



# Gottfried Semper and the Problem of Historicism

*Mari Hvattum*

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## **Gottfried Semper and the Problem of Historicism** Mari Hvattum

Using key texts by the German architect and theorist Gottfried Semper, Mari Hvattum offers a reinterpretation of historicism, which is here viewed both as a philosophical outlook and as an architectural problem. Hvattum focuses on Semper's two major concerns: an understanding of the ontological significance of art and architecture, and the rendering of art and architecture as the objects of scientific investigation and prediction. Hvattum investigates the background and implications of these conflicting concerns. By examining the historicist fusion of Romanticism and Positivism, the book seeks to understand the nature as well as the limits of the modern dream of a 'method of inventing'. More than an intellectual biography, *Gottfried Semper and the Problem of Historicism* explores historicism and its implications for modern architectural discourse and practice.

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