*, where Rickman's official nomenclature called *Norman* the whole English Romanesque (Rickman 1825:39, see section 2.3.). In the next passage Sharpe is accused of having no basis for his dating system he uses to date medieval buildings:

> *The observation of Mr Rickman that we have very few buildings known to be more than a very few years earlier than the Norman conquest, has never been answered; and many of the buildings* ***which is now the fashion to call Saxon****, there is every reason to believe were really built after the Conquest, as for instance, the towers at Lincoln at the low town […]. The* ***history*** *is however* ***too obscure*** *to be worth disputing. […]* ***What possible ground can Mr Sharpe find for making the use of this style terminate at this particular date?*** *Which excludes one half of our finest and richest Norman Buildings, as Iffley Church, built about 1160; Peterborough Cathedral, transept and nave built between 1155 and 1177 by Abbott Waterville; Bishop Alexander's fine west doorways at Lincoln, and many others which it would be tedious to enumerate. (FSA 1851a:386)*

Sharpe's association of a distinctive feature, such as the pointed arch or the lancet form, to a specific period is also commented by FSA. Indeed, the author argues how the use of these features in the building practice extends chronologically far beyond the dates proposed by Sharpe to the correspondent periods:

> *But* ***the question here is not one of the date only.*** *Lancet shaped windows were so very convenient, and so elegant at the same time, that they were* ***used for a much longer period*** *than Mr Sharpe assigns to them, contemporaneously with windows of other forms. They are found occasionally in all the styles, especially in towers. (FSA 1851a:386)*

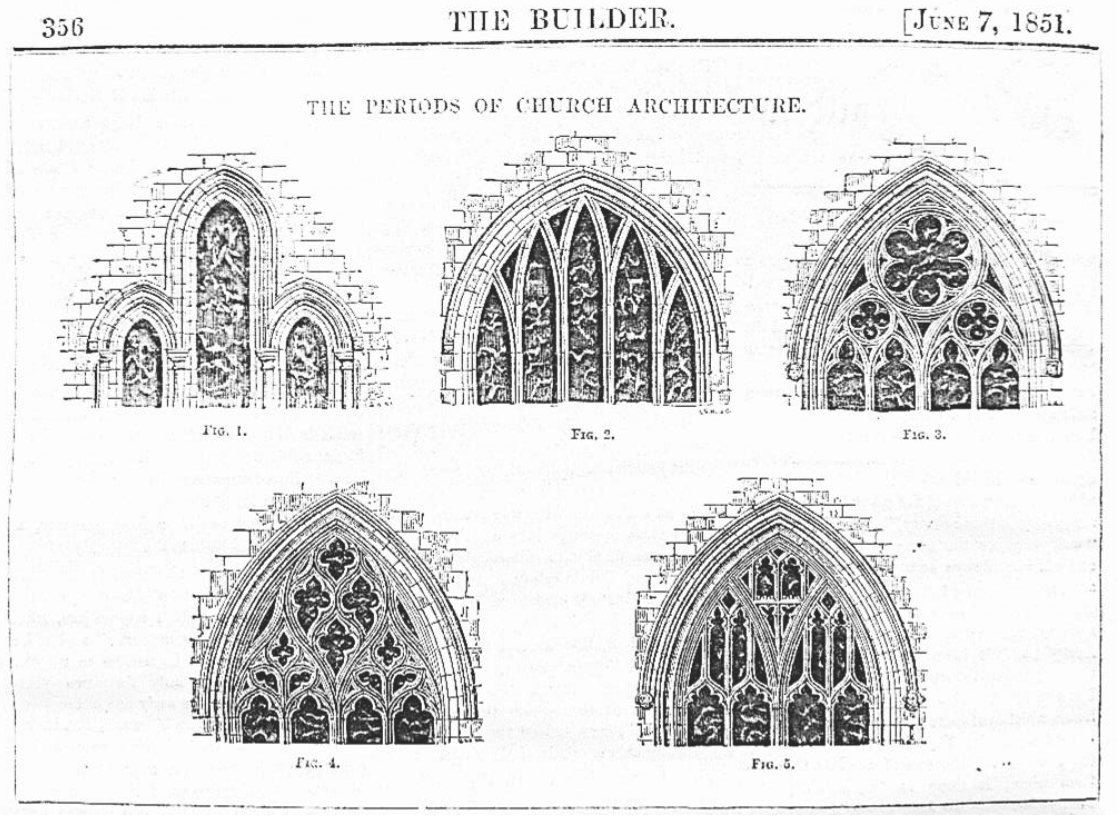


Figure 26: Windows examples from several periods. 1) Lancet period; 2) Evolution of Lancet period; 3) Geometrical period; 4) Curvilinear Period; 5) Rectilinear period. Sharpe 1851c:356, June 7th, 1851.

The focus is then shifted on the originality of the terms indicating the periods. The criticism gets an accusatorial tone, ignoring the principle of science evolution, according to which the new originates from the existing. Additionally, also Sharpe's declaration of non-originality in his first letter (Sharpe 1851c) is disregarded, where the author asserted that he was proposing terms already in general use in the practice of architectural description. From Sharpe's letter on June 7th, 1851:

> *In an article on the British Critic some years ago, they were proposed to be applied, but with this distinction: the term* ***Curvilinear*** *was proposed to be applied to the tracery of all periods in which a curve of any kind was found; and the term* ***Rectilinear****, was proposed to be substituted for the* ***Perpendicular*** *of Mr. Rickman. (Sharpe 1851c:357)*

To which FSA responds on June 21st:

> *This includes part of two of the established style – the Early English and the Decorated. The idea is not a new one: the* ***same division*** *and the* ***same name*** *for it was proposed by Mr Freeman to the Oxford Architectural society in 1842. That society very properly* ***declined to adopt it****, on the ground that '****it is impossible to define such a style****'. It applies to the windows only, the other members of a building to do agree with this division – doorways, mouldings and all other details are opposed to it. (FSA 1851a:386)*

Following that, FSA continues discussing the difference between the terms *Perpendicular*, used by Rickman (1825:39, see section 2.3.), and *Rectilinear*, proposed by Sharpe as an alternative (Sharpe 1851a:15, see section 5.3.). Nothing seems to be gained from such a change of name in terms of the description's quality. The topic is then taken up in a further letter:

> ***Rectilinear*** *period (1360 – 1550): This is* ***merely a change of name*** *without any object and the dates are not well chosen. The change of style did not begin quite so early, though occasional instances may be found. […] good Gothic work did not continue so late as 1550 as a general style, although occasional instances may be found for a century after the date. (FSA 1851a:387)*

To conclude, FSA introduces the subject of the applicability of the new nomenclature, asserting how Sharpe's nomenclature could find no application even if one just considered England, due to a problem of dating of the buildings. Moreover, the author remarks the impossibility for the proposal to upset *'the received division'* (FSA 1851a:387) of Rickman, established by general use. Indeed, general use alteration configures as one of the debate's leading topics:

> *In some districts 'the Lancet period' is wanting altogether; in others 'the Geometrical period' extends through nearly the whole of the 15th and the 16th centuries. […]* ***Neither he nor anyone else will succeed in upsetting the received division*** *of styles, which is grounded on fact and has been subjected to the test of the careful examination of many accurate observers for a long term of years. (FSA 1851a:387)*

6.3.2. July 5th, 1851 – Sharpe, *The seven periods of English architecture*

Sharpe seems here to have become aware of the real identity of FSA, as the editor of the last edition of Rickman's volume, *An Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England from the Conquest to the Restoration* (Rickman 1848) and author of the *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836) based on Rickman's system: John Henry Parker, who is trying to prevent his publication from being overshadowed by a newer one. The object of Shape's response is thus a protest not only against general practice, but also against the interest of publishers to keep their publications valid. Sharpe also remarks the naturality of his nomenclature, which is, according to him, inevitably due to enter the general use:

> *Some such classification as that I propose, by whatever terms it should be characterised, and which, when once pointed out, appears to me 'so* ***obvious****, so* ***easy*** *and so* ***natural****', would inevitably* ***force itself into general use****. […] It unfortunately happens, however, that* ***no change*** *of this kind can be made* ***in the nomenclature*** *of any art or science, which does not* ***affect certain vested interests represented by those publishers*** *who possess* ***the stock and copyright****, as it were, of the system about to be superseded. I have strong reasons to believe that it is* ***one of this class****, who under the signature of FSA complains so loudly. (Sharpe 1851d:417)*

In the next passage, categorisation as a general rule is discussed, as well as the possibility of some specimens to classify as exceptions:

> *Now, how a **division** can be a **period** at all is somewhat difficult to understand, and how divisions can be **contemporaneous** it is still more puzzling to conceive. In no part of the Seven Periods do I assert that no feature, characteristic of the architecture of a particular period is ever to be found in another: on the contrary; […] but I do maintain that these instances are rare, and are to be looked upon as anomalous and as **ordinary exceptions to a general rule**. (Sharpe 1851d:418)*

The didactic character of terminological work, especially for the architecture student, is declared as a main topic in every publication of the time and is remarked also here by Sharpe. Moreover, the author criticises the *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836) used as main didactic reference and which adopts Rickman's nomenclature. In particular, the dates adopted by Parker (1836) in the *Glossary* would be deliberately fictitious to misguide the architecture student:

> *On this account (the dates) there is not a more **dangerous book** to place in the hands of a beginner, than the '**Glossary of Architecture**' which abounds in **fictitious dates** of this description, the greater part of which are manifestly erroneous and much more calculated to **mislead** than to assist the **student**. (Sharpe 1851d:418)*

To conclude, Sharpe, who is not yet aware of the identity of his interlocutor, invites FSA to justify his authority in dating the building specimens. In the following passage, the topic of the presence of a regulation authority, or figure, to decide on the debate is introduced:

> *[…] I will request him, first, to supply me with the **authority** on which he asserts that AD 1160 is the date of erection of Iffley Church; and secondly to complete the list of 'one half of our finest and richest Norman buildings' which he asserts that I have excluded from the Norman period. (Sharpe 1851d:419)*

6.3.3. July 12th, 1851 – Freeman and Cox, *The seven periods of church architecture*

The third letter in the debate is authored by Edward Augustus Freeman, an architectural historian and author in the same year as Sharpe of another proposal for a system of classification, which is also based on window tracery: *An essay on the origin and development of window tracery in England* (Freeman 1851a). Freeman enters the dispute, having been cited by FSA. The occasion for that is the discussion on the originality of the *Geometrical* style as a concept and as a term. In the words of FSA from the previous letter on the *Geometrical* period:

> *The **same division** and the **same name** for it was proposed by Mr Freeman to the Oxford Architectural Society in 1842. That society very properly declined to adopt it, on the ground that – **it is impossible to define such a style!** (FSA 1851a:386)*

According to Freeman, the original proposal of a *Geometrical* period of English architecture is to be found in the introduction to the book called *A guide to the architectural antiquities in the neighbourhood of Oxford* (Parker & Grey 1846), bearing the date October 10th,1842. Moreover, as far as Gothic architecture is concerned, Sharpe's division coincides exactly with the one proposed by Freeman in his *History of Architecture* in 1849 (Freeman 1849). In Freeman's opinion, Sharpe appears not to know his precedent proposal of 1849, since he makes no reference to it. Almost the same statement by Freeman reported in the following passage, appeared in 1848 on the Archaeological Journal (Freeman 1848):

> *The **introduction of a new style** between the **Early English** and the **Decorated** was proposed to the Oxford Architectural Society by Mr Freeman In 1842; the same idea has since been taken up by Mr Paley and now by Mr Poole; it is an attractive theory and we are not surprised at its finding many votaries but the **objection** which was made to it on its first proposal still holds good. It is **not easy to define such a style**. (Freeman 1851b:430)*

The accusation of non-originality made by FSA is again denied and the problem of departing from Rickman's official nomenclature is remarked by Freeman:

> *His [of Sharpe] two new names **Curvilinear** and **Rectilinear** I agree with FSA in very much **disliking**. But I claim no sort of **originality**: my scheme is only evolved at length from suggestions of Mr Petits. […] Mr Sharpe's divisions are **perfectly accurate** as theoretical definitions of style and in theoretical and historical discussion of styles I should always adhere to them. But **Geometrical** and **Flowing** are so mingled together in individual instances, that for describing particular buildings we want a **three-fold nomenclature**, and for this purpose I see no reason whatever for departing from that of Rickman which is **sanctioned by general use**. (Freeman 1851b:431)*

As the attention on the dispute grows, George William Cox, Late Secretary of the Oxford Architectural Society, intervenes discussing the role of professionals in the process of categorisation:

> *The inquiry into the rise and development of our national styles of architecture has been taken up by and diligently followed out by **professional architects** instead of being left, as, till of late, to a greater degree it was, to non-professional students. […] It was impossible to attain to a real systematised classification of them, so long as the matter was left, in great measure, in the hands of those whose lives were **not professionally** devoted to the work. (Cox 1851:431)*

Though praising Sharpe's valuable contribution to the periodization of national architecture, Cox condemns the whole dispute, mentioning the impossibility of a universally agreed terminology and the inevitable arbitrariness of all divisions. The use of the terms *style* and *period* (Cox 1851:431) by Mr Cox is noteworthy, considering that such terms are the object of the terminological discussion:

*The **attempt** namely to **classify** and **arrange** these past styles and **assign them their periods and a fixed nomenclature**, - is one which, from the very nature of the case, lies open to much **criticism**, and has called forth much argument, heightened, I cannot help but thinking somewhat of **misunderstanding**. […] It seems almost superfluous to speak of the **difficulties** which must be necessarily be incurred by anyone who seeks **to give names** to a classification of innumerable buildings raised during many ages under a **constant progress and development of national style**. Such progress must be continual, and often almost imperceptible, going on simultaneously in every part of the land, advancing from circumstances more rapidly in one part than in another, so that constantly buildings of an earlier character were raised contemporaneously with those of later, as the old style yielded more or less slowly to the new influences which were beginning to prevail. This course must at once furnish numberless **transitional instances**, which cannot in strict accuracy be assigned to any fully developed style, but which do bear incontestable testimony of these **styles** (or **periods**, if we **may so term them**). […] these definitions are not completely accurate, as it would be **impossible to find dates** out of which no buildings would fall – Such **definition and classification** are **unattainable and absolutely impossible**, except under the supposition that each succeeding style **went out**, as it were, **one evening,** and that the following style **commenced the next morning**. (Cox 1851:431)*

Cox praises Sharpe's division as *'made for practical purposes'* (Cox 1851:432) though not exhaustive. Moreover, he recognises that the main subject of this dispute are the names of the periods. To the author, the concepts behind them are indeed shared by all authors, as the terms to name them are discussed:

*Certainly, the name '**Curvilinear**' employed by Mr Sharpe to denote what is commonly called '**Flowing**', seems **not strictly correct** and **logical**: **if this word is used,** the Geometrical must also fall under it, and this in its turn must be accused, of trenching upon the province of curvilinear [….] as we look forward, a **fixed nomenclature** can be generally **agreed upon and adopted by all**, still it would greatly **advance our knowledge** were all ready to confess that the reconcilement now needed is one **not on a matter of principle**, but – **of convenience of names**. (Cox 1851:432)*

Commenting on the importance FSA attributed to dates, Cox underlines the contemporaneity of periods. No clear limit exists between the end of a period and the beginning of the next, so that a certain contemporaneity necessarily occurs. This can obviously not be reflected in a classification, where dates are needed to define as a reference. Similarly, also the presence of exceptions, not fitting in an exact classification, is acknowledged by the author:

*For purposes of classification we must look to other things, not to **dates** or to mouldings only, but to the general characteristics, which make a building belonging to a **period** or **style**. **Periods overlap one another,** and for the **purposes of classification**, we must be satisfied with a classification which do not include all examples of one character. (Cox 1851:432)*

To conclude, Cox recommends the rejection of the terms *'curvilinear'* and *'period'* (Cox 1851:432), providing no further explanation for that:

> *For practical purposes, we must be contented with* ***classifications by periods*** *which* ***do not include all instances*** *of examples of the same character. And Mr Sharpe's divisions, with the* ***Transitional*** *periods which in each of them are implied, appear sufficient for this purpose, although we might recommend the* ***rejection of the words 'curvilinear' or 'period'****. (Cox 1851:432)*

6.3.4. July 19th, 1851 – Sharpe and FSA, *The seven periods of English architecture*

Sharpe replies in a further letter to FSA's accusation with another argument: the importance of periods of transition not only for himself, but also for Rickman:

> *If he [FSA] will apply the same mode of reasoning to the whole of the Seven Periods in question, he will find that all his difficulties will disappear and that sufficient margin will be given to cover those few apparent* ***anachronisms*** *which appear so much to disturb him and which compelled Mr Rickman, in his division of church architecture in* ***four styles instead of seven****, to make the* ***periods of transition*** *between two styles almost as* ***broad*** *as the styles themselves. (Sharpe 1851e:446)*

Following that, in his next reply (FSA 1851b), FSA condemns Sharpe's method of classification and the discussion on the term *period* continues:

> *I understand by a* ***period****, a fixed space of time, and not an indefinite one, and the* ***term*** *appears to me badly chosen, as* ***calculated to mislead****. […] He [Sharpe]* ***generalises too rapidly*** *form a few instances and* ***overlooks an equal number of instances*** *which tell the opposite way […] I quite agree with Mr Cox that in one sense the whole history of architecture is one of* ***continual change****; and that the division into styles is* ***arbitrary****; but after such a division has been* ***generally agreed upon*** *for the last thirty years, and after his general accuracy has been examined and attested by a host of observers at least as learned, as careful and as accurate as Mr Sharpe himself, it is rather* ***unreasonable*** *of that gentleman to assume his own individual observations to be superior to those of all others combined. (FSA 1851b:446)*

In the next passage, the purpose of Sharpe's proposal to substitute Rickman's official nomenclature is discussed more in detail. According to FSA, Sharpe's classification could have been an acceptable addition to Rickman's official one. However, in FSA's opinion, Sharpe's new nomenclature is not suitable to entirely replace Rickman's existing and traditional one:

> *But Sharpe does not want to make his observations* ***subservient*** *to the general system, he refuses to adopt the general system of four great divisions (corresponding nearly to the four centuries) with* ***subdivisions*** *and* ***transitions*** *between each. He wishes to establish a* ***new system*** *of his own, with seven great divisions, which he calls periods. It is* ***against this change of system*** *that I* ***protest****, as these proposed new divisions are* ***less marked****,* ***less true****, than the old ones. (FSA 1851b:446)*

To conclude, according to FSA the evidence brought by Sharpe to support his system is not enough to give up the existing nomenclature:

> *The feature that Mr Sharpe chooses as characteristic of each successive '**period**' are not so in fact: the instances which do not apply are almost as numerous as those that do. The different **varieties of windows** on which Mr Sharpe relies do not sufficiently mark successive periods: they are almost as often used **simultaneously**. […] in a question like this everything depends upon dates […] we must have better ground than this **before we agree to give up the received system** and adopt Mr Sharpe's new one. (FSA 1851b:446)*

6.3.5. July 26th, 1851 – Sharpe and FSA, *The seven periods of English church architecture*

In the beginning of this new letter, Sharpe cites the original passage from Parker's (1836) *Glossary of Architecture* in which Iffley Church is quoted as an example of the imprecision with which dates are attached to buildings in the volume (Parker 1836):

> *[…] your readers will have an idea, of the **loose manner** and the slight grounds upon which antiquaries of this stamp are in the habit of **attaching dates** to their illustrations.[…] Let him [Parker] reconsider and re-arrange his book, and, as I have already done, let him take off the back, detach the plates, cut off the **fictitious** dates, and having re-assorted them **under the heads of the Seven Periods**, republish the work as a new edition. (Sharpe 1851f:464)*

From this moment on, the tone of the dispute gets worse, with FSA defining Sharpe's periods as *'fanciful'* (FSA 1851c:464), and only based on specimens that support his classification:

> *I merely warned your readers against taking Mr Sharpe's **'fanciful' Periods** for historical facts, as they would find themselves **misled** by them [….] I cited it as a very well-known example of the use of curvilinear tracery after the date Mr Sharpe assigns to it, the date being ascertained by an inscription on the brass of the merchant who rebuilt it and being twenty or thirty years after the end of Mr Sharpe's 'Period'. I do not pretend to follow all Mr S's **fanciful vagaries** and find examples to **contradict** him in each instance. I consider the facts too notorious to render any such process necessary. (FSA 1851c:464)*

Subsequently, FSA questions the term *period* and its meaning connected to history and time. Here, Sharpe is accused again of discarding specimens compromising the validity of his classification:

> *Respecting the later divisions, if Mr Sharpe had called them **styles**, or what they are more properly **subdivisions of styles**, I should not have interfered; but when I saw his '**Seven Periods**' cited in The Builder as if they were **historical**, I thought it necessary to **warn** your readers that it is not the case. The exceptions are so numerous that no reliance can be placed upon this system as a guide to the age of a building: it is called rather to **mislead** than to assist the student. (FSA 1851c:464)*

To conclude, FSA closes his contribution describing Sharpe's terms as *'ill defined'* (FSA 1851c:464), as well as misleading for the architectural student:

> *The term **Geometrical**: has been a **term long in use** for a particular kind of tracery, and as a **subdivision of the Decorated style**. Mr Sharpe calls by the same name and includes in his division another class of tracery which is always accompanied by mouldings and details of quite a different kind: his own example, Lichfield Cathedral, has the tooth ornament and other details of the Early English style […] the Curvilinear period is **equally ill defined**: windows with tracery of geometrical patterns are continually recurring during this period. […] The more the matter is investigated the more the people will be satisfied that Mr Sharpe's **'Periods'** are **not real** and **natural divisions** of our medieval building as a whole: they apply to windows only, and other parts do not agree with them. The **names** are **calculated to mislead**, and windows of this or that form do not indicate a particular date with sufficient accuracy to be taken as a guide. As another instance of the **vagueness** of Mr Sharpe's definition and the **fallacy** of his divisions as a guide to the age of a building, I may mention the large round window […] of Lincoln Cathedral: This agrees with every one of Mr Sharpe's **definitions** of Mr Sharpe's Geometrical period and therefore the **student**, relying on Mr Sharpe **guidance** must consider it as built between 1245 and 1315 – the fact being that it is part of the work of St Hughes, who died in 1200, and is copied form a similar window in Blois […] and therefore belongs to the very commencement of Mr Sharpe 'Lancet period' or about half a century before the time his system would assign to it. (FSA 1851c:464)*

The concept of a *Geometrical* period to be added to the official nomenclature is a central one in the discussion. Therefore, it is the object of a separate analysis in a dedicated chapter (see Ch. 3).

6.3.6. August 2nd, 1851 – Scott, *The seven periods of English architecture*

This letter sees a contribution of George Gilbert Scott, architect and architecture historian, trying to put an end to the dispute. Lamenting the nervous tone of the debate, the author hopes for more suitable conditions in which to conduct a scientific discussion:

> *The importance and interest of the subject, the discussion of which has lately occupied a place in your pages renders it doubly to be wished that the advocates […] would enter it with the calmness suited to a **scientific enquiry** and with that absence of personal feelings which can alone ensure a satisfactory issue. […] the **introduction of a new system of nomenclature** has a natural tendency to produce a **bilious excitability**, as has been exemplified in an attack made by the Ecclesiologist some time back on Mr Poole who had had the temerity to doubt the eligibility of their system. […] The **question** is whether the architecture of England from the Conquest to the Renaissance is more properly **divided into four periods or into six**. If we were to keep ourselves to this question, we should rid the subject of much of its **perplexity**. […] I think there is **far too much flourish of trumpets** on the one side, as if a great discovery had been made; and **most needless dismay** on the other, **as if the very foundation of our edifice had been threatened**. (Scott 1851a:480)*

Most relevant for the purposes of this study is the next affirmation by Scott: namely, that every architectural historian already applies in practice Sharpe's proposed nomenclature as a sub-system to the official one (Scott 1851a:480). The statement is methodologically most relevant, revealing the existence of a secondary classification of sub-styles, which Scott addresses as *'conversational nomenclature'* (Scott 1851a:480):

> *I believe we all, for many years past, have practically adopted, and that we must of necessity in practice use, a* ***system of division*** *closely resembling, and often* ***in words*** *as well as in facts* ***coinciding with Mr Sharpe's Periods****. […] we call the architecture from the conquest* a *long way on to the 12th century Norman. Then ask anyone what is the style of St Cross […] he will tend to one answer 'Transition'; […] we often call* ***Salisbury*** *and Whitby specimen of the 'Lancet style'; and what we do call the style of* ***Lincoln*** *Presbytery and* ***York*** *Chapterhouse but '****Geometrical****'? Thus far our* ***vernacular****,* ***conversational nomenclature*** *is* ***identical*** *with that adopted by* ***Mr Sharpe****, and the two remaining divisions we only differ upon so far as name go, calling one '****Flowing****' vice '****Curvilinear****', the other '****Perpendicular****' instead of '****Rectilinear****'.* ***Where then we do practically differ?*** *Simply in this, that Mr Sharpe in some cases gives the dignity of* ***separate styles or*** *'****periods****' to divisions which we generally consider merely as* ***sub styles****. (Scott 1851a:480)*

This statement on the existence of a secondary, unofficial, nomenclature next to Rickman's official one reveals the necessity for a more detailed classification, which was not acknowledged in the debate so far. In the next passage, Cox discusses the matter of periods' naming, defining Sharpe's operation as a mere shift in perspective. Indeed, according to Cox, the *periods* defined by Sharpe in his proposed nomenclature are already commonly in use as internal subdivisions of Rickman's four official periods:

> *Were I subdividing for myself, I should have* ***placed this division later****, so as to agree rather with what the Ecclesiologist would call the '****Early first pointed****' than to give it only the later specimen of Norman, more or less tinged with pointed anticipations. The important part however of the question at issue does not lie there, but in the erection of the two great divisions of the Decorated or Middle Pointed into styles instead of sub-styles. […] In all systems this division is clearly acknowledged. In one it is marked as that between the* ***early and late Decorated****, in another as between* ***early and late Middle Pointed****; in a third as between* ***early and late 'Complete Gothic'****;* ***in common parlance*** *as between* ***Geometrical and Flowing*** *–* ***Decorated or Middle Pointed*** *being understood. (Scott 1851a:480)*

The following passage is of great relevance. As it happens, it contains Scott's first proposal for a common European nomenclature and classification of medieval architecture. The topic is a central one for the authors involved in the present debate, which also reveals the modernity of their thought:

> *Had I then,* ***seen none but English examples****, I should strongly hold with Mr Sharpe's division; but as it is, I am I confess very dubious and almost disposed, after all, to view the 'geometrical'*

*and 'flowing' and 'curvilinear' as **local subdivisions** only, and the two together as the one middle-pointed style, variously subdivided in **different countries**. I wish we could get up **a sort of committee** of English and foreign architecturalists to discuss such a point at this, and, if possible, to arrange a **common system of division and nomenclature**. I confess myself dissatisfied with all hitherto proposed, though all have merits on their own. On this great question of the division of Geometrical from Flowing, my sympathies are all with Mr Sharpe and I should rejoice to see my way out of the **difficulty** I meet with, the **non-coincidence of foreign examples**. (Scott 1851a:481)*

Eventually, Scott expresses his conviction that Rickman's nomenclature must be abandoned anyway sooner or later. Curiously enough, the nomenclature is still used nowadays:

*Mr **Rickman's terms, I fear, must be relinquished sooner or later**: it will **never** do to go on talking about Early English and Decorated. Whether the fourfold division of pointed architecture be right or not **I should certainly hope for a European code**. Mr Sharpe's is exclusively English, which is one of the great objections to Rickman's. (Scott 1851a:481)*

To conclude, it is interesting to note how Sharpe's nomenclature is recognised as exclusively English by all authors with experience of foreign architecture (see Scott 1851a:481: *'Had I then, seen none but English examples […]'*). Sharpe himself, having been to Germany in 1833 (see Sharpe 1833, in section 3.3.), is presumably aware of that. Admittedly, his purpose was never to propose a European common nomenclature while rather a more detailed English one, based exclusively on English buildings. The remarkably English character of his division is probably the main reason for its ultimate failure.

6.3.7. August 16th, 1851 – Sharpe and Freeman, *The seven periods of church architecture*

Determined to defend his proposal, Shape does not want to leave the debate and suggests further points of discussion, based on the main criticisms received so far:

*I, therefore, propose, with your permission, […] to consider some or all of the following points: 1st. The meaning and use of the term '**Transition**' and '**Transitional**' 2nd The meaning and use of the terms '**Style**' and '**Period**'; and 3rd the value and use of '**Dates**'. (Sharpe 1851g:512)*

It is worth to note here that the two terminological questions on the one hand about the term *transition* and its derivates, and on the other hand about the difference between the terms *style* and *period* are not ultimately answered yet and clearly need further discussion. Freeman replies lamenting the use of *'so many hard words*' (Freeman 1851c:512) in the discussion and makes a confession:

I confess to having made the same conjectures myself as the person lurking under the designation of FSA. (Freeman 1851c:512)

Consequently, Freeman addresses the matter of the classification of English medieval architecture:

*I find it quite possible to **agree with both**. I employ, as I said, Mr Sharpe's, or rather my own, division for **theoretical purposes**, and the ordinary one for the **description** of particular buildings. […] **there are two**, and only two, really **distinct types of Gothic buildings** – the **Early** and **Continuous** of my own division; The **Early Complete** and **Late Complete Gothic** of Mr Petit. The **main division** is one **common to England, France and Germany**. But the particular course of the development differed widely in each. Thus, except in England we have no prevailing Lancet style or Gothic, the architecture of the continent nowhere stopping to attain perfection between Romanesque and Geometrical. So probably England alone can produce a distinct Flowing style, separated both from Geometrical and Flamboyant, and our form the Perpendicular, of fully developed continuous Gothic is different from that of any other country. But all agree in possessing **an early and continuous style** […]. Looking now to **England alone**, we find a **pure early style**, the **Lancet**, a purely continuous style, the **Perpendicular**, two points at which the respective ideas of each are thoroughly carried out. Between these we have a **period of transition**; this period is that of the decorated style, a style which […] has to be defined by minute details. That is to say early and continuous notions were for long time in antagonism. (Freeman 1851c:512)*

Freeman's classification, published two years before in 1849, is clearly opposed to Sharpe's one, as it is based on a more general division applicable at a European level (Freeman 1849). Concurrently, Freeman recognises, besides a common European system, a more detailed English division, and thus the contemporary existence of two parallel systems of classification, a general and a detailed one. In his conclusions, Freeman (1851c:512) acknowledges a certain chaos in the matter and speaks in favour of the general use and against a change of it, which is not needed according to him:

*But **amid this chaos** we can detect **two ideal forms: one** still **Early**, yet not identical with the past Lancet; **the other** already essentially **Continuous**, yet not identical with the future **Perpendicular**. These are respectively the Geometrical and Flowing Styles, a sort of post-Lancet and ante-perpendicular; no less distinctly marked in idea, as styles, than any others, but so perpetually jumbled together in practice that we want **a name** to denote this **period of confusion or transition**. And for this purpose, I can see no objection to retaining the **established term, Decorated, absurdly meaningless** as it is, simply **because it is the established term**, and **there is nothing to be gained by a change**. (Freeman 1851c:512)*

Moreover, according to Freeman, *periods* can only be consecutive to one after the other, differently from *styles*, which, as in this case, can be contemporary:

*I think Mr Sharpe is **wrong** in talking of **seven periods**, because Geometrical and Flowing (his Curvilinear) are not **periods**, but merely **styles**. Periods must be simply **consecutive**, styles may be, as in this case, **contemporaneous**. But it would not do to substitute the '**the seven styles**' because the **transition** from Romanesque to Gothic is not a style but merely a period. (Freeman 1851c:512)*

The author then describes his nomenclature as having window tracery as a base, probably referring to Sharpe's *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a), from 1849, in which the author explains how, though recognisable in every part of the building, his division is to be identified most clearly in window tracery:

> *In my fourfold nomenclature I divide* ***according to window tracery****, because that is the feature in which the principles of the successive styles appear at one earliest and clearest. The tracery draws more directly than any other feature upon the* ***leading principle*** *of the style and it consequently that on which a* ***philosophical nomenclature*** *may be most appropriately grounded. […] I would not be misunderstood in saying that the difference between* ***Geometrical*** *and* ***Flowing*** *exists only in the tracery. It extends to piers, mouldings, everything. (Freeman 1851c:512)*

The interesting conclusion of Freeman's contribution (Freeman 1851c) is his agreement with both parties in the debate, stressing the complementary nature of Rickman and Sharpe's nomenclatures, whereby one is the starting point of the other:

> *If I can* ***persuade Mr Sharpe*** *and* ***FSA*** *that* ***they mean the same thing****, I shall have done a* ***great work:*** *if they would only believe on my testimony in the existence of someone who thinks they are both right, they would be at least on the road to so happy a consummation. (Freeman 1851c:513)*

6.3.8. September 6th, 1851 – Sharpe, *The classification of medieval architecture*

This answer by Sharpe starts with a methodological statement of utter clarity from the taxonomic point of view: the only exact and complete account of church architecture would be a list of every building, with construction date and notes on every single intervention. In the absence of it, every proposal is necessarily at least partially arbitrary:

> *If there happened to be in existence at the present moment a* ***correct list of all of the buildings of the Middle Ages in this country****, arranged in the exact Chronological order in which they were actually constructed – if some special Chronicle had been devoted by the Church to this express purpose, and regularly kept, in which not only the original construction, but the minutest repair and alteration of every important building had been accurately recorded form the earliest period of the Christian era down to the present time, the History of our National Architecture would be complete. In the* ***absence of such a Chronicle****, it is to the* ***construction of a Chronological list, or the nearest approach that can be made to it, that the efforts of those engaged in the elucidation of this History must ultimately be directed****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

Nevertheless, steps forward occurred in the categorisation during the last century:

> *A century ago, when Medieval buildings were all* ***classed without distinction*** *in one large group and indiscriminately denominated 'Gothic'* ***such an attempt*** *would doubtless have been looked upon as utterly* ***hopeless****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

In Sharpe's opinion, the first advancement towards a modern system of classification was due to Rickman (1825). In this way he acknowledges his fundamental contribution:

> *He [Rickman] published the first edition of his Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England in which he roughly threw all of our Medieval buildings into* ***four large groups or classes*** *and thus rendered a service to those engaged in the study. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

Keeping his purpose in mind, Sharpe refers to Rickman as a supporter of scientific evolution in relation to the progress of knowledge:

> *He [Rickman]* ***would have been the first****, as he undoubtedly would have been the fittest person to have declared, long ago, that* ***the time had arrived for a new classification*** *of our national buildings, one more* ***detailed*** *and better* ***suited to the advance state of knowledge*** *on the subject. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

The next point made by Sharpe is then of utter importance for our whole discussion. With the purpose of convincing the reader to adopt his new periodization, the author describes the history of architecture as a constant state of evolution:

> *[…] These* ***four styles****, as they are called by him, prevailed without variation for almost the entire term allotted by him as that of their duration, and then merged into one another by a course of rapid transition, and thus to discountenance and to conceal the very important and indubitable fact that –* ***church architecture in England****, from its earliest existence down to the 16th century, was in a* ***constant state of progress or transition****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

What naturally results from the vision of history as a constant progression it the inapplicability of the term *transition* to any period, since every single moment is a transition from a previous state:

> *This has led to the problem that the use of the terms '****transition****' or '****transitional****' for examples supposed to be between these styles were erroneous, these terms could namely* ***be applied to examples from the middle of the style as well****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

This brings Sharpe to the logical conclusion of discarding the term from his own nomenclature. The decision configures as an extremely important modification of his system of classification (see Sharpe 1851c), probably also as a last attempt to win the critics to his side and give his system a possibility of application. He proposes to renounce to the terms *transition* and *transitional*:

> *The sooner, therefore,* ***we get rid of these terms****, in the* ***fallacious sense*** *in which their use has hitherto been restricted, the better. […]****the term Style*** *cannot be correctly applied to any collection or series of consecutive examples belonging to any particular period of our architectural history and differing from one another so greatly […] The sooner therefore we* ***restore to this term his natural signification****, and thus* ***employ it conveniently and usefully*** *in our descriptions the better…*

we should get rid *of the notion of the existence of* ***four separate styles with transitional examples*** *between them and I cannot see how this is effectively to be done, except by* ***discarding the terms themselves****. […] Having* ***got rid of the previous nomenclature****, we just have to define the periods so that the buildings belonging to each one could be identified by a* ***common feature*** *– having done so we are free to speak of these building in* ***in what terms we please****, not indeed as belonging to an* ***indefinite style****,* ***but to a definite period****, the earliest and latest examples in which are equally but* ***not more transitional*** *in the general sense of the term than the rest; their early or late character, moreover, being sufficiently indicated by their classification at the commencement or the close of the period. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

In addition to that, Sharpe remarks his preference for the term *period*, having a more definite meaning in terms of years, as opposed to the indefinite *style*. By doing so, he actually responds to FSA's previous criticism about the conceptual connection of the terms *period* and *history* (see section 6.3.1.):

In stipulating for this licence in the ***readjustment of our terminology****, and in desiring to sit thus easily under our* ***new terms****, I would not be understood as undervaluing* ***the importance of a judicious selection****, as well as of the* ***Periods*** *into which we may divide our* ***National Architecture****, as of the* ***terms by which we may designate these periods****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

It seems appropriate here to underline the effort taken by Sharpe in adjusting his nomenclature's proposal to the criticisms received from the other authors. That also classifies as part of the *'terminologisation'* process (Sager 1990:60). Eventually, Sharpe highlights also the importance of the means of classification, which for him are windows and window tracery:

Arbitrary *as any such division of National Monuments must necessarily be […] the principal* ***marks of identification*** *by which we are to recognise the buildings of each period should be* ***clear*** *and* ***unmistakable****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

At this point in the discussion, Sharpe presents a first graphic representation of the relationship between his and Rickman's nomenclatures. Since this is a community of architects, graphic representation of concepts is not unusual and will therefore not be the only one in the discussion:

[…] a ***more detailed division*** *of this kind […] offers a closer approximation towards that complete* ***Chronological List*** *that we may hope someday or other, possibly and ultimately, to reconstruct. The nature of this advantage, […] may perhaps be roughly illustrated by the construction of the following* ***simple diagram****. If the* ***continually changing fashion*** *of our National Architecture, departing from Roman at an early period of the Christian Era, and returning ultimately in the seventeenth century to the same type, may be said to be sufficiently represented by the* ***line*** *which, starting from a given point and returning again to the same point, forms* ***the circumference of a circle****; and if* ***in that circle a square be inscribed,*** *one angle of which should coincide with that given point, then, four sides of that square may be roughly taken, not inaptly, to represent the* ***four***

> ***periods*** *of time into which Mr* ***Rickman*** *divides the history of our national architecture; and if again the arches which are cut off by these four sides be bisected, and straight lines be drawn from the angles of the square to the points of bisection and an* ***octagon be thus inscribed in the circle****, the eight sides of this octagon may be said to represent the eight periods […] into which I propose to divide the same history, and a closer approximation be made by the figure of the circle itself; and if, further the same process be* ***repeated****, and a* ***figure of sixteen sides*** *be thus constructed, the Early and the Late portions of each of these eight Periods may be said to be thereby represented; and, lastly, if we are ever enabled, by careful* ***comparison*** *and* ***investigation****, and by a similar process, to inscribe with tolerable certainty on the circumference of the circle itself, in the order in which they were actually constructed, the names of the whole of the principal buildings of this country, the* ***history of our National Architecture*** *as I have already said in the first sentence of this letter will be* ***complete****. (Sharpe 1851h:557)*

To this, a most relevant declaration by Sharpe follows on the motivation which lead him to elaborate a more detailed system of classification:

> *I latterly found that a* ***system of notation****, different from that of Mr Rickman's, had gradually crept into my memoranda, without which, in fact, after I got accustomed to it, I found it* ***impossible to describe satisfactorily half of the buildings I met with****: that which I had found practically useful to myself, I desired to afford to others the opportunity of testing […]. (Sharpe 1851h:558)*

The statement configures as the fundamental principle of every terminological evolution: a necessity for new terminology arises as the existing one turns out as insufficient for its practical purpose, in this case, the description of buildings. Moreover, Sharpe remarks here the aims of a system of classification primarily oriented to practical application:

> *[…] In searching too deeply for principles, we may run some risks of overlooking the principal object and the* ***aim*** *of all system and classification, that namely, of enabling us* ***to convey simply*** *and* ***intelligibly*** *to others that we ourselves possess […] and to obtain a system which is* ***scientifically correct but practically useless****. (Sharpe 1851h:558)*

The author further informs the reader about two publications in which he presents his nomenclature, the first of which has just been published, *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a), while the second, *The Mouldings of the six periods of English architecture* (Sharpe 1871), is almost ready. He subsequently asks for no further judgement until the second volume is published. As far as the wish for a common European nomenclature is concerned, it seems to Sharpe an *'hopeless task*', since in his opinion: *'the buildings not only of different nations, but of different districts, require to be separately classified'* (Sharpe 1851h:558).

6.3.9. September 20th, 1851 – Scott, *The classification of medieval architecture*

In the next letter George Gilbert Scott discusses the original attribution of the systems of classification of English medieval architecture, here referred to as the *'honour of precedence'* (see section 6.3.1.):

> *Of the **two** leading **systems** of classifying Pointed Architecture, the **three-fold division** (**Early English – Decorated - Perpendicular**) is popularly attributed to Mr **Rickman** and the **four-fold** (**Transitional – Lancet – Geometrical - Rectilinear**) to Mr **Sharpe.** To neither of these gentlemen, however, does the **honour of precedence** justly belong, though to each is to be attributed much credit for placing their several systems in a popular and generally intelligible form. The honour of precedence belongs, for Rickman's system to the 'Description of the Cathedral Church of Ely' by Reverend **George Millers**. – this work […] I will next claim for my friend **Mr Freeman** the honour of precedence over Mr Sharpe as to the four-fold division. (Scott 1851b:590)*

In addition to that, according to Scott, the first four-fold division of the Gothic, subordinate to a two-fold one of medieval architecture into *Romanesque* and *Gothic* presented by Sharpe was originally proposed by Freeman in a paper read in 1845, before the Oxford Architectural Society (Freeman 1845). This paper led to a discussion in *The Ecclesiologist*, another journal for architecture, were it was published. There, Freeman's classification of the English medieval architecture, very similar to Sharpe's own, was clearly enunciated (Freeman 1846). Both systems, as remarked by Scott in the following passage, reflect the necessity of a more detailed division of Rickman's *Decorated* style (Rickman 1825). Indeed, Sharpe will split it in his classification into the *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear* periods:

> *On **philosophical principles the unity of the Decorated style** falls to the ground […] **no such broad change in principle** separates the Lancet from the Geometrical, or the Flowing from the Perpendicular, as divides pure Geometrical from pure Flowing […] I reckon then two great divisions of Gothic, each subdivided into two classes; and these four styles I would call Lancet, Geometrical, Flowing and Perpendicular. (Scott 1851b:590)*

Scott also states that he has written a letter to Freeman in August 1846, in which he agrees with his division, admitting that:

> *The **Geometrical** as the termination of the ascending scale and the Flowing as the beginning of the descent, and I express my opinion that the point which divides these styles, however **indistinct**, is **the most important era in the whole History of Pointed Architecture**. (Scott 1851b:590)*

It should be noticed here that the term *Flowing* (Freeman 1849:353, see Table 3) is Freeman's equivalent to Sharpe's *Curvilinear* (Sharpe 1851a:15). Scott further comments on the graphic representation presented by Sharpe, apparently proposed some time before also by Freeman himself:

> *It is **curios** enough, that this letter contains in its margin nearly the **same circular diagram** suggested in Mr Sharpe's last communication. When two years later I saw Mr Sharpe's drawings*

at Lincoln, I naturally took it for granted that he had taken his system from Mr Freeman. (Scott 1851b:590)

At a later point and with a remark of utter significance, Scott responds to the topic of arbitrariness of division, discussed by Sharpe in his last letter, as well as on the concept of transition:

*If the divisions are simply **arbitrary**, why so much **discussion** as to whether they should be **three or four?** If they are mere periods, **why divide them so unequally as 70, 55, 45 and 190 years?** The answer is obvious, viz, that we perceive **four distinct 'phases'** of style prevailing through perfectly unequal periods, and consequently that, though both styles and periods, they are much more distinctly the former than the latter; and if so, […] their central portions are by no means **transitional** in the sense in which that term may be applied to their **extremities**. (Scott 1851b:590)*

In the absence of a convincing nomenclature and aware that any alternative would be an arbitrary and personal classification, Scott proposes to simply divide the history of architecture in equally long periods. A reference is made here to the character of a proper classification. If the primary requirement of a classification system is to identify classes through their main descriptive features, a descriptive name is needed. If on the contrary, as it appears to be in this case, the main aim is to distinguish phases and to date buildings belonging to each one, a chronological division in equal categories suffices. The next topic of discussion is again the concept of transition in history, illustrated through a parallel with the colours of the prismatic spectrum (see Fig.27). The same comparison will appear in Sharpe's later work, presenting again his system of nomenclature (Sharpe 1871, in section 5.4.):

*An apt illustration of that may be found in the **prismatic colours**. They, as our Gothic architecture, are in a **constant state of transition**; but does this disprove the existence of three primary colours, - does it make the subdivision wholly arbitrary, - or **does it prove that red, blue and yellow are as transitional as purple, green and orange?** […] a constant state of '**progress or transition**' is not inconsistent with the periodical appearance of pure and distinct types, which, though part of a general system of transition, are not in their own nature, **transitional**. (Scott 1851b:590)*

With regard to the discussion about the concept of transition, Scott underlines the possible existence of different transitional levels between periods:

*Mr Sharpe's '**transitional period**' is unquestionably such par excellence, as being that between two distinct classes of art, instead of being only between the different phases of the same art; but I contend that, though **being less marked**, **the passing of the divisions of Pointed Architecture** into each other are **equally transitional** with that of Romanesque into Pointed. (Scott 1851b:590)*

In the next passage, the author remarks once again the necessity of an international system of classification: in this system, the *curve of contra-flexure*, as the mathematicians call the *ogee*, is the means of classification discriminating *'between early and late examples'* (Scott 1851b:590). The case

of the ogee constitutes an example of the same concept, a curve, being identified in two different subject fields, mathematics and architecture, by two different terms. Indeed, that recalls also the affiliation of terms to a specialised framework, as addressed by Cabré (2003:188). Scott subsequently suggests a simpler system, maybe numerical, in order to internationally term and recognise phases, together with a secondary more detailed exclusively national system:

> *The **French** system, and that for the Ecclesiologist would do for the former, were they **four** instead of **three-fold**, and for the present by dividing the **Secondaire** or **Middle Pointed**, into Early and Late, they may for convenience be **used concurrently with more precise national classifications**. (Scott 1851b:590)*

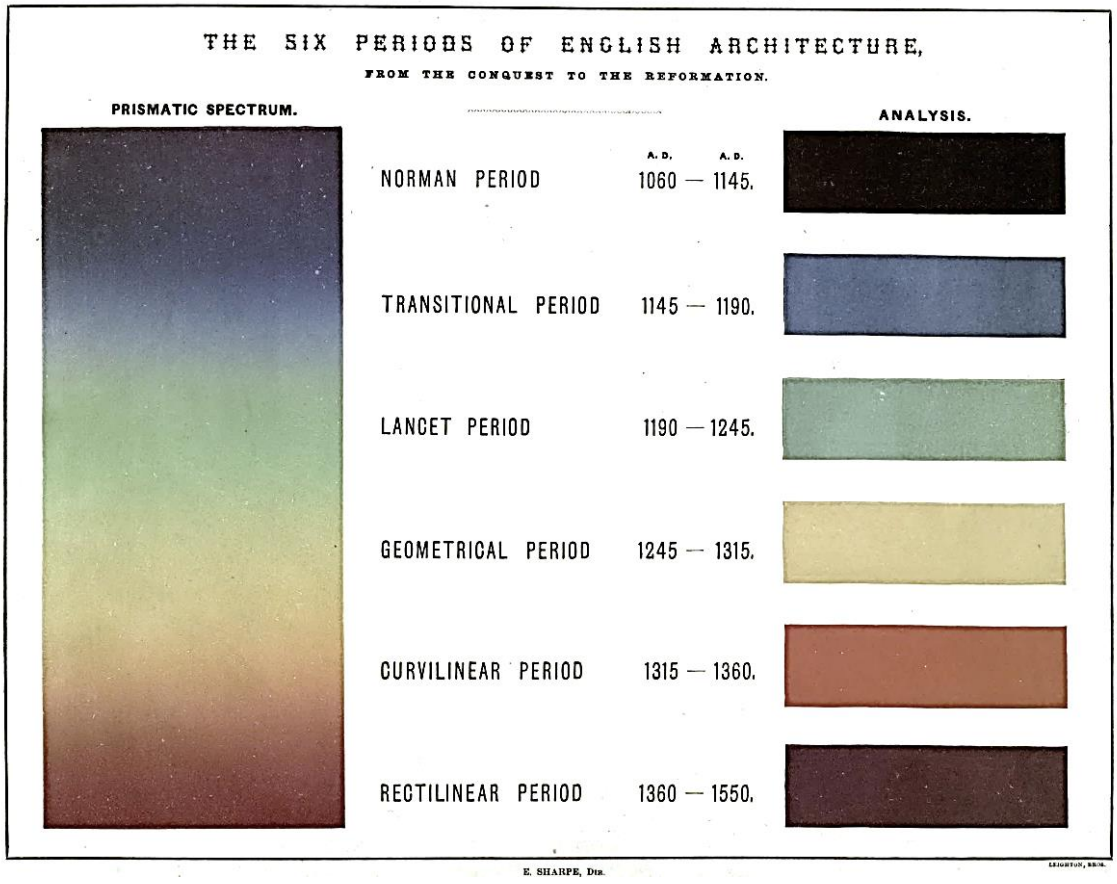


Figure 27: The Six Periods of English Architecture. Illustration of the parallelism between periods of English architecture and the colours of the prismatic spectrum. The image is the cover of Sharpe's volume *'The Mouldings of the Six Periods of English Architecture from the Conquest to the Restoration'*. Sharpe 1871. Page not numbered.

Before concluding his letter, he then reiterates the main statements that the reader should remember:

1. *The three-fold division, usually attributed to Mr **Rickman**, belongs really to Mr **Millers***
2. *The fourfold division advocated by Mr **Sharpe** originated with Mr **Freeman***
3. *That system (of Mr Sharpe) would be more correctly described as **four styles**, or **phases of style**, than merely as periods*

4. *I would suggest its general adoption for English architecture, though I think the usual terms '**flowing**' and '**perpendicular**', would be conveniently retained, instead of '**curvilinear**' and '**rectilinear**'.*
5. *We should have, concurrently with this, **distinct national systems** for other countries, and one general system, even if simply **numerical**, **applicable to all**. (Scott 1851b:590)*

To conclude, special attention should be paid to point Nr.5: the necessity for a uniform classification appears so contingent at this point that the author wishes for a nomenclature that is as simple as possible, but also applicable to all countries, to allow communication and information exchange.

6.3.10. October 04th, 1851 – Garbett, *Nomenclature of English styles*

On October 4th, in a letter entitled *Nomenclature of English styles* (Garbett 1851), Edward Lacy Garbett, architecture historian and author of *A rudimentary treatise on the Principles of Design in architecture as deducible form Nature and exemplified in the Greek and gothic architects* (Garbett 1850), enters the debate. His work on the connection of architectural principles to natural ones is a most interesting contribution to the topic. Given the different title and author, the letter was probably not meant to be part of the debate. However, it is so interesting from the terminological point of view that it would have deserved a separate chapter for itself. The collocation of this letter amidst two ones of the debate and in the same distance of a fortnight, seems enough to justify its inclusion.

The letter presents one of the terminologically most interesting passages of the discussion. It begins with Garbett commenting on the tone of the debate and the multitude of proposals appeared. The author seems to hope on the one hand for a uniform common classification, and on the other, for two distinct nomenclatures, one for medieval buildings and one for window specimens. In this, he is probably referring to the fact that most nomenclature proposals, including Sharpe's one, are based on windows characters (Sharpe 1849a, see section 4.3.):

> *[…] yet it is difficult to see the long battles waged about '**Late Early English**' and '**Plain Decorated**', without being led **to imagine a correct and uniform nomenclature** of our styles of buildings (and another for our styles of window-work regarded apart as one branch of building) to be still somehow **desiderata**. (Garbett 1851:619)*

However, a uniform and universally agreed nomenclature seem still impossible to reach. Hoping for the debate to end, the author makes a worthwhile remark on the descriptive names for the periods, asserting that, in other disciplines, no name based on descriptive features would ever be chosen as a term:

> *All components of a building were designed and built separately and not under one common '**style**' or **period of the art** (taken as a whole) can be properly or adequately named after the peculiarities of any one of these component parts, but only after circumstances external to the art as locality, date, author's name, reign, dynasty etc. This principle seems to have been recognised in the nomenclature of every art but our own. Thus, **styles of music** are **not** named after the prevalence*

of certain ***notes*** *or* ***intervals*** *or kind of time;* ***no style of painting*** *after their peculiarities of* ***composition***, ***outline***, ***colouring***; ***no style of writing*** *after their prevailing* ***rhetorical features***, ***grammatical construction*** *or any other internal peculiarity. It is very useful to investigate all these things, but not to name styles after them. […] It is duty of a teacher to* ***generalise***, *and group examples with the same features under a common category. (Garbett 1851:619)*

According to Garbett, indeed, descriptive names would constantly be subject to change at every stage of evolution. On the contrary, what the author calls *'fixed names'* (Garbett 1851:619), e.g. names not based on a descriptive feature, would never be wrong:

We are wrong in using any such expressions as names for the style: for first, you cannot express in a name ***more than one or two peculiarities***, *and they are all necessary to the style; secondly, you defeat the very object of nomenclature by rendering it an unstable thing, liable to continual improvement with every advance of our knowledge of styles, their peculiarities and their deep-buried motive powers.* ***Fixed names and names containing a description****:* ***Names can never be fixed***, *if they are to be condensed descriptions. They will be rendered false and unsatisfactory, if not useless, by every discovery. […] What a pretty mess the* ***astronomers*** *would be in, if they had kept and used such names as the Morning-star, the Ring-bearer, the Six-mooned or the Out-planet. But such a name as* ***Neptune can never be wrong. No discovery can ever call for its amendment****. (Garbett 1851:619)*

As far as the naming is concerned, the ancient Greek are the model to follow, as stated by Garbett, Grecian orders are named after their geographic origin, and not after a visual feature. In line with that, another important point is treated: the reference to the capitals as means of classification of the Grecian orders, attributed to John Ruskin, an English contemporary architecture historian. Being aware of that, Garbett warns the colleagues not to make the same mistake, i.e. classifying medieval architecture based on a single visual feature, like the window. It is also worth noticing that, Ruskin's most famous volume, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (Ruskin 1849), is said to have inspired the title of Sharpe's main volume: *The Seven Periods of English Architecture* (Sharpe 1851a):

*I submit that the ancients, therefore, followed the right method of nomenclature for our art, naming their styles of it Corinthian, Ionic etc. which the shallow conceit of moderns has affected to improve into '****Foliaged****', '****Voluted****', '****Mass-capitalled****' etc., as if their difference consisted in this or that member being decorated in thus or thus. Anyone with the smallest perception of the wonderful completeness, all-pervading character and immiscibility of the different Grecian orders must be astounded to see so true an amateur as* ***Ruskin*** *treating them as if all their difference resided in their* ***capitals****. […] Now, are we not committing* ***just the same error trying to name Gothic styles after the varieties of a single feature*** *(and that not a universal one)* ***the window?*** *I say we are doing* ***worse***, *for the window is not in any style, so indispensable a member as the* ***capital***, *the latter*

coming, in fact, as near to absolute necessity, as near ***the place occupied by the verb in speech****, as I can conceive any building member to do. (Garbett 1851:619)*

Sharpe's terms are then questioned by Garbett. Specifically, the author refers on the one hand to names inspired by the similarity to an object, as the *Lancet*, and on the other hand to the choice of descriptive adjectives. Indeed, the major drawback of the nomenclature appears to be the inconsistency of its terms:

All the ***descriptive names*** *of styles are also, in the present state of our knowledge, either* ***false, insufficient****,* ***redundant*** *or* ***inconsistent****. Thus,* ***Lancet*** *Style is all four:* ***False*** *because there are no forms in it truly resembling a lancet (or even an outline of one […]* ***Insufficient****: because these lancet-fitting vacuities are as common in any later style than in the one meant;* ***Redundant****: because such openings are not necessary to the style:* ***Inconsistent****: because it bears to relation to any other name in use, for we have no pen-knife, sword or carving knife style, or any other named on the cutleresque system. (Garbett 1851:619)*

Moreover, the term *Decorated*, or *Flowing* in Freeman's terms, apart from having no connection to window tracery, gives rise to another terminological problem: the one of the distinctions between terms in form of descriptive adjectives, and adjectives actually used for the purpose of description:

Decorated *[…] is wrong in all four ways: every writer seeming now to avoid it, as having the utmost faultiness that any word ever* ***used as a name*** *can be conceived to have. Yet we have seen an exact parallel with* ***Florid Gothic****, florid having just as much connection to a style or period as* ***stupid*** *has. (Garbett 1851:620)*

The most relevant critique is however made against the term *Geometrical*: the adjective cannot become a term due to the absence of its opposite. Indeed, no period can be defined as *Non-geometrical*:

Geometrical: being ***nowise more geometrical*** *than any style in general, either of architecture or mere tracery. It is utterly indefensible, unless we can distinguish all other styles from it as* ***Arithmetical*** *or* ***Algebraical*** *or having some other quality* ***not geometrical****. (Garbett 1851:620)*

In fact, logically, the same also happens for the terms Flowing and Perpendicular:

So also ***flowing*** *is inconsistent, unless opposed to some such terms as* ***stopped*** *or* ***discontinuous****; and it is therefore only applicable to the whole of the later Gothic collectively including Perpendicular, and Tudor.* ***Flowing curvilinear*** *and* ***flowing rectilinear*** *might serve as* ***sub-divisions*** *of the flowing; but curvilinear alone, as now applied, is egregiously false, even if confined to window tracery, this style actually admitting some straight lines where the previous style admitted none. […]* ***Rectilinear****: had only the common fault of applying to window tracery alone (a secondary and quite non-essential feature); and* ***Perpendicular*** *adds to this the* ***inconsistency*** *of corresponding to* ***no negative, no Oblique-angled*** *or* ***Non-perpendicular style****. (Garbett 1851:620)*

In addition to that, Garbett laments the excessively generic nature of terms such as *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear*, which could be mistaken for words of general language, due to a lack of specificity. On the contrary, he is also afraid that qualitative adjectives such as *Decorated* or *Florid* could be too easily considered terms, while they are only used for descriptive purposes. Regarding Rickman, Garbett (1851:620) asserts that in his traditional nomenclature only two terms were actually inadequate: *Decorated* and *Perpendicular*. Rickman's successors made it worse altering the nomenclature for the mere *'sake of change'* (Garbett 1851:620):

> *[…] Only 2 of 4 names were '**barbarous and inadequate**', his successors have extended the error to the whole nomenclature and with the affectation of altering the names for the **sake of change**, needlessly, and generally for the worse. (Garbett 1851:620)*

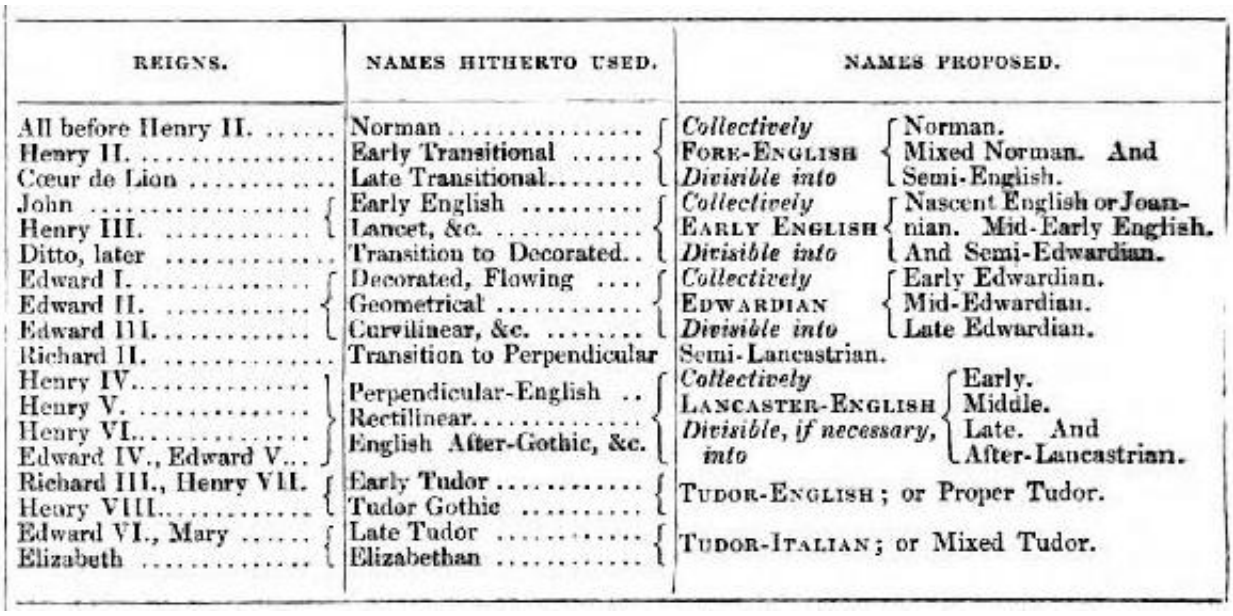
Trying to avoid the *'false principle of names describing internal peculiarities'* (Garbett 1851:620), Garbett presents his own nomenclature, based on English kingdoms as Rickman previously did:

> *As this Decorated is just included in the reigns of three successive and long-lived Edwards, and as the other Edwards' reigns are scattered, and evidently too short to have any peculiar style proper to them, I cannot see any chance of misconception if I substitute for this '**decorated English**' the term '**Edwardian**' (which further dispenses with the qualification English, since in no other kingdom has this been a regal name); […] Then as this perpendicular English assumed its complete form exactly at the accession of the House of Lancaster, […] I can see **no impropriety** in calling this style the **Lancastrian**, even though it did grow up before their ascension, and extend after their fall […]. Thus, we are brought down to the Tudor style, an **already established name**. […] With these two innovations alone, we can distinguish more transitional and subordinate divisions than in any other system I have seen. […] Reigns are substituted for dates, as **quite definite enough and more easily remembered**. […] All Richard's reigns are periods of rapid and marked transition; the first from Norman to English; the second from Edwardian to Lancastrian, the third from debased Lancastrian to Tudor. (Garbett 1851:620)*

Garbett's classification is an actual proposal of regression to the old system of classification published by Rickman in 1817 (see Rickman 1825, in section 2.3.). According to the author, it would advisable to go back Rickman's method to divide the styles of the English medieval architecture according to the reigning monarchs. Having proved descriptive names and a classification based on elements of the ecclesiastical building wrong for an accurate and effective description of the English styles, Garbett reintroduces the English kingdoms as chronological references for his periodization. Indeed, the authors finds the terms inspired by the reigning dynasties easier to remember since already part of the general use and language (see Fig. 28):

> *I submit that **descriptive names are wrong** when applied to **styles of an art as a whole**, observe that this nowise interferes with their use to express their varieties of any particular branch of the*

art *(as in* ***painting****, to express varieties of composition, lighting, colouring etc..) and the nomenclature of this kind which I would suggest in the case of tracery, shall, if you have no objection be the subject of another letter. (Garbett 1851:620)*



REIGNS.	NAMES HITHERTO USED.	NAMES PROPOSED.
All before Henry II.	Norman	*Collectively* — Norman.
Henry II.	Early Transitional	FORE-ENGLISH — Mixed Norman. And
Cœur de Lion	Late Transitional	*Divisible into* — Semi-English.
John	Early English	*Collectively* — Nascent English or Joan-
Henry III.	Lancet, &c.	EARLY ENGLISH — nian. Mid-Early English.
Ditto, later	Transition to Decorated.	*Divisible into* — And Semi-Edwardian.
Edward I.	Decorated, Flowing	*Collectively* — Early Edwardian.
Edward II.	Geometrical	EDWARDIAN — Mid-Edwardian.
Edward III.	Curvilinear, &c.	*Divisible into* — Late Edwardian.
Richard II.	Transition to Perpendicular	Semi-Lancastrian.
Henry IV.	Perpendicular-English	*Collectively* — Early.
Henry V.	Rectilinear	LANCASTER-ENGLISH — Middle.
Henry VI.	English After-Gothic, &c.	*Divisible, if necessary, into* — Late. And After-Lancastrian.
Edward IV., Edward V.		
Richard III., Henry VII.	Early Tudor	TUDOR-ENGLISH; or Proper Tudor.
Henry VIII.	Tudor Gothic	
Edward VI., Mary	Late Tudor	TUDOR-ITALIAN; or Mixed Tudor.
Elizabeth	Elizabethan	

Figure 28: The classification of English medieval architecture as proposed by Garbett in *The Builder*. October 4th, 1851. Garbett 1851:620.

6.3.11. October 18th, 1851 – Parker and Godwin, *Classification of medieval architecture*

In his last letter on October 18th, FSA eventually reveals his identity as John Henry Parker, author of the *Glossary of Architecture* (Parker 1836). As publisher and editor of the fifth edition of Rickman's volume, *An attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England* in 1848 (Rickman 1848), Parker defends Rickman's official nomenclature in the debate and adopts exactly the same classification system. Accusing Sharpe on this occasion of having made *'a bitter and libellous attack upon me by name and upon my publications in general'* (Parker 1851:655), he then believes the reputation of his *Glossary* to be *'too well established to be injured by Mr Sharpe's interested attacks'* (Parker 1851:655).

Moreover, in Parker's opinion, the edition of his *Glossary* (Parker 1836) recalled by Sharpe was an older one; the Chronological tables attached to it, namely the most criticised part due to the problem of chronological succession of the buildings, were not included in the new edition. In Parker's opinion, the Chronological tables had nonetheless, *'no pretention to exact accuracy'* (Parker 1851:655), since the given dates constituted an approximation and an attempt at classification exactly like Sharpe's illustrations on his *Architectural Parallels* (Sharpe 1848a). Parker further justifies his attempt asserting that he does not possess the same confidence in his work as Sharpe, since he is neither an architect nor a historian. According to Parker, the progress of knowledge in the last ten years has now made the classification on the *Glossary* obsolete. Successively, the author remarks the inconsistency of Sharpe's chosen means of classification, the window arch:

*[…] the **Pointed arch alone**, without late mouldings, is **no proof of transition**. Mr Rickman had observed long before that round and pointed arches were, for nearly a century, used indiscriminately, as was most consonant to the necessities of the work or the builder's ideas. (Parker 1851:655)*

In addition to that, Parker (1851) also asserts to have seen in the south and west of France numerous buildings of the 11th century in which the pointed arch was already commonly used. Following this, the applicability of Sharpe's classification abroad is questioned, as a most relevant feature for its adoption. In fact, Parker concurrently testifies the application – and thus also the applicability – of Rickman's system abroad. Quoting France as an example, Parker affirms indeed how the division in centuries on which Rickman's system is based is universally recognised. The topic of allowing communication with foreign colleagues is a most relevant one within the debate, as well as for the whole present research:

*He [Sharpe] avows that his own system is **totally inapplicable** to **France** or to other foreign countries and says that no other system can be applied to both English and foreign examples. This I altogether deny. […] the leading features of the **established system** – the division into for great periods or styles – is just as well marked on the continent as in England. The system is not only applicable, but it is **actually applied**, and **in daily use, all over Europe**. Its great recommendation is its **simplicity**, and the ease with which it is remembered; while the seven divisions of Mr Sharpe's system are perfectly arbitrary and applicable (so far they can be applied at all) to England only; the **four divisions** of the established system are **natural and obvious**, and have this **great advantage of agreeing with the four centuries** during which this styles prevailed, the last quarter of each century being the **period of transition** from one style to the other, and during this periods there was not only a mixture of styles, but also what Prof. **Willis** has aptly called '**an overlapping of styles**'; that is to say, during those periods while new fashioned people built in the new style, old fashioned people continued to build in the old style. […] with these qualifications the same general style prevailed all over Europe. The style of the 13th century, for instance, which in England is the 'Early English Gothic' and in France the 'Early French Gothic' has a marked and decided character of its own, which no one who has studied architecture at all can possibly mistake, but which is not always distinguished by **lancet windows** either in England or in France. The question is not when **the first germ** of a new style began to make its appearance, but when it became established, and the usual style of the period. It is here that Mr Sharpe's system entirely fails. **Cross the Channel and his 'Periods' must be left behind**. (Parker 1851:655)*

Besides the possibility to describe foreign buildings, the chronological division in centuries of Rickman's nomenclature is the structure which finds international recognition and the key to its success: as foreign countries identify the same periods with other terms, chronology and features are maintained:

*With the help of the **established English system** I have been able to tell the age of foreign buildings with nearly the same **facility** as English ones. […] In the best foreign work upon the subject it will be found that **their system is the same as our own**. (Parker 1851:655)*

Parker is here citing the work of Monsieur de Caumont, author of the French nomenclature (De Caumont 1825), corresponding chronologically to Rickman's English one. This is the key to the success of Rickman's system: a periodization is indeed well-constructed, if by substituting its terms with their foreign correspondents, in this case the French ones of De Caumont, the system is still valid abroad. Parker thus expresses himself in favour of Rickman's terminology, underlining the advantage it offers, i.e. that of communicating with foreign architects, in particular French ones, who share the same system:

*I find **no difficulty in conversing with them**, and discussing with them the dates, or the merits, or the uses of the various buildings […] this sort of **friendly intercourse** between those engaged in kindred pursuits in different countries I hold to be very desirable and useful to both parties; but if compelled to adopt Mr Sharpe's system only, it would be **impossible for me to continue it**, **and necessary to abandon the acquaintance and correspondence with my friends in France**. No one who has studied Gothic architecture by Mr Sharpe's system only, can ever hope to establish a similar correspondence or even to understand anything of **foreign Gothic**. (Parker 1851:655)*

The categorisation of the window of the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris is then illustrates by Parker as an example of the non-applicability of Sharpe's system abroad:

*Suppose a tyro to have just learned Mr Sharpe's system, and to make an excursion to Paris, he naturally goes to the **Cathedral of Notre Dame** and finding all windows to agree with Mr Sharpe's vague definition of the '**Geometrical Period**' he assigns the building at once to that date, which is about a century after the one in which it was originally built, the whole of the windows being inserted at a subsequent period – not an uncommon event – and though probably obvious enough to Mr Sharpe's eyes, by no means easy for a tyro to detect. (Parker 1851:655)*

Eventually, the author agrees with Mr Scott's proposal to stop identifying the established system with Rickman's name, remarking that the terms are not important, but rather the concepts behind them:

*It is time that the **established system ceases to be called by the name of Mr Rickman**, who was only one of the many zealous workers who contributed to bring it to perfection. His nomenclature is not at all essential to the system, and **the less use we make of technical language the better**. The French antiquarians usually describe a building **by its date only** – as early 13th or late 14th etc – as **the case** may be. **Why should we not do the same?** (Parker 1851:656)*

After that, an editorial note by the editor of *The Builder*, George Godwin (Godwin 1851), concludes the dispute, regretting the tone it has assumed, which indeed led to its premature interruption:

*The personal feeling that has been elicited during the **very interesting discussion** of this subject […] is **much to be regretted**. It was quite contrary to our view, and we have been forced to decline several communications on this ground, including a reply by Mr Sharpe to Mr Scott's letter. We are not disposed to give **any more space to merely personal questions**. (Godwin 1851:656)*

6.3.12. November 8th, 1851 – Sharpe, *The classification of medieval architecture*

Eventually, Sharpe ends the dispute with a last letter on November 8th, 1851 (Sharpe 1851i). Firstly, he defines Rickman's (1825) classification in four periods too rough for a proper description of architecture, as well as for the purpose of reaching a *'true knowledge'* of tis evolution (Sharpe 1851i:703). Secondly, with regard to the example brought by Parker (1851) of Notre Dame, he proposes a comparison for a description of a window of the Cathedral's choir, according to the two systems: Rickman's and his own:

*Undoubtedly Mr Parker is correct in asserting that he who crosses the Channel in search for foreign Churches, **must leave the Seven English Periods behind**; and further I admit that he who is content with **roughly classing** the whole of our English Buildings under four heads, may readily find sufficiently broad characteristics to enable him to do the same on the Continent; but I contend that anyone who contents himself with such a classification will not only never arrive at a **true knowledge of the real progress of architecture**, either in this country or abroad, but will be liable at the very outset to be continually misled: and no building is better adapted to illustrate the truth of this assertion and the advantages of the more detailed system which I propose, than the one Mr Parker has selected to disprove them Notre Dame. (Sharpe 1851i:703)*

The next part of the letter is dedicated to a comparison of Sharpe's and Rickman's periodizations. Specifically, these are applied to the description of a window of the choir in the Parisian Cathedral of Notre Dame. The comparison is most interesting as an example of the difference between the two classifications of medieval buildings, both based on the description of their windows:

Rickman's system: *Now let us on the other hand consider in which terms the tyro who had studied architecture according to the system of **Mr Rickman** would describe the same building. First of all he would find in the windows a great resemblance to the ones of the Chapter House on Salisbury Cathedral and he would therefore call them according to his textbook (Rickman, 5th edition, p 92) Early English, and secondly, if we suppose him equally to detect the similarity between the detail of the Choir of Notre Dame and that of the Choir of Canterbury, he would upon the same authority (Rickman, p 98) pronounce the remainder of the work to be also Early English. (Sharpe 1851i:703)*

Sharpe's system: *Let us suppose him in the choir, and about to commence the study of a single compartment in the manner pointed out in Chap. 3 of the **Seven Periods**. He would first pronounce the windows to be Geometrical – those of the clerestory belonging to the earliest and those below to the latter part of the period: but on viewing the triforium and the ground story he would perceive*

no traces of geometrical work; he would find the mouldings of the arches and form of the capitals, the carved works and all other details to correspond very closely with those of the choir of the Canterbury Cathedral , and to exhibit all the characteristics of the latter part of the Transitional period, and he would accordingly be disposed to place at least one century between the earliest and the latest part of this work. (Sharpe 1851i:703)

According to Sharpe, a more detailed description can be reached only if one follows his own system:

The results then of the two students would be as follows: whilst the former would declare that an entire period – the ***Lancet*** *period – had intervened between the first works – those of the* ***transitional*** *period - and the last works – of the* ***Geometrical*** *period – the latter would declare that the whole building would belong to one style, namely the* ***Early English Style****. (Sharpe 1851i:703)*

In a final word of justification, the prescriptive purpose of Sharpe's proposal is made explicit. A reference to previous declarations is here to be made. Firstly, to the definition that Sharpe provides of his own system as being arbitrary and personal (see Sharpe 1851c:356, in section 6.3.1.) and thus without pretence to prescribe terms. Secondly, the criticism by FSA to the prescriptive character of Sharpe's proposal, made with the exact goal of substituting Rickman's traditional one, seems to be defensible:

Having proposed to myself to write the history of English architecture, I ***have surely the right****, as a preliminary step,* ***to prescribe the terms in which I will write that history*** *and set forth in the little work which has been the cause of this correspondence; and surely that right was somehow rudely and unjustifiably attacked in the first letter of FSA. (Sharpe 1851i:703)*

As previously declared, FSA would have had nothing against Sharpe's nomenclature if it had been merely propositive and descriptive. His criticism arises as Sharpe declares his intention to prescribe on such an important medium the terms through which English medieval architecture should be described.

6.4. The debate seen through the principles of terminology theory

The purpose of this analysis is to describe the dynamics of the debate taking place in 1851, through a comparison to the topics and methods proper to modern theories of terminology. The development of the dispute could be classified as an example of the process of *'terminologisation'* as later theorised by Sager (1990:60), where the definition of a concept is accompanied by progressively more precise stages of naming[80]. This operation has as its purpose the identification of clearly defined concepts with unique terms. This univocal correspondence, one of the main aims of terminology, is described for instance also in Wüster's univocity ideal, in his *General Theory of Terminology* (Wüster 1979).

[80] See Cox 1851:431: 'The attempt namely to classify and arrange these past styles and assign them their periods and a fixed nomenclature […] It seems almost superfluous to speak of the difficulties which must be necessarily be incurred by anyone who seeks to give names to a classification of innumerable buildings raised during many ages under a constant progress and development of national style'.

At the first stages of the debate, the responsibility connected to terminology diffusion prefigures what Sager will later address as process of the term formation (Sager 1990:60). Indeed, the author defines two different stages of term formation, a primary and a secondary one. While primary term formation coincides with the moment in which a scientist discovers a new concept and first names it; secondary term formation identifies the stage in which the term, is communicated to the scientific community. Consequently, an inherent discussion about the choice of the term and its pertinence with the concept are acknowledged by Sager as part of the process (Sager 1990). Indeed, the debate described through the letters presented in this chapter, appears to prefigure a similar process.

Another recurring terminological topic is the role of general use in terms standardisation. The theme evokes Sager's description of the communicative dimension of terminology, according to which terms should be coming from texts and general use, rather than being *'label for things'* (Sager 1990:23). Moreover, connected to the context-dependant nature of terms is their naturality of use by the speaker. The communicative theory of terminology addresses language stability as something *'people perceive as natural'* (Cabré 1999:215) and which happens gradually in the society, starting from a terminologically unstable situation, as the one analysed here. As a matter of fact, a recurrent concern of these historians appears to be the possibility to change the linguistic habit of their audience. As Rickman's (1825) periodization is perceived as outdated, Sharpe proposes an innovative one, to become official (Sharpe 1851a). In order to do so, this nomenclature is discussed by the scientific community from which it should then be adopted to consequently modify the habit of the speakers[81].

As a further focus, some of the future conditions of a successful communication are recalled, as described by Sager (1990:102). Among others, the presence of a regulation authority to decide about the nomenclature to officially adopt, as well as the necessity of an appropriate behaviour in a debate could be mentioned. In the examined discussion these conditions seem to be missing[82].

In addition to that, the role of subject field experts in the process of *'terminologisation'* (Sager 1990:60) is remarked. Here the argumentation envisages once more the communicative theory of terminology (Cabré 1999), according to which terminology should be decided upon by subject field specialists as its ultimate end users. Indeed, the primary goal of terminology should be to facilitate communication within the scientific community (Cabré 1999:11). Furthermore, the discussion analysed here is predominantly centred on creating a new nomenclature. Here, description and prescription, as opposite approaches to this creation are discussed by these authors, anticipating again the future terminological theory, as stated by Faber (2009). Furthermore, the wish for an internationally shared terminology is discussed both in the letters and by almost all terminology theories as an essential

[81] See Sharpe 1851d:417: 'Some such classification as that I propose, […] appears to me "so obvious, so easy and so natural", would inevitably force itself into general use. […] no change of this kind can be made in the nomenclature of any art or science, which does not affect certain vested interests represented by those publishers who possess the stock and copyright, as it were, of the system about to be superseded'.

[82] See Sharpe 1851d:419: 'I will request him, first, to supply me with the authority on which he asserts that AD 1160 is the date of erection of Iffley Church; and secondly to complete the list of "one half of our finest and richest Norman buildings" which he asserts that I have excluded from the Norman period'.

condition allowing communication. The first aim of terminology, as theorised by Wüster, was indeed *'to avoid ambiguity in international intra-professional communication'* (Wüster 1968, in Cabré 2003:179, see section 1.5.1.) [83]. Sharpe's position about the history of architecture appears to reflect the future opinion of the socioterminologists about language evolution. According to Pihkala, indeed: *'standardization is a chimera since language is in constant change'* (Pihkala 2001, in Faber 2012:14). Consequently, terminological variation is always present as a sign that both concepts and definitions are in a constant state of change and evolution (Faber 2012:14). Among others, also Cabré argues in favour of the inevitable connection between language and progress of the society (Cabré 1999:215).

Most relevantly for this study, the categorisation of objects as based on their *'most salient feature*' (Cabré 1999:13) is also part of the future terminological theories. In these, categorisation is defined as a process of abstraction, from which, classes of objects and their names should result. Specifically, these names must be inspired by the features the real-world objects share with one another (Faber 2009). Indeed, by employing images to convey the meaning of their terms, architecture historians anticipate the visual representation of concepts, as a subject of frame semantics (Fillmore 1985). Contemporarily, images of real buildings are used to explain the existence of architectural styles, anticipating the multidimensional nature of concepts (Temmerman 2000:31; Faber et al. 2007).

The differentiation of words from terms is also part of the discussion and one important topic of future terminological research. According to Faber & López Rodríguez (2012), one of the basic assertions of Wüster's *General Theory of Terminology* is that *'terms in specialized language are inherently different from general language words'* (Wüster 1979, in Faber & López Rodríguez 2012:6) due to the monosemous reference between terms and concepts. The topic suggests the future vision in which concepts are ordered in a concept system *'before they will be named with a term'* (Temmerman 2000:14). This leads to the conclusion that a concept system is valid even if its term is substituted, as in this case, by its equivalents in a foreign language. A further aspect of terminology that is foreshadowed in the dispute is the *'multidimensionality'* of terms as described by Temmerman (2000:31):

> *[…] a phenomenon of classification that arises when a concept type can be subclassified in more than one way (i.e. in more than one dimension), depending on the conceptual characteristic that is used as a basis for the subclassification. (Temmerman 2000:31)*

Moreover, the debate presents different classification possibilities of concepts, identified with the periods of English medieval architecture. Each author exposes his own classification, basing on aspects of the periods he considers so relevant to become classificatory means. Indeed, the dispute originates, as every process of term formation, in *'the need to overcome diversity through unification'* (Cabré

[83] See Scott 1851a:481: […] it will never do to go on talking about Early English and Decorated. Whether the fourfold division of pointed architecture be right or not I should certainly hope for a European code. Mr Sharpe's is exclusively English, which is one of the great objections to Rickman's'.

1995:1). As specified by Sharpe (1851h:557, see section 6.3.8.), the only exact classification of English architecture would be a list of each single specimen. In the impossibility of that, the diversity of all specimens should be grouped in classes according to similarities, for the purposes of study and description[84]. Lastly, a reference to the difference between the processes of naming and standardisation as theorised by Sager (1990) is here to be made. If naming occurs in contemporaneity with the appearance of a new concept, standardisation is, on the contrary, a matter of greater difficulty. Indeed, it is normally accompanied by a conflict about names and the necessity of a choice among alternatives:

> *Naming occurs as soon as a new concept, object, process etc. is established, which inevitably leads to **infelicities** in naming and the multiplication of names. **Standardisation** is introduced at a **later stage**, when there is felt to be a **need** for it, e.g. when a **conflict** has arisen **about names**; in such a case, a choice has to be made between two or more alternative designation of the same concept, process etc. (Sager 1990:115)*

The examined dispute could thus be described as a process of naming, although still connected with the appearance of new and contrasting concepts, originating from conflicting interpretations of reality by the numerous participants. The multitude of naming proposals can be said to be due to the absence yet of clearly defined concepts, corresponding in this case to the periods of English medieval architecture.

A further possible explanation for the presence of multiple terms for one concept is what Freixa (2006:51) terms denominative variation, i.e. the phenomenon in which multiple denomination are present for a concept within the same specialised field. The author enumerates different causes for it, some of which seem to be prefigured in this debate. Among others, conceptual imprecision is quoted: this is the absence of clearly defined concepts, which cause then confusion in the selection of its precise denominations (Freixa 2006:58). It could indeed be assumed that the concepts they discussed, identified with the periods of English architecture, could not be entirely defined yet. This would then justify the presence of multiple terms for them.

Moreover, cognitive causes due to discordant interpretations of reality are plausible for the nomenclature each historian proposes. Additionally, the creative causes defined by Freixa (2006:60) include a major emphasis attributed by each author to different aspects of the concept. Indeed, this seems to be the case of apparently very similar terms suggested for the same period. If following Guilbert (1975, in Freixa 2006:64), each denomination represents a personal image of a thought, among the cognitive causes for denominative variation, the parallel to a painter is also relevant. There, Freixa, quoting Vaugelas, compares words, as *'images of thoughts'* (Freixa 2000:64) to strokes of a painter. More words, like more strokes, contribute to a better image of reality, as more different aspects are depicted (Vaugelas 1649/1934:493–494, in Freixa 2006:64).

[84] See Sharpe 1851h:557: 'In the absence of such a Chronicle, it is to the construction of a Chronological list, or the nearest approach that can be made to it, that the efforts of those engaged in the elucidation of this History must ultimately be directed'.

The approaches advocated by both socioterminology and the communicative theory of terminology seems also to be prefigured in the dispute. There, terms are studied in their communicative context (Faber 2012:14). In particular, the socioterminological approach to terminology seems to be anticipated, focussing *'on the social and situational aspects of specialized language communication, which may affect expert communication and give rise to term variation'* (Pihkala 2001, in Faber 2012:14). The inevitable consequence of this is terminological variation, which is mainly due to the fact that *'the use of one term instead of another can reflect the knowledge, social, and professional status of a group of users, as well as the power relationships between participants in the communicative interaction'* (Cabré 1995:3). This will involve the communicative theory of terminology, where Cabré (1999:65) defines the presence of an opposite as one of the requisites for a word to become a term[85].

As a last worthwhile aspect, the debate highlights the interdependence of terminology and its context of use. Regarding this, the discussion foreshadows the communicative situational perspective in terminological theory in reference to which, a term can only be understood in its context of appearance (Faber 2012:5). Similarly, a terminology's affiliation to a specific subject field and its importance in the communication among experts is described in the communicative theory of Cabré, according to which terminology occurs within *'the discourse of particular interlocutors'* and *'reflecting the ideology conveyed by the sciences and technology'* (Cabré 1999:112). Eventually, a leading principle of terminology is foreshadowed by Sharpe's motivation for his proposal of a more detailed classification of English medieval buildings: the necessity for new terminology arises when the existing one turns out as insufficient for its practical purpose, as later theorised by Wüster (1968, in Cabré 2003:173)[86].

As a conclusive remark, the words of Rey (1995) reported hereafter appear to resume the contents of the dispute from a terminological point of view. Indeed, as also Sager (1990) points out, a new conceptualisation always corresponds to the appearance of new terms. Therefore, a conflict occurs between the existing terminology and new terms, appeared with the evolvement of knowledge. This description seems to quite exactly reflect the dispute among historians reported in the chapter:

> *[…] every* ***conceptualisation*** *and every model need a* ***terminology*** *adapted to its purpose. […] more or less close to the conceptual system it has to serve. […] we witness a* ***constant struggle*** *between* ***terminological neology*** *and* ***linguistic stability****. Every change in the system of knowledge requires a parallel change in the system of designation. […] scientific terminologies are* ***always inadequate*** *and* ***too stable*** *for reflecting the changing diversity of systems of knowledge. […] (Rey 1995:56)*

[85] See Garbett 1851:620, about the term Geometrical: 'Geometrical: being nowise more geometrical than any style in general, either of architecture or mere tracery. It is utterly indefensible, unless we can distinguish all other styles from it as Arithmetical or Algebraical or having some other quality not geometrical'.

[86] See Sharpe 1851h:557: 'He [Rickman] would have been the first, as he undoubtedly would have been the fittest person to have declared, long ago, that the time had arrived for a new classification of our national buildings, one more detailed and better suited to the advance state of knowledge on the subject'.

6.5. Conclusions

The debate reconstructed in these pages could be considered as the natural conclusion of the discussion began with Sharpe's proposal of a new classification for English medieval architecture in his volume published in 1851 (Sharpe 1851a). Against the backdrop of an already official and approved nomenclature and periodization, an urge for a more detailed description of real building specimens – and for appropriate terms for it – motivates Sharpe to propose a more detailed classification of English medieval and ecclesiastical architecture. To this, the author attaches innovative terms.

While moved in the definition of new periods and names by a genuine curiosity for description of real English building specimens, Sharpe openly describes his terms as better than Rickman's ones for the same periods, i.e. concepts, and asks the scientific community of historians for their official adoption. In this, the author seems to unite the two opposite purposes of terminology: the prescription of terms to be applied in a specialised field, and the description of reality through precise names, as Faber will later describe (Faber 2009). Moreover, Sharpe's innovative classification of English medieval architecture into seven periods is presented in the letter which originated this debate in *The Builder* (Sharpe 1851c). As to be expected, this provokes contrasting reactions by the historians, who respond to it expressing and motivating their divergent opinions on the subject of English medieval architecture classification. In this discussion, both Sager's process of term formation and his reflections on the conditions of a successful communication among experts appear to be recalled (Sager 1990:60).

Not less relevantly, a process of idealisation of reality occurs during the debate, also prefiguring the terminology theory. As it happens, the operation of confronting with diversity through categorisation will become one of the main purposes of terminology (Cabré 1995:1). Indeed, through the different nomenclatures and categorisation proposals of building specimens, an urge for standardisation of the discipline's vocabulary seems to be expressed by these historians. It should therefore be reasonable to affirm that, even if not agreeing on the terms, a common wish for an update of the current periodization appears to be shared by all authors involved, which is expressed more or less explicitly by each of them. Ultimately, presumably the most innovative element emerging from the debate is the relevance attributed to the international dimension of communication. This subject of a supra-nationally shared terminology – discussed by Scott in the letters on August 2nd, 1851 (see section 6.3.6.) – in order to allow unlimited communication and comprehension will occupy a relevant place in all future theories of terminology. It will indeed be discussed by different authors, starting from Wüster's *General Theory of Terminology* (Wüster 1979, in Temmerman 2000) to the communicative aspect of terminology described by Faber (2012). Indeed, the wish for a shared nomenclature and classification denotes a necessity of communication and knowledge exchange which will later be one of the funding motivations of future theories of terminology. As a matter of fact, this necessity of communication could be appointed as the first motivation of the existence of terminology in the first place.

In the end, although complete standardisation and a universally agreed terminology will never be entirely reached and denominative variation, as argued by Freixa (2006), will always occur to a

certain degree (Faber 2012), the efforts of these historians should be appreciated at least in their attempt to better define the funding concepts of their discipline through an open discussion of them. Indeed, even if it did not result in an update of the official classification of their discipline, the conceptual discussion presented in these pages surely contributed to shed light on some different aspects of the main concepts of the discipline, and therefore to an advancement in knowledge.

7. Conclusions

7.1. Some conclusive remarks

This final chapter presents conclusions drawn from the events described in this work and reflects on certain aspects of the history presented. Eventually, suggestions for future research on the practices of classification and naming of medieval architecture are provided: additional perspectives on the matter are hinted at which could become the subject of future works. This thesis was primarily aimed at showing how terminological systematisation among experts was a common practice even before the actual codification of terminology as a discipline by Eugen Wüster, at the beginning of the 20th century (see Wüster 1931). Although this practice is likely to be attested in every field of knowledge, this work concentrated on studies of medieval architecture in England in the first half of the 19th century. As Brewster and Wilks (2011) recall, every knowledge field feels the need to classify its own objects of study and create classes of entities. Different classifications correspond to multiple conceptual organisations and perceptions of the same concepts. Concurrently, a proper vocabulary is necessary to allow unambiguous communication and knowledge transfer. Therefore, attention was devoted to the creation of a suitable vocabulary of standardised terms for architectural history, composed of shared linguistic signs to identify shared concepts.

While this process originated in Victorian Britain, both the classification of objects and the creation of specialised terms soon adopted an international perspective, as the necessity was acknowledged of a supra-national vocabulary for communication to compare specific national concepts. As Yanni (1997:210) reports on the English history of architecture, the passage from a national to a European dimension of communication and terminology is inherently connected to the possibility of the historians to embark on architectural tours of Europe, as Whewell, Rickman and Sharpe all did. Through the study of foreign architecture, comparison among buildings and styles was naturally enhanced. One of the main topics this research would like to underline is that comparison should be remembered as a fundamental component of the terminological activity. The comparative method adopted in this work was originally inspired by this reflection.

These architectural tours throughout Europe resulted in a series of volumes by the historians to report on their discoveries abroad. These are devoted not only to a careful description of the encountered buildings, but also to a comparison to well-known specimens in England. Indeed, as mentioned in *The Builder* (see section 6.3.), historians at the time were simoultaneoulsy involved in the classification and naming of their national architecture, while also discussing its relation to foreign building traditions and the possibility of a common nomenclature. If a unified European nomenclature for medieval architecture remained a utopia, the modernity of the thinking of these historians is evident in their awareness of the necessity of a standardised scientific language. A similar necessity of standardisation of terminology in scientific fields will result in the creation of a norm for terminology, codified in the standards of the ISO TC/37. There, international comprehension and communication are, as wished for by Wüster, the funding principles of the existence of a codified terminology.

A consequence of a wider perspective of observation on reality and the practice of comparing national and foreign architectures is the discovery of exceptions and rarities, impossible to be included in any categorisation. Indeed, a major conceptual evolution in the classification method adopted by Sharpe and his contemporary historians is that clear-cut classifications defined in theory are useless, unless one acknowledges right from the outset that reality will inevitably present unclassifiable specimens.

Regarding the theory of terminology, the main purpose of this thesis was to retrace, in the work of the English historians of the 19th century, the same principles later discussed by theorists of terminology. Specifically, the naming and classification processes this work tried to describe appear to prefigure future reflections in terminology theory. More than others, the positions of Juan Sager on term formation, or *'terminologisation'* (Sager 1990:60), seem to be mirrored in the reflections of these historians. This process starts with the individuation of a concept and leads to its definition through successive and increasingly precise phases of naming (Sager 1990). This progressive definition of the concept happens through investigations by experts, which lead to the appearance of new terms. Specifically, Sager (1990) defines a primary and a secondary term formation phase, both retraceable in the events presented in this work. While primary term formation is connected to the appearance of a concept, first named by the scientist, the secondary phase corresponds to its communication to the scientific community. Through discussion of the terms, multiple aspects of the corresponding concept are then discovered, and finally lead to its complete definition. The same seems to happen in the described phase of the English history of architecture. First, periods are defined through the description of building specimens and consequently named, then they are discussed by experts. This leads to different naming proposals for the periods and thus to a more thorough comprehension.

The history presented in this work can also be interpreted as a demonstration of the *'multidimensionality'* of concepts, later defined by Temmerman (2000:31). The nomenclature that each author promoted to categorise national architecture is probably the most evident testimony of how the same concepts can be classified differently according to discordant interpretations (see Fig. 28 and 29). A complementary vision of the events can be retraced in Temmerman's (2000) theory about the definition of a concept. According to the author, language is strongly connected to the concepts it expresses. Hence, if a discipline's conceptual structure is not well defined, and further destabilised by the appearance of new concepts, this could only result in an equally unclear terminology.

In line with this, all proposed nomenclatures of English architecture could be considered as an example of the phenomenon that Freixa (2006) terms denominative variation. This is mirrored in the presence of multiple terms for the same stylistic periods, which shows how multiple denomination can coexist for a concept within the same specialised field. Notably, many causes of denominative variation addressed by Freixa (2006) can be retraced in the events describe here. Among others, cognitive causes, which signal a specific and different conceptualisation by the author, which is then reflected in his terms. Not less important are discursive motivations, i.e. the necessity for these authors to convey particular aspects of a concept through different denominations. In connection to that, as Faber and Léon-Araúz

argue (2016), it is important to remember how multiple denominations of the same concepts should not be regarded as mere linguistic preferences. On the contrary, they all represent valuable perspectives and precious components for complete knowledge of each concept. Following this, all quoted periodizations should be considered equally relevant towards knowledge of this architectonical era.

Secondly, this thesis argued that all historians presented here can be conceived as terminologists *ante litteram*, underlining how experts appear to be – at least in the presented case – excellent terminologists in their own scientific field. In this respect, this work could become a model case to encourage the application of a similar study method to other disciplines. Ultimately, this should demonstrate that terminological and conceptual systematisation inherently belong to the scientific activity of every discipline. In history, researchers always had to define new concepts and to find appropriate names for them. Concurrently, they had to explain their naming choices to fellow experts, justifying them by means of their shared knowledge. In this respect, the process that this work attempted to describe could be reasonably defined as the natural evolution of knowledge in every scientific field.

As all historians could be considered terminologists *ante litteram*, a special mention is due to the terminological activity of Edmund Sharpe. Indeed, it seems reasonable to compare his efforts in architectural history and the ones of Eugen Wüster in terminology. The contexts of the two authors' work also appear similar, as a comparable necessity of order and official standardisation of concepts and vocabulary is addressed by both of them. However, following these premises one could also consider Rickman as the *Wüster of English medieval architecture*, since he was the author of the first periodization of English medieval architecture and of its first official nomenclature in 1817. A similar interpretation of Rickman's work is supported by Yanni (1997:211), who presents Rickman, and not Sharpe, as the *'Linnaeus of English medieval architecture'*. Indeed, Linnaeus is remembered as *'the father of modern taxonomy'* (Calisher 2007:268) and as the creator of the modern classification of natural species in botany, the binominal nomenclature (Yanni 1997). In passing, this comparison to Linnaeus calls to mind Temmerman's (2000) theory according to which the processes of concepts systematisation and naming inherently belong to the initial development of a scientific discipline, after which all successive stages of vocabulary update accompany the discipline's progress as consequences of knowledge development. In this, the history of architecture is no exception.

In light of these considerations, Rickman should be considered the actual *Wüster of the English history of architecture*, and not Sharpe. The two authors' comparable roles should be remembered: Wüster and Rickman were both experts in their field of studies, who then developed an interest in terminology out of necessity for a standardised vocabulary in their disciplines. Not only that: Rickman's purposes in proposing his first periodization of English medieval architecture seem to mirror almost exactly Wüster's ones in establishing terminology as a discipline:

> *To **eliminate ambiguity** from technical languages by means of **standardisation** of terminology in order to make them **efficient tools of communication**; […] To convince all users of technical*

languages of the benefits of standardized terminology; […] To establish terminology as a discipline for all practical purposes and to give it the status of a ***science****. (Wüster 1968, in Cabré 2003:165)*

In line with this, a mention is also due to the historian and passionate terminologist William Whewell, who best embodies the mixture of specialised knowledge and passion for naming described here. Through his multiple studies and interest in systematisation, Whewell contributed to the classification of medieval architecture and coined numerous terms. Whewell first formulated the term *scientist* (Lightman 2011:367), as well as the definition of a *term*, as intended in terminology theory (Rey 1995:15, see section 2.5.). Through his work, the urge for terminological standardisation and knowledge classification becomes evident as a central element of this stage of English architectural history.

The emergence both in the classification of English architecture and in terminology of a descriptive approach towards reality is a further important topic of reflection. Indeed, the main consequence of the acknowledgement of the variety of reality. appears to be a prominent role of description. As Yanni (2014) argues, due to the absence of previous classifications, Rickman's attempt at systematisation aimed at maximal simplicity and intuitiveness of concepts. With the development of architectural studies, his theory became insufficient for a satisfactory description of what had become a much wider field of knowledge. The same prescriptive approach appears to be reflected in in Wüster's first theory of terminology, which provided the discipline with its funding principles (see Wüster 1979). Hence, the following generations of both historians and terminologists will try and precise these original classifications, as the limits of simple conceptual structures and vocabulary became evident.

The innovativeness of the descriptive approach is probably best exemplified in Temmerman's (2000) criticism of the univocity ideal, described by Wüster (1979) as the main principle of terminology. As a linguistic discipline, terminology was indeed primarily based on the univocal correspondence between a concept and its linguistic denomination (Wüster 1979). On the contrary, according to Temmerman (2000), only when a new concept is formulated an initial *'tendency'* (Temmerman 1997:62) to univocity occurs. After that, the natural search for a better knowledge of the concept leads to the appearance of more terms for the concept, which describe its multiple aspects. In Temmerman's (2000) view, indeed, univocity is unrealistic in communication, since synonymy and polysemy are needed to express different aspects of concepts, as well as discordant visions of them by different authors.

Inspired by what happened in terminology, we would venture to claim that Sharpe's (1851a) work was the natural consequence of Rickman's (1825) own, as the evolution of an initial systematisation. As Rickman's fist categorisation was proposed, in 1817, it was a simple, though sufficient one. Given the appreciation it got from fellow contemporary and successive historians, no further division or vocabulary appeared necessary at the time, as Whewell (1842) confirms. With the discipline's evolution, however, a necessity for a more detailed description of building specimens appeared, which was consequently addressed in the work of Sharpe and his contemporary authors. It is thus reasonable to conclude that Rickman's nomenclature could not have been more detailed as a first attempt at classification, mirroring a still rather essential knowledge of medieval styles. The comparison

of Rickman's (1825) and Sharpe's (1851a) nomenclatures confirms the evolution of the study of medieval architecture (see Fig. 28 and 29). From a division following the succession of centuries, a more detailed organisation of the architectural periods resulted from a careful classification of real specimens. As previously maintained, this evolution seems to prefigure the one in the terminology theory. There, too, to a nearer study of language in context follows a criticism of Wüster's original principles (Wüster 1979). In a wider perspective, this process seems to reflect the natural evolution of a scientific discipline from its original systematisation to a more pronounced attention to reality.

Influenced by natural sciences, as Yanni (1997) argued, the language employed in the description of architecture had changed with Sharpe's generation, since it was for the first time *'borrowed from science'* (Yanni 1997:208). Not only the building itself was *'laid bare'* (Sharpe 1833, in Yanni 1997:208) to be examined by the historian turned anatomist, but the conception of architecture periodization itself had transformed dramatically. From the comparison of styles to animal species (Poole 1850b, see section 3.3.) a new evolutive conception of architecture emerged, which considered it as a continuously muting entity: the style as a living being grew from *'an embryo'* (Symonds 1890:28) and evolved without pause from one form to the next, as Yanni (2014) points out. Accordingly, the historians seem to come to the acknowledgement that all classifications mainly represent theoretical instruments of discussion. In fact, they do not exist in reality, where architecture is constantly muting into different forms, and it is impossible to be entirely included in a clear-cut definition or timeframe. Corbeil (1980, in Cabré 1999) comes to a similar conclusion, arguing that language, as all other living beings, finds itself in a state of uninterrupted mutation and progress.

It is equally important to notice that the reflections of the historians presented here are not the typical stylistic descriptions of buildings which normally occupy architectural volumes. Rather, at what seems to be the initial stage of definition of the English medieval history of architecture, historians are involved discussing the very foundations of the discipline, starting from official vocabulary. Presumably, contemporary historians in England do not question the definition of the fundamental vocabulary and periodization of their discipline anymore. More probably, this vocabulary and conceptual structure are now constantly evolved and expanded through discoveries and a parallel and regular update of terms to describe them. Here, again, Rey's (1995) reflection turn out particularly useful. According to the author, conceptual discoveries and linguistic update should run parallel to one another, since no new concept can be named and identified without the appropriate linguistic tools:

> *It is impossible to name without names; it is impossible to name scientifically without terms […] (Rey 1995:59)*

In these words, lies probably the most important final acknowledgement of this research: a constant terminological update is necessary in every scientific discipline, in order to accompany and describe linguistically the evolution of knowledge. Or, as Rey (1995:59) argues, the other way around: scientific discoveries inevitably bring with them innovative terms to define them. Accordingly, if terminology

remains in the past, and *'men are not willing to unlearn a term with which they are familiar'* (Sharpe 1852:170) in order to adopt a new one, no scientific development can happen.

7.2. The destiny of Sharpe's classification

In conclusion, we should consider the destiny of Sharpe's attempt at classification after the debate in *The Builder* in 1851 (see section 6.3.). Sharpe's classification was not officially adopted and, and with other proposals by contemporary historians, it did not substitute Rickman's traditional classification. Instead, perhaps surprisingly, Rickman's classification and nomenclature from 1817 are still in use today as the official periodization of English medieval architecture.

However, some of Sharpe's terms managed to survive the decisive debate in 1851 and are quoted in successive publications on medieval architecture. Indeed, it is attested that Sharpe's (1851a) terms *Geometrical* and *Curvilinear* identify internal varieties of Rickman's *Decorated* style. This is confirmed for instance in Fletcher's volume entitled *A history of architecture on the comparative method* (Fletcher 1905). There, the author addresses the debate in *The Builder* (1851, see section 6.3.), as well as Sharpe's (1851a) system in comparison to Rickman's (1825) own (see Fig. 22, in section 5.4.). Sharpe's nomenclature is also recalled in Francis Bond's 1905 *Gothic Architecture in England* (Bond 1905). In the volume, Sharpe's accurate description of medieval window tracery is attested through original illustrations from the author's *Architectural Parallels* (Sharpe 1848a) and *Decorated Windows* (Sharpe 1849a; 1849b). Additionally, Sharpe's periodization is addressed by Bond (1905) as a particularly successful one of the *Gothic* in England, specifically his *Geometrical*, *Curvilinear* and *Rectilinear* periods. Notably, some of Sharpe's terms are also present in the historian Nikolaus Pevsner's collection of 46 Architectural Guides of England entitled *The Buildings of England* and first published between 1951 and 1974 (Pevsner 1951 – 74), as well as in his *Architectural Glossary* (Pevsner 2010).

Contrary to what was prefigured by Scott in *The Builder* (Scott 1851:481, see section 6.3.6.), Rickman's system survived the test of time. Thus, probably even more than the necessity of substituting Rickman's nomenclature, the debate shed light on a need for further vocabulary and additional terms to specify Rickman's four styles, instead of substituting them. Had Sharpe and his contemporary authors suggested – as they originally intended to – to add their terms to Rickman's own, and not substitute them, with something which *'after all, means the same thing'* (Sharpe 1852:170, see section 3.2.), their classifications would have presumably had a better chance to establish themselves. It seems reasonable, thus, to conclude that Rickman's (1825) system survived because it was the simplest, but also because it was the most suitable to accommodate further and more specific internal varieties. To that purpose, nowadays, other nomenclatures presented in this work are recalled in specialised texts. However, no official secondary division is attested, and Rickman's remains the only internationally recognised periodization for English medieval architecture. Indeed, in the destiny of Rickman's classification, Darwin's (1861) theory of the *'survival of the fittest'* (Spencer 1864:444) seems to have applied.

Finally, one might wonder whether Sharpe's efforts in classification and naming, like the ones of his fellow historians, should be remembered as failed attempts. Or whether, more reasonably, these

attempts at classification should be classified as fundamental contributions to the knowledge evolution and development process of the discipline of English history of architecture. Drawing on Sager's (1990) theory, the classification and naming of concepts inherently belong to a scientific disciplines' principal activities, both at its beginnings as well as during its further development. Concurrently, a fervent discussion about concept classification and the consequent appearance of new terms could be considered as consequences of knowledge development (Sager 1990).

Following this, a history of all failed attempts of periodization of English medieval architecture should probably be written, including all alternative proposals of classification which were not granted the privilege of officiality and did not manage to be remembered in the main volumes. There, their role in the discipline's evolution should be highlighted, in order to prove how officiality and recognition by the experts' community do not necessarily represent the only form of success: any effort in the classification, organisation and naming of building specimens and constructive elements should be presented as a fundamental support to the advancement of the discipline, and the knowledge we possess today of medieval architecture. Even if it was denied the honour of officiality and recollection in the official periodization, Sharpe's visual description of the English architecture through its windows appears to deserve the highest respect for being a most detailed and precious addition to the study of the ecclesiastical buildings of the English Middle Ages.

7.3. Future research perspectives

There are as many directions in which this research could be extended, as aspects to further examine. Firstly, it could be interesting to conduct the same study presented in this work on other periods of architectural history, to see if similar debates on classification occurred there, too. For instance, the classification of Classical architecture should be investigated, to discover if the Grecian and Roman architecture, as highest models of systematisation which inspired these historians, also went through similar discussions towards the ordered classification they enjoy today. As Garbett suggested in a critical note (1851, see section 6.3.10.), a parallel should be drawn between the classification of the Classics based on the capital's forms and the window-based one of English medieval architecture. Specifically, Garbett (1851) claimed that a classification based on a non-structural element as the window would be meaningless and a better classificatory means should be found, as for instance the arch.

Alternatively, the same study could be extended to the medieval architecture of other European countries as France, Germany or Italy. Indeed, some authors already provided description and categorisations of foreign architecture. Among others, Whewell, in his *Architectural Notes on German Churches* (1842) or Willis in his *Remarks on the architecture of the Middle Ages, especially of Italy* (1835), as the result of their architectural tours. Moreover, this international perspective on classification and nomenclature was already present in Parker's (1836) *Glossary of terms used in Grecian, Roman, Italian and Gothic architecture.* Accordingly, also Rickman and Whewell embarked on several tours of Northern France to report on the evolution of the *French Gothic*, as Yanni (1997) refers.

In a further study, therefore, the wish of these historians for a common European nomenclature and classification of the *Gothic* architecture could be investigated, as expressed in *The Builder* (see section 6.3.). Beyond the description of each European country's own classification and nomenclature, an international comparison could be drawn among these systems to analyse similarities and differences, as done here among English classifications. If an international nomenclature remains utopian, mainly due to strong national characters of the styles, similarities throughout Europe should be evidenced, even if similar elements are called by different names. Since in England practically every author proposed an alternative periodization at the time, and presumably the same happened in France and Germany, it could be even more interesting to compare all the terms and investigate their origin. As Whewell (1842:233) argues, for instance, the French term *Flamboyant* is inspired by the profile of its tracery presenting a *'flame-like shape'*. Accordingly, Sharpe explains the choice of the term *Lancet* as due to the narrow form of the windows resembling, indeed, *'a lancet'* (Sharpe 1851a:5). In this, the different etymologies of terms and discordant approaches to the naming of periods could also be addressed. While Rickman's (1825) generation clearly preferred historically inspired terms, the choice of more descriptive names seems to be an evident consequence of a more detailed study of specimens and their components, allowing a more careful description and classification according to specific constructive elements.

Worth noticing is also that, as much as the present research was limited to the debate reported in the architectural periodical *The Builder*, where Sharpe's (1851a) periodization proposal and nomenclature were principally discussed, with some references to *The Ecclesiologist*, equally valuable debates among architecture experts about similar classification attempts took place contemporaneously on other specialised periodicals of architecture. Hence, a future study could be extended to other architectural journals, where contributions by further historians would help reconstruct the whole frame of the terminological discussion *ante litteram* on the styles of English architecture of the Middle Ages.

Moreover, the same research conducted here about a periodization based on window tracery could take the medieval mouldings of the ecclesiastical building as classificatory means. Notably, Sharpe presented a paper to the Royal Institute of British Architects called *On the subordination and distinctive peculiarities of the mouldings of the seven period of English architecture* (Sharpe 1851b), where mouldings were used to justify his classification of medieval architecture into seven periods. In Sharpe's (1871) later volume on the subject, however, the periods became six, due to the absence of original *Saxon* moulding specimens to be illustrated, as the author admits. Indeed, in *The Mouldings of the Six Periods of British Architecture* (Sharpe 1871), the author presents a classification of English architecture into six periods, based on drawings of original mouldings and the characterisation of their features. Naturally, Sharpe is not the only one to study mouldings and in a dedicated study his work would again have to be situated within an array of similar categorisations based on mouldings. According to Sharpe (1851b), the history of the English architecture is indeed written in its mouldings, as in all other constructive elements of the ecclesiastical architecture:

[…] the language of the history of our national architecture, is as clearly written in the mouldings as it is in the general outline, and in those more prominent features of a building, which strike the eye of the general observer. (Sharpe 1851b, page not numbered)

One of the last topics still to be addressed is the role of habit and tradition in language. We have witnessed in this research how strong the attachment of speakers to their linguistic tradition could be and how difficult it is, to simply propose a change of a linguistic habit, no matter how outdated it is. In the perspective of future works, it should be worth investigating some further aspects of the matter. Firstly, successful attempts of change of a linguistic habit and traditional nomenclature could be retrieved, to the contrary of what was presented in these pages. Conversely, it would also be fascinating to investigate if, once established, a linguistic tradition is bound to remain part of the language ever after, to which then new terms are merely added. Secondly, it would also be worthwhile to understand how valuable the commitment to a linguistic habit actually is, compared to the importance of new terms and contaminations from foreign languages. Is it always the right choice to stick to tradition in language, or is the constant update of our way of speaking as much a necessity as the continuous upgrading and adaptation of its vocabulary for a specialised discipline?

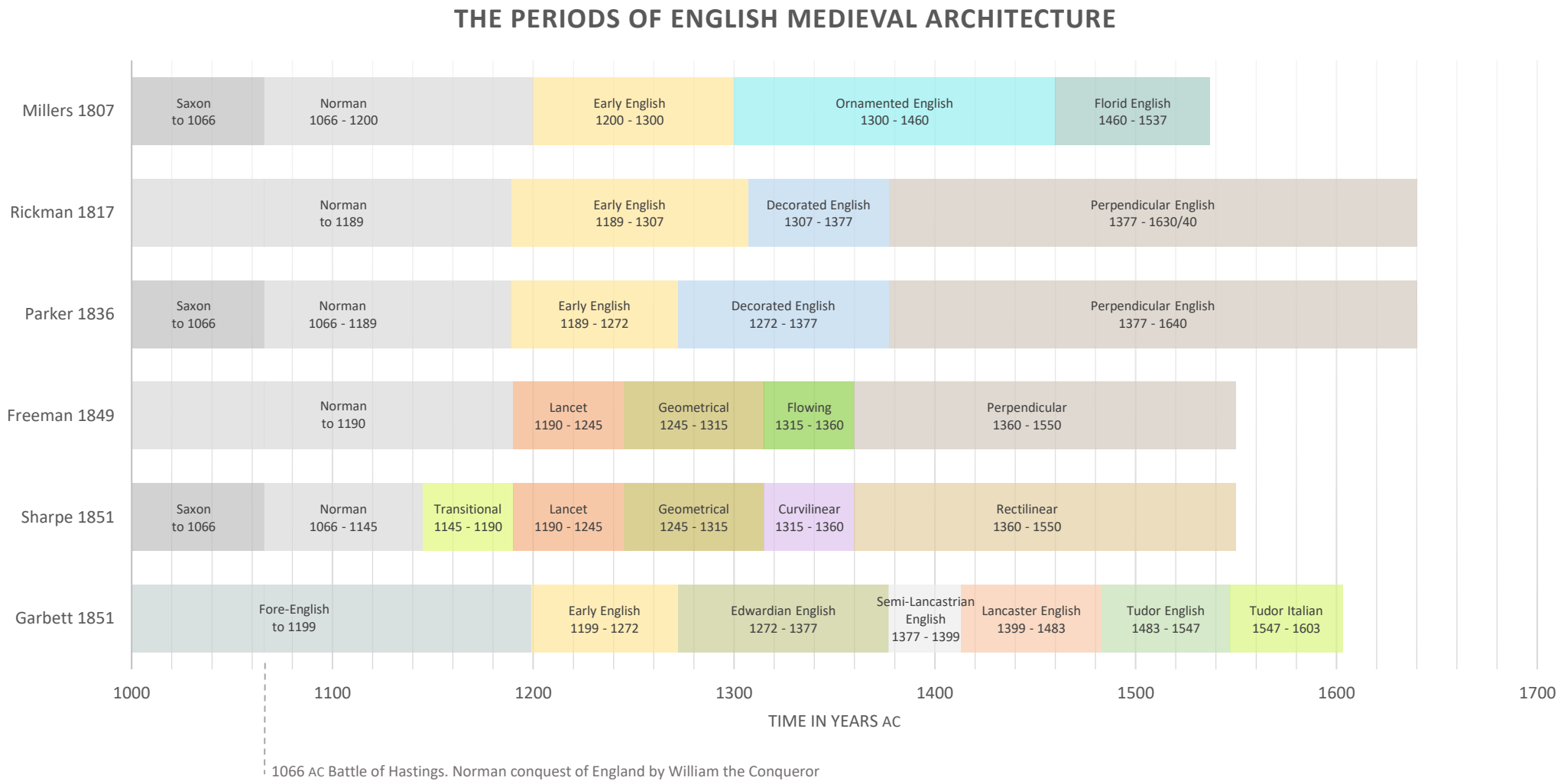
Eventually, some last questions remain to be addressed. Were there other phases in the history of architecture where a similar need was felt for a more detailed classification and naming, as the one described here? Did they also lead to similar debates among experts and did they succeed in modifying, even if not officially, the previous nomenclature and linguistic habits of the speakers' community? We would much more like to believe that a continuous terminological discussion became a routine activity to constantly accompany research not only in the architectural history, but in all scientific disciplines. In the end, a final classification issue persists. Namely, the one about how these English historians should be remembered. Were Edmund Sharpe, Rickman, Whewell and their colleagues merely architecture historians, or should they also be classified as pioneer terminologists?

Ultimately, this work would like to support a different perspective on the meaning of failed attempts in history. Should all attempts be remembered as failed ones, as long as they did not manage to become part of the official history of their discipline? Is the version of history we are told in books merely a collection of successful attempts? Or better, is a history of successful theories which managed to gain recognition from the experts and become official enough? These and other similar questions would like to raise awareness about the meaning of success in history. Does the concept of success only identify with officiality and a place in the collective memory, or is there more to it? Or, as we would like to believe, is there a much more interesting history of failed attempts and unsung heroes which awaits to be written behind the official and successful one? By shedding light on a particularly significant episode of the history of English medieval architecture and, at the same time, an interesting example of the application of terminology theory to a specialised knowledge field, the main purpose of this work was to lead the way for further research on the subject, as well as to raise more questions than the ones it attempted to answer.

George Millers 1807 ***A description of the Cathedral Church of Ely with some account of the conventual buildings***	**Thomas Rickman 1817** ***An attempt to discriminate the styles of English architecture***	**John Henry Parker 1836** ***A glossary of terms used in Grecian, Roman, Italian and Gothic architecture***
Saxon – to 1066 A.D.	*Norman – to 1189 A.D.*	*Saxon – to 1066 A.D.*
Norman – 1066 – 1200 A.D.	*Early English – 1189 – 1307 A.D.*	*Norman – 1066 – 1189 A.D.*
Early English – 1200 – 1300 A.D.	*Decorated English – 1307 – 1377 A.D.*	*Early English – 1189 – 1272 A.D.*
Ornamented English – 1300 – 1460 A.D.	*Perpendicular English – 1377 – 1630/1640 A.D.*	*Decorated English – 1272 – 1377 A.D.*
Florid English – 1460 – 1537 A.D.		*Perpendicular English – 1377 – 1640 A.D.*
Edward Augustus Freeman 1849 ***A History of Architecture***	**Edmund Sharpe 1851** ***The Seven Periods of English Architecture***	**Edward Lacy Garbett 1851** ***The Builder, October 4th 1851***
Norman – to 1190 A.D.	*Saxon period – to 1066 A.D.*	*Fore-English – to 1199 A.D.*
Lancet style – 1190 – 1245 A.D.	*Norman period – 1066 – 1145 A.D.*	*Early English – 1199 – 1272 A.D.*
Geometrical style – 1245 – 1315 A.D.	*Transitional period – 1145 – 1190 A.D.*	*Edwardian English – 1272 – 1377 A.D.*
Flowing style – 1315 – 1360 A.D.	*Lancet period – 1190 – 1245 A.D.*	*Semi-Lancastrian English – 1377 – 1399 A.D.*
Perpendicular style – 1360 – 1550 A.D.	*Geometrical period – 1245 – 1315 A.D.*	*Lancaster English – 1399 – 1483 A.D.*
	Curvilinear period – 1315 – 1360 A.D.	*Tudor English, or Proper Tudor – 1483 – 1547 A.D.*
	Rectilinear period – 1360 – 1550 A.D.	*Tudor Italian, or Mixed Tudor – 1547 – 1603 A.D.*

Table 4: Comparative chart of the quoted periodization proposals for English medieval architecture with authors. The proposals are ordered according to their first publication. The date of each periodization refers to the volume's first edition or publication.

Figure 29 (see following page). The periods of English medieval architecture. A comparison of nomenclatures. The same periodizations are represented in a bar chart.


THE PERIODS OF ENGLISH MEDIEVAL ARCHITECTURE
Millers 1807
Saxon to 1066
Norman 1066 - 1200
Early English 1200 - 1300
Ornamented English 1300 - 1460
Florid English 1460 - 1537
Rickman 1817
Norman to 1189
Early English 1189 - 1307
Decorated English 1307 - 1377
Perpendicular English 1377 - 1630/40
Parker 1836
Saxon to 1066
Norman 1066 - 1189
Early English 1189 - 1272
Decorated English 1272 - 1377
Perpendicular English 1377 - 1640
Freeman 1849
Norman to 1190
Lancet 1190 - 1245
Geometrical 1245 - 1315
Flowing 1315 - 1360
Perpendicular 1360 - 1550
Sharpe 1851
Saxon to 1066
Norman 1066 - 1145
Transitional 1145 - 1190
Lancet 1190 - 1245
Geometrical 1245 - 1315
Curvilinear 1315 - 1360
Rectilinear 1360 - 1550
Garbett 1851
Fore-English to 1199
Early English 1199 - 1272
Edwardian English 1272 - 1377
Semi-Lancastrian English 1377 - 1399
Lancaster English 1399 - 1483
Tudor English 1483 - 1547
Tudor Italian 1547 - 1603
1000
1100
1200
1300
1400
1500
1600
1700
TIME IN YEARS AC
1066 AC Battle of Hastings. Norman conquest of England by William the Conqueror

List of Figures

List of Tables

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