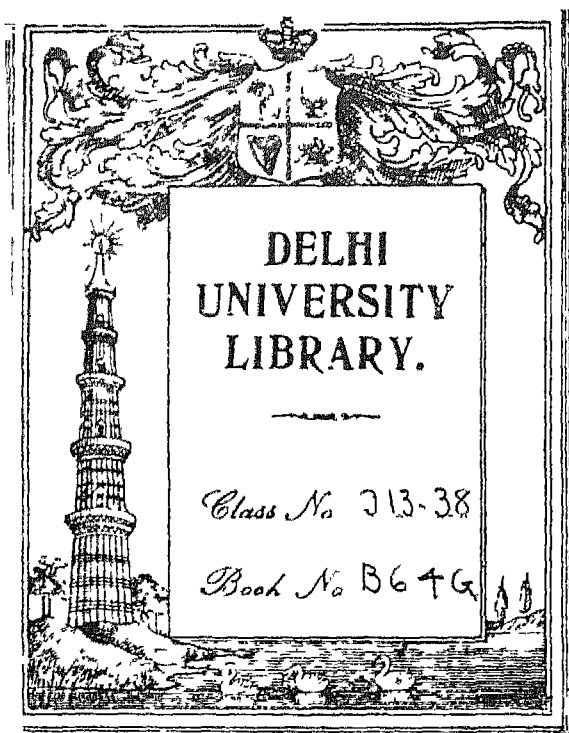




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THE
GREEK TRADITION



ARISTOTLE, CHARTRES CATHEDRAL, WEST PORTAL

After Houvet

THE GREEK TRADITION

*Papers contributed to a symposium held at
The Baltimore Museum of Art
May 15, 16, 17, 1939*

edited by
GEORGE BOAS

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PREFACE

WESTERN civilization is compounded of three ingredients: local custom and superstition, Greek science and art, Hebraic religion. The quantity of the several ingredients varies. In some places such as France, the Hellenic is as great as the Hebraic; others, such as contemporary Germany, the local is in ascendance over both the Hellenic and the Hebraic; in America, with strong Anglo-Saxon heritage and Puritan background, the Hebraic is perhaps the most important. But whatever the proportion of the mixture, every modern occidental civilization is a compound in which the main elements come from the ancient world.

The Baltimore Museum of Art as the subject of its 1939 Symposium has chosen one of these traditions, that one whose effect upon art and science has been most pronounced. The Hebraic tradition has given subject matter to art in the western world ever since the western world was Christianized. Indirectly, I supposed religious taboos for instance, it has influenced the course of science. It might be said also that the "folkways" of the colonists have been responsible for a certain scientific ingenuity in American laboratories as well as for what has been called "practicalism" in philosophy. But the main course of science not only in America but also in Europe has been determined not by local customs but by a tradition of mathematical formulation which comes to us directly from the Greeks. When the medieval sculptors put effigies of Pythagoras and Aristotle on their cathedrals, it was as if they recognized the great contributions of Greek mathematics and logic to man's life.

The Greek tradition is not Greek civilization; it is man's interpretation of that civilization. Every age in European cultural history, like every individual of the intellectual classes, has gone back to the Greeks for inspiration ever since there were any Greeks to go back to. But what Greeks they selected as "*The Greeks*,"

and what ideas and manners and standards they chose as typically Hellenic have varied from age to age and from individual to individual. Was Plato "The Greeks"? Was Aristotle? Was the sculpture of the fifth century typically Greek? Or was it rather the sculpture of the third? Was Aeschylus *the* Greek poet, *par excellence*, or Euripides? Or was it Homer? Or perhaps Pindar? Were *The* Greeks wild, carousing, Aristophanic satyrs, or were they calm and melancholy marbles draped from shoulder to ankle? Were they soft and faceful youths with out-thrown hip, or muscular athletes? Were they a rational or an "enthusiastic" people? Were they democratic politically or simply individualistic aristocrats? Were they given to tyrannicide, or did they weakly tolerate despots? Any of these and similar questions could be answered in either the affirmative or the negative and answered truly. The Greeks were and have been all things to all men; what you will call them depends upon whom you select as your sample Greek; a good case can be made out for almost any generalization about them, for we know them only from fragments of their writings and from ruins of their art.

The purpose of our Symposium is to throw some light on the growth of the Greek Tradition, not on its persistence. Anyone who has been to college, or for that matter anyone who has ever read an anthology of English poetry or seen a colonial American house or looked up a long word in a dictionary, has a fairly definite idea of this tradition. But we are all too prone to accept it as something homogeneous which we have inherited generation by generation from our parents. When we discover in the past Hellenists whose idea of Hellas is not our own, we are inclined to believe that they are simply naïve and somewhat primitive, not having had the advantages of modern education. The truth is rather that they, for reasons no stranger than those which orient us, were interested in a side of antiquity which no longer interests us. No age is conscious of its transitoriness; if it were, its activities would become paralysed. Each age produces with an assurance that seems childish—if not bumptious—to its successors. But it is incapable of feeling that it itself is childish. A child, for

that matter, doesn't feel itself to be an immature adult, something incomplete, something not yet finished, something on the road to being finished. To him the adult is the anomaly, a sort of fatigued and worn-out child.

What is most interesting of all is why people have always turned back to antiquity for an ideal, regardless of how they interpreted antiquity's character. The answer lies in that curious attitude of retrospection which governs so much of human thought and which in its extreme form is chronological primitivism according to which the first men to appear on earth, did they exist in the Garden of Eden or in the Golden Age, were the happiest. The Athenian Greeks for a few years in the fifth century B.C. did enjoy a kind of intellectual and creative freedom which has never been seen since that time. It was bought, however, at the price of extreme political instability and also at the price of slavery. The number of individuals, moreover, who enjoyed this freedom was never very great; under Pericles it amounted to a little over 50,000. Of these, how many could have understood and appreciated its value? In any event, these few years and these few people have been the focus of man's longing ever since and have been endowed with all the virtues, political and ethical and intellectual. Few writers have stopped to consider their numbers or their isolation in the greater mass of Greeks both in time and space. Their virtues were shared neither by Corinthians nor Thebans nor Spartans. Neither their ancestors nor their descendants resembled them. Yet for most men they have become *The* Greeks.

It must not be forgotten that during certain periods of western history they were only a name. For a thousand years or more no one could read any of the dramatists or, in all probability, any of the poets. The great sculptors of this age are known largely by tradition and legend—in fact, most histories of Greek sculpture are re-created from such guides as Pausanias and Pliny. They speak glibly of the style of Phidias, Scopas, Polyclitus, and so on, but how many actual works of these men have their authors seen? Similarly with Greek thought; until we come to Plato we have

but the most tantalizing fragments and the comments of critics to steer us in our interpretations. When we write about Heraclitus and Democritus, Empedocles and Parmenides, we have a few pathetic and mutilated sentences from each. It is as if a newspaper interview repeated in summary form with one or two quotations taken from their context were all we had of Galileo and Newton.

Yet Greek philosophy is probably more important than even Greek art in forming our idea of Greek civilization. Every age—as early at least as the end of the first century B.C.—has referred back to “The Ancients.” The dominant philosophical trends of the early Christian period were a mixture of earlier systems of thought in which the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle had the major part. By the third century it became the boast of Plotinus that his philosophy was such a “reconciliation”—as it used to be called—of these two masters. And as the philosophy of the Middle Ages began to develop, it was built largely on the foundations laid by them.

But though Platonism is a single word, it has meant a variety of things. The Plato of the early Middle Ages was largely the Plato of one dialogue, the *Timaeus*. The *Timaeus*, it will be recalled, relates the story of creation as seen by a Pythagorean philosopher. Its dominant note is perhaps that of the fitness of things in the universe and one reading it begins to believe that Plato was preaching a kind of Greek Christianity. That too would appear to be the impression which its medieval readers derived from it. Mr. A. O. Lovejoy's *Great Chain of Being* illustrates how one small passage from it on the goodness of God was the ultimate source of one of the most influential traditions of medieval and modern thought. In a Latin version it was read by such Christian fathers as Saint Augustine and became a sort of pagan Bible.

By the time of the Renaissance other dialogues of Plato became known, particularly the *Phaedrus* and the *Symposium*, and on the basis of these the Greek philosopher became the spokesman for something known as “Platonic love.” The number of translations

and imitations of the *Symposium* must be very great and few educated men of the Italian Renaissance were ignorant of its contents. But the Plato of these two dialogues is no longer the author, or transmitter, of a creation-story. He is the poetic stylist, the dramatist of ideas, whose vivid portraits are unlike the work of any other philosopher. It is from him, more than from any other one man, that modern times derives the notion of the philosopher-poet. His myths, which are both acute and exquisitely fashioned, became the inspiration not only of allegorical pictures but also of emblems, supplanting the "folk-myths" of the ancients. Thus the soul as the charioteer whose two horses, one noble, the other ignoble, strive to draw him in opposing directions becomes one of the allegorical commonplaces of the sixteenth century.

As the dialogues became better known, as they did soon after the Florentine Academy was founded in the fifteenth century, Plato became a more complex philosopher. More commentaries were written on his thoughts; new translations and editions appeared; the false dialogues became separated out of the great mass and all became arranged in chronological order, so that one began to have notions about the earlier and the later Plato. Moreover, the Neoplatonists began to be read in the West and the master to be re-read in the light of their bizarre doctrines. The Platonists of England are certainly as Plotinian as they are Platonic, yet they themselves probably thought of their ideas as peculiarly Platonistic.

Similar fortunes were of the lot of Aristotle. After the first period, when the disciples and later the Alexandrian editors organized the writings, most of the works were lost to Latin Europe. The first centuries of the Middle Ages had only two of the logical treatises in a Latin translation and a number of Neoplatonic commentaries. It was not until the twelfth century that his works became rediscovered, thanks to the efforts of the Jews and Arabs. After that date it was possible to think of him not only as a logician but as the universal investigator he has become today. We can scarcely think of any branch of science which we do not trace to this man, whether it be physics, psychology, biology, or

political science. Our understanding of him and of his temperament is quite different from that of the Middle Ages, not only because we have more of his works but because we have learned how to read them.

It would require a volume or more to relate the fortunes of ancient philosophic and scientific thought, but here we must be satisfied with suggestion.¹ We have purposely selected only the outstanding features of the history of man's idea of pagan antiquity, leaving it to specialists to fill in the missing details. It will be noticed that very little space is given herein to iconography, which may seem strange in a volume sponsored by a museum of art. The omission is deliberate. To begin with, the Symposium as a whole was supplemented with an exhibition of paintings and other works of art organized jointly by The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Gallery, an exhibition designed to illustrate the development of the Greek Tradition in the Fine Arts. In the second place, the guiding idea behind this Symposium—as behind that on *Courbet and the Naturalistic Movement*, held in 1938—was to show the pervasiveness of aesthetic traditions, to interrelate aesthetic and non-aesthetic interests.

This introduction should not terminate without a word of thanks to the institutions and individuals who made it possible: The Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Gallery, the Johns Hopkins University, and the various speakers whose services were so generously contributed. As is always true, the most burdensome and least obvious labor fell on that anonymous group, "The Staff," whose cheerful acceptance of tedious duties makes working in The Baltimore Museum of Art a pleasure.

G. B.

¹ Among the papers read at the Symposium, which unfortunately we could not reproduce in this volume, were one by Irwin Edman on *The Fortunes of Platonism* and one by Henry E. Sigerist on *Science and the Greek Tradition*.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
The Greek Tradition in the Hellenistic Age, <i>by Henry W. Prescott, The University of Chicago</i>	1
Archaeology and the Idea of Classical Antiquity, <i>by Dorothy Kent Hill, The Walters Art Gallery</i>	15
The Survival of Antiquity in the Middle Ages, <i>by Dorothy Miner, The Walters Art Gallery</i>	53
John of Salisbury and the Renaissance of the Twelfth Century, <i>by Sidney Painter, The Johns Hopkins University</i>	75
The Beginnings of the Italian Opera, <i>by Lubov Keefer, The Peabody Conservatory of Music</i>	91
The Ancients as Authority in Seventeenth-Century France, <i>by Ruth Cherniss, The Bryn Mawr School</i>	137
The Greek Tradition in Germany, <i>by Ernst Feise, The Johns Hopkins University</i>	171
The Classic Revival in American Architecture, <i>by Talbot Hamlin, Columbia University</i>	193

Alexandria, founded to provide a port for south-north shipping, to furnish grain to the conqueror's armies, to be a commercial center, became in fact a port in east-west trade, the Chicago of the ancient world. It was here that oriental and occidental ideas and tastes first mingled to emerge as that curious mixture known as Hellenistic philosophy and art. This was the city of lexicographers and grammarians, of systematizers, of editors, of scholars. If Ph.D.'s had existed in antiquity, this would have been their capital.

Alexandria and the Hellenistic period gave us our chubby cupids to replace the slender and cruel Eros of the earlier Greece; they gave us our Greek romances, our Daphnis and Chloe, our Arcadian shepherds, more busy with singing than with tending sheep, our Cupid and Psyche; they gave us the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoon, the Farnese Bull.

It was during this period that the Olympian pantheon became fused with the Latin, Zeus and Jupiter, Hera and Juno, Pallas and Minerva. When the Greek gods became Mediterranean divinities, Greek civilization ceased to be parochial and started on the road to universalism. The ancient mind became prepared for the idea of Man as against the idea of Greek and Barbarian, Roman, Gaul, German, Belgium, and Briton. When that idea became normal, men were readier to accept a religion which was really catholic, universal, and a civilization which was human rather than local.

THE GREEK TRADITION IN THE HELLENISTIC AGE

by

Henry W. Prescott

THE HELLENISTIC period was a long one; the Hellenistic world was vast in area. The former extends from shortly after the middle of the fourth century B.C. to 30 B.C. The latter reached from Sicily and Magna Graecia on the west to India on the east. This tremendous expanse, outside of Greece proper and early Greek colonies elsewhere, was slowly Grecized in the course of three centuries, and of course in different degrees in various parts of it. Strictly the period should be divided into two parts, the latter half marked by the increasing fusion of Oriental influences with Greek factors. In the most fruitful sense the period does not come to an end in 30 B.C.; for the Roman people transmitted Hellenistic culture through their own cultivation of literature and the plastic arts down to modern times, again of course blended with Roman elements. In this huge stretch of space and time we are concerned, not with the intellectual history, itself of great importance, but with the dominant features of literature and the plastic arts, and by literature we mean *belles lettres*, not all written documents. Aristotle may be the most significant intellectual product of the age, but Aristotelian prose is not artistic.

What is the Greek Tradition? Conventionally it is the tradition established by the practice of art in the fifth century. To be sure, the conventional idea probably reckons also with Homeric epic and pre-classical lyric, though the alleged Greek quality of self-restraint is hardly exemplified in Sappho's lyrics, and the unity of Homeric epic in any full artistic and Aristotelian sense leaves much to be desired. Greek tradition in the fifth century is based upon scanty remains of literary art—dramatic poetry, historical,

oratorical, and philosophical prose; there are huge gaps: little or no epic poetry or elegy, epigram scantily if splendidly illustrated in Simonides and a few others, lyrical verse outside of dramatic choruses barely represented, narrative prose, except as it seeps into oratory, history, and the philosophical dialogue, limited in scope. Nor should we forget that Aristophanic comedy and Euripidean tragedy do not conform to the Greek Tradition as it is usually understood. Euripides in particular is the precursor of the Hellenistic tradition in many respects.

In the theory of literary art Aristotle's *Poetics* served to crystallize some of our modern conception of the Greek Tradition. The philosopher emphasized one of the most stable constituents of classical Greek art, the principle of unity. The perfect organization of many parts into a single organism, each part properly integrated with the larger whole, so closely that the loss of any part results in the dissolution of the whole, and so firmly that the intrusion of any inorganic elements ruins the effectiveness of the entire structure, is generally recognized as fundamental in the Greek Tradition. So stated, unity is a means directed toward the end of effective results, but aesthetically considered it is an essential element of beauty, however vaguely that term is defined. And sensitiveness to beauty, in a large and comprehensive sense, is conventionally regarded as part of the Greek Tradition. This sensitiveness is disciplined and held in check by sane-mindedness, which in the field of literature preserves the proper interrelation of action, character, and feeling, and in general maintains the principle of decorum, of what is fitting in the largest sense of the term.

To any such understanding of the Greek Tradition there can be no objection provided it is not extended to describe the Greek people as a race. So far as it is rightly derived from extant specimens of Greek art in the fifth century and from Greek theory, it is in my opinion a code of etiquette in the field of art. Nor may one object to the use of it as a standard by which to measure the good and the bad in art, if we subscribe to the view that absolute standards do exist. But those who are historically-minded

as well as aesthetically sensitive, at least so far as oil and water mix, must recognize the gradual collapse of this code during the time of Alexander and his successors, and down through the longer period in which Rome transmitted the inheritance from the Hellenistic period to later ages.

The Hellenistic period does not mark a revival of the Greek Tradition. From one point of view it marks the death of it. From my chosen point of view classical antiquity and classical art are, historically speaking, a continuum, but from an aesthetic point of view not an unbroken continuum. The Greek Tradition is one thing; the Hellenistic-Roman tradition is a different thing. The Hellenistic period started the Hellenistic-Roman tradition. Intelligent appreciation of art is not enhanced by confusing the Greek Tradition with the highly modified form of it which artists of the Hellenistic period introduced and Roman artists transmitted mixed with distinctive Roman elements.

The causes of the collapse or essential modification of the Greek Tradition in the Hellenistic-Roman period were largely political and social. Greece in the fifth century was an unorganized assembly of independent entities known as city-states. The city-state organization emphasized the absorption of the individual in the state; the citizen's general horizon was identical with the boundaries of his home town. Intellectual freedom might prevail, as it long did at Athens, thanks to the unusual endowment of the people; but the trend was toward an extreme form of unselfish and in itself highly commendable devotion to the interests of the community rather than toward any inevitable expression of rugged individuality. The gradual integration of this Greek world into the monarchies of Alexander and his successors led to greater freedom of the individual. Greeks served as mercenary soldiers in the conquering armies of Macedonian generals. They settled in the conquered territories of the near East. They confronted new phenomena in their new homes, strange new conditions in their new surroundings, in flora and fauna, in institutions and customs. To this new environment they brought their own culture. The result was the sudden acquisition of a wealth of new experiences

and necessary adaptation to new surroundings. The artistic product changed under the changed conditions. The conservatism of the city-state gave way before a wider cosmopolitan outlook, a greater freedom of movement, and a greater variety of artistic expression; life became complex; the new experiences were rich and varied; the immediate communication of the experiences often tended to be relatively photographic; the bustle of the new world did not encourage idealizing and conventionalizing but promoted forthright reproduction of experience oftentimes in terms of realism. And the material chosen for artistic treatment indicates a growing interest in the simple activities of ordinary people rather than in doings of gods and heroes as earlier epic and tragedy had portrayed them; the mimes of Herondas photograph the punishment of a truant schoolboy, the activity of the clerk and the customers in a shoeshop, the bromidic criticism by two ladies of the plastic art in a temple, as well as less seemly situations.

In addition to the new raw material of daily experience in a new world the old literary material survived, with modifications, especially in the higher types of epic and tragedy. Gods and heroes, and their glorious achievements, continued to furnish the themes of these more elevated forms of imaginative poetry, and, naturally, after the accomplishment of earlier centuries the new artists seldom succeeded in successful re-interpretations of these old myths in narrative or dramatic forms. New material of this same legendary sort was brought to light by antiquarian studies; scholars concerned themselves with the history of towns and cities, and in their researches brought forth a large stock of local folktales and local legends. These legends were often of a sentimental and usually gruesome character; they ran to the sensational, to illicit love, to murder and suicide. Artists, wearied by the staleness of the old saga of gods and heroes, often turned to this new material, and, especially in short epic narratives and in elegy, elaborated the emotional and often sensational possibilities of these local legends. Thus there came into the stuff of literature an increasing amount of emotional and pathetic subject matter which provided an easy outlet for the Hellenistic interest in feeling

rather than in action; and even when the poets handled the old saga of gods and heroes they favored the stories which emphasized sentiment and emotion rather than glorious physical prowess. The Homeric Calypso and the Sophoclean Antigone, with their temperate indulgence in the emotion of love, yielded precedence to innumerable offspring of Euripides' Phaedra, whose turbulent feeling and gruesome catastrophes became instruments upon which Hellenistic poets played the whole gamut of human emotions.

But the period is marked by complexity and contradiction. To some extent the breakdown of self-restraint and the splurge of emotional expression are checked by a peculiar phenomenon. Alexander and some of his successors were educated by distinguished scholars. Hellenistic monarchs in consequence developed new intellectual centers in their respective kingdoms, and on reaching maturity, because of genuine interest in scholarship and perhaps also from a shrewd awareness of the political values of a brain trust cooperating with administrative forces, many of them attracted scholars to Alexandria, Pergamum, and other important cities, where, with libraries at their disposal and exemptions from material discomfort, they were free to indulge their various intellectual interests. In many cases these scholars were the creative literary artists of the day, and often with damaging results. To them we owe the scholarly editing of texts of Homer and the tragedians of the earlier centuries, philological commentaries, antiquarian studies of various sorts, and the consequent perpetuation of the material of the Greek tradition. But when these scholars turned to the creation of literature, their intellectual equipment often hampered the play of fancy and imagination. Nobody can charge Callimachus, the outstanding scholar-poet of the day, with lack of restraint in recounting the charming tale of Acontius and Cydippe. Quite unmoved by the emotional possibilities of the local legend he recounted in cold and unsympathetic tones the main chapters of the action and concluded with a learned statement of the historical source from which he derived the story; and, not content even with this prosy fact, he provided a catalogue

of the contents of the entire antiquarian document of which the story formed only an incidental part. This pragmatic interest found complete expression in the composition of didactic poems, devoid of the literary qualities with which some earlier didactic poets and, later, Lucretius and Vergil endowed them. Such pedantry however seldom affected the whole fabric of a poem. More often it found expression in digressory treatment of matters incidental to the main theme but of paramount interest to the encyclopedic scholars of the period. The unwelcome intrusion marred usually only such types as epic and elegy; comedy, epigram, mime and other types closer to the realities of contemporary life were seldom disfigured by pedantry. But archaisms, obsolete diction, neologisms, intricacies of thought and expression, enigmatic style, learned digression became part of the diction and general expression of the literary tradition. And the contradiction is most apparent and offensive when pedantic digressions emerge in one and the same poem alongside of or in the midst of a riot of emotional feeling.

The individualism of the period did not manifest itself prominently in the invention of new literary forms. But it is worthy of note that the bustling activity of the age reacted unfavorably toward the perpetuation of the long Homeric epic and created a short form of epic narrative, within the compass of a few hundred or thousand lines, in which the shorter compass led to nicety of finish, to copious decorative and sensuous detail, to the kind of art characteristic of the miniature rather than of the fresco. In embryonic form biography and epigram may have existed in the fifth century; but the full development of these types is the work of Hellenistic artists. History began to pay more and more attention to individuals, to the characterization of persons, to the effect of individuals upon the larger mass. Philosophical interest centered more upon the individual man rather than on the race. Aristophanic comedy, a characteristic product of the earlier city-state, though hardly in accord with the Greek tradition, was unintelligible without a knowledge of specific events and of particular persons within the narrow boundaries of Athens at a

particular date; Hellenistic comedy portrayed typical situations, experiences common to the larger cosmopolitan world, from which one might derive universal truths applicable everywhere and at any time. And in its form this comedy, like earlier tragedy, attained a relative unity of dramatic structure sharply differentiated from the incoherent satirical burlesque of the fifth century. In addition to these new developments of older types, and to some slight innovations, the poets occasionally broke all the conventions and resorted to self-expression in whimsical and eccentric forms; in verses of varying length and changing meter, they constructed poems which in their outlines on the written page assumed grotesque forms, of axes, of altars, of shepherds' pipes, of the wings of birds, even of eggs.

Even in the continuation of established types of literature such as epic and elegy, in which in earlier times for the most part the artist concealed his own identity and personal interests, the poetry becomes egoistic. In prelude and prologue or in epilogue the poet intrudes himself, sets forth the source of his inspiration, explains the conditions of his composition, reveals his personal interests; and often in the main body of his narrative there will appear an abrupt emergence of the first person. So far as this is anticipated in earlier Greek literature it is the technique of Hesiod rather than of Homer; and in general it is the spirit of Hesiod rather than of Homer that dominates the age.

Some of these new features do not seriously affect the transmission of literary art through the Hellenistic and Roman periods to our modern age. Some were short-lived. Others did not influence later ages because they appeared in fragmentary literature or in literature that was for other reasons not available or interesting to later generations. And the essential modifications of the Greek Tradition that did affect the transmission of what is so vaguely styled "classicism" were largely conveyed to us through the mediation of Roman and Italian artists who translated and adapted Hellenistic models, and in many cases continued with improvements the Hellenistic tradition. These modifications resulted in the general breakdown of structural unity, in the col-

lapse of any real sense of proportion, in the frequent violation of good taste and in disregard of decorum. Individual artists of course differ in their divergence from the Greek Tradition, and some literary types are affected less than others.

As symptomatic of these serious modifications of the older tradition we may describe, for the sake of concreteness, the technique of narrative poetry in this period, particularly as it was cultivated in the short epic by Hellenistic artists and by the Roman poets of the age of Catullus. As narrative the story in itself is marked by significant chapters of action but in the poetic handling of the theme the important events are dismissed briefly in a verse or two. The legendary theme is usually sentimental in character, and the poet misses no opportunity to portray the emotional turmoil of the heroine, often the victim of betrayal or desertion. Her pathological symptoms in the various stages of love are fully revealed, either in description by the poet or, often-times, in long soliloquies by the sufferer; and these solo speeches are of disproportionate length, highly rhetorical, and usually, from a psychological point of view, quite unjustifiable: it is hardly conceivable that Ariadne, deserted by Theseus on a lonely island, could express herself in such a lengthy and consciously artistic speech as Catullus puts in her mouth in his sixty-fourth poem. This complete submergence of action beneath a flood of feeling is accompanied by equally disproportionate attention to picturesque and sensuous detail. Ariadne, hysterically rushing from hilltop to seashore, at last stops in the shallows by the shore, looking out toward the departing ship of Theseus, rapt in distressful longing for her faithless lover; the poet stops to describe her garments falling from her and lingers over the sensuous beauty of her nude form. Similar digressory descriptions, at times marked by an interest in sound and color, at other times by a preference for genre pictures, increase the impression that the older Greek regard for proportion has broken down. The story of Scylla, daughter of Nisus, is marked by even greater lapses from the earlier standards; not only is the heroine's riotous emotion fully portrayed in its early stages but when she is duly punished by

being tied to the end of Minos' boat and whirled over the sea on the way to Crete, the typical soliloquy is put in her mouth when she is thus uncomfortably suspended, and the itinerary of the boat as it passes over the Aegean is fully detailed; when she is finally metamorphosed by a charitable divinity into a bird, the details of the metamorphosis equal in extent the details of the itinerary. Since such legends often issue in gruesome and sensational catastrophes, melodramatic and theatrical effects add to the lapses from earlier decorum.

Parallel to these structural idiosyncrasies run divergencies from earlier standards of style, in the narrowest sense of the term. The principle of restraint and self-discipline affected diction, imagery, and the whole range of figurative expression. The Greek Tradition stood for simple and direct expression, with moderate indulgence in rhetorical embellishment. Technically this style is known as Atticism. But already in the fifth century certain sophists and rhetoricians had advocated the use of more lavish ornament. This movement in the Hellenistic period was greatly extended and led to the cultivation of the decorative style known as Asianism. The conflicting schools of style fought incessantly throughout the period and in later times in the post-Christian centuries; at times Atticism got the upper hand. In the latter half of the Hellenistic period closer contacts with the Oriental world lent impetus to the development of the florid and decorative style, of lush imagery, of excessive rhetorical ornament. The conflict continued on Italian soil, again with varying success. So far as it emerges at different periods, in different authors, and in varying degrees in different literary types it is another manifestation of the collapse of a sense of proportion and of restraint. In its vicious forms it results in the subservience of sense to sound, analogous to the submergence of action by feeling and emotion.

It would not be difficult for a more competent critic to illustrate from the plastic arts analogous departures from the Greek Tradition of the fifth century. Here again there were differences in individual artists, in different parts of the period and in different regions of the vast area. Complexity and contradiction are char-

acteristic of the cosmopolitan world. But in the field of sculpture, for example, the idealism of the city-state yielded to naturalism and realism, with occasional lapses into the vulgar. For subject matter the sculptors often turned away from gods and heroes and idealized human figures to genre pictures and the proletariat, to somewhat grotesque reproductions of the boxer, the hunchback, the drunkard, with a tendency to depict morbid symptoms. Even in the survival of more elevated themes the technique abandoned the emphasis on the essential and ran to copious detail, whether in representing anatomical minutiae which Phidias would have eliminated, or in graphic indication of violent emotions as in the frieze of the great altar at Pergamum, in which histrionic attitudes of fear and ferocity as well as exaggerated rolls and lumps of muscles, distorted faces, produce an overwhelming and monotonous effect. Individual portraiture of historical figures corresponds to the increasing interest of biography and history in the individual man. Decorative design for purposes of mere embellishment on the great reliefs of the Hellenistic and Roman periods loosely parallels the ornamental descriptive passages of narrative epic. Occasionally one may put side by side examples of literary and of plastic art such as the bronze figure of the Roman boxer, with its battered ears, broken nose, disfigured face, and spattered blood, and the twenty-second idyl of Theocritus, which reports a boxing match with all the expertness of a sporting journalist—thrusts and feints, spitting of blood, and bruises. But any emphasis merely on deviations from the Hellenic tradition misrepresents the achievements in Hellenistic plastic art.

Romans, Italians, and other non-Italian peoples under Roman domination were the great intermediators between Hellenistic and modern culture. They continued the current of Hellenistic tradition. Even when they adopted and imitated the older Greek tradition of Homeric epic or of Alcaeus and Sappho or of Attic tragedy they were doing just what Hellenistic Greeks had set the style of doing. They were not merely adapters and imitators. They often continued the tradition with great improvements and Romanized the Greek material. The *Aeneid* of Vergil is far superior to the

Hellenistic epic of Apollonius; it is a thoroughly Romanized form of Homeric epic though like Apollonius' epic it is influenced by the content and style of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. One may, in such a brief survey, profitably use the work of Vergil to illustrate the varied character of the Romanized form of the Hellenistic tradition. In his youth Vergil had absorbed the Theocritean idyls. Under their influence he cultivated the pastoral. The result is far inferior to the Greek model, but all the germs of Vergilian inferiority are contained even in Theocritus. Perfect naturalism in Theocritus exists side by side with artificiality. Real herdsmen in one poem are in contradiction to poets masquerading as herdsmen in another idyl. This artificiality Vergil extended and thereby led the way to the various violations of the pastoral illusion in the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. And his appropriation of Theocritean themes, situations, and phraseology is so extreme in some poems that an unsympathetic reader may dismiss the results as a mosaic of Theocritean thought and diction. Yet in his first eclogue Vergil succeeded in transferring his personal experiences to an Italian herdsman and with a reasonable degree of unity in producing a thoroughly Roman pastoral, devoid of any imitations of Theocritus, in drawing unified, contrasted, and natural characters, and in providing complete and appropriate details of scene-setting and of incident. In his *Georgics* the achievement is much greater. We have no reason to believe that didactic epic in Hellenistic hands was anything but dry, pragmatic stuff on poisons, antidotes for poisons, on astronomy, on bee-culture, and whatnot. But in Vergil, following the lead of Lucretius, the prosy details of husbandry are ennobled by poetic diction and imagery, by sympathy with animal life, by patriotic ardor. In some respects the work is superior to the *Aeneid*. In his epic poem, however, Vergil is the best example of what we mean by the continuation of the Hellenistic tradition in an improved form. Not only is the whole epic an expression of the national Roman spirit but it marks a high point in the development of narrative technique. Structural unity, dramatic effects that stop short of the sensational and melodramatic, psy-

chological motivation of action, rich emotional content but held in restraint in accord with the best Hellenic rather than Hellenistic tradition are the mint-marks of Vergil's contribution to epic art. If we prefer to read Homer it is chiefly because the sophisticated art of the Roman poet is nearer to the practice of our own day and generation. In general here are many of the distinguishing qualities of Hellenistic art chastened and disciplined by the Greek Tradition.

Under all these circumstances we may perhaps use the term "Greek Tradition" and properly consider the revivals of it. But the term "classicism" should, I fear, disappear from critical literature. It seems to have come into existence as an antithesis to romanticism or other terms. But the Hellenistic-Roman tradition introduced most of the features supposed to be dominant in romanticism. Unless the term "classicism" is so defined as to be identical with the "Greek Tradition," only confusion can result in the critical consideration of the arts. When Racine imitates Euripides' *Hippolytus* he is in the current of the Hellenistic tradition, although Euripides is a fifth-century author. When Goethe revives the *Tauric Iphigenia* of Euripides he is nearer the Greek Tradition than Racine in his *Phèdre*. When Goethe pays tribute to the elegies of Propertius he is thoroughly in the current of the Hellenistic-Roman tradition. "Classicism" is a meaningless term. Individualism in its many manifestations, naturalism and realism, emotionalism riotous and unrestrained, the whimsical, the eccentric, the grotesque, were an essential part of the classical if not of the Greek Tradition.

As long as the European culture was in the hands of people living on the same sites as the ancient Greeks and Romans, the continuity of the Greek Tradition was preserved and men had no feeling of the distance between antiquity and their own times. Both the Hellenic and the Hebraic traditions fused in early Christianity: the Old Testament was translated into Greek by "The Seventy" at least as early as one hundred and fifty years before Christ; the New Testament existed in Greek almost from the very beginning of Christianity and both were put into Latin at a very early date for the Latin fathers quote from a Latin version before the Vulgate was published in the fifth century. Parts of the New Testament would read to a Chinese, for instance, like bits of Platonic or Stoic philosophy.

Similarly there was a fusion of folklore and legend. At a very early date it became difficult to distinguish between the images of some of the gods and heroes and those of Christian saints and martyrs. Thus, if one had only the pictures to go by, who could tell the difference between Hercules and Saint Christopher, Apollo and Saint Sebastian? It was natural that the peasantry retain much of the old terminology in expressing their new religious sentiments and that even the learned classes try to reconcile their philosophical traditions with their new theology.

As paganism receded into the past, it became possible for objective studies of its literature and other monuments to be made. The Greeks and Romans began to emerge not as "our ancestors" but as "the heathens." The differences between them and moderns became accentuated for one no longer spoke their languages nor worshipped their gods. Men turned to archaeology for information about classical antiquity when it was no longer before their eyes and when it no longer had the vivifying force of inherited standards and ideas.

But archaeology too had a history. When it consisted of digging under the soil of Italy and turning up broken columns and mu-

tilated statues, unclassified as to date and style, it was quite different from what it later became. The romantic notions of a Schliemann were not those of Winckelmann two or three generations earlier. What archaeologists looked for determined in part what they found and certainly determined to a large degree what interpretation they made of their findings. There is a good bit of archaeology in the paintings of David, even more in those of Alma-Tadema, yet the Greeks and Romans of the one are not the Greeks and Romans of the other. For David the ancients were essentially patriots, the archetypal French Revolutionist; for Alma-Tadema they were poets and dreamers. Not only had Keats, Shelley, Byron, and Tennyson come between them but, what is more important, the extended excavation of Pompeii and the importation of the Elgin marbles.

The influence of archaeology upon our idea of the Greek Tradition is thus of major importance, if we are to understand its growth. Miss Hill's paper suggests some of the contributions made by students in this field.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE IDEA OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

by

Dorothy Kent Hill

ARCHAEOLOGY means the study of the past. An attempt to form an idea of the Greeks, by any means whatsoever, is Greek archaeology. Customarily, in scientific circles, archaeology has been restricted to mean a comparative study of artifacts with the purpose of re-creating the complete environment of those who lived with them, and thereby deducing their true nature. The primary technique in this study is the observation of the relationship of artifacts to one another within the soil with which the centuries have covered them. I wish to discuss archaeology in this technical sense; for in its widest sense archaeology would include everything to be discussed at this symposium and much more. We are concerned now with the development of the comparative technique and the results to date of its application.

We have not time to review Greek art and must assume that all of us are familiar with many of its great monuments and have a general conception of the whole. That we may assume this is in large part a triumph of modern archaeology. We need sometimes to remind ourselves of the tremendous increase in the number of ancient monuments since the dawn of the Renaissance, since the eighteenth century, and even within the last very few years; and with the even greater increase in popular knowledge of them. We tend to forget that Brunn, the great authority on sculpture in the mid-nineteenth century, based his whole appraisal of the archaic sculpture of Athens on one piece, and that in 1886 the Baltimore Archaeological Society heard a paper stating that while Athens had many remarkable bas-reliefs her museum housed only three or four statues of the best period because the Romans

had carried home all the others! Without the wealth of material which recent excavations have brought to light we should be hopelessly handicapped at the start of our investigations of the Greeks.

If, however, the unearthing of monuments were the only contribution of the archaeologist, much might be said in favor of the view that he should be replaced by a steam shovel. His contention that he should not be so replaced is his claim to have deduced by comparison more knowledge about the Greeks than the sum total of the contributions made by all the individual monuments. A review of modern archaeology must deal with the contribution of each age and each man to the whole structure of comparison.

Archaeology may be said to begin with Johann Winckelmann in the mid-eighteenth century. This is not to imply that he was created out of thin air or seemed a prophet to his contemporaries. He was the result of generations of study of the antique, a study which had gone on without interruption since the Renaissance, always fortifying itself by the excavation of statues. But in the mere title of his great work, *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1763), he struck a new note. His criticism and conclusions are of but minor value when compared with his realization that ancient art had a history, a fact which it is difficult for some of our friends to grasp. True, he placed a lengthy criticism of the beauty of Greek art before his account of its rise and fall; and added to this a still more lengthy history of art from literary sources. His classification of Greek styles (straight and hard, from the beginning to Phidias; grand and square, from Phidias to Praxiteles, Lysippos and Apelles; beautiful and flowing, through the schools of these artists; imitative, in the age after Alexander) although usable today, was based too much on ancient literary tradition and too little on study of the monuments. He fitted pieces into the scheme instead of making a scheme around the pieces. In the fitting he made some mistakes. He was right in his choice of coins and gems to illustrate the pre-Phidian period, and merely unfortunate in having to illustrate its marbles by a single copy of an archaic Athena. We must applaud his assignment of this type to the early period, as well as his observation that

it showed laborious industry and nicety rather than beauty (as he conceived it). His suggestion that the Romans had stolen this statue from Greece merely to have a complete historical series, the only reason for which he deigned to mention it, is indicative of his taste and that of his age. As we shall see, there is no reason to think that his judgment on archaic sculpture would have been different if he had had a better type from which to judge or an original instead of a bad copy. In choosing the famous great Athena from the Villa Albani as typical of the Phidian era he makes us gasp at his acumen. In placing everything which he really liked, such as the Laokoon, in the period of or before Alexander he laid himself open to the ridicule which posterity has delighted to pour out. He was, however, merely making a common mistake of archaeological science, that of being so firmly convinced of a previously conceived general thesis (in this case a thesis of many ancient authors) as to be unwilling to admit that it is not all-embracing. The contrary mistake, to regard the individual work of art as of greater importance than its relation to the whole, was so prevalent for a century after his time, is so prevalent even today, that we should be glad to excuse his error. And we must not fail to admire the opening statement in his historical sketch, that the only way to appreciate Greek art is to study all monuments of Greek art, as well as his closing prayer that he might make a voyage to Greece, to Elis, to search the soil of Olympia.

Of Winckelmann's many efforts, one more publication is worthy of mention. His *Monumenti Inediti* differs from other collections of engravings of statues in that the pieces are selected because they need to be made known, not because they are somebody's private property. This is prophetic of a long line of publications reaching down through the nineteenth century, is Winckelmann's effort in the direction, already suggested, of appreciating Greek art by studying its every monument.

Winckelmann's work was authoritative for two generations, during which his historical structure and his appraisal of individual works of art were accepted. No one took up the challenge

implied in his historical, comparative treatment to pursue the history of art and thereby, if necessary, appraise anew.*

There is a temptation to hear in Winckelmann a voice crying in the wilderness, for the seventy-five years after him have well been called "The Golden Age of Classical Dilettantism." To be most complimentary we may call it the age of collection and exploration. It was the northern European wave of the tide of collection which began in Italy with the Renaissance. It saw the emptying of works of art from the homes of Italian nobles into English country houses and the palaces of northern monarchs, such as Catherine the Great of Russia and Frederick the Great of Prussia. Since the supply offered by impoverished Italians did not equal the demand by wealthy foreigners, it was constantly increased by excavations, some of which—such as those at Hadrian's villa at Tivoli—had the added though incidental advantage of revealing masses of architecture.

But the age of Winckelmann's rule was laying the foundation for future archaeology by the more fundamental though less spectacular process of organizing the means of research. The first arrangements for cooperation in the means of study were made by no high-brows, but by the Society of the Dilettanti, founded in 1733 by a group of Englishmen who had made the Italian tour. Even if we did not feel obligated to give this society credit for its good work in its early years because we have to condemn its later mistakes, we should be unable to find words of praise strong enough for it. For many years this organization alone carried the burden of research, sending expeditions to study and publishing accounts of their studies and descriptions of collections. Without ever mentioning them, the leaders of the society seem instinctively to have appreciated the virtues of accuracy and objectivity. Every one of their publications has these virtues, the more remarkable when we realize that inaccurate publications were appearing on all sides, and that some of the members were imbued with ideas and interpretations which, if included in the publications, would

* For additional comment on Winckelmann, see Mr. Feise's paper, p. 173. Ed.

have greatly depreciated their value. Especially we may wonder at how rarely the fantastic, far-fetched, symbolic interpretations of mythology of Hancarville and Payne Knight found their way into the society's volumes. While mere membership in the society entitled one to lord it as a great authority on the antique, the published works were exclusively by true authorities. And, while the majority of the members were collectors, the society never hesitated to push projects chiefly or totally unconcerned with matters of acquisition.

The society's first and greatest contribution was in backing Stuart and Revett in their trip to Greece for the years 1751-1754 to make drawings of buildings, which the society was to publish in the *Antiquities of Attica* in four volumes (1761-2, 1787-8, 1794 and 1816). The first volume contained buildings of Athens not on the Acropolis, the Hellenistic and Roman; the second, structures on the Acropolis, the Propylaia, the Parthenon and the Erechtheion; the third, more temples from the city, the early Theseion as well as the later Temple of Zeus; the fourth, the ruins at Saloniki, Pola and Corinth and a drawing of the Parthenon frieze by Pars. The work of Stuart and Revett is noteworthy for its accuracy and its freedom from prejudicial comment and is used today especially, but not exclusively, for the study of those monuments, such as the small fifth-century temple on the Ilissos, which had disappeared before other students arrived in the field. While waiting for the *Antiquities of Ionia* the society had financed another great expedition under the direction of Chandler who published in the *Antiquities of Ionia* (1769 and 1797) drawings of Ephesos, Priene, Miletos, and the other sites of great temples early and late in Asia Minor, and Aigina and Sunion on the Greek mainland. Other volumes appeared up to 1915. Toward the end of the century Payne Knight, the society's leading member, undertook a publication called *Specimens of Antient Sculpture in Great Britain*. The first volume appeared in 1809, containing seventy-five engravings of good statues and statuettes, some but not all already fairly well known, and an introduction by Payne Knight in which he reviewed the history of sculpture as had not

been done since Winckelmann. Although his conclusions are not significant, his undertaking of the historical method is. Similarly we may say that his courage in presenting such a work as "The Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology, An Inquiry" and others which ran counter to the popular views of religion and decency was more admirable than his contributions to the science of comparative religion.

Second in importance only to the work of the Society of the Dilettanti is the beginning of the museum movement in the age after Winckelmann. A museum differs from a collection in being permanent, public and catholic. However much a few individuals may have enjoyed the collections in English country houses, especially those where each piece was fitted to its room so that it seemed an integral part of it, progress was hampered by the system and enjoyed a new day in the opening of the British Museum in 1759. The museum became a convenient place of disposal for those wise collectors who realized that their heirs would not treasure antiquities. One of the first great purchases from public funds was the Hamilton collection of vases in 1772. The Townley Collection of sculpture was to be bequeathed to the museum, but eventually, after 1802, it had to be bought from the heirs. Payne Knight was the first great collector to leave his collection, a collection of small objects, unconditionally.

But the institution was still small and had just taken the radical step of opening its doors to all at all times when the nation was faced with the proposal of acquiring for it large groups of works of a type not previously well known. The story of the Elgin collection of marbles from the Parthenon has been too often told, but we must go over it again because it conceals so many truths about early nineteenth-century taste in the antique. During the controversy all the knowledge, all the opinions, all the prejudices, which had developed in the half-century after Winckelmann came forth to be seen, to be tried and weighed for passing on to the next age.¹

¹ For good general accounts of the controversy see MICHAELIS, *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*, 1882, Introduction, paragraphs 74 ff.; and *A Century of Archae-*

Lord Elgin, a Scot, ambassador to Constantinople, prompted in the first instance by friends who asked him to bring them an antique or two, conceived, bit by bit, a plan for studying, then removing, the Parthenon sculptures which he envisaged as a sort of British national collection of Greek art. The opposition of the Turkish government was overcome and workmen were engaged from 1800 to 1803, only occasionally supervised by his lordship, to take the pieces down and load them. After a series of mishaps both the marbles and Elgin arrived home, the former in 1803 and 1812, the latter in 1806. During his trip Elgin showed some drawings of the marbles to the distinguished sculptor, Canova, who remarked that it would be a sin for any modern sculptor to try to restore these mutilated but beautiful works. His advice was taken and no restorations were made. On his arrival Elgin began to agitate to have the marbles bought for the British Museum at a price which would partially recompense him for his outlay in obtaining them. Opposition, violent opposition, was met. Some artistic authorities, headed by Payne Knight, pronounced the pieces of very little value. Others remarked that the pieces did not belong to Elgin but to the Turks or, more frequently, to the British government in whose employ Elgin had been when he obtained them. Others criticized the vandalism of Elgin's men while tearing the sculpture off the building and reshaped an old epigram to the subject: *quod non fecerunt Gothi, fecerunt Scoti*. Feeling was bitter in intellectual circles for several years. It was in 1811 that Byron wrote in Athens his "Curse of Minerva" which was intended for private circulation, and in 1812 he wrote in "Childe Harold" his bitter attack on the son of Caledonia.

General feeling was at first against the marbles but artistic feeling was inclined to favor them. Benjamin West, president of the Royal Academy, was for them from the first and speedily undertook to use them in his own work; young Benjamin Haydon copied them steadily for three months so that he might know them perfectly. The Crown Prince of Bavaria, a recognized authority,

ological Discoveries, 1908, pp. 28 ff.; CUST, L., *History of the Society of the Dilettanti*, 1898, pp. 130 ff.

was loud in their praises. Visconti, the leading Italian archaeologist of the day, then organizing the Musée Napoléon in Paris, spoke in their favor for the benefit to modern art; and Canova, who came the following year to take the Vatican's treasures from the Musée Napoléon back to Italy, burst into raptures; he said that these sculptures surpassed all other antiques, including the Apollo Belvedere, and he passionately regretted that he had not been able to study from them in his youth for then he would have founded a totally different school of art. This enthusiasm from foreigners forced a decision by the English. In 1816 a commission was appointed by Parliament to make recommendation regarding their purchase.² Some clever publicity work was done by Elgin and his supporters before the commission called the learned to give judgment, asking each of many witnesses to state the merits of the Parthenon marbles in comparison with the Laokoon, the Torso Belvedere, the Venus de' Medici, and the Apollo Belvedere. All but Payne Knight were enthusiastic over the quality of the sculptures. He stated his views, reviving an old theory of Spon, a traveler of the seventeenth century, that the pedimental sculptures of the Parthenon were Roman restorations made under the emperor Hadrian, and backing up this view by the correct observation, not to be made or used again for one hundred years, that while chisel marks show on the Laokoon none are visible on the Elgin statues.³ But the marbles won the day and were bought for the British Museum, and the Society of the Dilettanti had started down that road to disfavor which has made its name a term of reproach. Popular enthusiasm kept on growing and showed itself in such pretty extremes as placing a cast of the equestrian procession of the Parthenon frieze around the riding school of Woburn Abbey. Keats fell into quiet rapture and wrote his beautiful sonnet, "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles for the First Time," and

² *Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Earl of Elgin's Collection of Sculptured Marbles*, 1816.

³ CASSON, STANLEY, *The Technique of Early Greek Sculpture*, 1933, p. 201. Blümel, C., *Griechische Bildhauerarbeit* (Jahrbuch des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Ergänzungsheft XI) 1927, p. 36.

sent it to Haydon with another sonnet praising him because from the first

“Thou hadst beheld the full Hesperian shine
Of their star in the east, and gone to worship them!”

The swing in favor of the Elgin marbles may have been partly due to the arrival in England, while they were under discussion, of the frieze of the temple at Bassai near Phigaleia. This, one of the most perfect of Greek temples, was discovered for the modern world by a Frenchman, Rocher, who looked down on it from the crest of a wild Arcadian hill one day in 1765 and wrote in his notebook, “*Par moi découvert.*” The sculptured frieze was found in 1811 by Cockerell and Haller von Hallerstein, dug out of the ground, and shipped to Zante where it was bought by agents of the Prince Regent of England and given to the British Museum in 1815. The frieze is of approximately the same date as the Parthenon, is not so fine but better preserved. It portrays with great vigor the combats of Greeks and Amazons and of Lapiths and centaurs, with clever foreshortening and ingenious decorative use of drapery. It was an easy introduction to the more battered Parthenon marbles, partly because of its condition, partly because it was entirely in relief, which does not vary as strikingly from age to age as does sculpture in the round.

But meanwhile the fate had been decided of another group of temple sculpture, the pediments of the temple at Aigina, dug up by the fortunate and bright-eyed Cockerell and Haller von Hallerstein on the same trip on which they found the Bassai frieze. Here were represented battle scenes presided over by the goddess Athena, with no trace of the pretty in the hard, muscular, beautifully modeled bodies; out-of-date when the Parthenon was new, they were made at the beginning of the half-century of remarkable progress which led to the Parthenon. The sale of these was at Malta because of war conditions, and the English representative who had been given unlimited authority for their purchase lost them because he went to Zante instead. The commission which passed on the Elgin marbles mentioned this loss in its report but

expressed no regret since the statues were "valuable in point of antiquity but of no distinguished merit as specimens of sculpture." They were bought by the Crown Prince of Bavaria who had them restored by Thorwaldsen and installed in the new Munich Glyptothek. Thus a large Greek acquisition inaugurated a new museum, eventually to become public and a source of scientific study, as were the private collections of other monarchs of Europe.

France was meanwhile acquiring art at the point of the sword. Every treaty which victorious Napoleon handed down called for the surrender of a given number of works of art to be selected by French representatives, and treasures poured from Italy into France at a startling rate. The supply was so good and so easy that the few Greek works which had come to France just before the revolution, such as some Parthenon pieces from Choiseul-Gouffier, were quite overshadowed. Napoleon imported along with the antiquities the distinguished Italian archaeologist, Visconti. The new museum, headed by Visconti, had the pick of the Italian collections while the English gentlemen had to be content with what they could get. It is no wonder, then, that Visconti developed an historical theory quite different from Winckelmann's, and quite incorrect: that Greek art remained on an even level from Phidias through the age of Hadrian. The quality of the Graeco-Roman pieces with which he was associated accounts for his mistake. His theory is important only in that it shows a willingness to explore rather than merely to accept Winckelmann's view, and because he went beyond Winckelmann in perceiving that some good works were Graeco-Roman. After the treaty of 1815 most of the treasures were returned to Italy. Enough remained and enough of the others were remembered to give a decidedly Roman flavor to French archaeological studies in the years to come.

Another result of the freak Napoleonic rule was an archaeological project which in spirit belonged to the coming age, the systematic excavation of Pompeii. The site had long been known and in the process of excavation, so-called. But it was under French rule, at the behest of Joachim and Caroline Murat, King

and Queen of Naples, that plans were made and partially carried out to dig consistently through a section of the city, removing only what was most perishable and leaving the domestic architecture clear and clean for travelers to enjoy. The work stopped temporarily with the return of the old Bourbon dynasty to Naples, to be taken up again and again in the following century. But by 1820 Shelley could write,

“ I stood within the city disinterred
And heard the autumnal leaves like light footfalls
Of spirits passing through the streets—”

and as early as 1833 came Bulwer Lytton's novel, *The Last Days of Pompeii*.

One more phase of the age after Winckelmann must be mentioned, the beginnings of scientific geography. Explorers have been mentioned in connection with the acquisitions of antiquities, but with Walter Leake, in Greece at the same time as Elgin, we recognize a spirit as far removed from the ordinary explorer as Stuart and Revett were from the other sketchers of architecture. His work was to compare the Greek landscape and ruins with the account of the Greek traveler, Pausanias, and to go beyond Pausanias in investigating the pre-Greek remains of Orchomenos and Tiryns. His work remained standard for all travelers in Greece and all students of Greek history for nearly a century; it was only superseded when Sir James Frazer was able to supplement Pausanias' account from the excavations of the nineteenth century.

The age after Winckelmann, then, was in many ways a growing-up to Winckelmann. Beginning by accepting Winckelmann's dicta absolutely, it was only at the end of the period that men caught his spirit and began to pursue his method of free inquiry. Archaeologists of the beginning of the nineteenth century had a new mass of material with which to work. They knew the elemental differences between the Greek and the Roman in the major fields of art. They admired the Parthenon sculptures. They had explored classical lands, formed public museums, organized societies for cooperation in research.

The next great period, from 1820 to 1870, may be called the great age of organization and study. The newer archaeologists were as different from the old as the bourgeoisie were from the nobility. In 1828 the Istituto di Corrispondenza Archeologica was founded at Rome by five men, Thorwaldsen, Bunsen, Kentner, Fea, and Gerhard, all professional archaeologists at heart though one is better known as a sculptor. All sincere and serious archaeologists belonged to this institute during the next two generations. The protector of the society was Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia, and the first meeting was held on Winckelmann's birthday. Publications of the institute were always in Italian, the language of the country. Here was an organization, international in character, every member of which was a true student, protected and financed by an interested amateur who happened to be royal. The members shine beside those of the Society of the Dilettanti as much as its international attitude shines in comparison with our present-day national organization of archaeology.

Two things the archaeologists of this group had to teach themselves. One was to describe accurately. It is no easy task to present a work to the public in such a way that every question which anyone will want to ask is already answered, but this Gerhard's generation learned to do. In recent times this task has become relatively less important; it has become customary to laugh at that archaeologist whose one trade is to write lengthy descriptions which could well be omitted in favor of photographs, and who runs about looking for something to describe, to "publish," to use the professional slang. This mockery should never be directed against the older generation whose principle duty was to describe. The other task which these men had to teach themselves was to think logically with things. Every individual who does archaeological work must teach himself this. It is no more natural to think logically with objects than it is to read. There are those who cannot read; there are those who can admire a gracefully arranged page or a Persian tile whose Arabic inscription is decorative and still not read it; and there are those who know what pages

and tiles say. Similarly there are those to whom a statue means nothing; there are those who understand it artistically; and there are those who understand it logically, seeing that certain stubs mean that it was attached to another figure, that a certain straight cut means that it was made in two parts, that a rough surface means that its back was concealed, that its stooping position means that it was placed in a triangular pediment. This is to understand it logically, and this is what an archaeologist must be able to do.

The Istituto di Correspondenza Archeologica issued, beginning in 1837, an annual journal and an annual bulletin, large, detailed publications, generously although insufficiently illustrated, and a whole new set of *Monumenti Inediti*. The two serial publications did a creditable job of recording and describing the finds of the year, casual and intentional. The cause of these new publications was not an increase in excavation over the previous century, but recognition by members of the institute of the importance of small finds, chance finds and unlovely finds.

The institute was ready to meet the problems created by the discovery of Etruscan chamber tombs as an easy source of antiquities in 1827. For twenty years these were vigorously, if not scientifically, excavated. Their painted walls, the best of them, were studied by specialists, their contents of vases and bronzes scattered far and wide. The popularity of the tombs was great enough to call forth such a masterpiece of travel literature as Dennis' *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria* which is still used as a handbook by tourists in Italy and has sufficient circulation to warrant its inclusion in "Everyman's Library." However, very little effort was made to preserve the tombs, and Dennis' book is full of records of needless destruction and of complaints over popular indifference.

The scientific obligations imposed by the exploitation of these tombs were faced by the institute, especially by Gerhard, with energy and discretion. He assembled and published in huge groups objects of minor art, mirrors, funerary urns and vases, in the prophetic realization that once the material was assembled it would speak to the beholder. He was rewarded soon by his dis-

covery that he could classify painted vases as orientalizing, black-figured, red-figured and polychrome, and, together with others, decide that the first class was made at Corinth, Greece; the second and third, at Athens; the fourth, in southern Italy. The Greek source of most painted vases had been proclaimed in the previous century by Winckelmann, Hancarville and others. Definite proof, however, was lacking, as was, perhaps, an interest in this proof until Gerhard's systematic arrangement of the material. With this establishment of the great painted vases as Greek the study of mythology from combined literary and artistic sources was for the first time possible.

With Gerhard we must rank Brunn, a student of sculpture as important in his day as Winckelmann was in his. Brunn by comparative study arranged Greek and Roman sculpture chronologically throughout. This was largely pioneer work, although we have seen that Winckelmann had the ability to do as much of it as he had desired. Brunn was one of the two sponsors of the great photographic work on sculpture, still appearing and still unsurpassed.

While these men were working in Rome the English were exploring the Near East and adding to the British Museum not only works of Assyrian and other Oriental art but the sculptures of the Mausoleum of Halikarnassos and the early Greek tombs of Lycia. All the great European museums acquired the best of their collections of small works of art during this period. Meanwhile Gell added to the geographical knowledge of Italy, Greece and the Troad.

At this time Greece, now independent, was setting her house in order. In the years following 1830 under the direction of a German, Ross, the Acropolis of Athens was cleared of post-classical structures and the lovely little Temple of Wingless Victory was entirely rebuilt on its platform outside the gates of the Acropolis, assembled piece by piece from fortifications into which it had been built. In these years were sown the seeds of the policy which was to make the Greece of afteryears a paradise for the archaeologist—seeds of national pride in antiquity without super-nationalistic

bias, pride which welcomes foreign help in popularizing the heritage of the Greek people.

The age from 1820 to 1870 offered less that was spectacular in the way of finds and theories than its predecessors. But its slow conscientious work and its training of a large group of students were a most necessary prelude to the next age, the age of excavations.

Impetus to new excavating came from an unexpected, nay, an unwelcome source. Heinrich Schliemann knew little and cared less for the studies of the scientific archaeologists. He had read Homer since he was a boy and was imbued with an almost mad love of it, as he was shocked and hurt by the theorists who, after Wolfe, held that there had never been a Homer, an Achilles, or any such life as was recorded in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. He dreamed for years of discovering Troy. He was not looking for treasure but for Troy and in his last years he tried to look for truth.⁴ His methods of excavating were not scientific, though he had the good sense to realize that ashes indicated fire. His practice of hunting for sites to excavate has been followed by the mound-hunters of all Greece and Asia until it has become a scientific technique. Despite his lamentable lack of training he was willing to have young men who had the knowledge which he had not accompany him in his later ventures.

Schliemann began to excavate at Hissarlik, which he and others identified as Troy, in 1870. He found nine cities, one above the other. In the second city from the bottom he observed traces of fire, and very sensibly identified this level as the Troy of the Homeric poems. The small finds were, on the whole, not beautiful although they did include gold ornaments. Among the most interesting were some pottery vases in the shapes of animals, quite primitive. Schliemann was satisfied that he had found Troy, and all but a few today agree that he was right although none thinks that he identified the correct level of the Homeric period. This he

⁴ The impression that Schliemann was looking for gold, an impression fostered by Ludwig's biography, can be seen to be erroneous from his own correspondence. See *Briefe von Heinrich Schliemann*, edited by C. Meyer, 1936; reviewed by C. W. Blegen, *American Journal of Archaeology*, XLII, 1938, pp. 594 ff.

would have done with difficulty, since the construction of Roman Ilium, built to honor heroes of the Trojan War, had destroyed the greater part of the true Homeric settlement.

Elated by his success, Schliemann turned to hunting the homes of the Greek heroes who had fought against Troy. Mycenae he identified without much difficulty, since it had kept its name until it was abandoned by the Greeks in the early fifth century B.C. and since the Gate of the Lions which marked its entrance had always been known. Here Schliemann's finds were spectacular. In the circle near the entrance were graves marked by sculptured tombstones, containing gold masks and disks, silver and gold vessels, and weapons. Schliemann had had little reason to expect gold in quantity. He was naturally delighted to be able to compare metalwork found here and elsewhere in the city with individual pieces, cups and shields, described in detail in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. From Mycenae Schliemann went to the beehive tomb at Orchomenos, which had always been known, then to Tiryns where the architecture was better preserved than at Mycenae; indeed he uncovered a palace in a citadel. In the twenty years from his first excavation until his death Schliemann established the fact that there was a city of Troy and that there was, contemporary with part of it, a rich civilization on all the mainland of Greece, fundamentally different from the Greek and mirrored somewhat in the Homeric poems. He also showed that the spade could reveal things undreamed of in any archaeologist's philosophy.

But the scientific method characteristic of excavations of the new age was more truly the result of the desk archaeology of the preceding era than of Schliemann's excavations. When objects had been studied comparatively, the possibility of comparison of the circumstances in which they were found in the soil suggested itself. Since antiquities are buried in the ground by the debris of old buildings and the accumulation of dust above them it is natural that the oldest objects should be the deepest down in the ground, the newest nearest the surface. When this is not the case there must be some good reason. The commonest reasons are that there was a hole in ancient times into which objects fell, in which case

the objects will be at the bottom of the hole with the earliest the deepest; or, that someone has disturbed the natural accumulation, in which case the artifacts may be placed in exactly the reverse of chronological order if the ground was shoveled off to form a heap, the top of the ground going to the bottom of the new heap. A trained eye becomes most skillful in detecting which circumstance is at hand. By carefully recording the objects which occur at one level and comparing them with those in other layers a chronological structure can be built up. It must be checked with the finds in layers at other sites. When such a datable object as a coin is found it is possible to date not only all the objects found in the layer with it but the layers containing all similar objects at other sites. Of especial importance for chronology is the study of potsherds, mere fragments of vases which may be ugly or in themselves unimportant but which because of their indestructibility and their omnipresence are invaluable in comparative study. The technique of observing is assisted by surveying and would not have progressed far without modern photography. Today the excavator is as different from the grave-robber as the surgeon is from the butcher, and as aware as is the surgeon that he cannot correct a mistake.

The new scientific method led, first, to the excavation of whole sites rather than of holes as in the earlier periods. Large-scale excavation had been tried at Pompeii where the benefits were immediately apparent. The scientific excavator saw the value of uncovering a whole area even if, as so often happened, he revealed only foundations. The first great site to be so attacked was Olympia, the Mecca of Winckelmann's hopes, actually dug by a group of Germans in the years following 1875. These excavators uncovered and systematically published ground plans of buildings for which there remained no superstructure as well as those whose marvelous sculpture was preserved. They published, even during their excavations, reports on the relative positions of objects and immediately afterwards a monumental report in which each piece was described with its context. By previous agreement with the Greek government all the finds remained in Greece; the same ar-

rangement has been made before every subsequent excavation. The work was, of course, not perfect; one of the grand old men is again at Olympia trying to supplement knowledge from potsherds left in corners and in foundations. But for the first time a Greek site was made clear as a whole, its horizontal structure before your eyes, its vertical stratification in the publication. Of the greatest artistic importance were the Praxitelean Hermes statue, the Nike floating on a pillar, a work of Paionios—contemporary with Phidias—and the metopes and pedimental sculpture of the great temple of Zeus. Of the gold and ivory statue of Zeus housed here, Phidias' masterpiece and one of the wonders of the world, nothing remained.

Next in importance to Olympia we must reckon the great sanctuary of Delphi, excavated by the French. It shows us the rich religious dedications of centuries, temples, treasures, a theatre, and a stadium. Its best sculptural contributions were the fine archaic frieze of the Treasury of the Knidians, a marvel of skill and delicacy, and the bronze statue of a charioteer, a fine severe figure of early fifth-century dignity.

The Greek excavations of Epidauros have given us our best-preserved Greek theatre. Other sites by the hundreds have been excavated throughout Greece, each contributing its share, none to be scorned. In the eighties of the last century the Acropolis of Athens was excavated with great results almost too numerous to be named. Since Athens was destroyed by the Persian invader in 480 B.C. and most of her early art concealed in the rebuilding on the Acropolis, the later Greeks did not know early Attic art; but we do, thanks to these excavations. A large temple of early style and numerous small temples of primitive periods were shown to have existed. With these must be connected architectural sculpture of various grades and styles, from the painted "Blue Beard" of coarse stone to the strong but delicate Athena-and-giant group of the age of Peisistratos. Also, in pits were the independent dedications of early days, the "Acropolis Maidens," the daintiest monuments of pre-Persian Athens.

Two great excavations are going on now in Athens, one by the

Germans at the potters' quarter outside the city, and another in the ancient market place by the Americans. These are carried on at great expense and labor in the full realization that there is little chance of discovering, here in territory so many times lived over and combed over, spectacular works of art. The digging is for ground plans and scraps out of which to write a new history of Athens.

Scarcely less important than the cities of Greece are the cities of the coast of Asia Minor, many of which were excavated in the closing years of the last century and the first years of this. The most impressive is Pergamon, a mighty city built on a hill, beautifully planned, crowned by the huge altar, otherwise "Satan's Seat," whose magnificent sculptural decoration continues to draw to its museum in Berlin all who love strength and realism. The ground plans of all these Asia Minor cities show a regularity and a conscious planning which are known to us on the mainland only at the site of Olynthus. Planned cities appeared late in Greek culture, but no later than in our own.

As important as the excavations of the great Greek cities is the modern research on the pre-Greek history of Greece. Schliemann started the excavation of the great cities of the Mycenaean age, which has been shown to be the second half of the second millennium B.C. separated by many centuries from archaic Greece. Every site which he excavated has been re-dug to obtain this date, which is finally substantiated by small finds outside of the country; the date was not assumed from the mythical date of the fall of Troy. Troy has been re-excavated twice: once by Dörpfeld immediately after Schliemann's death, once by an American expedition under Professor Blegen of the University of Cincinnati; this last expedition is now leaving the site, trusting that they have left enough for the next generation to use in checking and revising their work which cannot be final.

The Homeric question is not solved. For your convenience I will state one view of it which is accepted by some. In the second millennium B.C. Greece was the home of a rich, highly civilized people, racially the same as the Greeks, speaking a form of Greek

and writing it, in their latter days, by a system of syllabic writing. The civilization went down because of internal decay and invasion from the north by the Greeks, a people related to the old inhabitants but cruder. The following centuries saw a decline of civilization while many of the old inhabitants fled to Asia Minor. During these centuries the Homeric poems grew up in Asia Minor, recording old stories and places on the mainland. They did not achieve their final form until near the end of the Dark Ages, the eighth and seventh centuries B.C., nor was there a means of writing them until about that time when the Phoenician phonetic alphabet was made known to the Greeks. If there was an historic Homer he did not write all the poems. This account, by no means certain, may show you how much our views have changed from those of the pre-Schliemann scholars and from Schliemann's own, and how impossible it would have been to arrive at conclusions about the Homeric poems without the archaeological investigation which Schliemann inaugurated.

The interest in the study of the Mycenaean civilization was stimulated by the excavation in 1900 of the ruins of Knossos, Crete, and the subsequent revealing of a whole Cretan civilization. This civilization lasted throughout the third and second millennia B.C., and was closely related to the Mycenaean in its latter days, if it was not actually the source of the Mycenaean.

Excavation has also revealed civilizations older than the Mycenaean on the mainland of Greece, by peoples of different races which go back to Neolithic times. The chronology of these civilizations is an archaeological triumph of the twentieth century. The absolute bewilderment revealed in a notebook of a cub excavator of Corinth, about 1905, at potsherds said by a traveling professor to be pre-Mycenaean was equalled by that of his reader, twenty-five years later, no more experienced but accustomed to speak of Early, Middle and Late Helladic pottery, each with sub-divisions. Within twenty-five years knowledge of Greece had been lengthened by nearly two thousand years!

And what of desk archaeology in the last sixty years? It has carried on the tradition of Gerhard and Brunn. The most distin-

guished of Brunn's pupils was Furtwängler, who had an amazing artistic sense and such a memory that he could envisage a head in Bologna on a body in Dresden. His establishment of the Lemnian Athena of Phidias by just this combination of copies is typical of his contributions. His achievement was to establish the types invented by all the great artists of the fifth and fourth centuries, and to show how the types developed from these down to the fall of the Roman Empire. After Furtwängler's time it was possible to identify a fragmentary arm as from a Hermes by the way the drapery winds around the arm, to know the type of peplos figure to which a detached female head with a certain up-swung coiffure must belong, to know that certain heads with long hair must be Apollo, and that the Bologna head must be Athena although it had been called the head of a boy. These combinations have been tested again and again by complete finds from excavations and found to be right. Gods, goddesses and heroes were represented by certain fixed types which varied surprisingly little after the fourth century B.C. The new types that came in with the Hellenistic age went out with it.

Thanks to Furtwängler's work it was possible to write at the close of the last century good general histories of Greek sculpture. Today it is not as easy. The last generation has found errors in his work without being able to give a new picture of the whole. Today we know more about technique but not much more about history. Perhaps we need more time; perhaps we await a strong guiding hand.

But the year 1900 saw the announcement of a new approach to the early Greek sculpture which the nineteenth century had slowly learned to evaluate and understand. This was Emanuel Loewy's essay on "*Die Naturwiedergabe in der älteren griechischen Kunst.*" In this he explained that the primitive artist does not work from a model but from memory; and that what fixes itself in his memory is the most significant view of each part. Thus, primitive artists of all races draw noses in profile, eyes as if in front view, shoulders as if from the front, legs apart as if from the side. Children do the same. Sculpture developed from drawing, and

the success of a primitive sculptor in making a statue depends on his ability to combine two, but only two, sets of memory pictures, one from the front, one from the side. No sculptor before the Greek tried to do more than this. Now, Loewy pointed out, the Greek artists were the first to try to make a body as it appears in nature or, to use different words, to express the body organically. Similarly, they were the first to think of landscape organically, to see it as a whole and to try to place figures correctly in it. The whole effort of Greek art is to break away from two-dimensional restrictions and to represent organically, as in nature. The effort is the most noticeable during the fifth century, when art changes within a few years from something in fact very like the Egyptian and, in artistic outlook, exactly like the Egyptian, to what we accept as normal, realistic art, not comprehending how abnormal it is. After the Greeks discovered the organic approach to art it was never quite lost; even the Far East took it over as a result of Alexander's conquests.

This explanation of the history of art which Loewy announced in four easy chapters has become so much a commonplace in artistic discussion that credit for it is seldom given where it is due. It took centuries of archaeological study to make us realize that we adhere strictly to the Greek Tradition, and that our difficulties in comprehending the early Greek were due to our inability to think back through what fifth-century Greeks had thought out. Former critics admired Greek sculpture for being "ideal" instead of "realistic." Today, if we use these words at all, it is to insist that Greek sculpture was the first realistic sculpture and that it became progressively more and more realistic down through the Hellenistic age. And all intelligent criticism of Egyptian art and of Sumerian and other oriental art (which was scarcely known when Loewy stated his principles) is based on his discovery that all pre-Greek art is not organic but the result of a combination of memory pictures.⁵

⁵ FRANKFORT, H., "Sumerian Sculpture," *Burlington Magazine*, LXVI, 1935, pp. 110-121 and "On Egyptian Art," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, XVIII, 1932, pp. 33 ff.; SCHAEFER, H., *Von ägyptischen Kunst*, 1919, 1922 and 1930.

Attempts to know ancient painting are constantly being made and for the later periods our knowledge may be said to be fairly great, thanks to continued excavation at Pompeii and at Herculaneum. These show that there was not much about painting which was not discovered at some time during antiquity. Our enjoyment of it is not very great, however, for we have no fine monuments of painting, merely such works as ordinary citizens had in their houses. For the earlier Greek painting we must depend entirely on Roman copies, on mosaics and on vase-paintings which only slightly reflect the great trends. Perhaps that explains why we still agree with the eighteenth century that the greatness of Greece was in her sculpture.

Modern research on vase-painting has gone on from where Gerhard left it, with large groups of vases assembled. The next generation busied itself with the factory system indicated by the signatures on vases of the late sixth and early fifth centuries B.C. Signatures are sometimes "made me," sometimes "painted me." It has been possible to know the owners of factories and the traveling painters who worked for them, and to recognize the factory-owners once more in those who dedicated statues on the Athenian Acropolis because of their success in business. Since the beginning of this century the study has been enlarged to include painters who did not sign their work. This has been done by stylistic comparison, by comparison of minute details in the rendering of ears and toes. Some of the nameless vase-painters we know intimately, and the knowledge is no less valuable when we reflect that these marvelous miniature artists were sometime slaves, never aristocrats, and that the whole vase-painting business is mentioned just once in extant Greek literature.

Among the most popular Greek objects in the latter nineteenth century were the small figurines of terra cotta, first found in graves at Tanagra in Boiotia in 1870 and still often called "Tanagra figurines." These are from the later Greek periods, the late fourth century and the Hellenistic age. They are light, dainty and often beautifully colored. They represent the women of the day in all their silly finery, and sometimes also divine personages. The pub-

lic admired these figurines as it has seldom admired anything Greek. They were sold all over the world, they and the numerous forgeries which soon followed them, almost before the archaeologists could get to the illicit digs to try to learn the circumstances of the find. When the fury cooled it was found that here was an unexpected source of knowledge about Greek daily life as well as much knowledge about Greek methods of working. For the figurines were made with all the tricks of multiple production. Legs, arms, heads and torsos were made in moulds and fitted together at the discretion of the coroplast. The results, though often good, were often bad. It is, perhaps, beneficially sobering to our enthusiasm over Greek craftsmanship to be told that it had all the weaknesses, fell into all the temptations, that overtook other craftsmanship.

From our study of sculpture and the minor arts it has been possible to learn something, but not a very large something, about Greek religion and mythology. It is fortunate that most of us do not care as much about ancient religion and mythology as Payne Knight did, otherwise we should have to throw up our hands in despair at the meagre contributions which archaeology has made in the last hundred years. Vase-paintings, statues, terra cotta figurines and marble reliefs have been well enough classified so that we usually can recognize the subject of a Greek work of art. The opposite, to know how the Greeks represented a given subject, is often impossible; we simply have not enough monuments. Improvement in the work has come from using the technique of comparative religion, a technique which was developed with sources other than the Greek. This has shown us how to use and how not to use Greek literature and monuments. It has warned us against choosing a Greek monument or poem and reconstructing all Greek thought around it as we would like to have it. Particularly, it has warned us against thinking that the pretty stories about gods and goddesses are the heart and soul of the religion and that they are just what they appear on the surface to be. We must look behind them, and have looked behind them, for sources in the history and culture of the past, in the Mycenaean civilization and in the primi-

tive, earthy beliefs of simple times. And we have seen changes within the historical period, have seen the fair youthful Bros change into a fat love baby, a Cupid, and go on down the ages until he appears in the twentieth century A.D. as "Kewpie."

The last fifty years have seen the development of the science of epigraphy, the study of documents which the Greeks carved in stone. This depends upon skill in fitting fragments together and upon precise knowledge of the legalistic formulae employed in official documents. The amount of knowledge which can be extracted from an engraved record, even one that has been well known for a hundred years, is a daily surprise to those who are not themselves specialists in the field.

Recent years have shown the value of "comparative archaeology," by which we mean comparison between the great fields of archaeology, particularly in the comparison of early Greek and Mycenaean objects, with those made or found in the Orient. This brings us to the question of the future, for we think that the future will be chiefly concerned with this "comparative archaeology." We know that the Greeks did not invent civilization but came upon an old advanced civilization, and that their coming caused a temporary setback in the cultural development of the world. We have found out that they were not a static race but that they developed from something primitive to something fine, from the ordinary to the extraordinary, by a terrific effort of mind. It remains to find out how their development compares with and was affected by other peoples. For this we need more and more careful excavation. We do not hope for great artistic finds from our excavations, for the most promising sites have been excavated, and the principle chance of artistic finds is in accidental discoveries on land or in the sea. But from excavation of small sites by a more careful method, checked with new excavations in the east, we may perfect the historical structure which we think is now correct in broad outlines. Despite all the undigested material now at hand, our great fear is of a suspension of excavation which might tempt us to generalize beyond our knowledge. American archaeologists in particular are strongly in favor of continual excavation

and reply to their European colleagues, who accuse them of knowing how to excavate and nothing more, that desk archaeology which does not depend upon field work both in material and in method is not to be trusted.

This is, in brief, the picture of progress in the Greek Idea as it seems to the archaeologist. The archaeologist is one who considers an idea of the Greek an end in itself. In considering the effect on those who do not think it an end in itself, who want to use this Greek idea, great caution must be used. Perhaps nowhere has "post hoc, ergo propter hoc" reasoning been more in evidence than in discussions of the effect of archaeology on artists, art critics and others. Any appreciation, any use of a work of art is impossible until it is dug out of the ground, is almost impossible until it is made known in books; but unless the use has some connection with archaeological study or progress it is not fair to call it the result of archaeology.

The last century and a half have witnessed the discovery and study and understanding of Greek civilization earlier than that well known before. Greece of the eighth to the fourth centuries, Greece of the Mycenaean age, Greece of the Stone Age, are almost brand new to us. This is due to many causes among which are the interest which the archaeologist, like the biologist, must have in the origins of that which he studies; and political and economic situations which have made it possible, even necessary, to learn about Greece first in Rome, then in southern Italy (Winckelmann went into ecstasies over Paestum!), then in Greece, then in Crete, the coast of Asia Minor and the Balkans, and lastly in central Asia Minor, which is almost the exact opposite of the historical sequence. Simultaneously there has been a change of taste from the Graeco-Roman to the archaic. There is no reason for calling the second the result of the first. They might be quite independent phenomena.

Actually, Winckelmann came at a time when Greek was becoming popular at the expense of Latin. The reason for the growing popularity I cannot give but it was not archaeology. Whatever it was that satisfied the reader of the time in Greek but not in Latin

he wished to find again in art. But immediately he was faced with a difficulty; the Greek and Roman art he could not tell apart! It seems in answer to this problem that Winckelmann wrote, distinguishing the Greek from the Roman, finding in the Greek the qualities which he admired in Greek literature, making mistakes by seeing these qualities where they were not. His views were accepted; since the early nineteenth century it has been fashionable to praise Greek and decry Roman. Since then it has also become fashionable to praise early Greek at the expense of later Greek, each age accusing the preceding of not knowing what the early looked like. But the change came at its own rate of speed. We can illustrate this by tracing the history of the popularity of certain great works of art since the mid-eighteenth century.

The Apollo Belvedere and the Laokoon group were gods to Winckelmann, but if his choice had not seemed right to the majority of his readers his work could never have become popular. Its super-authoritativeness came in the second and third generation, probably retarding the development of new tastes. The commission on the Elgin Marbles used his standard. But, to repeat, the authority of the book came from its agreement with the taste of its generation. Winckelmann did not favor a narrow view of art; he wrote with nothing but disgust of Lord Baltimore who ran through the Villa Borghese in ten minutes and cared for no ancient statue but the Apollo Belvedere.⁶ Now, since Winckelmann's time, the popularity of these works has decreased markedly. Archaeologists have not abandoned them but taste has. Down through Furtwängler the Apollo Belvedere and its lost attribute and its date and originator were hotly debated, as they would be today if anyone had anything to add on the subject. But the public no longer cares. The Laokoon is discussed every few years; is it an original or a copy, of what date and of what school? Fame awaits those who can answer, but fame only among the professional; popular enthusiasm cannot be aroused. The Laokoon is still liked by those who can admire its technique and composition, but not

⁶ Winckelmann to Usteri, 1763, Jan. 1; to Franke, 1763, Jan. 15; from MICHAELIS, *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*, Introduction, paragraph 57.

by those seeking truth, beauty, restraint, or any other spiritual quality that was formerly attributed to it.

As for the controversy over the Elgin Marbles, we should be surprised not that they were not accepted at once but that in just thirteen years they had so won the popular fancy that their purchase was forced. Could a modern artist sell anything as new in as short a time? Not unless the world were ready for it. The only possible reason for Spon's theory that the pediments were Hadrianic was that while he knew that the ancients had called them the works of the age of Phidias *and of the highest merit*, he, living in the seventeenth century, could not honestly like them. And one reason for Payne Knight's opposition to them was that he, a rather old man tending to be conservative, could not like them. The public did like them by 1816, and Elgin, who was not an archaeologist, had been right in his prediction that they would like them. The work of subsequent archaeologists in planning reconstructions of the pedimental pieces and in discovering new ones has interested the public only because it concerned the beloved Elgin Marbles which have held their own as the greatest monuments of Greek art down to the present. There are those at the moment who say that the day of the Elgin Marbles is waning but only time can show them to be right.

We can find other examples of the peculiarities of popular taste in its treatment of two monuments found in the excavations at Olympia. The more popular at the time was the Hermes of Praxiteles. It was a work of exquisite beauty, an original by a known Greek sculptor, described and attributed to him by an ancient traveler, Pausanias. It was illustrated probably more than any other statue while to the excavators was left the disagreeable task of explaining a few of its peculiarities. After a temporary silence in discussion the Hermes was introduced again in 1929, following an argument on tools and technique of ancient carvers,⁷ not as an original but as a Roman copy. The arguments of archaeologists for and against its being an original have flown fast and furiously, and

⁷ BLÜMEL, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 ff. See also a symposium in *The American Journal of Archaeology*, XXXV, 1931, pp. 249 ff.; ANTONSSON, *The Praxiteles Marble Group in Olympia*, 1937.

it must be admitted that neither side has won the victory. Amazingly, the discussion has been almost entirely academic. It is not that the public at large has the fine sense to see that the value of the statue as a work of art is not in the least affected by whether it is or is not an original or whether its sculptor had or had not the name of Praxiteles; only a few understand this. The mob has simply ceased to care about the Hermes. This decline in interest was so quiet that it might have escaped notice had it not coincided with the rather brilliant discussion as to the true place of the statue in the history of art.

The same excavators had hopes of finding the pedimental statues of the great temple of Zeus, and their hopes were ironically rewarded. They found the statues but they were quite different from what they had expected. Pausanias had described them in detail, stating that one pediment was by Paionios and the other by Alkamenes, a contemporary of Phidias and second to him alone as a sculptor. It was reasonable to expect something like the Parthenon sculptures, but the works found did not resemble them in the slightest and were, to most, very disappointing. The excavators studied the pieces meticulously and many a later archaeologist added his bit toward solving their ever fascinating problems; the latest theory is that certain of the corner figures are not contemporary with the others, to judge from technique.⁸ But time staged a miracle. More than one traveler has gone recently to Olympia to see the Hermes and been unable to look at anything but the temple sculpture, so grand is it. Today the huge Apollo of the west pediment, judged not by the standards of truth and beauty but by some other which we cannot yet define, seems greater than human. Something has changed in the last sixty years and it is not the archaeologist nor the Apollo.

Schliemann's finds at Mycenae were the most sensational of the nineteenth century. They revealed a new civilization and were themselves of gold, and yet they have never gripped popular fancy. For once the archaeological point of view has prevailed; the meaning of the material is appreciated far beyond its value

⁸ BLÜMEL, *op. cit.*, pp. 34 ff.

piece by piece. Watch the travelers come into the Mycenaean room of the Athens museum and gasp at the display of gold; and then notice how soon they leave it to look at Greek statues! Similarly students of history and of art, who know the tremendous importance of this material for a knowledge of Greece, do not look at it for fun. Those who know their Homer will muse for a moment over the fact that Mycenae was indeed "rich in gold." But it remains the fruit of a dead civilization, so dead that we cannot understand it.

A sculpture find came not long afterwards. In 1886 the systematic excavation of the Acropolis of Athens led to the discovery of pits of sculpture damaged by the Persian destruction of the city in 480 B.C.. It was a mine of early sculpture, extending over a period of a little more than fifty years. The statues differed fundamentally from those best loved previously; they were so much more elaborate than the Parthenon sculptures and yet so much less developed! Archaeology was ready for this discovery and arranged the lovely maidens in a chronological sequence since proved to be approximately correct, noting that Brunn had been right in seeing in early Attic sculpture a moderate interest in anatomical detail and a great interest in the unity of the whole figure. Textbooks were built around these statues and that was all. Criticism went on slowly, going forward on the sudden wave of enthusiasm of Payne who lived his life in the twentieth century and enriched knowledge of this early Attic sculpture by astute criticism and by some astonishing combinations of fragments believed to be unrelated. About the time Payne began to work, perhaps about 1925, the public suddenly discovered early Attic art and refused to have anything else. Now collectors and museums are fighting for this unobtainable sculpture and critics are busily telling people why they like what they like.⁹ The popular discovery of these statues was as sudden as their discovery in the ground; but it came fifty years later.

These examples should be enough to show that taste has moved

⁹ For example, CASSON, STANLEY, "The Popularity of Greek Archaic Art," *Magazine of Art*, 30, 1937, pp. 281-287.

toward early styles but does not depend directly upon archaeological discovery or study. The popularity of a work comes when taste is ready for it. This may be immediately after its discovery, fifty years later, or never. And when taste changes again, the work of art becomes less popular. Just how much indirect influence archaeological knowledge may have had in gradually forming tastes over the years I would not attempt to say. But that it has not been the primary influence one can very easily see when he notes that our taste for the earlier and earlier in Greek sculpture has been accompanied by a taste for the more primitive in painting, or compares the interesting developing taste for the early throughout Roman times: a comparison which shows Winckelmann trying to agree with Pliny, the nineteenth century agreeing with Pliny, the twentieth agreeing with Pausanias.¹⁰

The archaeologist stands aloof from the battle of taste. His task is not to appraise but to know. His artistic tastes are usually those of his age. What opportunity he has to be in advance (for he sees more original material than anyone else, and that sooner) is negated by his naturally conservative disposition and his self-imposed discipline against letting his likes and dislikes run away with him. His chief satisfactions come from other than purely aesthetic reactions. As Gertrude Bell said when viewing Roman temples at Baalbek, Syria, "For the archaeologist there is neither clean or unclean. All the works of the human imagination fall into their appointed place in the history of art, directing and illuminating his own understanding of it. He is doubly blest, for when the outcome is beautiful to the eyes he returns thanks; but, whatever the result, it is sure to furnish him with some new and unexpected link between one art and another, and to provide him with a further rung in the ladder of history. He is apt to be well satisfied with what he sees, and above all, he does not say, 'Alas, alas! these dogs of Syrians! Phidias would have done so and so,' for he is glad to mark a new attempt in the path of artistic endeavour, and a fresh breath moving the

¹⁰ CARPENTER, RHYS, *The Humanistic Value of Archaeology* (Martin Classical Lectures, IV), 1933, pp. 120-122.

acanthus leaves and the vine scrolls on capital and frieze." ¹¹ And when the archaeologist is told by the artistically minded that his excavation has been a flop because he has found nothing pretty, he is inclined to smile, for he knows that sooner or later mankind will beat a path to some of his finds and worship them. Which they will be, he has no idea.

The effect of archaeology on art is even harder to estimate. The creative artist is a privileged person. He can take his inspiration where he wishes, do what he pleases with it. He may copy, distort, interpret, and no one may call him to account. Accuracy is not demanded of him unless, at certain times, it be an accuracy of form.

The effect which training in drawing and modeling from the antique has had on artists is impossible to measure. That the effect has been tremendous we know. We see it at once when we compare the work of an artist so trained with a modern artist who began in another way, particularly if this artist is induced by peculiar circumstances to include an antique copy in his work. He simply cannot do it. So the style of the artists who have studied from the antique since the Renaissance must have been deeply influenced by its spirit.

We may better undertake to estimate the influence of archaeology upon artists when they are deliberately introducing Greek subjects and styles into their own work. We shall see that artists have availed themselves of their full privilege to choose what they please and have not been guided by the main currents of archaeological progress nor by the great and typical ancient monuments.

For example, the beginnings of archaeological science coincided with the beginning of the "Greek revival" in architecture,* one of the largest and most interesting of modern movements in architecture. The interrelations of the two are complicated and obscure, but it is certainly wrong to assume that archaeology caused the Greek revival.

Before Stuart and Revett went to Athens they issued a pros-

¹¹ BELL, GERTRUDE, *The Desert and the Sown*, 1907, pp. 167 f.

* See the essay by Mr. Talbot Hamlin, p. 195. Ed.

pectus of their work in which they stated that they hoped their drawings would influence architects. When the time came for publication they decided to publish the monuments from the lower city of Athens first in order to give a greater variety of column types and ornaments. They therefore did not give much of the truly Greek architecture, and the other volumes were delayed for years. We see that the archaeology of Stuart and Revett was the result of their interest in architecture, not the cause of their work; moreover, a recent careful study has shown that their hopes of influencing architecture were not fulfilled.¹² They and their work were not honored in their own day but much later when the "Greek revival" was an accepted fact. Meanwhile Le Roy had given the world numerous inaccurate drawings of Greek monuments, accompanied by a running comment on how much better the Greek was than the Roman. The inclusion of the conclusion in the first publication of the material suggests that Le Roy had had a preconceived idea of the superiority of the Greek which he could hardly have gained through archaeology. Piranesi was the most famous of those who fought the Greek in the years to come, and is today more famous, perhaps, for his engravings of Roman ruins than for his remarks upon them. His battle in the first years was for the originality and independence of Etruscan and Roman architecture as compared with Greek, holding for the earlier date and greater simplicity of Etruscan. In his latter years he came to a truer conclusion in recognizing the elaborateness of Roman and holding this as a virtue worthy of imitation. Only then did he introduce material from Etruscan tombs into the argument.¹³ Chambers of the Royal Academy compared the Athenian Monument of Lysikrates, which Stuart copied in stone as well as by pen, in size to a sentry box, in shape to a tankard without its handle, while Piranesi was accused in high places of extoling things Roman in order to raise the selling price of his own

¹² LAWRENCE, L., 'Stuart and Revett: their Literary and Architectural Careers,' *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, II, 1938, pp. 128-146.

¹³ WITTKOWER, R., 'Piranesi's "Parere su l'Architettura,"' *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, II, 1938, pp. 145-158.

collection of marbles. While this battle was being waged architects practiced in their own way, Stuart copying Greek monuments none too effectively; Robert Adam, a much better architect, pushing a rather original, elaborate style of the Roman order. The struggle continued into the next century when the pro-Greeks won, until in 1842 the superiority of the Greek was so much taken for granted that Gwilt's *Encyclopaedia of Architecture* praised Stuart and Revett for their contention against "the opposite and vicious taste of Robert Adam, a fashionable architect whose eye had been ruined by the corruptions of the worst period of Roman Art."

Throughout this long, bitter and confused battle archaeology held but a small place, being used on occasion to prove either side right. The archaeology of the period fell far below the demands made upon it in the intellectual argument, although it was far ahead of the needs of the practicing architect of either school of thought. Le Roy's work satisfied the architects of the times, and Stuart and Revett were not needed; Saint Pancras in London could have been built from drawings of the Erechtheion sixty years before it was built, and the presence of a caryatid from the original in the British Museum was not necessary for its creation. We are dealing with a battle of tastes to which archaeology contributed but of which it was not the cause.

In the age of this controversy the sale of the Hamilton Collection of vases to the British Museum made ancient minor arts, exclusive of gems, available to English artists for the first time. How did it affect artisans? One thinks at once of Josiah Wedgwood and his pottery factory called "Etruria," of his well-known admiration for and study of the antique. And yet he rarely tried to imitate ancient works but searched books for reproductions of ruins which would make printed patterns for the centers of his plates and searched the museum for subjects and designs which would lend themselves to rendering in relief on the particular two-tone pottery material which he had perfected. Early and late patterns, naturalistic and archaistic figures, groups painted on archaic vases came to his hand to be used as he saw fit. His best imitative work was in reproducing the Portland Vase, which

Hamilton had acquired from the Barberini to pass on to the British Museum by a circuitous route through the hands of the dukes of Portland. In this Wedgwood had something which his technique could reproduce almost perfectly, and posterity has admired his reproduction as his finest work. Now the Portland Vase, as Wedgwood knew, was of glass, not pottery, and its archaeological value was as a rarity, not as a sample piece. If Wedgwood had really wanted to recreate antiquity he would have imitated in greater quantity the numerous black and red vases of the Hamilton Collection. His debt to archaeology is small. He chose what he needed for his own work.

The tremendous vogue of the Parthenon Marbles in the years after their purchase has been mentioned. It would be difficult to find any great influence of them upon contemporary art. Artists studied from them, copying them in their formative years, but they created little in the Phidian manner. They admired Phidias, but they chose for their own work what they wished and they seldom found the Parthenon sculptures helpful. Thorwaldsen, who restored the Aigina pediments for Ludwig of Bavaria (polishing them to the shine which he honestly thought they should have, judging from the Laokoon), Thorwaldsen who so admired the antique, took his models from the Graeco-Roman statues. Moreover Thorwaldsen had a good collection of Greek vases. Did he copy them in the vases which his heroes hold? He did not. So the great new acquisitions of the early nineteenth century did not directly affect sculpture. The artists continued in the Graeco-Roman manner. As a good reason for this we may note that the Graeco-Roman period, like the nineteenth century, was particularly interested in the decorative value of the individual piece or small group, while many of the preserved Greek works of the fifth century had an architectural purpose which could not well be duplicated.

We have noted the tremendous popularity of Tanagra figures just after their discovery in 1870. They were imitated but the imitations were forgeries, intended to deceive.* These came just

* They had, curiously enough, a certain influence on the dance, just as the Elgin marbles had on poetry.—Ed.

at the dawn of the great era of Greek excavation. But I do not know of any Greek works discovered in the modern excavations which have had a great effect on contemporary art. The Hermes of Praxiteles, popular as it was, was always used to illustrate the Greek, not as an inspiration for free copying. But that the possibility of mad imitation from archaeological material is not dead is easily shown; just remember the Egyptianizing materials and costumes that walked around in 1923 after the discovery of the tomb of Tut-Ankh-Amen! Today Egyptian style is more welcome than Greek.

Imitation from Greek art began to decline just as modern excavating archaeology began. It has declined steadily ever since while archaeology has grown with the years not only in value but in the numbers of people engaged. It has at the moment a romantic appeal to just the people who are not interested in Greek. Tell the average American that a dirty dish was dug out of the ground and he will be interested; tell him that it is Greek and he will run. If archaeology had ever really affected his thinking it would have made him care for the Greek. This independence of archaeology and other thought and interests is enough to show me that archaeology is naturally not a determining factor in artistic or other thinking but a technique for those who want to have an idea of the Greek for its own sake. It is one of the branches of knowledge which exist for the knowledge alone. Like all sciences, it looks forward to complete knowledge in the far, distant future.

It seems, then, that the mid-eighteenth century had a desire for new qualities in art and felt that they had existed in the Greek. This feeling had two results. One was a succession of styles in imitation of the Greek, which lived long and then died. The other was archaeology, the study of the Greek for the sake of knowing about the Greek. This has found in the Greek people a progressive group who entered a full, old, busy world and schooled themselves into a new view of the world and a new practice of art from which other peoples have gone on to develop what is best in themselves. And this Greek archaeology is still going on.

The medieval Christians, though they differed from the pagans in religion, were nevertheless conscious of their Roman and Greek past. The languages they spoke were pagan languages; the thoughts they expressed were, when they were not religious, pagan thoughts. Just as Plotinus in the early third century of our era tried to "reconcile" the teachings of the ancient philosophers, so the Christians were driven to harmonize the two sources of their religious and secular ideas. One can only express oneself with inherited symbols, and the symbols of the medieval Christians were perforce those of their Greek and Roman forbears. The gradual transformation of these symbols into forms which seem to the unschooled eye new and radical departures from tradition is related by Miss Miner in the article which follows.

CLASSICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDIEVAL ART

by

Dorothy Miner

THE INTRICATE relationship between medieval art and classical antiquity has for long been a favorite field of investigation among scholars of art history. For the purposes of this symposium, which considers manifestations of classic thought in various fields of subsequent cultures, it will not be out of place to offer a broad analysis of this medieval inheritance from antiquity, although of necessity much must be repeated that has been investigated and discussed more fully in other studies.¹

The visitor to an art museum, observing the products of the various great epochs which succeeded each other in Europe between the decline of the Roman Empire and the present, would probably see in the arts of the Middle Ages the least possible contact with classical tradition. Most of us still subscribe to the notion of Renaissance men that ancient culture was by them rediscovered and brought to light after a period of oblivion during a "middle age." But the truth of it is that in thus isolating medieval arts from the stream of Hellenic tradition, we unconsciously pay tribute to the definitely characteristic nature of the forms evolved during the Middle Ages. No epoch in history has clung more

¹ The Warburg Institute, formerly in Hamburg and now in London, exists for the purpose of investigating the contribution of classical civilization to later cultures. The studies published in the *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* and, more recently, in the *Journal of the Warburg Institute* are indispensable materials in this field. A demonstration of the Warburg method is presented by E. PANOFKY and F. SAXL, "Classical Mythology in Medieval Art" in *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, IV, 2 (1933) where an extensive bibliography may be found. The reader of English will find summaries of other approaches to the problem of classical survivals in medieval art in C. R. MOREY, "Sources of Medieval Style" in *The Art Bulletin*, VII (1924-1925), pp. 35 ff. and R. HINKS, *Carolingian Art*, London, 1935.

resolutely to tradition, but surely none developed such a knack of converting tradition to its own needs. For far from representing a break with ancient culture, it is well recognized that the Middle Ages must be considered as the logical continuation and development of it. New forms and motifs and a different aesthetic outlook arose from the fusion of the Greek and Latin tradition with the cultures of people from the east and from the north. These latter peoples provided an artistic endowment of emotional intensity and an instinct for powerful, complex design which was destined to give spiritual force to the heritage of Hellenic form and intellectual content which remained authoritative throughout the Middle Ages.

The insistence of the medieval man upon authority is important, for it explains not only most of what he created but of what he preserved. The prophets, the evangelists, the church fathers, Greek and Roman philosophers, the pagan poets, the saints, astrology and even necromancy were adduced to lend prestige to whatever he did—whether he wrote a treatise, composed a romance, built a cathedral, carved a portal, or usurped a kingdom. From the second half of the twelfth century on even Christ and the Virgin Mary in the guise of "intercessors" were enticed into this miscellaneous band conspiring to lend force to individual human enterprise. Even for the writings of the evangelists the medieval scholar sought the authority of more ancient texts, constantly searching the Old Testament for "parallels" or prophecies of details of the New Testament. This bolstering of Christian teachings by giving them an "ancestral lineage" back into early times was expressed visually in the later Middle Ages by such characteristic productions as the *Biblia Pauperum* or, a little earlier, by the representations of the evangelists mounted upon the shoulders of the prophets.¹⁴ The same purposes, as we shall see, were even served by the appropriation of distinctly pagan "authorities."

¹⁴ PRUDENTIUS (348-c. 405 A. D.) in his *Dittochaeon* provides a concordance of episodes from the Old and New Testaments. Such a disposition of scenes may be found in several Carolingian descriptions of church mural-painting. Cf. J. VON SCHLOSSER, *Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der Karolingischen Kunst*, Vienna, 1892, pp. 925 ff.; 931 ff.

The medieval man, despite his absorption with Christian doctrine, derived his authority and his knowledge quite as naturally from pagan sources as from the Bible. It has often been recognized that in the Middle Ages the lack of any historical or archaeological attitude toward antiquity was due to the medieval conviction that their culture was the continuation of that of ancient times, the Holy Roman Empire being, of course, the political expression of this belief.² The medieval man admired the competence shown in ancient works of art, just as he respected the boundless knowledge of the philosophers. He respected them not as remote representatives of another epoch and culture, but as his authority and immediate inheritance. The very crimes committed by him against ancient art and literature are indicative of the intimacy of this contact. Quite naturally and without self-consciousness he made free with antiquity and adapted it to his needs. Whether art or literature, he copied, emended, abbreviated, compiled, interpolated, annotated, re-interpreted. Some of these adjustments were more characteristic of certain periods of the epoch than others.

More than elsewhere in Europe the medieval art of Byzantium and the region thereabout preserved in general a current of genuinely Greek tradition in form and content. At the end of the Hellenistic era the great stirring of oriental spiritual activity of which Christianity was one of the manifestations had brought to the Hellenized centers of Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt oriental artistic tastes. Thus, at the time that the Hellenic artistic current was losing vitality and its tradition of plastic, idealized representation had gone sterile, the orient began to contribute with increasing force the emotionally moving qualities of rich color and rhythmic pattern. These characteristics had long before left their mark

² P. E. SCHRAMM, *Kaiser, Rom und Renovatio*, Leipzig, 1929. W. S. HFKSCHER, "Relics of Pagan Antiquity in Medieval Settings" in *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, I, pp. 204-209. J. B. ROSS, "A Study of Twelfth Century Interests in the Antiquities of Rome" in *Medieval and Historiographical Essays in Honor of James Westfall Thompson*, Chicago, 1938. This last collects the twelfth-century evidences of historical or antiquarian interest in classical remains. However, I think with a few exceptions these demonstrate the consistently medieval viewpoint of the travelers to the ancient capital.

upon the primitive arts of northern Europe as the result of the successive waves of barbarian migration from Asia. Now oriental aesthetics began to migrate into the Hellenistic artistic world. From the Greek cities of the Near East it spread to Rome and Romanized Gaul.³ This was effected not only by the importation of works of art from the eastern Mediterranean, but by the actual migration of colonies of eastern tradesmen and artists to Rome, to northern Italy, and especially to southern France. These forces operated in successive waves of varying intensity, but the process was already at work considerably before Christianity became an important factor in the Roman Empire and provided the need for new modes of artistic expression. Thus it is that many of the forms of classical antiquity handed down to the early medieval Christian artists of Greece (and, later, Byzantium), of Italy and Gaul already were modified by oriental influences. It is the complex interaction of Hellenic, oriental, orientalized Hellenic, barbarian and northern factors which make the study of early medieval art the fascinating confusion that it is. For this reason it will be clarifying to analyze the ways in which the contribution of antiquity continued to bear significant relation to the arts of the Middle Ages.

The manner in which the medieval artist made use of his classical heritage may be examined briefly under six headings:

³ The fundamental statement of the now obsolete theory that early Christian art derived entirely from Roman sources was presented by WICKHOFF in his introduction to the *Wiener Genesis*, Vienna, 1895; the publication of STRYZGOWSKI's *Orient oder Rom*, Leipzig, 1901, was of cardinal importance in medieval archaeology as it first directed attention to the significance of the Near East in the development of medieval forms. Since then innumerable studies have reaffirmed the importance of this oriental rôle. See BALDWIN SMITH, *A School of Ivory Carvers in Provence*, Princeton, 1918, pp. 192 ff., and MARION LAWRENCE, "Columnar Sarcophagi in the Latin West" in *The Art Bulletin*, XIV (1932), pp. 103 ff., for the summaries of the evidences of actual Near Eastern colonization and centers of art-production in the west. In this country the most influential theory of the development of early medieval artistic traditions is that developed by Professor C. R. MOREY and his associates at Princeton, which is conveniently summarized by him in "Sources of Medieval Style" cited previously.

- I. The employment of actual materials from classical works of art.
- II. The adoption of classical patterns and figure-types without regard for their original use or significance.
- III. Adaptation of classical personages and forms to figure as analogous Christian ones.
- IV. Adoption of late classical personifications.
- V. Reproductions of ancient material, especially scientific illustrations.
- VI. Observation of classical works as a basis for modifications in artistic style.

I. The first of these headings touches on the most obvious contribution of pagan artists to their Christian successors, but it is not without interesting implications for the attitude of medieval artists toward the use of pagan objects for Christian purposes.

It is, of course, only natural that in the earliest Christian times pagan buildings and objects were pressed into the service of the new religion. Nor is it surprising that in regions rich in classic remains temples and other ancient structures became quarries for the erection of churches, particularly during the fourth to eighth centuries when skilled contemporary stoneworkers were infrequent. The pagan purpose of Greek and Roman works of art never interfered with the medieval man's recognition of the technical competence of ancient artists. It is astonishing to us, however, that in flourishing periods of medieval craftsmanship and at points where there were no ancient ruins convenient for plunder we note instances of the importation of ancient sculptures and structural parts for the embellishment of Christian buildings. Sometimes such importation constituted merely the side issue of an expedition for other purposes. One may cite the familiar instance of the four ancient bronze horses which Crusaders looted from Constantinople in 1204 and brought to Venice to embellish the façade of St. Mark's. There is also the story related by John of Salisbury⁴ that in 1151 Henry, ex-bishop of Winchester, on a

⁴ *De Gestis Regum Anglorum* IV, 351 (edit. W. Stubbs in *Rolls Series*, London, 1887-1889, II, pp. 402 ff.).

visit to Rome bought some ancient statues which he sent to his former see in England. But evidently in certain cases the incorporation of ancient parts in a Christian building was the result of definite projects of importation. Everyone recalls Einhard's statement that Charlemagne sent to Rome and Ravenna for marble columns for his new chapel at Aix-la-Chapelle,⁵ and there has been frequent reference to Abbot Suger's extraordinary scheme for importing from Rome the columns of the Baths of Diocletian to use in his great abbey church of St. Denis—a project he abandoned only because of the difficulties of shipment.⁶ This last incident cannot be classed as a device to avoid the handicaps of poor local craftsmanship, inasmuch as Suger had assembled at St. Denis the most capable stoneworkers in western Europe. It is rather to be attributed not only to admiration for finely finished marble, but particularly to a desire to connect the prestige of his great new abbey with the long-established dignity of ancient Rome.

Architectural parts from classic buildings might not raise a conflict in the religious conscience of the medieval man. In the case of objects such as cameos and gems carved with mythological figures the issue is more clear-cut. The frequent use of these throughout the Middle Ages, not only for personal adornment but on sacred shrines, reliquaries, Gospel book covers, etc., is an interesting illustration of the extreme agility of medieval rationalization. The gems are employed particularly in objects dating from periods of renewed concentration on the achievements of ancient culture, such as the Carolingian epoch and the twelfth century. In late eighth- and ninth-century manuscripts of the Ada and Tours schools, painted representations of classical intaglios even become part of the ornament surrounding sacred scenes.⁷ Dr. Heckscher

⁵ *De Vita Caroli Magni*, English translation in *Early Lives of Charlemagne*, ed. A. J. Grant, London, 1922, p. 42.

⁶ SUGER, *Liber de Consecratione*, ed. J. von Schlosser, *Quellenbuch zur Kunstgeschichte des abendländischen Mittelalters*, Vienna, 1896, pp. 283 ff. See the discussion by W. S. HECKSCHER, *op. cit.*, pp. 219 ff. regarding the medieval attitude toward ruins or fragmentary objects.

⁷ See plates in A. BOINET, *La Miniature Carolingienne*, Paris, 1913, Pl. VIII, XV, XVI, XVIII-XX, etc.

in a recent important article⁸ on the use of these gems assembles evidence of the medieval custom of seeing in the engraved pagan forms Christian analogies, or of actual alteration to permit them to pass as Christian figures. Thus Caracalla's portrait may be inscribed in medieval letters with the name of St. Peter, the standing figures of Athena and Poseidon are rechristened Adam and Eve, while Zeus accompanied by his eagle becomes St. John. The traditional association of certain stones and symbols with various magical and medicinal properties gave to these pagan gems a particular significance of Near Eastern origin, which the medieval lapidaries coated only very thinly with Christian interpretations.⁹ In this connection it is interesting to note that the powers of the pagan divinities and the magic residing in ancient gems were recognized by the Church sufficiently to necessitate a formula for exorcising the evil in them and consecrating them to Christian use.¹⁰

II. The preservation of classical ornaments in the works of medieval artists is a matter closely related in essence to the question of actual incorporation of ancient fragments in medieval works. In both instances the practice is most inevitable in regions abounding in ancient remains, or elsewhere in periods of conscious classical "revival." However, there are some unexpected variations from this rule.

In the eastern Mediterranean the great centers of the Hellenistic world preserved in their paintings, mosaics and architectural sculpture an abundance of familiar classical motifs such as the acanthus capital and rinceau, ovile, "running dog," Greek key, guilloche and other ornaments. To these were added many Near Eastern motifs, such as the palmette, the grapevine, machicolations, heraldic animal designs, and others. The operation of orientalizing tendencies caused the development of both these traditions away from organic plastic forms and in the direction of rhythmically distributed "coloristic" ornament. In the west the arts

⁸ HECKSCHER, *op. cit.*, esp. pp. 216 ff.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 213 ff., where he cites the basic literature on this interesting subject.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

of the great sites of classical and late classical culture in Italy and Gaul tended to preserve the form of traditional ancient ornaments more faithfully, as may be seen in many medieval monuments of Rome, Languedoc or Provence.¹¹ But in these regions also the infusion of oriental motifs and taste, the contribution of barbarian and Celtic forms, and the general archaizing operations which preceded the transformation of this material into developed Romanesque style all played their part in the history of these classic motifs. They lived most securely perhaps in architectural sculpture, which is where, for the most part, they took their ancient origin. The appearance of an abundant vocabulary of ancient ornament in the manuscripts of the Carolingian epoch is interesting both for its reflection of the zeal with which scholars, artists, and their patrons sought a *renovatio* of Roman culture, and because it is a clue to how impure and indirect was much of their heritage. For in the superb, illuminated books of the great Carolingian schools of painting, especially the Ada, Tours, St. Denis and Regensburg products, we see, framing the Canon Tables, the pictures of the evangelists, and other illustrations, an abundant repertory of classical ornament in addition to Celtic, barbarian and other forms. Now there is reason to believe that the late Latin manuscripts were sparing of ornament. This is made evident by such examples as the two Vatican Vergils¹² of the fourth and fifth centuries, respectively, the "Quedlinburg Itala" manuscript now in Berlin¹³ and the *picture-pages* of certain Carolingian and Ottonian manuscripts which appear to have been copied closely after fourth- or fifth-century Latin prototypes.¹⁴ The few late classic Latin manuscripts which incorporate abun-

¹¹ On this subject see, for instance, HANNIS-U. VON SCHOENEBECK, "Die Bedeutung der Spätantiken Plastik für die Ausbildung des monumentalen Stils in Frankreich," in *Adolf Goldschmidt Festschrift*, Berlin, 1935, pp. 23 ff.

¹² Vat. Ms. Lat. 3225; cf. P. DE NOLHAC, *Le Virgile du Vatican et ses peintures*, Paris, 1897. Vat Ms. Lat. 3867; cf. *Picturae ornamenta complura scripturae specimena codicis Vaticanani* 3867, Rome, 1902.

¹³ V. SCHULTZE, *Die Quedlinburger Itala-Miniaturen*, Munich, 1898.

¹⁴ E. g., The Bible of Moutier-Grandval, First Bible of Charles the Bald, Dufay Evangelary, Bamberg Boethius, Codex Egberti. See BOINET, *op. cit.*, Pl. XLIV-XLV; XLVII-LI; LVI-LVII; GOLDSCHMIDT, *German Illumination*, Florence, 1928, Vol. II, Pl. 4-6.

dant ornament in the frames display, along with some familiar Hellenic motifs, many patterns which derive from Syria. In this connection one may cite the Chronograph of the year 354,¹⁵ and the famous Gospels in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge,¹⁶ which must be based on a fifth- or sixth-century prototype. Both of these manuscripts in their repertory of ornament and in various architectural details of the frames suggest the mixture of Hellenic and Syrian patterns in the sixth-century Rabula Gospels in Florence.¹⁷ The motifs, astounding in their variety, in this last manuscript can all be matched in the ornament of fifth- and sixth-century Syrian architecture or in the late classical mosaics of the region. This suggests that the *renovatio* enthusiasts of the Carolingian schools were not only non-classic in indulging in the Celtic and barbarian love of abundant ornament around their illustrated pages, but that some of the Roman books available as models provided them with a Syrian orientalized recension of ancient ornamental forms.

Although the appropriation of ancient ornamental motifs during the Carolingian era and the twelfth century might in many instances be due to fresh enthusiasm for ancient material, in general such patterns passed into the artistic vocabulary of the west as familiar artistic forms which were employed with as little consciousness of their origin as were the Celtic interlaces, Lombard lacertines, or fantastic Romanesque foliage.

Somewhat similar was the natural adoption of ancient figure and landscape motifs. In a somewhat abbreviated and cryptic form this is observable in western, early Christian representations where the customary vocabulary of pre-Christian sculpture and painting was applied to the new themes. I refer now to the adaptation of current pagan forms as an artistic necessity and without intentional symbolic analogy. In the catacomb of Priscilla¹⁸ a second-

¹⁵ Preserved only in Renaissance copies. STRYZOWSKI, "Die Kalendarbilder des Chronograph vom Jahre 354" in *Jahrbuch des deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Ergänzungsheft*, I (1888).

¹⁶ Various attributed in date and place of origin, but probably an English copy of an Italian prototype. See reproduction in HINKS, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ Bibl. Laurenziana, Pl. I, 56. Reproduced in BIAGI, *Reproductions de Manuscrits Enluminés*, Florence, 1914, Pl. I-III, and C. NORDENFALKE, *Die Spätantiken Kanontafeln*, Göteborg, 1938, Pl. 129-148.

¹⁸ W. NEUSS, *Die Kunst der alten Christen*, Augsburg, 1926, fig. 24.

century artist has rendered the Virgin Mary as a Roman matron, Apostles stand with the swaying contraposto derived ultimately from Praxiteles,¹⁹ three Magi²⁰ move with the same accented rhythm as do the figures in the Vatican Vergil. The sculptured sarcophagi,²¹ whether from Rome or Gaul or imported from Asia Minor, present us with traditional classic figures of orators, philosophers, vestal virgins, genii, muses and even gods assembled to play their parts as actors in some Christian episode.

Many of these conventions of pose, movement and proportion have a continuous history back to the days of Praxiteles and Lycippus; others derive from the more active Hellenistic types devised especially in Asia Minor, and later spread to Alexandria and other centers. It is in Byzantine painting that the eclectic assemblage of these ancient Greek forms can most readily be observed over a course of many centuries. It has been mentioned that Byzantine artists, despite the effective presence of numerous other influences, preserved in general the closest medieval contact with Greek formal tradition. And in being eclectic the Byzantine artists were again observing good Greek practice. Dr. Buchthal in a recent study of the most important monument of Byzantine painting—and the most violently disputed one—the so-called Paris Psalter,²² points out that general or even detailed resemblances of Christian figures and scenes cannot necessarily be taken as proof of immediate copying of a specific ancient monument, or an implied symbolic analogy. As he says,²³ "Indeed, it is characteristic of the art of antiquity that once a type has been found for a character or scene, it becomes traditional, and artists revert to the same formula whenever they wish to render the same scene, or another similar in subject or in content." Therefore the famous illustra-

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, fig. 22; also second century "Gnostic" catacomb, fig. 21.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, fig. 23.

²¹ The most important studies of this material are: C. R. MOREY, *Sardis* V, 1, "The Sarcophagus of Claudia Antonina Sabina and the Asiatic Sarcophagi"; G. WILPERT, *I sarcophagi cristiani antichi*, Rome, 1929; M. LAWRENCE, "City-Gate Sarcophagi" in *The Art Bulletin*, X (1927), pp. 1-45; Idem, "Columnar Sarcophagi in the Latin West" in *The Art Bulletin*, XIV (1932), pp. 103-185.

²² HUGO BUCHTHAL, *The Miniatures of the Paris Psalter*, The Warburg Institute, London, 1938.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

tion²⁴ of David seated playing his zither beside the female personification of Melody merely continues the form used in antiquity to represent loving couples. Thus similar compositions may be found on ancient frescoes representing Mars and Venus, Perseus and Andromeda, Poseidon and Amphitrite, Venus and Adonis, etc.²⁵

In the same fashion the representation of David fighting Goliath²⁶ not only descends from a long Greek tradition of battle scenes such as the Pergamene frieze or the sarcophagus of Alexander, but parallels may in other monuments be found for the female personifications which urge each of the combatants. Likewise, the decapitation of Goliath has been influenced by traditional representations of Perseus and Medusa. And yet there is no reason to assume any allegorical relationship between prototype and Byzantine derivative.

One cannot go here into all the evidences of the recombination of Hellenistic form-types to create compositions of new content. It must suffice to call attention in passing to the device of giving plausibility to these eclectic compositions by architectural and landscape accessories to imply depth and space.²⁷ However, examination reveals that the little temples, garden ornaments, impressionistic trees and architectural façades themselves are assembled without spatial unity. They are the descendants of the paraphernalia of late classic illusionism in sculpture,²⁸ painting²⁹ and mosaic.³⁰ There are strong reasons for connecting the origin of this illusionistic landscape style with Alexandria,³¹ but nevertheless it expanded widely throughout the Hellenistic world.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Pl. I.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14. For references to illustrations.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Pl. IV, and p. 22.

²⁷ See, for instance, the David miniature, *ibid.*, Pl. I. Or the famous Joshua Roll in the Vatican, reprod. in *Il rotulo di Giosué*, Milan, 1905.

²⁸ For instance, the relief in Munich illustrated in MOREY, "Sources of Medieval Style," fig. 17.

²⁹ A good example is the Pompeian "Paris on Mt. Ida" reproduced in BUCHTHAL, *op. cit.*, fig. 15.

³⁰ Notably the early second-century A.D. "Judgment of Paris" mosaic found at Antioch and now in the Louvre. C. R. MOREY, *The Mosaics of Antioch*, New York, 1938. Pl. I.

³¹ C. R. MOREY, "Sources of Medieval Style," pp. 39 ff.

We cannot leave the subject of the transmission of ancient figure-types without alluding to the most brilliantly proved instance of this phenomenon. Professor A. M. Friend, Jr., has been able to show conclusively³² that the portraits of the evangelists current in medieval manuscripts, notably those of Byzantium, derive with little alteration from classical types of author-portraits of Alexandria, Antioch and Ephesus. Moreover, that the profile seated evangelist, which was most widely used, is nothing more than the survival of the ancient poet inspired by his muse, which may be seen on pagan sarcophagi and other reliefs.³³ Further, by taking into consideration the complex architectural settings of niches, arches, gables and garlanded walls which accompany both the pagan and many of the Christian examples, it becomes plain that the painted evangelist portraits derive ultimately from the statues of poets, philosophers, and dramatists that decorated the stage fronts of the ancient theaters of Asia Minor. The Byzantine miniaturists treated this tradition with great conservatism. In the west the theme during the course of centuries underwent freer and more imaginative handling. The quietly deliberating poet becomes transformed into an ecstatically inspired seer,³⁴ an alert secretary,³⁵ and finally an industrious scribe.³⁶ However, it is noteworthy that through the entire course of medieval representation the evangelists always appear in classic dress and in most cases are provided with ancient types of furniture and accessories—frequently enough misunderstood by the later copyist.

³² "The Portraits of the Evangelists in Greek and Latin Manuscripts" in *Art Studies*, V, pp. 115 ff., and VII, pp. 3 ff.

³³ The classic example is the Sidamara Sarcophagus in the Ottonian Museum, Constantinople, reproduced in FRIEND, *op. cit.*, part I, fig. 164. Cf. also the fragment of an Asiatic sarcophagus in the British Museum, illustrated in M. LAWRENCE, *op. cit.* (1932), fig. 13. Here the muse holds a mask of comedy which implies that she attends one of the poets of comic drama.

³⁴ Especially in Reichenau works around 900-1000 A.D. A. GOLDSCHMIDT, *German Illumination*, Vol. II, pl. 26. The relation of evangelist and the prophets is here figured.

³⁵ E. g., K. LÖFFLER, *Schwäbische Buchmalerei*, Augsburg, 1928, pl. 20; Swabian, twelfth century.

³⁶ E. g., St. Magloire Missal (early XV century) reproduced in H. MARTIN, *La Miniature Française*, Paris, 1923, pl. 80.

III. The history of the evangelist portraits brings us to another famous aspect of the fusion of ancient and medieval tradition. It is well known by everyone that the early Christian painters and sculptors appropriated numerous pagan figures with the deliberate intention of enforcing their dogma through analogy. By this means Christian themes not only assumed the prestige of long history and of ancient prefigurement, but doubting neophytes were weaned away from the orientalized mystery cults³⁷ such as the Orphic and Bacchic. Orpheus harping to the animals was transformed into Christ the Good Shepherd, or David the shepherd-musician. Hermes carrying the lost sheep became the favorite figurement of Christ. The messenger of the gods bearing the infant Dionysus to the muses was the prototype for St. Christopher carrying the Christ Child,³⁸ and the saint inherited from the pagan divinity his patronage of travelers. The Bacchic cycle became a particularly rich source for mystic analogy, partly because of the prefigurement of the Resurrection implied by the killing of Dionysus and his restoration to life, which was commemorated in the spring festival of the Anthesteria.³⁹ Therefore, the scene of the bathing of the infant Dionysus was transformed bodily to early Christian paintings and sarcophagi to figure as the bathing of the Christ child, and in Byzantine art, at least, remained with surprisingly little change for centuries.⁴⁰

In the course of the Middle Ages the mystic connection of most of these types was generally forgotten in the west, and the classical origin is quite unrecognizable in the late Romanesque or Gothic period when evolution of style and the addition of iconography from other sources had transformed the representations. The christening of the mythological figures on ancient gems which we have cited above was not in recognition of any mystic kinship

³⁷ EISLER, "Orphisch-Dionysische Mysteriendanken in der christlichen Antike" in *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* II (1922-1923), pp. 159 ff.

³⁸ Cf. especially the mosaic from Antioch now in the Worcester Art Museum; reproduced in MOREY, *The Mosaics of Antioch*, pl. XIII.

³⁹ Cf. JAMES G. FRAZER, *The Golden Bough*, New York, 1935, Vol. VII, pp. 32 ff.

⁴⁰ Cf. K. WEITZMANN, "Das Evangelion im Skevophylakion zu Laura" in *Seminarium Kondakovianum*, VIII (1936), pp. 89 ff.

between certain pagan and Christian personalities, but was based on chance formal resemblances.

In the Byzantine east, due to the greater continuity of the Greek tradition and helped by such fresh Hellenic impulses as the so-called "Byzantine Renaissance" of the tenth century,⁴¹ many of these types retained classic form, at least until comparatively recent times.

IV. The classical iconography which longest retained its identity in Christian scenes was the late-Hellenistic device of personification. East Christian and Byzantine works such as the Paris Psalter and the Joshua Roll⁴² abound in mountain-gods, river-gods, or figures of cities fashioned after the famous "Tyche of Antioch" sculptured in the fourth century B. C. by Eutychides. Abstractions such as Wisdom, Night, Dawn, and others abound, usually under the guise of a tall female form.

The medieval artist in the west, receiving his endowment of these personifications indirectly through Rome or later more directly from Byzantium, adopted them enthusiastically. Earth-goddesses, river- and ocean-gods, figures of the sun and moon with or without chariots, the winds, the seasons, and the months, personified cities and provinces, and mental attributes abound in the illuminated manuscripts and carved ivories of France and Germany during the Carolingian and Ottonian periods. As early as 791 Charlemagne himself, ardent classicist though he was, had discountenanced the adoption of such pagan images,⁴³ but this seems to have had little effect. The dogmatic value of personification was the very thing needed to dramatize the subtleties of medieval theology and philosophy. Not only were pagan personifications preserved but new ones were invented, and the thing became a truly medieval device. Literature largely was responsible for the new forms devised, which arose as literal illustrations of such

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, passim.

⁴² No date is here assigned in the mention of these two famous manuscripts because dispute attributes them variously from the seventh to the tenth century.

⁴³ In the *Libri Carolini*, which presents Charlemagne's views on the iconoclastic question. MIGNÉ, *Patrologia Latina*, XCVIII. Passages on personifications ch. III, 23.

allegorical texts as those of Martianus Capella (early fifth century) and Prudentius (348-ca. 405). The former's didactic allegory, *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, was not only, up to the twelfth century at least, the basic schoolbook on the seven liberal arts, but from its literary personifications stemmed the whole artistic tradition which made the figures of the Seven Arts stock characters on sculptured façade, frescoed wall and illuminated page from Italy to England.⁴⁴ In the same way the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius⁴⁵ was the source of the types of Virtues and Vices as well as numerous allegorical episodes which are familiar in sculpture and painting from the ninth century to the Renaissance. The picturesque vividness of these inventions induced later authors and commentators to draw upon them constantly to clarify their own logical and theological involutions. The twelfth century, especially, produced in France and Germany a flood of didactic treatises, commentaries and rehashed scholastic compendiums. These are illustrated by diagrammatic schemes featuring the Virtues and Vices, the Seven Liberal Arts, etc., in endless combinations to stress relationships between various theological, scholastic, scientific, social and moral problems. Examples which may be cited at random are, the *Hortus Deliciarum* of Herrade of Landesberg,⁴⁶ Honorius of Autun's *Commentary on the Canticum Cantorum*,⁴⁷ Conrad Hirsau, *Dialogus Peregrinae et Theodora de Speculo Virginum*,⁴⁸ and many others.

V. The endowment of philosophical and scientific literature bequeathed by classic authors to the Middle Ages provided the strongest cultural bond between the two epochs. The purely philo-

⁴⁴ For this iconography in medieval art see R. VAN MARLE, *Iconographie de l'art profane*, The Hague, 1932, II, pp. 204 ff., and E. MÂLE, *L'Art Religieux du XIII^e siècle en France*, Paris, pp. 75 ff.

⁴⁵ R. STETTINER, *Die Illustrierten Prudentius Handschriften*, Berlin, 1895. H. WOODRUFF, "The Illustrated Manuscripts of Prudentius" in *Art Studies*, VII, pp. 33-79.

⁴⁶ Now preserved only in copies. *Hortus Deliciarum*, Strassburg, 1879-1899, ed. by A. Straub and Keller.

⁴⁷ Walters Art Gallery, ms. 387.

⁴⁸ Walters Art Gallery, ms. 393. Cf. also Munich Clm. 14159: A. BOECKLER, *Die Regensburg-Prüfeningener Buchmalerei*, Munich, 1924, pp. 41 ff. and Pl. XXXV-XXXVIII.

sophical writings of antiquity were by their nature unillustrated. It took a medieval mind to make a diagram of a train of thought. In the scientific books, however, were found abundant illustrations which were available to the ninth- and tenth-century copyists of east and west. Upon late classical manuscripts of Aratus, Ptolemy, and Dioscorides the scholars of east and west depended for their knowledge of astronomy, geography and medicine. The extremely conscientious copying of such texts was paralleled in the amazingly classic style achieved in ninth-century reproductions of the pictures. We may even include in this category the fabulous writings, such as the *Physiologus* and those of Aesop and Avienus, which reached the Middle Ages in illustrated form and were depended upon directly or indirectly until the fifteenth century as sources of zoological lore and illustration.

The problems connected with the illustrations of these scientific manuscripts are too involved to be outlined here. The pagan concepts of homomorphic planets, constellations, as well as zodiac signs and representations of the months⁴⁹ entered the medieval repertory directly from late classic sources and underwent a characteristic evolution and modification of form and meaning. Professor Panofsky in an important article on "Classical Mythology in Mediaeval Art"⁵⁰ traces the course of the mythological forms of the planets and constellations from classic times until the Renaissance. He demonstrates that the faithful reproductions of the antique types preserved in Carolingian illustrations undergo an evolution in form and style until in the twelfth century they crystallize into regular Romanesque characters, scarcely distinguishable from purely western concepts of saints and heroes. The new interest in scientific texts which occurred in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had an amusing effect upon this medieval scientific illustration. Like the Aristotle texts, these new translations into Latin came by way of intermediate Arab versions in Spain. Although the texts amplified the thirteenth-century schol-

⁴⁹ The latest discussion of the representation of the months is by J. C. WEBSTER, *The Labors of the Months*, Princeton, 1938.

⁵⁰ In *Metropolitan Museum Studies*, IV, Pt. 2 (1933), pp. 228 ff.

ar's knowledge of the ancient original, the illustrations had become Persian! As Dr. Panofsky shows, the oriental illustrations often preserved points of scientific importance more faithfully than had the previous European versions, but the basic Greek mythological character was utterly lost. Dissatisfaction with Persian Jupiters and Hercules caused the invention of new representations, based upon textual descriptions, in the same way that the Liberal Arts had been conceived. The result in both cases was utterly unclassical and quite medieval. It was not until the fifteenth century that the ancient aspect was restored to these classical scientific symbols—partly as a result of the recovery of actual Roman sculptured figures, but often enough because of the turning up of the ninth-century illustrated manuscripts.

VI. The relationship of medieval style to the classical part of its heritage has been so thoroughly discussed by many authors⁵¹ that it is needless to pursue the question here. No matter where an artist lived, whether in Syria, Coptic Egypt, Spain, Northumbria, or Gaul, during the first nine centuries A. D. he could not avoid the influence of ancient art forms. They were all around him, mixed though they might be with much that was unclassic. He transmitted them according to his own aesthetic preoccupations, using the authoritative image as a fair field for his concern with intricate design, dynamic organization, or flat pattern and strong color. The classic artist won simply by having visualized things first, just as the Greek and Roman authors won because they first thought so thoroughly about nearly everything.

Aside from this natural infiltration of ancient influences there have been, especially in western Europe, recurrent periods of intensive examination and appreciation of antique cultural productions. These "renaissances" usually have occurred after periods of confusion or stagnation when need is felt for fresh ideas, for stable and uncorrupted authority, a general revaluation. In the seventh century the Northumbrian monks were in frequent contact with Rome in order that their liturgy, music, architecture,

⁵¹ The most stimulating short analyses in English are those in MOREY, "Sources of Medieval Style" and HINKS, *op. cit.*

books and even frescoes might be authoritative.⁵² The subsequent painting of Northumbria and later of Canterbury displays a certain infusion of late classical forms and style influence, but this soon evolves into a highly characteristic English style.

At the end of the eighth century Charlemagne sought to reorganize the political, military and cultural structure of his empire on Roman lines. A reform in handwriting, enormous activity in copying of texts and illustrations from authoritative sources, a searching for pure texts for collation, and a general elevation of the standards of scholarship resulted. Books to supply the copyists were imported from wherever good texts, pagan as well as Christian, were to be had. Some came from Rome, some, evidently, from Byzantium, but it is interesting to note that Alcuin wrote to York for books to supply St. Martin's at Tours. Presumably, some of the late classic books brought to Northumbria by Benedict Biscop, or copies of them, now came to Gaul to help provide cycles of late Latin Biblical illustrations. Manuscripts throughout the ninth century reveal the closeness with which the fourth- or fifth-century prototypes were examined not only in terms of iconography, but of style. Just as the scientific illustrations showed attention to modeling in light and shade, classical proportions and movement, so the Biblical illustrations reveal some grasp of illusionism in perspective and landscape detail. But soon this undergoes a change. Before long, at Tours and St. Denis, at Regensburg and Reichenau, we find the early iconography adjusted and reassembled into new schemes. The classical *controposto* and illusionistic draperies become fields for whirling dynamic pattern, the ancient gestures become tense and excited. Before the end even of the ninth century the fresh infusion of solid classic form has been swept into the vortex of medieval style. By the twelfth century, as Dr. Panofsky noted in connection with the constellation pictures, the ancient contributions have lost their identity and have become fused in the medieval creation.

⁵² Cf. the account of Benedict Biscop's importation of books, pictures, stoneworkers, and singers from Rome in BEDE'S *Vita sanctorum abbatum monasterii in Wiramutha et Girvum* in MIGNÉ, *Patr. Lat.*, XCIV, 718.

But the twelfth century witnessed a new classical "renaissance." In the manuscripts of the era or on the façade of Chartres we look in vain for a fresh outburst of late antique style. The manuscripts of Aristotle and the scientific writers were translated in Spain from Arabic versions of the Greek text. Thus, as we have noted, such pictures as were transmitted were likely to be Islamic rather than classic in style. Whatever illustrations were needed for the precepts of the scholastic philosophers could be assembled from the great array of personifications of the arts, of the Vices, of the forces of nature, which had by this time evolved into thoroughly medieval motifs.

The new logical, physical and metaphysical teachings of the schools and universities were of course founded upon the authority of the ancient philosophers, especially Aristotle. Just as throughout the Middle Ages the images of the evangelists and the prophets were needed to illustrate the authority of Biblical texts, now representations of the ancient philosophers begin to appear in manuscripts and sculpture as the authority from which the scholastic system derived. The most famous and earliest example of this iconography is on the west front of Chartres, where each of the Seven Arts is attended by the appropriate philosopher.⁵³ This façade was being carved between 1134 and 1150 at the time when Theodoric, brother of the great classical scholar, Bernard of Chartres, was composing his book on the sources of the Seven Liberal Arts. Where did the sculptor get the types for these philosophers? One looks at the intent old men, industriously bending over the desks or pausing patiently a moment, in the manner of scribes awaiting dictation, like the Romanesque evangelists. And that is just who they are. The sculptor has assimilated his scholarly philosophers to the most authoritative studious authority known to him—the evangelists. And so we make a circle. The Greek philosopher-author provided the prototype for the earliest representations of the evangelists, and now they, in turn, are needed to supply a shape for the philosophers. The Aristotle

⁵³ Illustrations in E. HOUVET, *Monographie de la Cathédrale de Chartres, Portail Ouest*. Also cf. E. MÂLE, *op. cit.*, pp. 85 ff. See frontispiece of this volume.

and Pythagoras of Chartres in their humble, hard-working intensity are a long step from the profound serenity of the deliberating philosophers sculptured in Ephesus. It is a fair exchange. The evangelists during the centuries had shaken off the pagan touch of the philosopher-portraits. And now they in turn have medievalized the ancient philosophers. Aristotle has been "brought into conformity" by the sculptor quite as effectively as by the rationalizing of the scholastics. Just so the Middle Ages made the antique its own.

Catholic Europe might have been expected to be definitely hostile to paganism, and indeed in so far as paganism was a religion, the hostility was marked. But paganism as a type of civilization retained the respect and admiration of many loyal Christians. The ancient writers continued to be read and studied and ancient art was perpetuated, as Miss Miner has suggested. At the same time wars, invasions, indifference, had their effect and much that was typical of historic Greece and Rome simply disappeared.

That was especially true of manuscripts. The Greek were retained in greater or less completeness in Byzantium, but they were in large measure lost to the Western world. For only in outlying districts, such as Ireland, was a knowledge of Greek retained for a time and if a monk knew Latin, he knew enough for most purposes.

It must never be forgotten that medieval man had a definite sense of the uniformity of human nature. His religion was universal, not parochial. To him local and individual differences were not important but accidental. Moreover, the nation in the modern sense of the word scarcely existed until the Renaissance. All men of learning spoke the same language, Latin, had the same religious beliefs, Catholicism, and were children of the same Father. Their common loyalty to one God was perhaps of greater significance in their spiritual lives than their individual loyalties to a local or regional chief. Their Bible and their histories emphasized man's common descent from Adam and man's common heritage. The fact, then, that a certain people once lived on a Mediterranean peninsula, made statues of nude gods, painted vases, wrote poems in a peculiar language, would not have impressed them so much as that this people had or had not anticipated Christianity. When they found a writer like Vergil whom they suspected of having anticipated it in prophecy, they were not slow in reading and studying him. That sense of the community of all mankind is precisely what accounts for their lack of what is often called the "historical sense."

Thus a painter who, like Peter Breughel, paints a Slaughter of the Innocents and provides his mothers with Dutch costumes and lays the scene in a Dutch village during a Dutch winter may seem simply quaint and ignorant to us. But to such a person there simply did not exist the temporal and spatial distance between the historical incident and himself that exists inevitably for us. To see the past historically is to see the present also historically and to do that requires a certain imaginative effort.

Hence when one comes upon medieval writers who study the Ancients and comment on them, one is interested, to be sure, to see how completely they absorbed them into their own time. But such absorption may mean that they felt contemporaneous with the events they were describing and not merely that they had no historical sense. What one says depends upon which element of the truth one thinks most important. Mr. Painter in the paper which follows gives us a glimpse of one such person and his contemporaries and suggests their contribution to the Greek Tradition.

JOHN OF SALISBURY AND THE RENAISSANCE OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

by

Sidney Painter

THE TWELFTH century saw classical scholarship and interest in the classical period at the highest point they were to reach during the Middle Ages, and John of Salisbury was the most eminent classicist of that century. As our purpose is to discover what the men of the Middle Ages thought about Greece and Rome, we can do no better than to view these ancient civilizations through John's eyes. This will not, of course, give us a point of view that can be called typical. In respect to knowledge about classical times and pure intellectual capacity John of Salisbury stood far above his contemporaries. Moreover his varied and active life gave him a breadth of interest and experience that most scholars lacked. After spending some twelve years in study at the schools of Paris and Chaitres, John became secretary to Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, soon after the year 1148. From that time until the murder of Theobald's successor, Thomas à Becket, in 1170 he was a prominent counselor and servant of the two archbishops of Canterbury and their royal master, King Henry II. John's loyal support of Becket deprived him of King Henry's favor and he retired to France. In 1176 the French king, Louis VII, elevated him to the episcopal chair of Chartres which he occupied for the remaining four years of his life. Thus John of Salisbury was not only a distinguished scholar but also an important figure in the ecclesiastical and political life of his day. If we are to form any adequate idea of what the ordinary literate man of the twelfth century thought about Greece and Rome, we must notice in passing the opinions of lesser men on the various features of classical civilization which John discussed.

Before proceeding with this inquiry it is necessary to envision

clearly the difficulties which faced all medieval students of classical times. Whenever men seek to describe the thoughts and life of people of another age, they tend to create a mirror of themselves. The ideas and environment of the scholar always distort his view. How serious the distortion will be depends on the breadth of his knowledge and the sophistication of his mind. In general the men of the Middle Ages lacked sophistication and possessed very little historical sense. The *trouvères* who wrote the twelfth-century romances dealing with Aeneas, Alexander the Great, and the sieges of Troy and Thebes knew that the people about whom they were writing were pagans who worshipped many gods, but that was about the limit of their knowledge. They made the heroes of antiquity into medieval knights who wore the armor and used the weapons of the twelfth century, tourneyed and jousted, and lived in many-towered castles. In one of these stories an English knight called Sir Goodrich is made to participate in the siege of Thebes side by side with the heroes of Greek mythology.¹ When Pallas seeks to persuade Paris to give her the golden apple, she promises him a high reputation for chivalry.² John of Salisbury, Abelard, and other scholars of the day knew vastly more about classical times than did the romance writers and they had far more critical minds, but the same general tendency affected their views.

John of Salisbury rarely permitted his environment to lead him into error in regard to minor details of classical life. He was fully aware that the training, discipline, equipment, and tactics of the Roman soldier were vastly different from those of the medieval knight even though both were denoted by the Latin word *miles*.³ He probably knew what he was doing when he called the English itinerant justices pro-consuls.⁴ But he completely failed to comprehend the position of the Roman *curiales*, the local municipal

¹ *Le roman de Thèbes* (ed. Léopold Constans, *Société des anciens textes français*, Paris, 1890), I, 325.

² *Eneas* (ed. J. Salverda de Grave, *Les classiques français du moyen âge*, Paris, 1925), lines 150-154.

³ *The Statesman's Book of John of Salisbury, Being the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Books and Sections from the Seventh and Eighth Books, of the "Policraticus"* (trans. by John Dickinson, New York, 1927), pp. 180-242. This work will be referred to as Dickinson.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

magistrates, and cheerfully called them courtiers.⁵ In general, however, it was the more fundamental features of medieval society which distorted the views of John and his fellow scholars. The men of the twelfth century were so deeply Christian that they found it extremely difficult to comprehend the religious and moral ideas of the pagan past. Moreover the tendency of medieval scholars was to worship authority blindly. The Bible and the writings of the church fathers were accepted as revelations of the absolute truth in their realm, but they only covered theology and to some extent history and morals. For all other fields of knowledge the classics were the sole storehouse of information available to the Middle Ages. Naturally men were inclined to consider the classics as authoritative in their own fields as were the canonical writings in theirs. This attitude of mind was not likely to lead to a critical and objective view of the great men of the past and their works. John of Salisbury was a sincere Christian churchman who was thoroughly imbued with the respect which a man surrounded by the comparatively primitive culture of the Middle Ages was bound to feel for the advanced civilization of Greece and Rome. Although his keen, judicious mind prevented these two features of his environment from leading him as deeply into error as they did many of his contemporaries, they nevertheless affected his view of classical civilization.

For medieval churchmen the dominant subjects of study and contemplation were the Christian faith and the salvation to which it led. As all classical scholars of western Europe in the twelfth century were ecclesiastics, the first question which occurred to them in regard to the men of the past concerned their relation to Christianity. It was a ticklish subject on which the authorities were none too clear. Augustine and Jerome certainly taught that several virtuous pagans, in particular Plato and Vergil, had been inspired by God. Vergil indeed had prophesied the coming of Christ. On the other hand Augustine and Jerome had been attempting to convince educated pagans, mainly those with Neoplatonic leanings, that Christianity which Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 303.

Origen had decked out in Neoplatonic garments was not essentially different from their own philosophy. This controversial need no longer faced the ecclesiastics of the twelfth century and they were inclined to be more severe towards the pagan philosophers. When Abelard developed Augustine's ideas on this subject, he was declared in error. To Abelard the pagan world was divided into two classes, philosophers and others. The philosophers did not believe in the heathen gods—in fact they had a clear conception of the Trinity. He even went so far as to declare that Plato had received a revelation.⁶ Of course Abelard was using the term philosopher in a sense of his own—the pagan teachers who were not inspired were pseudo-philosophers. Abelard's enthusiasm led him from the path of orthodoxy and what we consider common sense. His motives are easy to comprehend. Plato and Aristotle were the most eminent authorities in wide fields of human knowledge, and he wished to establish them in a sound position as good Christians.

John of Salisbury had a better-balanced mind than Abelard and he had seen his old teacher wither away before the fiery blasts of that champion of orthodoxy, Bernard of Clairvaux. As a result he was always careful to make clear that the great men of antiquity were pagans. In speaking of the Emperor Trajan whom he admired he said cautiously, "I do not unreservedly and in all respects commend the judgment of a man who knew not Christ, yet I do extenuate the fault of him who broke loose from the pressure of others (to persecute the Christians)." ⁷ Again, "Cato, too, though he knew not the true God and was led astray by the superstitions of the gentiles. . . ." ⁸ In the case of Vergil John relaxed for a moment. Speaking of man's proneness to sin he says, "If the words of a pagan may be employed by the Christian. . . . Vergil

⁶ PETER ABELARD, *Theologiae Christianae* (ed. Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina*, CLXXVIII, Paris, 1885). See REGINALD LANE POOLE, *Illustrations of the History of Medieval Thought and Learning* (London, 1920), p. 149.

⁷ DICKINSON, p. 39.

⁸ *Frivolities of Courtiers and Footprints of Philosophers, Being a Translation of the First, Second, and Third Books and Selections from the Seventh and Eighth Books of the "Polycraticus" of John of Salisbury* (trans. Joseph B. Pike, Minneapolis, 1938), p. 178. This work will be referred to as Pike.

seems to have been by divine wisdom given a hint of this very fact." ⁹ Later, however, he set this right. "Maro (Vergil) although ignorant of the truth and walking in the darkness of the heathen. . . ." ¹⁰ As far as I can discover, John made no reference to Vergil's prophesy about the coming of Christ. Only with Plato and his followers did John venture near the precipice over which Abelard had fallen and then he did so with rare discretion:

Our great Augustine is authority for the statement (if I recall correctly the writings attributed to him that I have read) that there is found in the works of the Platonists that which the blessed evangelist thundered higher than the skies, and greater than the human mind can grasp, although the ear after a fashion can hear it; there is found these words at the beginning of the Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" and so on until the passage where he says, "And the light shineth in darkness and the darkness did not comprehend it." As for myself, had I not read it in the writings of the Fathers, I would never have thought that it had ever been granted to any unbeliever to open his lips in a prophecy of such light that the eye of the world could not endure to look upon it.¹¹

John of Salisbury was safe, well covered by Augustine, and what he really believed you can guess as well as I. He did, however, perhaps in moments of inattention, save two pagans. Quoting Jerome he placed Seneca among the saints in heaven because on the basis of some false letters he was believed to have been a friend of St. Paul.¹² Then John told how Pope Gregory the Great had mourned the fact that Trajan, the most virtuous of pagan emperors, was doomed to rest in hell. One night Gregory had a revelation that Trajan was free from hell on condition that the saintly pope did not bother God about any more pagans.¹³

Since John appears to have been convinced that the men of classical times, no matter how wise or virtuous they may have been, were pagans, it would be interesting to know what his conception of their religion was. He seems to have joined Abelard in following the early fathers who insisted that the really worthy men of

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 402.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 407.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 376.

¹³ DICKINSON, pp. 106-7.

pagan times did not believe in pagan gods. In speaking of early Rome he said, "Numa Pompilius introduced among the Romans certain ceremonies and sacrifices to the end that under the pretense of immortal gods he might the more easily induce them to cultivate piety, religion, good faith."¹⁴ He is even more definite in his comments on a passage in Plutarch, "This language is indeed that of an infidel and worthy of execration; nor is the sense of the words such as befits a philosopher. But perchance he did not dare express his real opinion concerning the nature of the gods."¹⁵ John obviously could not believe that wise men accepted the gods, but he was careful not to take the next step with Abelard and make them worshippers of the one God. That scholar quoted a passage from Cicero stating that philosophers did not believe that the gods existed and then added, "And so he openly says, 'I worship one God, not two or more.'"¹⁶

John left the philosophers religionless. He also failed to form any definite opinion as to what the pagan gods actually had been, but instead managed to express all the views current in his day. He stated that Homer used Minerva as a pleasant poetic symbol for prudence.¹⁷ In another passage Mercury was described as the "most adept of magicians."¹⁸ This represents the very common Euhemeristic view among medieval scholars that the gods were simply mortals whom fame had immortalized. Thus Abelard following Augustine made Mercury the first philosopher.¹⁹ Walter Map spoke of Jove as "an earthly king, who was even called king of heaven for his wonderful prowess of body and incomparable distinction of mind."²⁰ John, however, was equally taken with the idea that the gods were demons. After recounting the vengeance wreaked by Apollo on one who desecrated his temple, John said, "Nor need any be disturbed by the fact that Apollo appeared in

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁶ MIGNE, *Patrologia latina*, CLXXVIII, column 1140.

¹⁷ DICKINSON, p. 246.

¹⁸ PIKE, p. 39.

¹⁹ MIGNE, *Patrologia latina*, CLXXVIII, column 1009.

²⁰ WALTER MAP, *De nugis curialium* (trans. Montague R. James, *Cymmrodorion record series*, London, 1923), p. 163.

his temple for the purpose of checking the audacity and destroying the army of the unconquered leader . . . for it is certain that the powers of the air do much mischief against those who are without wholesome faith and are ignorant of the true religion.”²¹

The clarity and independence of John's mind is nowhere shown more effectively than in his judgments about the ideas and actions of the men of classical times. Abelard's reverence for the philosophers led him into the completely untenable position of denying that Plato meant what he said when he advocated the holding of wives in common.²² John did not feel it necessary to have his secular authorities perfect. He admitted that Aristotle made many errors, but maintained that he was a great logician.²³ To him the men of Greece and Rome were pagans who did much that was wrong, but they also furnished many examples of virtue and wisdom. “Let therefore the semblance of virtue be revered provided it be understood that without faith and love there can be no substance of virtue. Who now clothes himself in even the shadow of the virtues in which we see that gentiles excelled, albeit having no Christ they did not attain the fruit of true blessedness?” Then followed a list of nine virtues with a man noted for each one—for instance, Themistocles for diligence, Socrates for continence, Scipio for modesty, Cato for frugality.²⁴ Augustus was particularly praised by John for resisting the wiles of Cleopatra.²⁵ Scipio restored to the barbarians the boys and girls whom he had captured without looking at them lest it appear that he had been guilty of lust even if only with his eyes.²⁶ Brutus' execution of his sons was an example of care for the public welfare but at the same time a shocking infanticide.²⁷ John had a great admiration for Cicero. Nevertheless he remarked that it was Cicero's habit to laugh off any dishonorable act that he could not deny.²⁸ The Roman people were in John's view the supreme masters of the arts of politics and

²¹ DICKINSON, p. 230.

²² MIGNE, *Patrologia latina*, CLXXVIII, columns 1180-1.

²³ *Joannis Saresberiensis episcopi Carnotensis Metalogicon* (ed. Clemens Webb, Oxonii, 1929), p. 194.

²⁴ PIKE, pp. 178-9.

²⁷ DICKINSON, p. 51.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

war. At the same time they were greedy, avid for vain glory, easily corrupted by flattery.²⁰ In short, to John of Salisbury the ancients were not simple figures in black and white but real men who had wisdom and virtue, yet made errors and suffered from vices.

Among the innumerable moral judgments formed by John about the men of the past, several are particularly interesting because they seem to be the result of his medieval environment. The conservatism of the twelfth-century prelate is clear when he calls Gracchus a trouble-maker who deserved to perish.²¹ Christian suspicion of money influenced his comment on the story from Petronius of the man who could turn glass into gold and was executed by the emperor lest he do it too freely. To John this was a crime. A capable artisan was slain to protect the fuel of avarice.²² Another passage throws light on feudal political morality:

Argesilaus, on hearing that an uprising had taken place by night against Sparta, immediately abrogated the laws of Lycurgus which forbade the death penalty's being inflicted upon those who had not been condemned. After the guilty had been seized and put to death he restored the laws, at one and the same time seeing to it that salutary punishment should not on the one hand be contrary to law nor on the other hand hindered by it.²³

This devotion to the letter and indifference to the spirit of the law would have done credit to the most wily twelfth-century baron.

As John of Salisbury and his contemporaries learned what they knew about the ancients from their writings, their attitude toward these works is obviously of great interest. In general one can say that except for a few extremists the churchmen of the twelfth century were fully resigned to the necessity of reading the pagan classics. They were, after all, the only source of knowledge in many fields of inquiry. A common device was cheerfully to confuse Scriptures with scriptures and declare that every piece of writing had its value.²⁴ Another favorite excuse, culled from the fathers and used by John and most of his contemporaries, was the

²⁰ PIKE, pp. 80, 182-3.

²¹ DICKINSON, p. 21.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 395.

²³ PIKE, p. 389.

²⁴ *Ovide moralisé* (ed. C. de Boer, *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen*, new series, XV, Amsterdam, 1915), p. 61.

statement that it was wise and virtuous to "despoil the Egyptians."³⁴ As a matter of fact, however, this question of the use of pagan writers did not trouble John. He believed that every source of knowledge should be read. A wise man would know how to reject the errors of the pagans. John was in fact a highly adept despoiler of the Egyptians. To him Ovid was a teacher of immorality, yet he read his works and used them. He even quoted precepts from the *Remedia amoris* as sound advice for ascetics.

There was, however, one type of classical literature that troubled medieval scholars—that which contained large amounts of mythical matter. The men who joyously accepted Christian fables were perplexed and annoyed by pagan ones. Peter of Blois assured a correspondent, "I took my matter not from fables but from truthful history."³⁵ In the *Battle of the Seven Arts* Henry d'Andeli describes the defense of a castle by the authors (that is, classical writers). The fortress would have been strong had it not been stocked with fables.³⁶ The usual solution of the difficulties presented by fabulous material was to resort to allegorical interpretation. John clearly approved of this method, "For the poets' myths serve the purpose of divulging truth."³⁷ He himself followed Bernard Silvester in producing an allegorical interpretation of the *Aeneid* as an attempt to describe the four ages of man:

The first book of the *Aeneid*, then, under the figure of a shipwreck, sets forth the manifest tribulations of childhood, which is shaken by its own tempests; and at the termination of the period the abundance of food and drink of manhood is in evidence at the gaiety of the banquet. On the confines of boyhood conversation facilitates the interchange of ideas, and its freedom from restraint leads to the narration of stories and the mingling of the true and the false for the reason that a multitude of words cannot want sin. The third book sings the varied errors of youth which, as it were, belong to it because that age knows almost nothing but error.³⁸

³⁴ PIKE, p. 217.

³⁵ HENRY OSBORN TAYLOR, *The Mediaeval Mind* (New York, 1925), II, 160.

³⁶ Henri d'Andeli, *La bataille des VII ars* (ed. Louis John Paetow, *Memoirs of the University of California*, IV, Berkeley, 1914), p. 52.

³⁷ PIKE, p. 167.

³⁸ *Mediaeval Mind*, II, 142-3. PIKE, pp. 402-404.

At this game of allegorical interpretation John was to be vastly outdone by his successors. The men of the Middle Ages in general believed that every piece of writing had not one but several hidden meanings according to the point of view from which it was examined. The fourteenth-century author of *Ovide moralisé* took stories from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and supplied each one with a number of different historical and moral allegorical interpretations. In commenting on the story of Jupiter and Io the author pointed out that Ynacus was obviously a river:

Argus, who looked through a hundred eyes, had a castle which was near (the river). This castle had a hundred little towers: even today they are beautiful. Well was Argus lodged: his castle was seated nobly near the meadow, near the woods, near the river on a mount. From this mount and d'Argi the castle was named Montargi.

Having supplied Montargis, the chief stronghold of Gâtinais, with a classical namesake, the author proceeded to develop his allegory. Io represented the beautiful cows which Argus pastured in the meadow near his castle. Mercury, son of Jove, slew Argus and went off with the cows. In case this explanation was unsatisfactory, the author had another at hand. Ynacus was the first king of Greece. He had a son and a lovely daughter. The son, Phoroneus, was the first to invent legal procedure and the Roman *forum* was named after him. The daughter, Io, was seduced by Jupiter, king of Crete. He deserted her and she became a prostitute. Her father sought her out and begged her to return home, but he could not win her from her life of sin. As Io grew older she became the keeper of a house of prostitution. Her skill in that capacity so impressed the Egyptians that they made her a goddess. If one prefers a moral allegory, that too is ready. Io was a young girl who after years of virtuous life gave way to vice. Argus represented the world that exploited her weakness. Mercury was the eloquence of the sermons which led her to repent.³⁹

The story of Danae and the shower of gold was interpreted with equal verve. Jupiter was a great king who desired the girl who was shut up in the tower:

³⁹ *Ovide moralisé*, book 1, lines 3796-4013.

In order to accomplish his desire with the girl this king gave gifts from his rich treasury to the guardians of the tower so generously that they seemed to rain down in order that they would in return for his wealth be careless with the girl and let him have ease and leisure to speak with her as he pleased. Then he made the girl such rich gifts that he had his pleasure of her.

This fable taught the excellent lesson that you cannot keep a girl from a rich man. Then followed a still more intriguing interpretation:

Now I shall tell you the miracle of God who entered into the closed tower as a shower of gold without disclosing or discovering himself, without opening a wicket or a window. Jupiter, God, our aid, our father, our savior, our king, our creator descended into the noble tower where the beautiful Danae was shut up. Danae can be taken as virginity loved by God. The tower where she was enclosed represents the secret place in the belly of the virgin girl where God was able to descend as rain and take human flesh and join himself to our nature.

Needless to say Perseus represented Christ. Acrisius stood for the Jews who persecuted him.⁴⁰

John of Salisbury was the most learned and most understanding classicist of his day. He read and used all the available works of ancient writers. He seems to have had a real interest in the people who lived in the civilization he read about. Yet nowhere in his works can I find a reference to the classical works of art that adorned medieval Rome and that made a profound impression on many of his contemporaries. John visited Rome many times as an agent for his monarch Henry II and his two archepiscopal employers, Theobald and Thomas à Becket. While the objects of his journeys were political rather than cultural, it is hard to believe that he did not notice the classical statues scattered about Rome. But whether he observed them or not, he did not write about them. For the reaction of a medieval scholar to these works of art we are forced to turn to a classicist of the generation before John, Hildebert of Lavardin, bishop of Le Mans and archbishop of Tours:

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, book IV, lines 5490-5636.

The gods themselves marvel at their own images and desire to equal their sculptured forms. Nature was unable to make gods with such visages as man has created in these wondrous images of the gods. . . . They are worshipped for the skill of the sculptor rather than for their divinity.⁴¹

Not only scholars felt this spell. The magnificent equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius which the Middle Ages mistook for a likeness of Constantine the Great and placed in front of the cathedral of St. John Lateran made a deep impression on pilgrims. Several of them were so much affected by it that when they reached home they sought to have it reproduced on their favorite churches. The results of the hazy memory of a pilgrim and a sculptor who had never seen the original were often astonishing. At Parthenay-le-Vieux Constantine appears clothed in the mantle and crown of a medieval monarch and carrying a falcon on his wrist. Like the *trouvères* who composed the romances about classical times this sculptor saw no reason why the Ancients should not dress like men of his own time. This tendency of thought is beautifully illustrated by a story told of Duke Robert of Normandy. He was sorely troubled when he noticed that Marcus Aurelius-Constantine wore no mantle, a garment absolutely necessary for a nobleman. He therefore ordered his servants to clothe the statue in one of his mantles.⁴² Hildebert of Lavardin admired the skill of the sculptor; Duke Robert worried about the propriety of the emperor's costume. But both, scholar and warrior, were greatly impressed. Perhaps in fact it was Duke Robert who saw that a reproduction of Constantine was made to grace a church in Caen.

During the course of this paper we have seen how John of Salisbury viewed certain phases of classical civilization. Here and there we have noted the contrasting and similar opinions of some of his contemporaries. There was, of course, no medieval view of classical times but many different ones. As the most intelligent and best informed classicist of his day John's opinions are the most reasonable in the sense that they are the most like our own. Fixed ideas, lack of knowledge, and mental unsophistication hampered him less

⁴¹ *Medieval Mind*, II, 168.

⁴² ÉMILE MÂLE, *L'art religieux du XII^e siècle en France* (Paris, 1924), pp. 247-251.

than others. From him one can go down through various levels until one reaches the simple *trouvères* who wrote of Aeneas and Alexander and the sculptor who reproduced Marcus Aurelius at Parthenay-le-Vieux. As to what the illiterate mass of medieval people thought about Greece and Rome we can only guess. Perhaps our best guide to their views is the representations of classical subjects which appeared in contemporary pictures along with scenes from the Bible and popular romances. There one sees Vergil, who had climbed into a basket to be pulled up to a lady's window, left dangling in mid-air by the playful beauty, and Aristotle acting as a horse for the amusement of a mistress of King Philip of Macedon.⁴⁸ The tale of the eager lover in the basket was a favorite one in the Middle Ages and one finds many different men in the stellar role. In the popular mind the great men of antiquity seem little more than convenient heroes for good stories.

⁴⁸ ÉMILE MÂLE, *L'art religieux du XIII^e siècle en France* (Paris, 1925), pp. 337-8.

The Renaissance, whether rightly or wrongly so-called, derives its name from the idea that the period was a rebirth of the Greek ideal. We have seen that such rebirths had occurred before and that there had been more or less continuity of the Greek Tradition since its start. But in the fifteenth century in Italy it became peculiarly the fashion to justify all aesthetic innovations as revivals of classical originals, whether they be in the field of architecture, sculpture, literature, or even music.

The use of the classical model in the other arts is fairly well known to readers of such a volume as this. How strongly composers were inspired by the same program is probably less known. But when one reflects upon the rise of the opera, one sees that it could have been projected as a revival of the Greek tragedy, for the Greek tragedy also had music, poetry, dancing, acting all combined in one work of art. That the first operatic composers did not recognize the differences between their creations and those of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides is not extraordinary. The editor of these papers has seen a performance of Euripides' MEDEA by an American actress which might have been written and directed by Victorien Sardou. For that matter did not Brunelleschi and Alberti, Vignola and Palladio, imagine that their constructions were Roman? The early opera was Greek only in subject matter, but that subject matter at least was retained by composers up to the nineteenth century.

THE BEGINNINGS OF ITALIAN OPERA

by

Lubov Keefer

WAS IT VERDI who said: "Tornate all' antico e sara un progresso"? Whenever the youngest of the arts, music, wants to be rejuvenated, it turns to antiquity. Tonal archaism begins with Periclean Greece. Consequently, each one of the last few centuries has witnessed a renewed attempt to clarify its musical resources in regard to those of the "golden age." In each case the outcome has been as unexpected as unique.

When, on the heels of Kant, the German romanticists—Wackenroder, Tieck, the Schlegels, and Novalis—set out to evoke the spirit of the Hellenic muse, it was the would-be universality of the Greek melos which provided the keynote for the cult. The music of Aeschylus was symbolic of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the synthesis and integration of all the sister arts. The impulse for this unusually vehement espousal was given by Winckelmann's discovery that pure beauty lay in the "noble simplicity and quiet greatness of Hellas." This leads to Lessing's momentous contrast between static painting and dynamic poetry. In his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* Herder transplants the principle to the field of sculpture and music. Finally, Schelling covers the whole relation of nature and art. He distinguishes "Naturseele" or soul of form and the soul "an sich," and decrees that complete harmony of both was established only in the music of the Greeks. Hamann's "Ganzheitsbegriff" plays as telling a part in this search of the antique ethos as Herder's primitivistic philosophy, Heinse's musical novel *Hildegard von Hohen-thal*, Schleiermacher's pantheism, and Goethe's *Iphigenia*.

What is startling in this trend in German letters is that Novalis and Tieck could appreciate "naïve und sentimentalische Dich-

tung," the *Kritik der Urteilstkraft*, Schubert's psychology, Shakespeare and Dante, the magic of Paracelsus, even the theory of number, new physics, and Hafi, with infinitely more discernment and taste than they could Gluck, Piccini, Mozart, or the early Beethoven, let alone as abstruse a subject as Greek modes. Their letters and confidences display an amazing lack of musical data or even curiosity. The only trained musician among them and, incidentally, the only one to embody the ancient tradition of composer-poet, was E. T. A. Hoffmann, at once virtuoso, critic, poet, novelist, painter, and composer. Yet, in spite of technical deficiency and a lack of aesthetic insight, it is solely the unknown, unheard melody of a misty past which dictates the art formulas of Jena and Heidelberg.

Music in Athens, preach the *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* and *Sternbald*, was not a disconnected, divorced language. Not an art, it was "the" art, linking present and past with things to come. It was, proclaim *Lucinda* and *Hyperion*, the germ of speech, thought, and emotion, the only idiom, in which the soul of man, unhampered by reason, penetrated the deepest mysteries of the cosmos and conversed of things eternal. Its full latent power, assert Hölderlin and Schlegel, was realised but once in the history of mankind: in ancient Greece. There it was Deity, perfection, the primeval number, the absolute source.

What the romantics demand of their own product is integration. "Nicht nur alle Künste sollen Eins werden und alle Wissenschaften, Kunst und Poesie Eins mit Philosophie, und Eins mit Religion, nein, alles Geistige soll auch Eins werden mit dem Naturhaften" (Karl Joel: *Nietzsche und die Romantik*, 43). They abhor rules; music, as they see it, is irrational from beginning to end. Even the word profanes this intimate, "natural" dialect. They insist on a simplification of musical grammar: fewer instruments, less virtuosity. They champion musical eroticism, spontaneity, directness, nationalism—virtues which they read into Pindar and Sophocles.

Needless to say, no tonal chef d'œuvre crowned this worship.

Perhaps even the literary output, the *Athenaeum* and *Ofterdingen*, was not particularly benefited by the somewhat naïve and bulky experimentation in synesthesia and onomatopœia. Yet, by a less direct road, these exalted pœons culminated in Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, *Carnival*, and stirring C major *Phantasia*, Brahms' tender *Intermezzi*, and Beethoven's towering *Ninth*.

When Christoph Willibald Gluck, the "Ritter Gluck" of Hoffmann, and beloved of Heinse, some fifty years earlier declares war on the "misapplied vanity of singers and the excessive complaisance of composers, flowery descriptions, useless comparisons, and cold, sententious moralizing," pledges to exterminate "metaphor" and "sherbet" arias and to portray henceforth naught but "strong passion and the language of the heart" (Preface to *Alceste*), he bases his creed not so much on Greek drama as on the plastic art. And even though Gluck, inspired by the might and majesty of Phidias, breaks with standardized sentiment and bloodless idealisation and peoples his plays with Helenas, Euridices, and Alcestes, even though he succeeds in imparting to melody a purity matched only by the *Hermes*, and in knitting music and libretto into an organic whole, his melodrama approximates rather the style of his opponents, Piccini and Traetta, than that of Euripides. True, chorus and orchestra inherit the long-lost role of commentator, and aria is denuded of the fashionable senseless ornament, but Gluck, the thinker, who had looked for "his point of leverage outside what strictly can be called music" (A. Einstein: *A Short History of Music*, p. 144), yields to Gluck, the musician. His unique orchestral instinct triumphs as much over his own postulates as it does over the plaster-antiques of his day.

The same holds true for Wagner and Dargomyjsky, his Russian contemporary and brother-in-arms. As the creator of the *Niebelungen Ring* decides that the error of opera "lay in the fact that a means of expression (music) has been made the end; the end or objective of expression (the drama), the means" (*Oper und Drama*); that isolation, segregation of the "sublime Greek art" have brought about decadence, the "incomprehensible, bizarre,

and absurd" (*Kunstwerk der Zukunft*), he superimposes "alla Grecca" his edifice of "Ticht und Tanz" on "Ton."

With what results? He may contrive to produce undying melody, advance orchestral resource, create a titanic circus or forge a splendid weapon for Fascism, but he does not resurrect *Antigone* or *Prometheus*. If Dargomyjsky, in his *Stone Guest* actually hints at this most elusive of truths, the "musical," it is perforce because he is a lesser giant.

Yet, whatever the Attic supremacy in the *Frogs* or the *Erechtheon*, from the standpoint of sheer sonority the contemporaries of Aristophanes certainly had nothing even faintly akin to the *Meistersinger*-Fugue, the love-death of *Tristan*, or the immolation of the *Götterdämmerung*. Nor could they, for medieval lyrics, Beethoven's passion, Berlioz's instrumental wizardry, and the theatrical instinct of the despised Marschner, Weber, and Meyerbeer, were all grist to Wagner's mill.

But, without an initial effort to bring back Greek music, there would be no Gluck, Dargomyjsky, and Wagner, as well as no *Euryanthe*, *l'Africaine* or *Hans Heiling*. True, without this attempt, we may still lay claim to all of Bach, Brahms, Chopin, Reger, and Scriabin, to the greater Beethoven, and the very choicest in Haydn, Schubert, and Schumann, but the world would be the poorer for one of the most vital, protean, as well as the most provocative, of music forms.

For, unexpectedly, and almost against the better judgment of its sponsors, the thesis that salvation from musical monstrosities lay somewhere on the other side of the Aegean resulted in the creation of opera. The place is Florence. The date, 1600, has assumed such magnitude that today it still serves to denote the boundary between those eternal adversaries, the old and "Nuove, Musiche."

It goes without saying that the essence of Hellenic melody was as much of a sealed book to the Florentines of the late Cinquecento as it had remained to Gluck, Herder, or Richard the First.

Today we are infinitely better off. Epigraphy and musicology have given us a Baedeker through the different stages of Greek tonal art. For the archaic period of *Nicandra*, the smiling *Apollon*,

and *Typhon* we possess a remnant of a Homeric hymn. The early classical art of Myron and the Olympian temple of Zeus is represented by a few lines of an *Ode* of Pindar, the authenticity of which at last seems assured; the glorious era of Phidias and Iktinos, by a badly damaged fragment of Euripides' *Orestes*. Performed in Athens in 408, this stasimon is all that is left of Greek tragedy-music. It was made accessible to the world at large in 1892. The age of Praxiteles speaks through two fascinating hymns to Apollo, engraved in the stone of the Athenian treasury in Delphi. A short time before, the Gauls had attacked the sanctuary but were expelled by landslides, and the songs voice the gratitude of Cleocharès, son of Bion. Discovered at the same time as *Orestes*, and published by Weil and Reinach some months later, they are the most significant of the excavations to date. The Hellenistic, "genre" culture of the early Augustan rule has yielded the pearl of Greek lyrics: the touching Skolion which a certain Seikilos had drawn as a token of undying love on the tombstone of his departed wife in Tralles, in Asia Minor. It became known earlier than the others: in 1883. Finally, the chapters on decadent Attic melos, under Hadrian and Antoninus, are exemplified in the three chants of the Cretan Mesomedes, who, if one is to believe Suidas, was a notorious player on the kithara. Those were identified already in the sixteenth century and remained until the advent of Debussy all that was known of Attic song.

These disconnected bits may be, and are, lamentably inadequate for the reconstruction of a great art. For even today, we are at a loss to pass on the harmony, range, orchestral means, or dynamics of ancient tone. However, even they became accessible in the last decenniums. The sole exception is furnished by the more Roman than Greek Mesomedean Hymns to the Muse, Helios and Nemesis. Preserved in a number of manuscripts all through Europe, they were unearthed by Vincenzo Galilei as early as 1581. Certainly, they aroused tremendously the curiosity and awe which were already in the air. But, as far as their acoustical components go, they were dead letters indeed. It was reserved for two Germans, Heinrich Bellermann and Karl Forlage, after endless false

leads to unravel in 1850 the key to the Greek notation, both the Dorian for instruments, and the older Ionian for the voice. An astoundingly complex network of pitch and time progressions was thus laid bare.

Wherein lay the fascination of obscure Greek melody to post-Renaissance Italians? Now it is quite conceivable that the epoch-making finds of the Belvederean Apollo (1485) and the imposing Farnese Bull (1456), the Laokoon (1506), Ariadne (1585), or the gigantic Nile (1513), would enthrall a nation which had as yet no sculpture of its own worthy of the name. Vasari's tale of how Brunelleschi and young Donato set out to rediscover antique vaults, plans, and cornices, so as to incorporate them in Santa Croce, and the palaces of Urbino and Pitti, has been retold over and over. Giotto, Masaccio, and Pollaiuolo are as inconceivable without Apelles as Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio without Homer and Plato.

With music the situation is the exact reverse. This was the only art fondled and cherished by a Church which deemed it wise to expel from its humble houses all plastic reminders of man's body as venomous to man's soul. And it is precisely in the years preceding the voluntary return to primitivism, that melody and harmony, bent on emancipation from the aegis of the same church, had made incalculable strides.

In the year which saw one of the first *Dramme per Musica* (1594), Palestrina, unsurpassed lord of Roman church-chant, "as near perfection as is permitted mere mortals" (Gray: *The History of Music*, p. 75), and Orlando Lassus, in versatility and dynamism the very incarnation of the Renaissance, were laid to rest. These names alone would elevate the century to undimmed glory. But simultaneously, Spain produces the mystic Tomas-Luis de Vittoria, in tragic exaltation the peer of El Greco, and Ferrara, the most brilliant madrigalist of all times, so great in fact that his own generation thought him a madman and murderer—Carlo Gesualdo, prince of Venosa. In Venice, the Gabriellis, uncle and nephew, reach out far beyond the limits of country and time. And, across the Channel, waiting on the Queen, a galaxy of prolific

composers: Shepherde, Taverner, Tye, White, Phillips, Tallis, Byrd, Dowland, Wilbye, Weelkes, and Gibbons, seem anxious to crown a great age in a great country with a last great deed. Why then should music of her own free will shed all this radiance?

The range of musical thought from the first timid endeavors at rabetting together two or more voices of Gregorian, early in the ninth century, to some six hundred years hence, is generally designated as the era of vocal polyphony. When medieval man, through some sheer inadequacy of auditory or vocal equipment, discovered to his delectation that tunes could be sounded together and the potency of musical expressiveness thereby heightened a hundredfold, he began to explore the weaving and welding of all sorts of tonal patterns. Since it redounded infinitely more to a composer's credit to be a *symphonetes*, which means to make use of ready-made melodies, than a *phonescus* and invent new ones, there evolved, papal bull notwithstanding, a rather ingenious design, one which dominates the field straight to the death of Bach, the *motet*. Originally the name of a part with a new text, and etymologically derived from "word," it soon serves to denote a contrapuntal piece for three or more voices. The lower may be given a fragment of plain-chant; the middle sounds against it some popular ditty, while the upper, unheeded, frolics about as *ballata*, *caccia*, or troubadour refrain. The lower intones in Church Latin, the middle, in the language of Dante, while the "triplum" proceeds in Saxon, Provençal, or in any other tongue. This Babel illustrates more than any other single factor the joy in purely sensual sonority at the expense of something, which, in the different ramifications of musical speech, has been felt to be the necessary concomitant of all tonal utterance: the spoken word. It is only with the breathtaking advent of the Symphony, with the Mannheimers, Stamitz, Richter, and Wagenseil, that harmony, melody, and rhythm succeeded in obtaining a Magna Charta from their former support and, more recently, adversary.

If *musical Renaissance* may be permitted to be used in its broad sense, 1300-1600, the desecration of the word is undoubtedly its salient feature. It characterises alike the High Mass, profaned by

a gutter-air, and the not much more irreverent *villanella* and *frottola*. As the "new Pythagoras," Willaert of Brugge, in his search of color inaugurates a double chorus for the service of St. Mark's, he definitely enriches the tonal web and refines its texture. But already with his immediate successors, van Rore, Merulo, and the Gabriellis, Andrea and Giovanni, the usual four-part choir swells into a canon for as many as thirty participants. Voice is piled mercilessly upon voice, chorus upon chorus, until in an ensemble more staggering than satisfying, the word, smothered still further by endless repetition and the breaking up of syllables, becomes hopelessly lost. This polyphonic debauchery is carried on in all learned music. It is a fantastic magnificence. Of course, many a poem was cleansed in the process, but in the wake of Barberino and Petrarch, the agitation against the murder of the word by tone became a matter of national concern.

As already suggested, salvation was felt to lie somewhere in the direction of Mount Parnassus. It was not clear how much counterpoint Pindar and Aeschylus had accumulated. But with its few actors classical tragedy could not possibly have indulged in these mass extravaganzas which grew to be the particular *bête noire* of Florence. In addition, the Eulesian festival in honor of the Sun-God did not draw its tunes from arbitrary sources. Instead, melody was summoned solely as an aid to poetry. A tragedian had to master music as any other tool of his craft. No less an authority than Aristotle vouches for it. And since Hellas had showered on the world the noble moulds of Nike and Zeus, the thought of Socrates and Plato, was it not natural then that tone-language, in the very subjugation of melody to inflections of dialogue, had here in Athens scaled once and for all its sublime heights?

So argued the company of art-lovers and literati assembled in 1580 or thereabouts around their enlightened patron and munificent host, Giovanni Bardi, the Florentine count of Vernio. Here was a "virtuous cavalier, liberal, magnanimous, of excellent taste, highest gentility, and great knowledge" (Stefano Arteaga: *Revolution of the Theater*, 1783). Better still, he had

ideas, and money to put them into practice. Among the habitués of this literary rather than musical fraternity were Vincenzo Galilei, father of the astronomer and pupil of the no less renowned harmonist Zarlino; the poets Ottavio Rinuccini and Gabriello Chiabrera, the learned Maecenas Girolamo Mai and Jacopo Corsi, and the instrumentalists and singers Piero Strozzi, Jacopo Peri, and Giulio Caccini.

Their premise ran as follows: in ancient drama the musical means are of the simplest. Yet they produce overwhelming consequences. The strains of a single phorminx or an aulos safeguard the chastity of Clytemnestra or the strength of Prometheus, while Chisia's fury is stilled by the four strings of the kitharis. In order to restore music to this erstwhile pristine chastity, and so to endow it with new blood, the "fiorita Accademia" (G. B. Doni: *Della musica scenica*) resolves that tonal grammar be stripped of all the wealth which had been its prerogative since the days of Huchald and Guido. Many-voicedness is the most dreaded but not the only foe. All manners of melismatic ornament which, as legacy of Gregorian sequence and trope, had outwitted St. Augustine, papal edict, and the council of Trent, are envisaged as formidable obstacles in the path of "natural" melody. Somewhere in Plato, Bardi, this "grande amatore della Musica e dell' Antichità" (Doni: *Della musica scenica*, Chap. 9), had come across the assertion that music consists of but three essentials: word, rhythm, and sound. Is it not clear that tone has to wait on the first two named? The maxim is accepted as battle cry. Bardi out-Platoes Plato when he adds: "Just as the sound is more noble than the body, so the words are more noble than the counterpoint," and, with a lesser regard for the *Symposium* but more prophecy for the course of the coming opera: "The singer must sing sweetly, for music is naught but sweetness."

Perhaps there is something unsavory in any adoration nurtured exclusively on theoretical postulates. In addition, the "dogmatic Areopagus" had spent a goodly measure of the sap and vitality of a Masaccio or Peruzzi. It would seem that the satellites of Bardi manifest an exaggerated, almost sickly, modesty by looking

for encouragement not in the opulent, fertile present: Lassus, Byrd, Vittoria, but in intangible phantoms. Luckily, the danger is averted by the multiplicity of talent, latent in the *Camerata*, as the Society is called, and by the elasticity of individual trends. Alone, a sublimation of the erstwhile union of word and tone animates all the Bardists. Three dates display best the potency of the Neo-Greek revival.

In the year 1581 Galilei publishes *Della musica antica e della moderna*, an exposition of what he believes to be the focal points of classical art. The writing is prompted by the disclosure of the first authentic Greek melodies, identified in an antique manuscript in Rome a few months previously. A dialogue between the two chieftains of the Camerata, Bardi and Strozzi, summarizes Galilei's aesthetic aims: "Under the rule of the Barbarians all science was extinguished, as if everyone had fallen into a lethargy of ignorance: they lived without desire for knowledge: they had as much idea about music as about the West Indies, and persisted in this passivity." (Preface to *Della musica*). A savant and humanist, Galilei confesses a deep-rooted contempt for the "Goths," in whose camp he places even Zarlino. It is he who imparts to the Academy its reformatory and archaeological bent. The Hymns are carefully copied and printed together with the musical treatises of Aristides Quintilianus and Bryennius. (Rolland, Romain: *Les origines du théâtre lyrique moderne. Histoire de l'Opéra en Europe avant Lully et Scarlatti*, p. 64). As many another valuable document, the practical application of this belligerent pamphlet is lost. Of Galilei, the composer, more will follow.

In the year 1585 the Venetian colorist Andrea Gabrieli presents the choruses for the solemn production of the Sophoclean *Œdipus Rex* in Vincenza at the theater of Palladio. The superb building with its classic columns and arches had been erected some twenty years before to house a single production of another copy from Hellas, Vicentino's *Antigone*. Gabrieli's songs, "sopra li Cori della Tragedia" (the incomplete score had been located by Rolland in the Padoan *Biblioteca del Seminario*), do not approach the moral portent of the commentator. But, in more than one way,

they are harbingers of a new musical epoch. Scored for a small body of singers (fifteen at most), grave, simple, and distinctly harmonic in feeling, they are modeled on "piacevol parlare ed armonia" (Solerti, Angelo: *Gli albori del Melodramma*, I, p. 7-8) and pay the most scrupulous attention to the words of the Italian translation. If the dramatic often becomes submerged in the religious, the accent of the verse is kept intact throughout. Andrea well deserves the tribute of the younger Giovanni: "He was unique in his command of expression in speech and thought" (Winterfeld, Carl: *Johannes Gabrieli und sein Zeitalter*, p. 121).

The last momentous date is 1589 when Luca Marenzio, the foremost madrigalist of the age, sets to music the *Combat of Apollo with the Serpent Python*. The occasion is a traditional one—a wedding in the Medici home. Indeed, what would have been the progress of opera without the fertilization of high finance by royal blood? The best brains of Florence vie with one another in the gala spectacle, broadcasting the union of Ferdinando I with Christina di Lorena of Tuscany. *Apollo's Battle* forms the central episode of five, each of which asserts in a different manner its indebtedness to Attica.

The musical setting of the first is by Emilio di Cavaleri, a somewhat blinded torchbearer of the Camerata (Doni). His lutes and viols lend a modern touch to the antique fable as found in Plato's *Republic*: the Harmony of Celestial Spheres. After some madrigals, manufactured by Cristofano Malvezzi to Rinuccini's lyrics, the curtain rises on the strife of the Pieridi with the Muses, laid amid huge mountains and grottos. Here it is the musician who resuscitates the dim past: in Malvezzi's score each single voice can be isolated from its surroundings.

But the really revolutionary incident is the *Combattimento d'Apolline con Serpente*. Its collaborators are Luca Marenzio, "sweet singer from the noble city of Brescia," and Rinuccini, the self-appointed spokesman of Vernio's order.

Now, in Hellas, there lived about 733 B.C., so says Plutarch, a certain Olympos, son of that notorious Marsyas who was flayed by Apollo for his proficiency in flute-playing, and grandson of

Hyagnis, inventor of the Phrygian mode. This Olympos owes his enduring fame to a fascinatingly descriptive nomos polykephalos in honor of the Delphian Apollo and a lament on the death of Python.

Three commentators: Strabo, Julius Pollux, and the Grammaticus supply detailed data on the nomos. Indeed, the orchestral interludes which introduced and closed the antique poem (Strabo and Grammaticus), Apollo's invectives (Strabo), the beast's groans, sighs, twists, and gnashing of teeth (Pollux), the triumphant outcries of the choristers as victory draws near, the Thanksgiving Hymn to the gods, the fanfares, and the ballet (Pollux), compare most favorably in color and suggestiveness to the winding, darting, recoiling, and hissing snake in Händel's *Giulio Cesare*.

Since the larger part of Malvezzi's score is lost, it is all the easier to follow Rinuccini's contribution. One senses the gusto with which the poet sharpens the realism of the sanguinary tale. He tinges it with deeper, baroque shadows, and imbues it with an undercurrent of the sinister. Throughout, the accent is on the colossal, the "terribilità." To this gloom the polite correctness of the lilting rime offers a glaring discrepancy. Dressed "alla Grecca," frightened men and women crowd the footlights, and sing:

- I. Ebbra di Sangue in quest' oscuro bosco
Giacea pur dianzi la terribil' fera
E l' aria fosca e nera
Rendea col fiato e col maligno tosco!
- II. Qui di carne se sfama
La spaventosa serpe in questo loco
Vomita fiamma e fuoco, e fischia, e rugge,
Qui l' erbe e i fior distrugge.
Ma dov' è il fiero mostro?
Forse avrà Giove udito il pianto nostro.

Just as they finish the refrain, the serpent appears. Too frightened to speak, they sing on their knees:

Oh, sfortunati noi!
O Padre! O Re del Cielo!
Muovi lampi, e saetta
A far di te vendetta
Contro il mostro crudel che la divora.

The song acts as an aperitive. Gleeefully, the serpent contemplates his prospective victims when, suddenly, out of a clear sky, sent for by the divinities, Apollo descends. Viols and trumpets signalize his arrival. The battle which ensues is as long and obstinate as the ballet which accompanies it step by step. Even the monster, exhaustion notwithstanding, embarks on a "pas" of his own. As, after many additional tribulations, Apollo places his gold-clad toe on the dead head, the singers, who had discreetly left the stage to the combatants, return to crown the victor and play "a rapturous tune on sweet instruments."

The constant allusion to the orchestra is most relevant. The entire ancient cult of the Sun-God is significant in that it is much richer in instruments than its later evolution. As is well known, the classical tragedy eschewed symphonic profusion and limited itself to the aulos, but the Delphians (Plutarch: *De musica*, Chap. 14) celebrated the victory of their oracle with syrinx, kitharis, even trumpet and drum. Riemann doubts the authenticity of the report (Riemann, Hugo: *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* I, p. 45-8); Malvezzi accepts it. One notices how cleverly and à propos the Camerata adopts its own resources to the antique scheme of things.

Musically, the surviving choruses of the *Combattimento* are a highly baroque product. They are not true to the Florentine conception of Greek music in that they make no use of sung dialogue. As in Gabrieli's chants, the songs of the Delphians, ranging from four to eight voices, reflect a definite effort to unveil the sense of the words. As in the *Œdipus* of 1585, the inner meaning of the drama but rarely emerges victorious over syllable and stress.

The concluding bridal intermezzi do not deviate from the established tenor. Allegorical duels provide the leitmotif. Music—song and instruments—serves to smooth over the rough edges.

Strozzi gives his version of an ancient contest between celestial and infernal demons, and for the grand finale Rinuccini and Malvezzi have the assistance of Cavalieri in *Ariono citaredo* and *Doni degli Dei e bullo*.

To us at a distance it is clear that the "lovers of poetry who were meditating the means of rescuing her from musical pedants . . . , Gothic, cumbrous ornaments . . . , in order to render her more fine, beautiful, and pleasing" (Burney: *A General History of Music*, II, p. 507), had no inkling of how far-reaching their reform was to be. As it was, social, aesthetic, and ideological currents turned out to be particularly propitious. No *dramma per musica* was to be thought of before poetry would be permeated with precisely these elements which would make it susceptible to music. Tonal language, in turn, had to become more highly individualized, more elastic and passionate before it could underscore dramatic development. The bare fact that but a few years after the movement got under way, Claudio Monteverdi is able to write an *Orfeo* speaks volumes. The arsenal from which the new monody drew its implements had been founded several centuries previously.

Of the formative trends which fertilised the "revolution" the speculative side is perhaps the most general, far-reaching and familiar. Sponsored by Petrarch's discovery of Cicero and *Ad Atticum*, and transmitted to Boccaccio, humanism makes rapid strides. By 1400 Chrysolaras teaches Greek in Florence, Plethon disputes on Plato, and Bruni gives a translation of the *Ethics* and *Politics* (1414-37). The enthusiasm is fanned by the councils of Ferrara (1483) and Florence with their heated controversy over the merits of Plato and Aristotle. Ten of the *Dialogues* are translated by Ficino before the death of Cosimo, ten more before the accession of Lorenzo. Soon afterwards, Angelo Poliziano introduces Lorenzo's children to Homer and Vergil.

In addition to the revered writings of Plato, Aristotle, and St. Augustine, the major impetus to music is offered by a Roman, Boethius (475-524). Translated by Grigorii (Venice, 1491-99), the five volumes of *de Musica* offer an adept, though by no means

profound, systematization of the doctrines of Varro and Albinus, supplemented by some disjointed maxims of Aristoxenus, Nicomachus, and still more, Ptolemy. In spite of the circumstance that the work completely lacks tonal illustrations, it whetted the musical appetite, and instigated as much juxtaposition of old and new music as Leon Baptista Alberti's study of modern and antique poetry a generation previously.

The analysis of primary sources proceeded at a slower pace. In 1498 Georgius Valla publishes in Venice the treatise of Cleonides which undertakes a rather copious exposition of Aristoxenus' *Rhythmic*. However, another half-century passes before any of the other standard works become available. Pollux is printed in Venice in 1502; Pausanias, the Baedeker of Greece, and Strabo, in 1515; and in 1532 there comes to light in the city of the Lagoons a Latin version of Plutarch's *Commentarie Musiche* by one Carlo Valguglio. From 1562 onward, following Sebastiano Serlio's essay on Vitruvius and the architectural treatises of Vignola and Palladio, there appear in rapid succession, and still in Latin, the writings of Aristoxenus of Tarentum, Ptolemy (*Harmonica*), and some fragments of Aristotle, selected by Gagavino del Grave. From now on the Cinquecento is fully equipped with Greek music in the abstract. The musical maxims of Hellas spread like wildfire and are appropriated alike by layman and practitioner. An unfortunate aspect of these tonal excavations is that they took place at a time when Aristoxenus, the greatest of the Hellenes, had been quite outstripped by Palestrina, Lassus, and Gabrieli. Zarlino, the mentor of Galileo, who could never forgive the younger man's ingratitude, is the first to point to the inconsistency.

If, among the numerous commentators of the *Politica*, *De legibus*, *Timaeus*, and *De furore poetico* there is a surplus of ecstasy and nothing approaching standardized opinion in regard to the role of music in Greece, it was exceedingly easy to sublimate the function, since the hedonistic subjects of the Medici craved all sorts of euphonious fare.

This taste has been fed ever since Angelo Poliziano (1454-94),

professor of Greek and Latin letters in Florence, had produced an *Orfeo* (1471) in which music, both vocal and orchestral, played a conspicuous part. Its solo (the prayer of Orfeo and Aristeo) and chorus (Driads and Bacchantes) are attributed to a certain Germo, of whom we have no further knowledge. Presently, that is from Franco Beverini's *La Conversione di S. Paolo* onwards, (1480) it becomes customary to herald the entrance of certain *dramatis personae* with definite instruments, à la Wagner. Already by the middle of the century these musical entr'actes threaten to overthrow the tragedy. Indeed, at this period the composer is mentioned on a par with the poet, a place of honor which he will shortly yield to stage mechanic, painter and costumer. A virtuoso of the first rank, Alfonso della Viola, furnishes the choral episodes for C. B. Giraldi Cinthio's *Orbecche*. Famous in another line, Antonio del Cornetto elaborates the same dramatist's *l'Egle*, while the great Claudio Merulo paints tonal canvases to two tragedies of Lodovico Dolce, the erudite and volatile friend of Titian: *Marianna* (1565) and *The Trojans* (1566). In addition, he has charge of that grand play of Cornelio Claudio Frangipiane, staged before Henry III of France under the title of *Tragedia all' Antica*, in the Venetian Hall of the great Council in 1574.

We can only guess at the ratio of music and poetry. Neither do we know how latent was the vertical feeling inherent in the score, but it seems reasonable to surmise that the madrigalist did not radically depart from his traditional phraseology. More likely all "archaism" is absolved by the interpolation of chants, and the choice of a mythological plot. As usual, the spectators get their biggest thrill from instruments and stage machines:

Fu recitata con quella maniera che si ha alla forma degli antichi. Tutti li recitanti hanno cantato in soavissimi concetti, quando soli, quando accompagnati: ed in fine il coro di Mercurio era di sonatori che avevano quanti varii instrumenti che si sonarono giammai. Li trombetti introducevan li dei in scena, quale era instituita con la machina tragica, ma non si è potuto ordinare per il gran tumulto di persone che qui vi era (Frangipiane, 2 ed. of the *Tragedia*. Rolland, p. 61).

From the interlude the next logical step leads to a play in

which music—not merely incidental—is applied throughout in the manner of Aeschylus or Euripides. But before this, the intermezzi will invade other genres. *Canzone, balleti, toccate*, whose sole purpose is a “stupefazione con l'improvviso” (Solerti: *Albori*, I, p. 10), appear almost coinstantaneously in France, Germany, and Italy. This ebullition of dances, masques, and allegories forms a link between the ancient play of the *sileni* or *satyri* and the more modern *buffa*. In no time, these rough pebbles are polished, rounded off, dramatized, and strung with a sort of continuity and operatic logic. Out of loosely woven madrigals and divertimenti there matures a baroque play within the play.

The chronological record of these interludes in comedy antedates all other art forms. Castiglione complains of the “musiche bizzarre,” which obscured the *Calandria* (1513), while Machiavelli sees fit to enrich the *Mandragola* with a canzonetta from his own pen. This usurpation of spoken lines by melody becomes a matter of communal concern in 1555 when Nicola Vicentino laments “ogni sorte di musica da buffoni, ridiculosa e lasciva” (Solerti: *Albori*, I, p. 8).

But the *Commedia all' Intermedi* will not be bridled. Individual stages in its advance derive once more from Medicean matrimonial ambition. In 1539 Cosimo weds Eleanor of Toledo; in 1565 Francesco takes to wife Johanna of Austria and, fifty years after Cosimo, Fernando lavishly inaugurates his union with Christina of Lothringia. *Il Commodo* seals the first tie. By one of these singular streaks of fortune to which we owe among others, Monteverdi's *Arianne* (*Lament*), the music survives. The second results in *La Cofanaria*, a narrative of the tribulations of Cupid and Psyche. For the commemoration of the third the whole Camerata lends its most glamorous force. The text of the entr'actes to Girolamo Bargagli's *Pellegrina* is entrusted to Bardi, Rinuccini, Giovan-Battista Strozzi, and Laura Guidiccioni; the tonal pictures, to Cavalieri, Caccini, Malvezzi, and Marenzio, this “più dolce cigno dell' Italia.” Who could deny that the intermezzo had passed its adolescence? We hear of fencing contests, fireworks, and naval battles which extolled the nuptials, but the intermezzi

with their scenic metamorphosis, gaudy costumes, "arty" dances, and a harmonious orchestra are enshrined in the most luminous aureole. The significance of all this lies not so much in the fact that a drama acquiesces with more or less grace to this intrusion by a foreign, artificially grafted body, as that these episodes, where tone and word were produced simultaneously, pointed the way towards realism and clarity.

Neither the term nor the concept of *program music* figure in the manifestos of the Camerata. Yet it is a clandestinely espoused virtue, one of the many excellences ascribed to Alcman, Sappho, or Anacreon. Today we may well question whether the Hellenes stooped to tone-painting in their lyrics, provided one subscribes to its existence in any time or clime. But since the "Areopagus" set out to make the message of tone more lucid, naturalism was felt to be a welcome attribute.

Once more, the Cinquecento sought realism in Periclean melody, because this realism already existed in a form on which they had been brought up: the madrigal. Not to be confused with its early namesake of Florentine extraction, the madrigal at first signalizes as much of a rebellion against "imitation" as against the vulgar *frottola* or *villanella*. It takes over the technique of its plebeian prototypes. To quote Ambros: "A Frottola ennobled became a Madrigal, and a Madrigal degraded became once more a Frottola." Simple and homophonic, it is the first outstanding manifestation of secular spirit in Christian music.

Petrarch, Tasso and Ariosto supply the first poems. As time goes on, the Italian madrigal retains its literary bent, but its musical pattern grows more voluminous and complex. More and more frequently it borrows its effects from polyphony. Spurred by the invention of music-printing, the output of madrigals is truly gigantic. At first sight it might be retorted that a vocal quartet is not the happiest medium for the portrayal of coquetry, jealousy, or anger, but then, what about the woodwind waterdrops in the *Pastoral*, or the ethical import of the trombones in *Don Giovanni*?

Curiously, the reversion to realism is accomplished precisely by means of this intellectual madrigal. From its adversary and

parent, the folk song, it secures the predilection for the picturesque. Alessandro Striggio, "gentilhuomo mantovano, servitore dell' illustriss. et eccellentissimo Cosimo" tills the soil for this naturalism. In 1567 he produces *Il Cicalamento delle Donne al Bucato*. The five scenes of this charming "symphony," rising from a matinal "al fresco" wash to a brawl of washerwomen interspersed with shrieks, hair-pulling, and fistfights in the best *Carmen* manner, display ultra-modern tendencies tempered alone by Italian grace. There is no avowed pretense at emulating the ancients, but in its faithfulness to type the *Cicalamento* is a worthy companion of *Antigone*.

Another genius who scorns all bonds with archaism is the Modenese Orazio Vecchi, priest, entrepreneur, and dueller, whose *Masses* and *Buffas* were in constant demand from Austria to Denmark and Poland. For his vast and biting "comédie humaine" Vecchi selects the madrigal. He defends the form with a vehemence and singleness of purpose prophetic of Molière in a similar predicament. "Like a mirror, a satire presents life in all its phases" (*Amfiparnassus, Ai lettori*, 1597). "It has been said that it is a violation of good taste to mix the serious with the light in music . . . they are related as father and son" (*Veglie di Siena. Ai lettori*, 1604). And, with a logic, characteristic of many a weaker genius, he adds: "Aristotle vouches for it; and Homer and Vergil prove it."

An insurgent, Vecchi upholds the divine birthright of melody (*Convito musicale*), for is not music "poetry fully as much as poetry itself"? (*Veglie di Siena*). His disciple Banchieri goes a shade further: "Tone and word are not complete without each other; real art means the blending of both" (*Saviezza giovanile. Prologue*. 1628).

The portentous aspect of Vecchi's artistry is that he allots to tone not, as heretofore, the intellectual, but the sensual domain: heart and passion. In the day when all idolization of woman narrowed down to an objective worship of the Virgin, he invests his melody with vibrating, fervid yearning. In the finesse with which he makes pitch and rhythm serve the inflections of conversation,

Vecchi has no peers. Already in *Selva di varie Ricreationi*, where the plant kingdom is symbolised through "capricci, balli, arie, fantasie, serenate . . .," this talent announces itself. It gains in incisiveness in the colorful *Convito* which opens with a paraphrase of Socrates and continues in the vein of Seneca and Origenus. If the design of *Le Veglie di Siena* is suggested by Boccaccio, its inner *raison d'être* is "aver tuttavia occasione di variare et ischerzare in tuttii generi della musica" (*Pref. to King Christian*). The peak of the dramatic madrigal is Vecchi's periphrastic *Amfiparnasso*. Beckmesser, Strauss' *Salome*, and Berlioz' *Fantastique* do in no way transcend the charivari of the Ghetto or the acrid chorus of the Jews.

So vital is this realistic madrigal that its well-being is in no way arrested by the birth of opera. As late as 1628 Banchieri's *Metamorfosi, lo Zabajone*, and *la Barca da Venetia per Padova* undergo additional editions.

If the madrigal provides the picturesque accent for the opera, if humanism dictates its table of contents, and the hedonistic insistence on the bel-canto its form, the color-palette of the new music drama is drawn from yet another fountain: the pastoral. It has been said that the pursuit of the idyllic is never as irresistible as in epochs of extreme spirituality and refinement. In Italy this orientation is accelerated by political calamity: Rome and Florence fall a prey to barbarians (1527-30). Liberty ceases. Even ancient drama is viewed with suspicion by the petty princes who tremble lest the mob become infected with the germ of democracy. Something less dynamic and sincere, less robust, is their object.

The pastoral rules supreme from the day of Poliziano to G. Chiabrera's *Il Pianto d'Orfeo* (1615), D. Belli's *Orfeo dolente* (1616), and S. Landi's *La Morte d'Orfeo*. In the latter work there is a scene in which Charon takes a glass of water from the Styx and sings a very jovial drinking song. Manufactured in two days for the festive entrance of cardinal Gonzaga into Mantua, the *favola tragica* of the oldest *Orfeo* consists of five acts: "Pastorale, ninfale, eroico, negromantico, and bacchanale." In reality, all of them are shepherd plays. From an unpretentious interlude, or

musico-gastronomic fête galante, the bucolic entr'acte becomes a full-fledged drama in *Il Sagrafizio* of A. Beccari. Willaert's pupil, Alfonso della Viola, is the composer in charge, and Henry II of France, part of the audience (Ferrara, 1554). Theocritus and Vergil speak more distinctly in the two Idyls which followed: Alberto Lullio's *Aretusa* and Agostino Argenti's *Sfortunato*, harmonized once more by the prolific Alfonso. Boccaccio's *Ninfale Fiorentino* inaugurates a play not from the people, not for the people or even for the public, but for a select coterie, or one omnipotent Maecenas, a glorified Gonzaga, Farnesi, or Savoia. The apogee is reached in Tasso's *Aminta*. Acted on the last day of July 1573, on the island of Belvedere, it is acclaimed as a sublime amalgam of the mildly tragic with the lyric, and, still more, for its meteoric opportunities for display of wealth. A king, Garin of Toledo, of Sicily, does not disdain to avail himself of the latter, while the Jesuit Marotta more humbly attends to the tonal palette. Guarini's *Pastor Fido* (1581-90), its vogue notwithstanding, does not dethrone its predecessor.

Pastel tints temper the entire musical revival of things Greek. Well may the *Commedia dell' arte* delve into cosmic issues and call to life supermen—the *Favola per musica* will feed on the Meissen grace and gallant nonchalance of *Aminta*. Its rococo nymphs and shepherds curtsy and sigh in Hades, on Mount Hymmetos and the river Lethe. Rightly so, for is not the bucolic scene but another link in the Dionysian chain, and Mimus, Pappus, and Bucco the forefathers of Pulcinello and Arlecchino?

While intermezzo and allegory had to fight for supremacy, mob and connoisseur in unison endorse the pastoral. And, with the advantage of a better perspective, the gifted contemporary of Monteverdi, Gagliano, avers that the design gives proof of the divine inventiveness of man, administering just the right doses of "lofty delight, finished style, attractive fable, sweet rime, voices and instruments, exquisite song, dance and gesture" (*Preface to Dafne*, 1608). Doni, the erudite professor at Florence, considers the idyl the only legitimate descendant of the Eulesian or Lenean nomos.

This acclaim has one happy consequence: the entire intelligentsia, writers, painters, and philosophers passionately cultivate music. Unmistakable is the trend to the synchronization of the arts—another gesture in the direction of melodrama. Michelangelo voices a universal dogma when he preaches: good painting is melody, is music. Teofilo Folengo discusses the potency of tone over nature (*Maccheronee*), and Castiglione requires as the *sine qua non* of the perfect courtier the understanding and pursuit of melody. Tasso not only keeps in close touch with the protagonists of the approaching *dramma per musica*: he is a first-class performer. Therefore the purely sensual appeal of *Aminta's* verse.

From a purely auditory point of view the pastoral adumbrates, if far less vitriolically, the war-cry on "imitation." Should one relegate Castiglione's many allusions to a flute solo to the realm of fiction, *il Sacrificio* may be handed the disputed palm as a signal sample of monody. In the memorable performance Andrea, brother to Alfonso della Viola, has only the support of the lyre, and later, of a vocal quartet. And half a century prior to the authorized unveiling of opera, the innovation meets with enough favor to warrant an encore the following month. As in Lullio's *Aretusa*, melody and rhythm are unusually loyal to the verse. Both breathe a verdant freshness, rarely duplicated in the would-be Aristotelean adaptations of later date.

The chorus is as yet optional. *Sfortunato* has none, while *Pastor Fido's* hunters, priests, and shepherds hold their backstage discourses now in between, now during the acts. One feature would have shocked Euripides: hidden from the sight of the audience and distributed à la Berlioz through the furthest corners of the hall, are the arch-darlings of the era: flute, organ, cembalo, viola, bass and harp.

For some strange reason the Camerata is completely reticent in respect to these time-honored models of the chanted play: de la Hale's *Robin et Marion* (1284), and the later morality and school comedy. No mention is made of the liturgical drama, in spite of the fact that it is the only form to be "durchkomponiert," like the Greek tragedy, or the Christmas and Easter Mysteries with their fascinating circus of devils, fools, and donkeys.

But, stronger than any linear plan, than any constellation of psychic stimuli, is the cyclonic call of a new and mighty idiom: folk song. Racy accents and lilting rhythms of *Frottola* and *Ballata* crowd out the tottering *Mass*. Not alone the plebe—learned craftsmen, Striggio, Rore, and Gesualdo, succumb to the spell (Vincenzo Giustiniani: *Discorso sopra la musica de suoi tempi*. 1628). The rural *Maggi*, made merry in Tuscan and Pisan countryside, sport all the dramatic and musical tricks of the opera. Furthermore, the Medici and Sforza were not slow in realizing that the stage offers a weapon ten times more efficacious for the glorification of their person and state than the pulpit.

And no place is better suited to assume the leadership of this secular tonal speech than Florence, that citadel of *cantilena* and haven of the *cantori a liuto* which had forever refused to bow to "Gothic" intrusion. Already under Lorenzo the Magnificent she pours forth her *Canti Carnascialeschi* and *Trionfi* in defiance of Fleming and Pope. Indeed, Riemann insists that not a single property of *Dafne* and *Euridice* is absent from the *Canto di vedove*, or *dei Giudei battezzati*.

But let us return to Bardi. The difference between his Pleiad and its chance progenitors, is that its course is dictated not from within, but by an extraneous fraternity: the literati. Also, from its cradle, it professes to have a clearly formulated objective and trumpeters galore to shout it. The negative side of the issue is well known. As announced by Galilei and Girolamo Mai (*Discorso sopra la musica antica e moderna*. 1602), the keynote of the constructive program is nature. What is nature to Galilei? Is it Apollonian order and symmetry? It is Rore's dazzling sonority, or Gesualdo's orgiastic sensual spasms? Is it passion, ecstasy? For, in spite of branding imitation as a soulless depraved perversion, the whole Camerata is enthralled by the Dionysian frenzy of the sublime counterpunctist, Venosa. Is Galilei's nature the great ethic purport which the Hellenes read into their respective modes, is it catharsis, expiation? Is it humor, complacency, directness? Is it the "nature" of Paracelsus, or the "natura naturans" and "naturata" of Bruno? Is it Händelian landscape, trees and waterfalls?

Nature to the Camerata is the most unnatural aspect of Greek melody. Just as Schlegel and Novalis saw fit to interpret the Greek muse as the acme of irrationalism, so Galilei and Mai underscore the most cerebral, the most logical trait: the absolute affiliation of word and tone. The romanticists abhor the word; the Camerata enshrines it. It forgets that the word of Homer is not that of Ariosto, and it has still to hear the classical "tone." Something ascetic, emaciated clings to this pursuit with the niceties of syllables and grammatic stresses in the lingo of prince and vassal, beggar and matron, horse and dog. Intervals and chord progressions are relegated to a secondary place, and derive their organization from the master "word" (Galilei advocates a return to the perfect intervals).

If the sumptuous intermezzi around the *Combattimento* adhered to orthodox lines of madrigal, orchestral introduction, and inevitable ballet, the Camerata is far more iconoclastic. Monody is legitimized. Galilei, a pioneer with his pen, is the militant prophet of the Academy's creed, but the "hazardous and to many ridiculous" (P. Bardi to Doni, Dec. 15, 1634) venture comes to be only through the unfailing assistance and encouragement of Bardi-père. Text after text is rejected. The ultimate choice falls not, as one would expect, on an *Orpheus* or the *Argonauts*, but "quel passionevole lamento del Conte Ugolino scritto da Dante." As the author presents it "sopra un concerto di Viole," the piece pleased, "although there was no lack of rivals who laughed out of envy" (Doni). Galilei was beautiful; his voice, passionate; his style, albeit somewhat angular, expressive; and he was determined to persevere. In spite of opposition he arranges next the *Lament of Jeremiah* as a psalmody alleged to represent an alloy of antiquity and modernism. "Ancient" is from now on synonymous with "monodic," and the composer expresses the hope that with his last opus he has penetrated "all'uso vero di quelli antichi e dotti musichi" (*Albori*, I, p. 38). After this we hear but little of Galilei: he cedes to better-schooled craftsmen or more valiant warriors.

Bardi hardly deserves either claim. He delivers himself of some

invectives against imitation in favor of "sweet singing," and initiates the youngest, most docile and amenable of the crew, Caccini, into the intricacies of the new instrument of musical speech, the recitative. After he moves to Rome on the summons of Clement XIII to serve him as *Maestro di Camera*, his mantle falls to Jacopo Corsi, "ricchissimo mecenate e colto letterato e musicista." At once the new dictator stresses the dynamic, creative, rather than speculative trend. Himself, he contributes a discourse on the melody of the ancients and another on the bel-canto, but, on the whole, disquisitions yield to production.

It is difficult, not to say impossible, to identify the real bearer of the flame lit by Galilei, mainly because in their estimate of each other the Seicento follows quite modern precepts. Among candidates for the honor are: Caccini, an impeccable vocalist but egotistical manifesto-writer of the order; Peri, the golden-haired "Zazzerino," pet of Rinuccini and Corsi; and Emilio del Cavalieri, the Roman musical intendant to the grand duke. Both Peri and Doni indorse the latter. Perhaps the issue of priority is negligible in a wave as formidable as the monodic ascendancy. More to the point is the respective "Hellenism" of the claimants.

The dramas in which Cavalieri is said thus to hoist openly a new flag are built around Attic themes. They are: *Il Satiro* and *La Disperazione di Fileno*, dressed into pastoral garb by Laura Guidiccioni (Florence, 1590). Both are lost, but it is recorded that the brilliant woman-singer, Vittoria Archilei, "moved her listeners to tears" at the request performance of the *Satir*. Since the works were not printed, Bardi's censure of Cavalieri as specious doctrinaire can not be substantiated. It is more than likely that the madrigal, and not the feverishly sought recitative, is the quarry from which they are constructed.

Whatever the "humanism" of Cavalieri, the dramatist, it is certainly eclipsed by that of the Oratorio composer. Alessandro Guidotti, publisher of the notorious *Dell' Anima e del Corpo* (1600), says: "Cavalieri reproduces the dramatic manner of the Greeks and Romans. In some tunes the resemblance is perfect. He indorses singing and playing . . . to the accompaniment of

two flutes. . . . He has rejuvenated classical art. . . ." To his experiments the Roman brings a generalizing, profound intelligence, schooled in the practical exigencies of the court. Stated in a lucid, explicit tone, they present a curious amalgam of pagan Athens and Medici Florence.

Contrary to the first al fresco theaters of the Este in Ferrara (*Facezie di Plauto*, 1486), Cavalieri demands a small and enclosed auditorium; one thousand is the maximum seating capacity. A larger place, rules Cavalieri, endangers acoustics and threatens the "word." Instead of the ancient trilogy Cavalieri demands a compact piece, not exceeding two hours or 700 verses from 5 to 8 syllables. Its phraseology must needs be simple; its tempo, rapid; the style, concise. Variety of musical means—solo, chorus, harmony, and orchestral interludes—is as imperative as that of costumes, miming, and sets.

Chorus and actor must unveil in minutest details of gesture and voice the sense of the speech. Nothing dares infringe on the sanctity of diction: forbidden are florid floriture, whispers, and overcrowding of instruments. For the dialogue a small orchestra suffices: double lyre, cembalo, khitarone or theorbo, and an organ. This can be reinforced in overtures and ritornelles. The whole may be topped off by a dance or, better still, by a chanted ballet. In every particular Cavalieri's scheme entails more concern for comfort and utilitarianism than for fidelity to ancient principles. The only connection with Eulesis or Epidaurus is the division of the auditorium into the raised *palco*—the stage—and the lower *teatro*—the orchestra. Also, the two altars for noble guests and instrumentalists reproduce the *Logeum* and *Proscenium*.

Peri's big chance comes in 1594. After Rinuccini, having looked far and wide for a libretto worthy of a *dramma all' antica*, resurrects his own *Combattimento d'Apolline* and amplifies it to the stature of a pastoral, *Dafne*, and after Corsi scribbles some canzonettas to *Dafne's* jambus, they commission Peri to complete the score in conformity with contours, which, "more lofty than speech and less formal than pure melodies of pure song, would strike a mid-way between both" (Preface to *Euridice*, 1600). As the

conscientious composer sees it, the moot point concerns the "qualifications of the new music," but Rinuccini, determined to be the oracle of the "ars nova," enlarges on it: "We were called upon to give almost incredible evidence that tone can magnify dramatic passion." Today we would add: the first musicdrama, borrowing from Hellas but a single propensity—the intermarriage of poetry and sound—breaks even this *cliché* by trying to impose an artificial line of demarcation between the full music of the *aria*, its lyrical moments where the conflict is suspended, and the half-music of the *recitative*, its dramatic patches.

Rinuccini's facile rime corroborates Doni's verdict that in him "la naturale leggiadria dello stile ebbe congiunta un' orecchia esquisita . . . i principi e i letterati e musici" (*Trattato della musica scenica*). After Ovid introduces the play, and frightened nymphs and shepherds pray Zeus for deliverance from the terrors of Python, salvation is promised by an oracle who repeats the end syllables of each verse, and improvises a couplet for it. And after Apollo is crowned victor, and the noble head is wrapped in the symbolic eternal bloom, the sea-maidens tra-la the moral of the fable: "O, sweet Amor, do not disdain my passion; before the fire of thine eyes let all hardness melt away, all indifference glow." . . . So much for Rinuccini.

Determined to exterminate all past musical norms, Peri resuscitates the antique *Diastematica*, a compromise between the velocity of dialogue and the retarded tempo of chant. In the microscopic analysis of his native tongue, he is startled by the exposure that certain graduations and nuances of syntax are finer, more delicate than all recorded melodic utterance. He listens to the accents of primitive passions: joy, hope, so as to incorporate them in chords and stresses. Of impeccable integrity, Peri does not vouch for his fidelity to classic archetypes, but he firmly believes his own idiom to be the only one capable of welding the two oral arts. Peri perseveres in his investigation after the première (1597). There is evidence that the melodrama undergoes considerable alteration during the three carnivals. But, when after some private auditions *Dafne* regales the select coterie of princes and cardinals assembled

in Corsi's palace—Ferdinando Medici, dal Monto and Montalto, P. Strozzi, and F. Cini—the play strikes lightning. They admire the voluptuous tale. They are enraptured by the dainty figurines of Dafne, Apollo, Venus, and Amor, no less than by Ovid's tribute to his own *Metamorphoses* and *Ars Amandi*, and the compliment to the duchess. They are fascinated by the *echo airs* which introduce and round off each act, and stunned by Federico Zuccherò's machines and decorations. They are ecstatic over the *giri* and *gruppi* with which Vittoria Archilei, the *Euterpe* of her day, adorns her solo. Cavalieri had ruled against this contamination of *bel canto*, but Peri, the vocalist, sanctions the practice. Perhaps the only collaborator about whom silence prevails is Peri and his *Diastematica*. But, then, the score is, once more, missing. Let an eyewitness speak: "The joy and amazement which seized the soul of the audience . . . can not be put into words. They had come with misgivings, fearing that chant would hamper speech and engender boredom—even Rinuccini was apprehensive—but the show turned out to be revelational" (Gagliano: *Preface to Dafne*, 1608).

Fired by victory, Rinuccini once more summons the succor of Peri. With *Euridice* all hypothesis of achievement yields to fact. At last we have the music. The *tragedia* is acted on the signal date of October 6, as supplement to the nuptials of Henry IV of France with Maria de' Medici, either at the Pitti or the Teatro Mediceo. Opera is born.

The christening will take place considerably later. *Euridice's* title page reads simply: "Poesia di Rinuccini—Musica di Jacopo Peri." Monteverdi contributes the first title, *Favola in Musica* for his Orfeo of 1607. Through the phases of *dramma* and *dramma per musica*, the term *opera* marks Cavalli's first-born, *La Nozze di Teti*, Venice, 1639.

Nothing could have surpassed the brilliance of the birthday. Sent for by the sovereign, French and German potentates, papal legates and artists, Giambattista Jaccomelli, Lucca Dati, Marchese Fontanella, and Orazio Vecchi do homage to the new fashion. "Un bel numero di gentildonne" adds glamor and spice. The

composer sings Orpheus in his "dolce ed affettuosa maniera di concetto lagrimevole" in a "marvelous way, admired by all Italy" (Gagliano: *Dafne*). From Lucca had been imported the actor for the role of Dafne; from Arezzo, for that of Aminta, Francesco Rasi.

The two dedications are duly humble and apologetic to Royal Highness. Rinuccini extols the cunning of his colleague and ventures the premise that he may have surpassed his Hellenic prototypes. As to himself, he begs forgiveness for his high-handedness in mutilating the venerable tale. His precedent is Homer (*Ajace*) and Dante (*Ulysses*); his artistic justification, the loftiness of Orpheus' prayer and lament.

Two propositions sum up Peri's stand. One stresses the aim, the creation of this elusive and tantalizing chimera: a faun, half-word, half-song; the other, the means—chords. Sound is to be the obedient tool of grammar, and each new logical variant find its musical equivalent in a new chord, new tonality, or new timbre. Peri's score calls for but a single cembalo, but in actual practice the *continuo* is in the hands of a string quartet who add to the emphasis on reason by playing either blocks of harmonic progressions or melodies of varied timbre.

Rinuccini's version of the touching Vergilian tale "which has enraptured man from the day of Poliziano to that of Strauss" (Raynard: *La renaissance du drame lyrique*, p. 33), harks back to the earliest copy, not alone in psychology but in literal expression. Although the Prologue is entrusted to the tragic Muse, all hint of doom is quelled, so as not to unruffle the serenity of the exalted event. *Dafne's* central theme—the tenacity of love—is impregnated here with something of the ardor and tenderness which will be its prerequisites through the ages. A courageous fisherman, so says the chorus, can check a flood; a soft breeze melt the snows of winter; death alone is invincible and eternal as love. In all, the fable of the gods receives a distinctly human touch.

Outwardly, the greatest strides have been made in the double chorus. Strophe, antistrophe, stasimon, parodos, and commos, alternate with refrain of the choregus. So pertinent is the assign-

ment of the chorus that the first decennium of melodrama is spoken of as *chorus opera*. It is the chief protagonist of the *favola*, directing its denouement and carrying its ideology.

Arteaga (*Rivoluzione del Teatro musicale italiano*) unconditionally elevates *Euridice* to Rinuccini's chef d'œuvre. Winterfeld, however, objects on the score of its spiritual remoteness from Hellas. "What is Hades to the Italians of the Cinquecento?" he exclaims in scorn. Of course, it would be futile to deny that Corsi's dependents had little, if any, religious regard for the story. But, what of the contemporaries of Epicurus and Antisthenes? If one wanted to be fair to *Euridice*, one must hold her up not against Sophocles but against the gory *Schicksals-und-Greuel-Drama*, the barbarous circus annals of Chiabrera and the Venetians, or yet against the arid allegory with its didacticism of virtue and sin. From the bulk of the pastorals it is distinguished by a patrician dignity, which dispenses with inane love-making, wooing, coy passion, and trifling jealousy.

Non sangue sparso d'innocenti vene
Non ciglia spenta di tiranno insano,
Spettacolo infelice al guardo umano
Canto su meste, e lagrimate scene.

(Rinuccini: *Prologue to Euridice*)

Peri's share is no less outstanding. In common with all pre-Monteverdian opera, *Euridice* has no overture. A fanfare of trumpets serves as curtain-raiser, while the loftiest office, that of clearing the atmosphere for the play, is apportioned to the prologue. The majesty of the opening remains an ideal for many a day. Peri brings uncommon assurance and talent to the projection of the dominant mood of each scene. Until the announcement of the divine union the tone is that of reserve and stateliness. But as soon as a nymph exultantly gives out the happy tidings, and her words resound in unison from lips to lips, the vein becomes jubilant. This climax exhales remarkable abandon and must have exercised an overwhelming appeal.

Fresh bucolic tunes and dances enliven the second act. Orpheus is drawn with sincerity and warmth. A significant departure is

the *Serenade* of the flutes, an instrument provocative both aesthetically and archeologically. This, and some passing interludes, are the only orchestral spots in the drama.

The shift to the sinister gloom of the death scene is achieved through means definitely of the Seicento: sustained chords of the tenth, bestrewn with iridescent chromaticisms. Hidden is a dissonance presaging the famous "sourire de la Chimère" at the *reprise* of the first movement of the *Eroica*: a natural against a flat in "ochi me." Swift modulations at the end of Dafne's monologue are another bit of ultra-modern technique.

The *presto* of Dafne's narrative anticipates the secco-recitativo and creates an illusion of deep disaster. Doni sees in it the artistic peak of the entire epoch, the first sample of "stilo rappresentativo." Its formal insignia is the iteration of short values of the same pitch. However, many additional and novel strokes heighten its potency: progressions of triads alternating major with minor, *morendos* of agogics and pitch, and other ingenious devices.

Yet, in spite of bold leaps, undissolved ninths, of *portamento* and *da-capo*, Peri's score remains a hybrid, in which a funeral episode of truly Greek grandeur is superceded by the puerile tableau of Hades. Structurally, the whole resolves into a series of madrigals: now, when it becomes imperative to evolve new lines, it is advantageous to sow on harrowed ground. Peri's emotional scale is distinctly limited. To the faults arising out of the "Hellenistic fog" must be counted the short, undeveloped phrases, the heavy punctuation, and the sameness of the recitative. They are partly the result of a false conception of rime, which in poetry is a substitute for tone and loses its *raison d'être* as soon as it is retranslated into the primary medium. In an equal measure they are conditioned by the uniform regularity of Rinuccini's rime with its truly Alexandrian ring: "piagge, salvaggie; rime, cime; cetra, alletti, diletta, impetra." A closer scrutiny of Hellenic prototypes should have led to blank verse, even if the crystallization of song into aria and recitative were to evaporate into a mirage.

On October 9 of the same eventful year when secular music, awakened from a long sleep, reclaims its rights, Caccini and

Gabriello Chiabrera put on with éclat the five acts of the *Il Ratto di Cefalo*. A disciple of the notorious Scipione del Palla, Caccini has not fared well at the hands of the more enlightened Peri, and still less at those of posterity. Rolland professes more than a passing sympathy for this tender servant of the "art, which alone stands no mediocrity . . . spreads goodness, and bestows on earth the delights of Paradise" (*Nuove Musiche*), who writes "the sweet music which he hears in his soul . . . for the encouragement of oppressed spirits" (*Nuove Musiche*).

Caccini's "profession de foi" are the much discussed and not particularly novel *Nuove Musiche* (Florence 1601, 1614; Venice 1607, 1608, 1615). Having paid the customary tribute to Vernio, his father Saint, Caccini coins the much quoted sentence that he has learned more from imbibing the untrammelled air of the Camerata than from thirty years of training in counterpoint. From Bardi he takes over the odium of the "Laceramento della poesia" (*N.M.*); to him he pledges to restore the manner "cotanta lodata da Platone e altri Filosofi, che affermarono la musica altro non essere che la favella e 'l ritmo, e il suono per ultimo, e non per lo contrario" (*N.M.*). In the same breath Caccini crusades against appoggiaturas. They may please the ear, "but the mind can be stirred only by the meaning of the word."

Caccini's first variants of "spoken music" are given in solo songs. Before his conversion in 1589 he had written a highly successful ornamented song "O benedetto giorno," but his new madrigals "Perfidissimo molto," "Dovrò dunque morire" are severely monodic. "Amorevole applause" greets them at Bardi's. Anxious to make sure of his ground, Caccini takes them to the Roman domiciles of Neri and Strozzi. Their verdict is even more flattering: "never has music exercised such moving power." Back in Florence, Caccini experiments with grave canzonas accompanied by several strings. His fabric grows more complex: he does not disdain virtuoso passages, roulade arias, and melisma—these charming chains of Italian song which ultimately smother it. True, Caccini indulges in them apologetically, only in final cadences, and on long syllables of songs which lack suggestiveness.

For, midway in his work, Caccini forgets his obligation to Bardi, Plato, and the word, and champions like Vecchi, Gesualdo, Gluck, and Wagner, a new god, expression, which he demands in like measure from performer and composer: "One is always beautiful if one is expressive" (N. M.).

Caccini's arias to Peri's *Euridice* and his subsequent setting of the same poem (1602) do not substantially promote either his own or the Greek cause. On the contrary, they shed additional light on the thesis that the Scicento's conception of solo is but a recreation of the great Polyphonic art of the Flemings where the spotlight was turned first on one and then the other voice. In fact, owing to the vacillations and the many vagaries of the Bardists, it is more than probable that the music drama of the "Florentine Secessionists" would have died an abortive end, or degenerated into a magician's bag of tricks, if a genius of the first water had not come to its rescue.

Born in Cremona in 1568, Claudio Monteverdi is a composer of a new race. From childhood his harmonic expansion has been guided by Ingegneri, and at fifteen he publishes a goodly number of *Madrigali Spirituali*. Engaged as violist to the Gonzaga, eventually a *Maestro di Cappella* to the duke of Mantua and in full charge of all musical entertainment, a virtuoso on every imaginable instrument, he has the advantage of being the first orchestral lord of music drama. Caccini and Peri were vocalists first and foremost. Monteverdi, like Bach, Haydn, and Beethoven, thinks in terms of the symphony even when he scores for the voice. In Venice, he becomes a full-blooded compatriot of Giorgione and Titian, alive to resonance, color, glow. He paints in the grand manner, not the sketches of Pollaiuolo, but the vast murals of Veronese and Tintoretto.

But even more than blood, a different character distinguishes Monteverdi from the Florentines. He is no longer the lackey of a prince, supinely eager to wait on His Highness. Like Mozart and Beethoven he is aware of his worth as artist and man. This assurance has been born of suffering, illness, death, and ceaseless toil. And his most sublime pages, like Beethoven's *Seventh* and *Eighth*, are children of his most acute torture.

The noblest work of Monteverdi is perhaps his first-born, *Orfeo*, played at carnival on the little stage of the *Accademia degl' Inuaghiti* and immediately encored in the Mantuan ducal theater (February 24 and March 1). Curiously, *Orfeo* was accepted as achieving ultimate perfection by all of Italy. Gagliano reads in it not alone the subject but the high emotional pith of ancient tragedy (Solerti—*L'Origine del Melodramma*, p. 82) and Pietro della Valle (*Della musica de l' età nostra che non é punto inferiore, anzi è migliore di quella dell' età passata*, 1640) argues for the buoyant vigor with which Monteverdi has arrayed the old fable.

Not to be outdone by Florence and Rome, the hereditary prince of Mantua, as fervent an admirer of the *Nuove Musiche* as of Tasso and Guarini, Rubens and Pourbus, had been preparing for the première for years previously. Outstanding soloists are placed at Monteverdi's disposal: the young Roman singer, Caterinuccia Martinelli; Lucrezia Urbana, the Neapolitan harpist; Sabina, trained by Rasi who had sung the lead in *Euridice*, and the sensational Jewess surnamed "M-ame Europa," sister of the violist Rossi. Better still, in January 1607, Vincenzo Gonzaga obtains from the grand duke of Tuscany the services of Giovanni Gualberto Magli, the supreme castrato, who "behaves very well, and masters the difficult part of *Orfeo* in two weeks" (Letter to Ferdinando).

Yet in one quarter we hear of no spectacular arrangements. Where are posters broadcasting that every line of Plato, Plutarch and the *Diostematica* have been combed for the forthcoming event? While painters and engineers set the costly stage, and Alessandro Striggio, son of the madrigalist and ducal secretary, restores the death scene of *Euridice*, Monteverdi labors at the heart-rending Prologue and Intermezzi to Guarini's *Idropica*, completes the melancholy *Ballo dell' Ingrate*, attends to his duties in the chapel, rehearses *Orfeo*, fights a nervous breakdown, and tries to provide for the support of his recently orphaned babies.

Instead of *De Musica* and *Poetica* the composer studies another authority—nature. His letters tell the story of his aspirations and failures. "Non trovando libro che mi aprisse la via naturale alla

imitatione, nè meno che mi illuminasse che dovessi essere imitatore, altri che Platone per via di un suo lume rinchiuso così che appena potero di lontano con la mia debil vista quel poco che mi mostrasse" (Lett. Oct. 22, 1633). Galilei's instructions interest him; but he will not copy them. For himself he chooses the spirit, not the letter, of the law; for his fundamental tenet, observation of natural phenomena and regard for truth. Truth and nature obtain a new interpretation: the sum total of man's desires and feelings. Of philosophers and naturalists Monteverdi asks just enough to sharpen his ear and eye for a keener insight into man's soul and to make him immune to formula. He is sure that in so doing, he is truer to the great pagans, Socrates and Aristotle, than he would be in paraphrasing Pythagoras.

Instead of refining the meter, the Cremonese strives to assimilate the language of passion and its imprint on musical sentence. Vecchi and Peri had acted on the same intuition. Monteverdi is freer; he has the orchestra. And if anyone doubts the modernity of his horizon, he would do well to read Artusi's crushing comment (supported by Aristoxenus). In making the heart the fountain-head of melody, Monteverdi at times maltreats declamation. Yet even a tyro could not remain deaf to the directness and breadth of his speech. Horrified at the thinness and meagerness of music's sensual range, he imbues his canvases with a new property, "indispensable to music"—"Ira," anger. Artusi's caustic rebukes show once more how well he succeeded. His *Combat of Tancred and Clotilda* is a masterpiece of impassioned unbridled romanticism, replete with tremolo invocation, violence, pain, and death.

Monteverdi gives Peri his due for the endeavor to reinstate poetry. He denounces the Camerata for immolating so meekly their own prerogatives and for debasing music into an agency of mere translation. In setting a "harmonious union" (Preface to *Scherzi Musicali*, 1607) as postulate of his craft, he opens a strife on two fronts. On the one he wages war against the Netherlanders, Josquin and Okeghem, who trample the word and elevate melody into a fetish; on the other, against the cerebralists, Peri, and Caccini. Both are oblivious of music's only domain—the heart—and of its model—the cosmos.

Unlike Wagner, Monteverdi views melody not as a weapon for philosophy or moral rebirth, but as an end in itself. A true poet of his century, he knows no loftier deity than the human heart. His heroes are not mythical supermen, but all too vulnerable mortals. Prospective librettos are scrutinized only from this angle. What is this piece: *Peleo e Tetide, favola marittima*? A phantasmagory, packed with monsters, winds, and amors. How can wind sing if nature has refused it a voice? "E come potrò con il mezzo loro muovere li affetti? Mosse l'Arianna per essere donna, e mosse parimente Orfeo per esser homo, e non vento. Le armonie imitano loro medesime" . . . (Dec. 9, 1616). Arianna provokes tears; Orfeo, prayer; but horses and winds have no soul. Yet, while Monteverdi's forte is suffering (*Alceste ed Admetto*, 1616), he shrinks like the Hellenes of yore before displaying violence on the stage. Rinuccini's *Narcissus* is rejected as "too tragic."

This realism pilots Monteverdi away from the shadowy Florentine product towards historical opera. The *Coronation of Poppea*, finished at the ripe age of seventy-four, fuses youthful ardor with uncanny finesse of character drawing, as truly "Shakespearean" as the libretto of Businello.

That Monteverdi openly and consciously breaks with Greek precedent is clear. Nothing less Hellenic than his dramas could be imagined. The myth of oneness of poet-musician comes to naught. Who, having heard the eloquent augmented fourths in Orpheus' lament "Tu se' morta, se' morta mia vita," remembers today the name of Striggio whose book is immeasurably more artistic than that of Rinuccini?

Doni's axiom that "the smaller the number of instruments employed, the less defective will be the harmonies," and the Hellenic abstinence in regard to the aulos vanishes before Monteverdi's Symphony of some forty pieces. Later, in the Venetian public theater, the Cremonese will grow more economical, but here he rejoices in gathering under the same roof all the old and new inventions: two cembali, two contrabassi di viola, ten viole da braccia, a double harp, two little violins, *alla Francese*, two

chitaroni (big bass guitars), two little organs, three *bassi da gamba*, four trombones, a regal (a small organ with labial registers), two cornetti, a piccolo flute, a high trumpet, and three *trombe sordine*. Truly a sensational magnificence. Others are added as the drama unfolds. The composer, like Wagner, requires his orchestra to be hidden. One organ is to be placed to the right of the stage, the other to the left. Variation of orchestral timbre opens an endless vista of emotional potentiality.

If the Greeks had little or no harmony, Monteverdi calls forth for his rendering of pangs of agony new, striking dissonances. Even his counterpoint shows unprepared chords of seventh and ninth. At times gauche, occasionally on a wrong track, the composer firmly escorts music away from modality, sacred to the Hellenes and ecclesiastics, to modern tonality, from horizontal to vertical music. Of course, the monks of Reading, Troubadours, and Minnesingers had already flirted with major and minor, but from *Orfeo* straight to *Boris Godunov* and the *Afternoon of a Faun* Aeolian and Phrygian will be used only for local color and will connote exoticism. What could be more unGreek than the elevation of major into an emblem of bright manliness, after all that Socrates had to say about the importance and depravity of the corresponding Lydian?

Whenever it suits his artistic purpose, Monteverdi silences his chorus. If Peri and Caccini weave their arias, *alla Grecca*, without pause, Monteverdi's design is symphonic: toccatas and ritornelles give his form monumentality and coherence. Rhythm henceforth obeys its own inner law. Only in a few French ballets is there a shadow of the verve and sparkle which enlivens the syncopated villanella with its sixth-eighths, the infectious saltarello-gigue, the shepherd dance in *questo prato ameno* or Orpheus's *Vi ricordo, o boschi ombrosi*. Folk song and folk dance vivify the *Stilo rappresentativo* and *concitato*. There is an opulence and a sweep contrasting with the puritanism of the Florentines which they forsook solely for the display of gaudy *mise en scènes*.

Instead of the Homeric epithet Monteverdi has recourse to a purely musical measure: the leit-motif. Like Wagner and Liszt,

he transforms the sentence to indicate its psychological mutations: the cornets and trumpets announcing Orpheus' descent to the lower regions subside to a lullaby in Charo's solo, and whisper in a faint remembrance in the finale. Again, as with Bach and Wagner, a specific instrument emblemizes each actor: the harp, Orpheus; the trombone, Pluto; the viola, Euridice. Not the word, but the orchestra suggests the mood of the scenes. Obligato violins give a grave and melancholy silver lining to the nether world; trumpets open their mouths for the first time in opera to forecast the impending tragedy (Act III), or else violas and cembalos are called upon, as the chorus of old, to pronounce a résumé of the tale (Act II). Both solo and chorus are more natural, more spontaneous than heretofore. Tempi are quicker, cadences lighter, rhythms infinitely finer. The Greeks could not have improved on them.

But the most significant action is Monteverdi's return to the abhorred Anti-Christ of the Camerata-counterpoint. He realizes the languidness and inertia of Caccini's songs. As with Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, who at the height of their artistic powers embrace polyphony, so Monteverdi's structural instinct leads him toward the fugato. Again, while Caccini aims at a "nobile sprezzatura di canto"—noble disdain of song—Monteverdi infuses his recitatives with an unusual degree of purely melodic appeal. There is hardly a musical design, monodic or contrapuntal, hardly a device of melody, harmony, or timbre, which is absent in *Orfeo*. Therefore, its uncommon vitality.

Monteverdi's later work is even less in keeping with the humanistic program. His fecundity is on a par with Lassus or Titian. By 1605 he has printed five books of madrigals; the *Scherzi Musicali* are produced simultaneously with *Orfeo*. In 1608, following the death of his wife Claudia, he gives *Arianna*, acclaimed the most perfect sample of monody, *Idropica*, and *Ballo dell' Ingrate*. There follow *Armida*, the highly imaginative *La finta paza Licori* (1627), *Proserpina rapita*, *Delia*, *Ulisse* (1630), *Adone*, and in the four years preceding his end, *Selva morale et spirituale* (1640), *Le nozze di Enea con Lavinia*, *Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria* (1641), and, finally, *La coronazione di Poppea*.

He does more than compose: he meditates and checks his research in his scores. To the end he practises the instruments and can demonstrate each technical trick as forcibly as each correct pose of actor and mime. Not a single item of chord-progression, no bodily contortion, not even the spasm of death, escapes his curiosity. Just in this Monteverdi is a brother-in-arms of Aeschylus!

The Hellenism of opera comes to an end with Monteverdi. Already during his reign music-drama leaves the ivory tower and becomes the property of the masses (*S. Cassiano* in Venice, 1637, later *S. Mosé*, *S. Angelo*, *S. Giovanni e Paolo*, *Le Salvatore*). Casques and helmets supercede Apollo's wreath. Stimulated by Tasso, Ariosto, and the *Aeneide* there emerge Roman tunics and togas, the heavy folds of *Romolo*, *Remo*, *Nerone*, *Caligula delirante*, *Tito*, *Scipione Africano*. Still later, as the operatic center moves from Rome and Venice to Naples, there appear the sumptuous and stereotyped super-beings of the melodrama: Alexander, Semiramis, Xerxes, Demetrius. They have as little soul or character as *Aminta's* shepherds. Pain and pathos are alien to opera; its gods are the castrato and the stage mechanic. From the first all sorrow is "operatic." Tragedy is used only for an instant, a spice.

The alliance with Hellas is dissolved still further as the chorus weakens, and gradually disappears. The very monotony of monodic treatment turns against it. Already Doni and Valla, Chiabrera and Bonini (*Discorsi e regole sovra la musica*) favor a more contrapuntal style. The artificial splitting up of melodic material into aria and recitative destroys the very unity of declamation which was the original objective.

Much has been said and written of the gaudy display of wealth into which the music drama degenerated. As a matter of fact, the tendency considerably precedes its birth. Floating goddesses and snorting dragons, Apollo and Jove seated on resplendently decorated rocks and surrounded by a constellation of allegorical Medici, bewitched castles, monstrous, black steeds "con ali di pipistrello grandissimi," Venus in a shell, sailing from Carthage, Aurora and the Zodiac, Discord and the Furies, Orpheus and

mounted noblemen, Arianne and soldiers in gorgeous armor, banquets and "bellissima colazione di cose nobilissime" (Solerti: *Musica, Ballo e Drammatica alla Corte Medicea*, p. 23), all of those were known and revered before 1600.

Much space has been devoted to the machines of the opera. But already Leonardo and Brunelleschi did not disdain to try their hands in the contrivance of doors leading directly to and from heaven. No thunder ever equalled the roar with which they were flung open. Shut, they served the saints for dressing rooms. Clouds were given over to the giddy use of angels and saints. God the Father encircled by a host of dancing disciples, was suspended from heaven by a rope. Paradise sported two skies scintillating with starlets and delicate music. The ropes descending from on high to rest on the anointed apostolic craniums resulted in many a fire. S. Spirito was burnt in 1471, and, worse still, at Arezzo, in 1554, during a representation of *Nabuccadanasor*, the paradise took fire, and the Eternal Father perished in it.

But it must be acceded that while the Hellenes had at first "no scenery, and for a long time afterward painting of a simple, conventional sort" (J. T. Allen, *Stage Antiquities of the Greeks and Romans*, p. 102), sets, not very artistic or scrupulous in detail, never allowed the *Deus ex machina* to turn to *Machina ex Deo*; they also adored the *Charon's Steps*, the *Anapiesma*, and the *Stropheion*, which took care of ghosts, river gods and furies. Of course, the moral purport of ancient tragedy always escaped unscathed. At least, so it appears to us.

However, it is yet another machine which made the resurrection of Attic music in the Seicento a vacuous undertaking: the *cembalo* and *virginal*, *viol* and *organ*. If frets, tangents, strings, levers, and reeds are allowed a more modest showing in these glowing accounts of Gargantuan revelries, it is because the language of music is hardest to put into words. Yet there is ample evidence of the awe and delight with which the Seicento pursued the evolution of the *braccias* and *gambas*. Instruments, "beautiful" or "numerous" are conspicuous in every parade of Medicean wealth. The hedonistic joy in timbre and resonance turned against the word even before its dynasty had been reinstated.

Of all the constituents of Greek tragedy the Camerata chose the most vulnerable. Had it fostered the latent ethic might, inherent in Sophocles, the semblance might have been preserved. Had it enlarged on the rhythmic and harmonic investigation of Aristoxenus, made available first through Cleonides and, later by Valla (Venice, 1497-99), Cinquecento music might have gained from it. Had they set out to study the psychology and color of the modes, they could have spared a great deal of labor to Händel, Beethoven, and Scriabin. As it is, the Bardists were from the first on the wrong track, since the language of art never repeats itself.

But in one respect Italian opera is a peer of Greek tragedy. If anything, its social significance is even more forcful. Its early conquests have not been duplicated in the entire history of art. Before 1700 no fewer than sixteen opera houses are opened in Venice alone! An operatic orgy seizes the country. Popes compose music-dramas and delicate sonnets to prima donnas; cardinals assist as librettists, painters and costumers; castratos sign treaties and act as plenipotentiaries. Audiences are aroused to hysteria and suicide.

No other form has been criticised as severely. Boileau scorns

D'un spectacle enchanteur la pompe harmonieuse,
Ces danses, ces héros à voix luxurieuse . . .
Ces discours sur l' amour . . .
Ces doux Renauds, ces insensés Rolands . . .

Voltaire is said to have remarked: "If a thing is too silly, people sing it," and Saint-Evremond, "If you wish to know what an opera is, I answer that it is a strange production of music and poetry, where the poet and the musician, each bored by each other, take the utmost possible trouble to produce a worthless performance." La Fontaine, Dryden and Addison in England, Tolstoi in Russia, add their voice of contempt.

Yet, does not the bitterness of the opposition, a phenomenon unknown in the symphony or chamber music, underscore the tenacity and vitalism of the musicdrama?

Around the opera fulminate the most lasting and acrid of

aesthetic combats. Beethoven's *Seventh* or Bruckner's *A Major* may have had their share of the devout and blasphemous, but street fights and barricades are reserved for the *Guerre des Bouffons* between the adherents of French and Italian opera, kindled by Pergolesi's *La serva Padrona*, or the still more deadly hostilities of Gluckists and Piccinists. Where else, in our "symphonic" age, does one meet with scenes of such mob violence as the turmoil which greeted the Paris première of *Tannhäuser* or young Boito's *Mefistofele* in *la Scala*? Liberty not alone of single individuals but of nations is accomplished through the channels of this truly Homeric form: in Glinka's *Life for the Tsar* Fedor Chaliapin obtains from Nicolas II the amnesty of Gorki; Auber's *La Muette de Portici* starts the outbreak of revolution in Brussels in 1830 which results in Belgium's autonomy. Verdi, in whose personality and work are prefigured all the aspirations and eventual triumphs of the Risorgimento, may have played a more decisive part in the unification of his country than Mazzini, Garibaldi, or Cavour. "Avrai tu l' universo, resti l' Italia a me," in *Attila*, the chorus in *I Lombardi*, "O Signore dal tetto natio," *Rigoletto*, and *Ernani*, implicit with the fervent revolutionary ideals of the common people, express the undercurrent of oppression more forcibly than the vigilantly censored word ever could.

And today the U. S. S. R. banishes not the Symphonists Miaskovsky and Glière, but Dmitry Shostakovich, whose *Lady Macbeth of Mzensk* is said to be a hotbed of Anti-Soviet naturalism. The stigma of traitor is perpetuated by every periodical, every aesthetic current in the country, and the battle is not yet over. Which other musical form is the first to be cut and altered in totalitarian states?

With opera Italy starts on the unchallenged contest of Europe, which she will yield in the symphony to Germany. And, in spite of all absurdities and its divergence from Attic ideals and technique, the Italian opera is probably not inferior to Periclean music. The integration of the three sister arts has perchance never been solved better than in this hybrid design. And if this union is not a harmonious one, and music not only illustrates the text but

gives an independent summary of its ideology, it is because of the resources which the Camerata had started to eradicate.

The year 1600 does not mean musical humanism any more than it means new musical lines. But by giving secular melody a legitimate role of prominence, denied to it in the Middle Ages, where, sacred, she was a mere adjunct to the ritual, or, worldly, was concocted for the aggrandizement of a patron, opera outshadows Greek tragedy. Alone, it effects the long-lost mysterious contact between the artist and the public. Without qualification, it is the most pregnant invention until the advent of its powerful progeny, the symphony. Verdi was right: it has imbibed of the nectar, the eternal youth of Hebe, the child of Zeus and Hera.

It was inevitable that sooner or later modern Europeans would rebel against the authority of antiquity. Each nation was growing more and more peculiar in its culture; each took to writing not merely trivial books in the vernacular, but belles lettres. As early as Dante some men had seen the fitness of poetry in the language of the times and the movement in favor of modernity spread from the authorization of linguistic novelty to that of aesthetic. The greatest authority of Greek times, Aristotle, the legislator for poets and critics alike, had decreed—somewhat ambiguously to be sure—that art was an imitation of nature. Why then must modern man turn from nature and imitate the Ancients? One might argue that, as Pope said, Homer and Nature were one, but after all Homer had not imitated another Homer prior to his time but had described the deeds of his own people in their own language.

The Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns, as the dispute is usually called, is peculiarly significant in this history because it illustrates more clearly than anything else the growing feeling of the distance between Greece and modernity. This was the time when an historical sense became possible. It meant in the long run that curious breaking up of catholic mankind into national types each of which was supposed to be as innately great and valuable as any other. This entailed, or encouraged, originality and variety; it made possible German, French, Italian, Spanish, English, art and poetry and even—as we have recently seen—truth. When Herder later on was able to say that every nation has its own cultural perfection,¹ universal beauty and artistic excellence were once and for all overthrown. Works of art were no longer great, they were great for such and such people at such and such a time.

One of the hotbeds of this quarrel was seventeenth-century France, an age peculiarly fertile in new ideas, a country whose art

¹ See Mr. Feise's essay, p. 176, below. Ed.

in all fields lived to triumph over Europe. French poetry, drama, architecture, and even painting, furniture and clothing found admirers and imitators everywhere. It was during this period that the French language became a sort of universal tongue, not merely in drawing rooms but also in learned and diplomatic circles. There is, therefore, no need to explain at length why this period and this subject should be given somewhat extended treatment in our volume.

THE ANCIENTS AS AUTHORITY IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY FRANCE

by

Ruth Cherniss

IF IT BE true that the test of the greatness of an age is the measure of its ability to attack and defend ideas with all the violence of declared war, at the same time producing works of lasting artistic value, then the seventeenth century in France must be considered great. For in spite of its many quarrels, the age of Louis the Fourteenth produced more lasting works and in a shorter period of time than any period of French history. Every idea, whether expressed as a challenging thesis or as a passing reflection, was seized upon as avidly as though its author had thrown down the gauntlet. The texts of the period stand as a lively record of the intellectual duels resulting from these challenges and the answers to them. The wars waged by the King on the continent are merely one aspect of the struggle for French preëminence. There is the struggle of Richelieu against the Protestants and the nobles, a contest that precedes the great literary age. There are the battle over the "Cid," the opposition of the Jesuits to the Jansenists, the more personal altercation between Descartes and Gassendi, the quarrel of the "Poussinistes" and the "Rubenistes" and finally the famous Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns which in itself embraces several controversies.

Diverse as these various disputes appear from the points of view of subject and relative importance, there is apparent one motivating concept, an undercurrent of thought that pervades the works of all the writers and artists who engaged in them. They resolve themselves finally into an argument of reason versus authority, originality versus imitation, invention versus tradition.

The practice of reinterpreting old texts in the light of con-

temporary life and beliefs, so common to the Middle Ages, was followed by the Renaissance. The sixteenth-century humanists, steeped in the classics, glossed and commented, while the poets of the "Pléiade" were such great admirers of the ancients that one of them eagerly derives the Gallic race from the ancient people of Troy. With du Bellay's *Défense de la Langue française*, however, the French begin to grow more conscious of the powers of their own language as a medium of artistic expression, and the seventeenth century, while it continues to return to antiquity for its authority in matters of dispute, seriously for the first time questions the infallibility of its dicta. As doubts and questioning of authority are apt to lead back to the firmer entrenchment of certain previously held doctrines and to the creation of new bodies of authority in which the struggling human mind may find a faith, so may we explain the creation of such a vast number of learned academies in France at this time. In addition to the Académie Française, founded in 1635, and the Académie de Peinture et de Sculpture, founded in 1648, we find a host of lesser academies, whose duties it was to establish and control the rules whereby literature, painting, architecture, the dance, and even music were governed.¹

This codification of the arts no doubt had for its origin the realization that with the increased wealth of talent and knowledge rules must be invented to govern it; but it also was due to respect for authority and fear of ostracism, whether from an academy or, worse, from the Church. Corneille's fear of misinterpreting Aristotle differs only in degree from Descartes' fear of not having satisfactorily explained the existence of God. Descartes and Gassendi both dwell repeatedly on their belief in this dogma, an insistence based partly, probably, on dread of the charge of heresy.² Pascal stressed the important distinction between fields of human study that are to be ruled by reason and those that depend for the truth purely on books. Among the latter he lists history, languages,

¹ GILLOT, *La Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes en France*, Nancy, p. 178.

² Gassendi's objections to Descartes' proofs of God's existence were based on their inconsistencies, not on the conclusions of those proofs. See LOUIS ANDRIEUX, *Pierre Gassendi*, 1927, p. 39.

geography, jurisprudence and, especially, theology, for it is only in theology that authority and truth become identical, "de sorte que pour donner la certitude entière des matières les plus incompréhensibles à la raison, il suffit de les faire voir dans les livres sacrés . . . ; parce que ses principes sont au-dessus de la nature et de la raison, et que, l'esprit de l'homme étant trop faible pour y arriver par ses propres efforts, il ne peut parvenir à ces hautes intelligences s'il n'y est porté par une force toute-puissante et surnaturelle." ³

Into an age of appeal to tradition, then, of a Boileau rewriting and amplifying a Horace, of a Racine justifying his choice of subjects by appealing to Euripides and Sophocles, of a Gassendi rendering Epicureanism into a Christianized dogma so as to make it palatable to the believers of his time, of a Fontenelle resurrecting Socrates and other noble ancients for the sake of conducting dialogues with the more recently deceased, into such an age was born the germ of doubt of the value of authority which reached its full force only in the latter half of the eighteenth century and culminated in an exaltation of the individual "free from his fetters grim" with the advent of the Revolution and the Romantic movement.

For authorities, then, the seventeenth century had the Church and the Ancients, but while the Church could be appealed to directly and intimately, the Ancients could be known only through books. It is therefore important to discover how much of the Ancients was known and how well they were known.

In the first place we must remember that Greek writers were read chiefly in Latin translations, that the study of Greek was limited to a very few people, and most of these knew it not as scholars but as "gens du monde." ⁴ When the Jesuits had "purified" the classics by endowing them with the gentle, smiling elegance of their time, and the Jansenists had applied the stern rule of austerity and opposed the truth of Christian writings to the falsehoods of pagan letters, the Greek texts lost a considerable

³ *Préface sur le Traité du Vide*, Edition des Grands Ecrivains, 1908, v. II, pp. 130-131.

⁴ RIGAULT, *Histoire de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, p. 60.

portion of their original quality. Only a small number of the great men—Corneille, Racine, Bossuet, Boileau, La Fontaine, Fénelon, La Bruyère—taught, through their examples, the enlightened love of antiquity; and even they did not all understand antiquity in the same light.⁵

The Greek tradition in any age can be determined only in the way it is expressed by the writers or artists of that age. For while it is often asserted that a writer represents the spirit of his age, he may represent only its intellectual stratum, or he may represent a small group of the stratum, and hold opinions quite contrary to the majority opinion. Again, if he be a writer of unusual intellectual gifts and great literary talents, he may more than possibly not represent anyone but himself⁶ and be at crosscurrents with the whole spirit of the age.⁷ Further, if he be a writer who was very popular in his own day, it is quite likely that our recognizing a similarity between him and his age may be due to his having formed the age rather than the age's having formed him.

When we shall speak, then, in this paper of the attitude of the seventeenth century toward the Greeks, it will be the attitude of a few writers or painters, artists who may be typical of the opinions held in their time, but who are not necessarily so.

That the so-called dead languages were held in the same sort of contempt by the common people of 1684 as by those of today is attested by Bayle in the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*. Among the learned, however, Bayle finds an unparalleled enthusiasm for things ancient as well as for emblems, medals, and inscriptions of all kinds. And the lack of any examples of Greek painting (except vase-painting) did not deter Perrault from comparing Le Brun with Apelles, or hinder Du Bos, in spite of his

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁶ Descartes recognized, while seeking to formulate his system of thought based upon the reorganization of epistemological principles, that "la lecture de tous les bons livres est comme une conversation avec les plus honnêtes gens des siècles passés, qui en ont été les auteurs, et même une conversation étudiée en laquelle ils ne nous découvrent que les meilleures de leurs pensées." *Discours de la méthode*, 1824 édition t. I, p. 126.

⁷ BRUNETIÈRE, *Études critiques sur l'histoire de la Littérature française*, deuxième série, 4^e édition, Paris, 1893, p. 4.

own warning, from comparing ancient and modern painting in regard to line, composition, expression and even chiaroscuro.⁸

We have mentioned the fact that Greek works were read largely in Latin translations. Some were known by their French versions, however, and therefore were known most imperfectly. La Motte, himself, the chief protagonist in the Homer quarrel, admits that our ignorance of ancient languages forbids our feeling or judging properly the nuances of expression in ancient authors,⁹ while Du Bos criticizes those people who, having read only translations of ancient writers, profess to see nothing in them.¹⁰ Perrault proves only too well, says a poem attributed to Racine,¹¹ that he is ignorant of both Greek and Latin while Boileau, according to an eighteenth-century writer, felt that the ancients had much more to complain of in their translator, Dacier, than in their detractor, Perrault.¹² Indeed some particularly self-confident translators admittedly revise or redress what they deem to be false or unseemly in the original. "Here is the way I translate," writes Bussy-Rabutin to Bouhours. "I render as faithfully as I can what I find the poet has thought correctly, but when he seems to me to have steered away from usage I set him back on the road."¹³

It is small wonder, then, if the gallant Achilles of Racine and the Darius of Le Brun show a distinct family resemblance to the Cyrus of Mlle de Scudéry.¹⁴ Antiquity was modernized, refined

⁸ The moderns excel, he says, at least as far as picturesque composition is concerned. Otherwise Du Bos finds equal merits in both ages. As to color, he thinks, we cannot judge. His authorities are, of course, Pliny and other ancient writers whose "récits sont si bien circonstanciés et si vraisemblables." *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture*, v. I, p. 379.

⁹ *Discours sur Homère*.

¹⁰ *Réflexions critiques*, v. II, p. 533.

¹¹ Verses on Fontenelle's reception into the Académie Française attributed to RACINE, *Édition des Grands Écrivains*, v. IV, p. 246.

¹² D'ALEMBERT, *Éloge de Perrault* (*Œuvres Complètes*, 1821, t. II, p. 235).

¹³ Cited by GILLOT, *op. cit.*, p. 402. Egger describes the change in attitude toward translating: "On croyait naguère, que les anciens nous devaient apprendre à écrire; on croit désormais que c'est nous qui devons le leur apprendre. Partout où un auteur grec blessera le goût moderne, on ne craindra pas de le corriger en l'interprétant. On ira même jusqu'à poser en principe qu'il le faut faire parler comme il eût parlé lui-même s'il eût été notre contemporain." *L'Hellénisme en France*, v. II, p. 126.

¹⁴ GILLOT, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

to the point where it might pass the censors at the doors of the seventeenth-century salons. Two widely differentiated tastes are apparent, then, in the attitude toward the classics: the pretty and superficial, modern-dress version of the "gens du monde" and the more serious, tradition-respecting, scholarly approach. Both believed that the supreme test of a work of art was the pleasure it gave, but the latter interpreted pleasure as pleasure of the soul derived from the innate logic of a work—an intellectual pleasure. This was also the viewpoint of the Academy of Painting; painting has a noble end which is a moral one. Hence the constant stress on the hierarchy of genres in painting, with allegory placed at the top. As a contemporary amateur expresses it, "il faut, par des compositions allégoriques, savoir couvrir du voile de la fable les vertus des grands hommes et les mystères les plus relevés."¹⁵

Allegory was especially useful in depicting the King, whose feats and merits received so many expressions of adulation that he became a deified figure during his very lifetime. Painters, writers, architects seemed to have conspired to set him up on the highest pinnacle of fame; words, statues, monuments are declared too poor to extol properly the virtues of the Sun-King.¹⁶

The praise of the monarch is so exaggerated and the flattery so obvious that one is led to wonder whether the great age of reason did not at times lose its powers of intellectual discrimination. Fénelon, for example, whose veiled attacks on kings in his *Télémaque* are generally admitted to be aimed at Louis, sets aside all moderation in his *Discours de Réception* at the French Academy. And Racine, in the Prologue to *Esther*, in the most extravagant terms assures God that Louis alone of all kings takes up the sword for Him and may be seen every day "confondant l'orgueil par d'augustes exemples."

In Perrault's *Siècle de Louis de Grand*, which was the spark that

¹⁵ FÉLIBIEN, Preface to *Conférences pour l'année 1667*, quoted by ANDRÉ FONTAINE, *Les Doctrines d'Art en France de Poussin à Diderot*, p. 57. Cf. Mme Dacier's definition of an epic poem: "un discours en vers, inventé pour former les mœurs par des instructions déguisées sous l'allégorie d'une action générale et des plus grands personnages." SAINT-BEUVE, *Causeries du Lundi*, v. 13, p. 161.

¹⁶ See for example, the project of an obelisk designed by Claude Perrault in the Appendix to his *Voyage à Bordeaux*.



LOUIS XIV COSTUMED AS APOLLO

set off the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns, the final argument for the greatness of the age of Louis XIV is merely his praise of the King himself. Many writers assert that it is only natural that a great King inspires great poets and historians to record his glory, while Fontenelle astutely remarks: "Ce qu'il y a de vrai, c'est qu'en tous temps les Historiens et les Poètes sont tout prêts, et que les Princes n'ont qu'à vouloir les mettre en oeuvre."¹⁷ In his estimation, apparently, the greatness of the King was restricted here to the virtue of a catalytic agent. One work that apparently enjoyed wide popularity at the Court was Vertron's *Parallèle Poétique de Louis le Grand avec les Princes qui ont été surnommés Grands*. Since Vertron was the King's historiographer it is not surprising to find him proving Louis' superior claim to the title *Grand* over that of all other great kings by discovering upon examination not a single one of the faults in him that one finds in all the others.¹⁸ It is this age which Voltaire called "le siècle le plus éclairé qui fut jamais," and in which he finds such a profusion of masterpieces as to have left nothing to be done after them but to trace the beaten path and repeat what the writers of the age ahead of his own had taught.¹⁹ It remained for a writer with more discrimination, if closer in time to the classic age of French literature, to express the contention that in spite of moral degeneracy and war the arts may and do flourish, whereas when they are encouraged, abetted and even subsidized by princes they frequently fail to reveal any nobility or greatness. Du Bos points out²⁰ that for all the efforts of the King to foster painting by founding the school at Rome for young painters, his reign can boast of no painter whose greatness is due to his largesse. In 1661 when Louis began to reign in his own right, Poussin was sixty-seven,²¹ Le Brun forty and Le Sueur dead. "Enfin," he con-

¹⁷ *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*, Œuvres de Monsieur de Fontenelle, 1767, t. IV, p. 190.

¹⁸ Reviewed by BAYLE, *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, September, 1685.

¹⁹ *Siècle de Louis XIV*, Paris, 1823, v. II, pp. 333 and 334.

²⁰ DU BOS, *Réflexions critiques*, v. II, p. 170.

²¹ He was already spoken of almost as an "ancien" and his reputation was uncontested. H. LEMONNIER, *L'Art français au temps de Richelieu et de Mazarin*, pp. 303-304.

cludes, "la nature que Louis le Grand força tant de fois à plier sous ses volontés, a refusé constamment de lui obéir sur ce point-là. Elle n'a pas voulu produire dans son siècle la quantité d'habiles Peintres qu'elle produisit d'elle-même dans le siècle de Léon X."

Such inconvenient facts did not, however, affect the general belief that God had shared a part of his eternal glory with the latter half of the seventeenth century.²² "Ne pas louer son siècle est parler à des sourds," La Fontaine countered when the Quarrel evoked an expression of opinion from the great "fabuliste" whose fables may or may not cover veiled attacks on the court and government of his day. And flattery was so natural to many of the writers of the time that La Motte, in endeavoring partly to account for Aristotle's fondness for Homer, ventures the suggestion that the great philosopher perhaps wanted only to flatter his "Prince," that is, providing his treatise on poetry is posterior to Alexander's expressed interest in Homer.²³

As Gillot points out in his history of the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns, there was more involved in it than the academic question of artistic superiority. The whole polemic was on the one hand a manifestation of the growing national consciousness, the spirit of patriotism that had received its impetus in the sixteenth century, and on the other a phase in the long history of the idea of progress. Although of course much older than the sixteenth century the idea of progress ceased at that time to be an isolated conception and became an intimate part of the thought of the age. Two currents pervade the arguments on the subject: the idea of the permanence of the forces of nature, and the idea of the superiority of the moderns over the ancients. For while Nature remains a constant, humanity little by little, definitely though sometimes hesitatingly, progresses.²⁴ In the seventeenth century these parallel ideas continue to be held, but added to them is the caution to

²² Certain "beaux-esprits," inspired by new discoveries in physics, endeavored to explain the recent disappearance of sunspots which were a topic of parlor conversation. The sun, they said, in order to render itself more similar to the King who had taken it for his emblem, was divesting itself of these imperfections. Du Bos, *op. cit.*, v. II, pp. 448-449.

²³ *Discours sur Homère.*

²⁴ GILLOT, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-9.

apply reason which, being the cause of our great respect for the Ancients, must also temper it.²⁵

II

The Greek Tradition in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries can be subsumed under four distinct attitudes: (1) the belief that the Greeks were no different from the moderns, since both are human, the only real distinction being a matter of time; (2) the assertion of the superiority of the Greeks; (3) the notion that the Greeks were inferior because of their religion, and their strange concept of morality in the wide sense; and (4) the contention that despite the inferiority of the Ancients and especially of the age of Homer, individuals arose who, far superior to their time and not really representing it, must be accounted for by chance, genius, or some other abnormality.

The first argument, that the Greeks were people like ourselves, is not usually based, as one might suppose, on a rational comparison of specific ancient and modern writings but on biology or logic. The whole matter of preëminence, said Fontenelle,²⁶ reduces itself to the fundamental question whether the trees in our land were formerly taller than they are now. If the brains of the Ancients were better formed or more delicate than our own, then the trees, too, must have been taller and finer. But physics teaches otherwise. Nature's material is unchanging and certainly she did not form Plato, Homer and Demosthenes of finer clay than our own poets, orators and philosophers. Let us not say that the Ancients cannot be equaled even if they attained perfection in some one field. Let us say they cannot be surpassed. As men we have every right to claim to equal them. Fénelon,²⁷ too, contended that men of all times have possessed about the same "fonds d'esprit," they have had the same talents as plants have had the same sap and the same "vertu." Again it is not sufficiently understood, according to Malebranche, that Aristotle, Plato, and

²⁵ PASCAL, *Préface sur le Traité du Vide*, Edition des Grands Ecrivains, 1908 v. II, p. 134.

²⁶ *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*.

²⁷ Letter to La Motte, May 4, 1714.

Epicurus were men like ourselves "et de même espèce que nous."²⁸

What, then, do we owe to the Ancients? Merely the advantage of coming after them. The more than two thousand years that have passed since they made their great contributions to learning must not distort our sense of perspective by leading us to suppose that had we preceded them we should not have thought and invented and written just as they did. Why should we treat the Ancients with any more respect than they treated their predecessors, asks Pascal. So may future generations regard us as we do our forerunners—as merely a phase of human history. We must be grateful to the early thinkers for providing us with a basis on which to build, recognizing the while that had they possessed our instruments of knowledge they would have built as we have. Perhaps, indeed, they would have had reason to affirm what they had in their age reason to deny because in physics, at least, their statements were always made with the reservation of the possibility of the future's acquiring greater knowledge. They based their statements on what they knew, and while their understanding equaled ours, the limitations of their knowledge give us a necessary advantage over them. The human race inevitably progresses, according to Pascal,²⁹ for nature, apprehensive in regard to animals, whose succeeding generations do not inherit knowledge but are forced ever to renew the labor of instinctive production, is more benevolent to man "qui n'est produit que pour l'infinité." Ignorant in the first stage of his life, he learns as he grows older, for he draws advantage not only from his own experience but also from that of his predecessors since he always retains in his memory the knowledge he has acquired in addition to that of the Ancients which is accessible to him in books. "De sorte que toute la suite des hommes, pendant le cours de tant de siècles, doit être considérée comme un même homme qui subsiste toujours et qui apprend continuellement." Men of modern times are, therefore, according to Pascal, in the same state as the ancient philosophers would be had they continued to live until the seven-

²⁸ *Recherche de la Vérité*, ed. Bouillier, Classiques Garnier, v. I, p. 203.

²⁹ *Préface sur le Traité du Vide*.

teenth century. The same idea had been developed three hundred years earlier by Bacon and was repeated by Descartes and Fontenelle, all of whom preferred to call the Moderns "the Ancients" since the Moderns have acquired a greater experience, just as an individual in his maturity commands greater respect because of his age than does a young man.³⁰ Fontenelle, however, refuses to carry the comparison of man and the race to its limits. He sees his age as the period of virility with no senility ahead and, of course, no death. And since reason is constantly becoming more perfect, she may in two thousand years from now prevent the same veneration of our time as we have permitted ourselves in regard to the Greeks.³¹ L'abbé Du Bos, whose *Réflexions critiques* appeared first in 1719, also believed that we owe only to time any advantage that we may have over the Ancients in the natural sciences. He denies only that we reason with any more excellence than the Greeks and Romans and claims that they would have made as good use as we of the important truths that chance has revealed to us had it pleased chance to discover these truths to them. He founds his supposition on the fact that they reasoned as well as we do on all matters concerning which they had as much knowledge as we. If we are more "habiles" than the Ancients in a few branches of learning which are independent of fortuitous discoveries, our superiority is of the same kind as that of a son who dies richer than his father, supposing they have had the same type of life and that fortune has been equally favorable to them both.³² We must remember too, Fénelon remarks, that in spite of the general excellence of ancient authors, their nature was only human and Greece can show us only one Homer, one Pindar, one Theocritus, one Sophocles, and one Demosthenes, and Rome only

³⁰ It seems to me that the confusions and emotional implications inherent in the word "anciens" have not been sufficiently stressed. There was certainly in the minds of some of the participants of the Quarrel the connotation of hoary, bearded, antique, doddering, while to others "anciens" definitely meant venerable, noble, commanding respect.

³¹ A secret desire for immortality, however, leads Fontenelle to remark that perhaps the admiration of his age for the Ancients has not even the advantage in prospect of a compensatory admiration by its posterity. "Cela serait un peu fâcheux," he adds. *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*.

³² *Réflexions critiques*, v. II, p. 480.

one Vergil, one Horace, one Terence, one Catullus, and one Cicero. Had we lived in ancient times, the exact knowledge of the "mœurs," of the nuances of the language, and of the ideas might have enabled us to perceive certain faults of which we are not conscious today.

Several writers of the time were aware of the difficulties involved in judging peoples far removed in time, difficulties other than those of language. "La prévention où la plupart des hommes sont pour leur temps et pour leur nation, est donc une source féconde en mauvaises remarques comme en mauvais jugements. Ils prennent ce qui s'y fait pour la règle de ce qui se doit faire partout, et de ce qui aurait dû se faire toujours. . . . Ainsi nous devons nous transformer en ceux pour qui le poème fut écrit, si nous voulons juger sainement de ses images, de ses figures et de ses sentiments."³³ And Bayle, reviewing the translation of two plays of Aristophanes³⁴ by Mlle Le Fèvre (the later Mme Dacier), seconds the complaint of the translator, that certain readers cannot lose sight of their own time and persist in judging antiquity according to the taste of the present. As Boileau had said:

Le temps qui change tout, change aussi nos humeurs;
Chaque âge a ses plaisirs, son esprit et ses mœurs.

And elsewhere:

Les climats font souvent les diverses humeurs.
Gardez donc de donner, ainsi que dans *Clélie*,
L'air ni l'esprit français à l'antique Italie;
Et, sous des noms romains faisant notre portrait,
Peindre Caton galant et Brutus dameret.³⁵

And yet, because he was so imbued with the spirit of his age, says Lanson, Boileau persisted in showing that the Ancients had the nobility, the good manners and the right principles of the "honnêtes gens" of his time without realizing that this sort of defense revealed him to be incapable of divesting himself of the taste of his time, and that this was a manner of being modern.³⁶

³³ Du Bos, *Réflexions critiques*, v. II, pp. 544-545.

³⁴ *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, March, 1686.

³⁵ *L'art Poétique*, Chant III. Brutus is depicted as a "galant" in *Clélie*.

³⁶ LANSON, *Boileau*, p. 176.

He substitutes, says Lanson, for the easy naturalness of the Ancients a naturalism that is both rational and conscious. And Du Bos fears that because of the failure of some playwrights to heed Boileau's admonition in the *Art Poétique* posterity, judging the plays of his day, will class them with the *Virgile Travesti*, the burlesque of Scarron.

The poets and painters no less than the critics were forced to choose between historical truth and the "bienséances" of their time. Racine seems to have leaned now to one, now to the other. In the first preface to *Andromaque* he replies to those who have complained of Pyrrhus' anger with Andromache and his insistence upon marrying a captive. Admitting that Pyrrhus is not sufficiently submissive to the will of his "maîtresse" and that Céladon knew perfect love better than the Greek hero, he asks "Mais que faire?" Pyrrhus had not read our novels; his was a violent nature, and all heroes are not made to be Céladons. In the second preface, however, Racine explains his departure from the *Andromache* of Euripides on the grounds that the tears of his "princesse" would not have made the same impression upon his audience had they flowed for Molossus, a son of Andromache by Pyrrhus, rather than for Astyanax, the son of Hector. "La plupart de ceux qui ont entendu parler d'Andromaque ne la connaissent guère que pour la veuve d'Hector et pour la mère d'Astyanax. On ne croit point qu'elle doive aimer ni un autre mari, ni un autre fils."

The critic, Du Bos, however, believes that Racine's *Bérénice* is weak because the hero fails to conform to the requisites of an "homme vertueux." Titus, forced by his interest and glory to part from a woman with whom he has been in love for twelve years, must not be so afflicted as to become a tragic character. "Il cesse d'avoir la dignité requise aux personnages de la Tragédie, si son affliction va jusqu'au désespoir."³⁷

The lack of historical perspective in the dramatic critics and theorists is perhaps best illustrated in D'Aubignac's criticism of

³⁷ *Réflexions critiques*, v. I, p. 120. La Motte defends himself against a charge of anachronism by basing his condemnation of the Homeric heroes' speeches to their horses on aesthetic rather than historical argument. *Discours sur Homère*.

Corneille's *Oedipe*.³⁸ It is unseemly, he says, for a king to be shown on the stage as guilty of any crime and absurd to see him traveling without a valet to hand him his nightcap and slippers. The niceties of the seventeenth century were responsible, too, for the controversy regarding Poussin's omission of the camels in his *Eliezer and Rebecca*. Le Brun defended Poussin and at the same time condemned Carracci's admission of a donkey and an ox in his *Nativity*, "car les règles sur la composition ne permettent pas que les plus vils objets d'un tableau étouffent ou du moins dominent sur les plus nobles, quand même les uns et les autres seraient nécessaires à l'explication du sujet."³⁹

The one great creative artist of the seventeenth century who seems to have been least confused by the problem of anachronism and interpretation is La Fontaine. His defense of Plato is a good example of his perspicacity. Like Montaigne before him and Renan after him, La Fontaine did not believe that Plato had a definite system. He dwells on Plato's irony and the art with which he entertains us. We must not think that Plato went too far in exaggerating the characters of Euthydemus and Dionysiodorus, he says. They carried sophism beyond the point of credulity with the sole intention of embarrassing the auditors by such subtleties; they were "des impertinents, et non pas des fous," wishing merely to display their cleverness and thereby secure disciples. All our schools, says La Fontaine, resound with the same sort of thing. So we must not be shocked by it, rather only amused, and see in these sophists the type of the "docteur" of the Italian comedy who picks up the last word uttered in order to make a fresh and stupid remark. Plato fights these and their kind with their own arms, on the pretext of learning from them. He is the father of irony, and he casts a kind of charm over us. "Voilà ce qu'il faut considérer là-dessus: laissons-nous entraîner à notre plaisir, et ne cherchons pas matière de critiquer; c'est une chose trop aisée à

³⁸ LANCASTER, *French Dramatic Literature in the Seventeenth Century*, Part III, v. II, p. 436.

³⁹ GUILLET DE SAINT GEORGES, *Mémoires inédits sur la vie et les ouvrages des membres de l'Académie*, I, pp. 253-254. Quoted by FONTAINE, *Les Doctrines d'Art en France de Poussin à Diderot*, p. 76.

faire. Il y a bien plus de gloire à Platon d'avoir trouvé le secret de plaire dans les endroits même qu'on reprendra; mais on ne les reprendra point si on se transporte en son siècle." ⁴⁰ La Fontaine explains that we should not expect to hear the Athenians in the gymnasium discoursing in the tone of a Parisian salon: "Nous ne cherchons qu'à nous amuser; les Athéniens cherchaient aussi à s'instruire."

Most of his contemporaries would probably not have understood the superior intelligence of the author of the Fables in his analysis of Plato. Bayle, however, finds no praise too great for La Fontaine. In the *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* (September, 1685), he praises the accuracy, the exactitude, grace and precision with which he defined the spirit of Plato, while in the April number of the same year he had contended that neither the Greeks nor the Romans had produced anything in this genre of the power of the *Contes de M. de La Fontaine*, and that humanists would be hard-pressed to moderate their admiration "s'ils avaient à commenter un ancien Auteur, qui eût déployé autant de finesse d'esprit, autant de beautés naturelles, autant de charmes vifs et piquants, que l'on en trouve en ce Livre-ci."

It is a far cry from La Fontaine's discriminating and brilliant yet short analysis of Plato to the verbose Malebranche who tried to dispose of the veneration of antiquity by attributing it to the prejudice which respects those opinions most that are farthest off from us in time or in space.⁴¹

III

"Quand notre siècle aurait ses savants et ses sages,
En trouverai-je un seul approchant de Platon?
La Grèce en fourmillait dans son moindre canton."

These lines from La Fontaine's *Épître à M. Huet* may be an intentional exaggeration since they attack Perrault for having

⁴⁰ *Sur les Dialogues de Platon*, Édition des Grands Écrivains, v. VIII, p. 340-341. To Paul Shorey (*Platonism Ancient and Modern*) this Avertissement appears "to be the most reasonable thing said about Plato in France before Emile Faguet's book, *Pour Qu'on Lise Platon*."

⁴¹ *De la Recherche de la Vérité*, ed. Bouillier, Garnier, v. I, p. 203.

claimed in his *Siècle de Louis le Grand* that Plato could no longer be read without boredom; nevertheless the admiration which they express for the author of the Dialogues is certainly genuine.

The argument that the Greeks were superior was not espoused by many writers of the time; this is perhaps only natural since those who were conscious of some claim to immortality would not be eager to enter into competition with men whose works had already survived the test of two thousand years.

L'abbé Du Bos tries to account for the superiority of the Greeks who, he says, were so great that they surpassed us not only in virtues but even in vices! It seems, he says, that nature had a force in Greece that she has not had in other countries, that she gives "plus de substance aux aliments, et plus de malignité aux poisons." The reasons he finds partly in the climate, which must affect the genius as well as the character of a people, partly in "moral" causes: the fact that in the wars waged among themselves the Greeks respected the rights of the people, that conquest did not involve slavery, and that their wars were "des guerres réglées où l'humanité se pratiquait, souvent avec courtoisie." He believes that the nation as a whole made pleasure its principal occupation, just as do those of his fellow-citizens who are born with an income of a hundred thousand "livres," and that these characteristics, added to the influence of climate, made connoisseurs of the majority of the Greeks so that a simple worker was a famous artisan as soon as he deserved to be; titles were conferred on those meriting them, and greatness in all fields recognized and applauded. By these means was excellence encouraged. So that, while in certain fields we may know more than did the Ancients and make fewer mistakes, we shall never attain the degree of excellence which they reached: "Nos Élèves seront mieux instruits que les leurs, mais nos Maîtres seront moins habiles."⁴² Our scientific discoveries do not prove the superiority of our reasoning. We do not reason better than did the Ancients, for if we did our philosophers would agree more often: "Cependant on ne disputa jamais plus qu'on dispute aujourd'hui."⁴³

⁴² *Reflexions critiques*, v. II, pp. 135-138; 306-307; 565.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, v. II, p. 486.

Baillet on the other hand refutes Aristotle's and Cicero's arguments based on differences in air and climate by pointing to the low state into which Greece has fallen.⁴⁴ He admits, however, that one must agree to the supremacy of ancient Greece in wisdom and human sciences, citing for authority Saint Clement of Alexandria who maintained that God had willed philosophy to the Greeks as a kind of Testament just as he had given the Jews the Law, the Prophets and the Old Testament. This is why Greece was so careful to preserve the heritage, to cultivate it "en faisant fleurir chez elle les Arts et les Sciences comme l'a remarqué Cicéron." And among the Greeks, according to Père Rapin,⁴⁵ the Athenians surpassed the rest in "délicatesse" because "Pericles had so accustomed their minds to suffer only the pure, the elegant, the finished, that those who spoke in public looked upon the least among the people as so many censors of what they were about to say." Moreover, according to Du Bos,⁴⁶ the Athenians were more sensitive and sharper than we are. And Racine assures us that when the Athenians had laughed at a quip in Aristophanes they were very certain they had not laughed at a "sottise." They recognized the "sel attique."⁴⁷

We shall not go into the arguments concerning which literary types were superior in ancient times, which in modern. Much ink was spilled over these questions, parallels drawn and comparisons listed. For if few men read the Greek works in the original, this did not prevent anyone interested in the Quarrel from discussing the relative merits of the literature of the two ages.

In art, however, the lack of any examples of ancient Greek painting forbade the comparison of that branch of art with modern painting. And yet the painters and "amateurs" of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries fill many pages with the "retour à l'antique." Here they deal exclusively with architecture and sculpture. "Les belles antiques" can mean only the "belles statues antiques" and it is interesting to note that in all the dis-

⁴⁴ *Jugemens des Savans*, v. I, p. 128-9.

⁴⁵ Quoted by BAILLET, *op. cit.*, v. I, p. 130.

⁴⁶ *Réflexions critiques*, v. I, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁷ Preface to *Les Plaidiers*.

cussion about line and color, no one seems to have pointed out the confusion of the two media. The Academy sent its students to Rome to study ancient sculpture and Renaissance painting. At the school in Paris the teaching program for design consisted in copying the "belles antiques" (of which the Academy had a great many casts), or Raphael, for the beginner; for the more advanced pupils, a study of the natural as compared with the proportions of the ancient, and finally the direct interpretation of nature according to the rules of ancient beauty as they were applied by Raphael.⁴⁸ Rigid as was the program of the Academy, however, it was not so much so as Bernini would have had it. When he appeared before the Royal Academy in 1665 he declared it would ruin the students to have them draw from nature to start with, for nature is almost always "faible et mesquine," and their imagination being filled only with this would prevent their ever producing anything "qui ait du beau et du grand air qui ne se trouve point dans le naturel."⁴⁹

Not only must one temper the study of nature by that of ancient art, but a painting cannot be sure to have represented nature correctly unless it conforms to the conception of nature in ancient art. Not nature but antiquity sets the rules. Not nature but antiquity gives us the standard wherewith to measure the accuracy of our own work.⁵⁰ When the students at the Academy at Rome, for example, took for a model the son of a concierge, they first "posed him in the attitude of an ancient figure; then they went to compare with the ancient itself what they had painted, in order to see the difference between 'la nature véritable à la nature recherchée et pour ainsi dire corrigée'."⁵¹

⁴⁸ ANDRÉ FONTAINE, *Les Doctrines d'Art en France de Poussin à Diderot*, p. 67.

⁴⁹ *Journal du Cavalier Bernin*, par Chantelou, publié par Lalanne, p. 134. Quoted by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

⁵⁰ Testelin, in his discourse on Proportions, tells us that the Academy examined two kinds of proportion, "one for noble and heroic figures; the other for rustic and peasant figures," and that it selected for the first kind the antique figure of Apollo; for the second, the antique figure of the young Faune. Quoted by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 66, note 2. FONTAINE adds: "C'est-à-dire que tous les héros devaient rappeler l'impression que cause la vue d'Apollon, tous les hommes rustiques et paysans celle que cause la vue du Faune."

⁵¹ *Correspondance des directeurs de l'Académie de France à Rome*, t. VII, p. 439. Quoted by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 181, n. 2.

Why must we imitate the Ancients, then? Because, said Le Brun, they give examples of eternal beauty. Why, asked Roger de Piles, are they beautiful? His answer is: "L'antique n'est beau que parce qu'il est fondé sur l'imitation de la belle nature."⁵² So must we also have recourse to nature first and resort to Greek sculpture only as a means to a choice in nature. The Greeks have left works of art of eternal beauty because they were honest and sincere; let us be honest and sincere in our time, not imitating their subjects but learning from their method. Nature may change and so must we. It may even have improved, as Du Bos affirms it had since Raphael's time.

Copying the Ancients' manner, then, should teach us to speak to the soul and to the heart, to speak to the unchanging element in human nature.⁵³ We must recognize, too, that however arrogant and violent the character of an Agamemnon may be, these traits are only too true and too frequent; and, adds Fénelon, with ever an eye to the "bienséances" of his age, "Il faut les peindre pour corriger les mœurs."⁵⁴ Fénelon also defends the presence in Homer of idolatrous, dishonorable, weak Gods and heroes on the grounds that poetry, like painting, is an *imitation*, and Homer attains the true end of art when he represents objects gracefully, forcefully, and vivaciously. "Il faut observer le vrai, et peindre d'après nature."

In order to explain the perfection of ancient sculpture, a number of theories were advanced by critics of the time. Roger de Piles points out that the Greek sculptors did not use a single model in order to attain their perfect figure but chose the most beautiful parts of several models with which they made a whole. For since Nature is impeded by accidents from attaining that perfection which is her goal, the artist must reëstablish Nature in her primi-

⁵² *Cours de Peinture*, 1^{re} édition, quoted by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

⁵³ Voltaire attributes Racine's growing reputation at the expense of Corneille's to his appeal to the heart, but he also believed Racine superior to the Greeks and Corneille in "l'intelligence des passions." *Siècle de Louis XIV*, Paris, 1823, v. II, p. 327.

⁵⁴ Letter to La Motte, November 22, 1714. It is worth noting that Fénelon opposes the gentle simplicity of Homer's time to the artificiality and luxury of his own. Letter to La Motte, May 4, 1714.

tive purity.⁵⁵ Fontaine cites an interesting paradox in de Piles, who feels that modern painters will have drawn the utmost from ancient art when their figures become so living that they can be said to serve as models for the Ancients rather than the Ancients for them.

There are, then, for de Piles two kinds of truth in painting; the "simple truth" which is a copy of nature as she appears objectively to the artist, and the "ideal truth" which consists of a selection of diverse perfections never to be found in a single model but drawn from several, and usually from antiquity. It is the union of these two truths that gives us the perfect truth attained by so few artists. Yet de Piles seems to believe the first truth alone indispensable to a satisfactory imitation of nature.⁵⁶

In the Quarrel of the "Poussinistes" and the "Rubenistes" it was Poussin who was considered to represent the Ancients; Rubens, the Moderns.⁵⁷ It would be interesting, therefore, to learn what was Poussin's conception of painting, his theory concerning the Greeks and his technique or method. From his letters we learn little of all this. He seems not to have consciously formulated any doctrine or laid down principles for any one but himself. He did not copy many of the great masters, deeming it more important to observe and study them well. But with ancient statues he dealt otherwise. Not only did he admire them greatly, he actually copied them in wax, convinced that the source of all beauty and all grace comes from these excellent works and that ancient sculptors had exhausted the beauties of nature to render their figures the admiration of posterity. Independently of the exact study he made of the ancient, he studied Raphael and Domenichino as artists who had "le mieux inventé, le plus correctement dessiné, et le plus vivement exprimé les passions de l'âme."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *Abrégé de la vie des Peintres*, p. 2. Cited by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

⁵⁶ *Cours de Peinture*, pp. 32-43. Cited by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

⁵⁷ According to de Piles, however, Rubens had stated the principle that for the final perfection of painting it is necessary to know the ancient, even to be penetrated by it. *Cours de Peinture*, p. 139. Cited by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁵⁸ *Dictionnaire des Artistes*, ouvrage rédigé par M. L'ABBÉ DE FONTENAI, article "Poussin," v. II, p. 357.

His admiration for antiquity—for ancient sculpture, since he could only guess about ancient painting—may be responsible for the plastic quality of his art. All of his subjects are drawn either from pagan or from Biblical antiquity.⁵⁹ Since he spent forty years of his life in Italy, Poussin could hardly be said to have influenced French painting during his lifetime. Though French by birth, he disliked Paris and returned only at the behest of the King, Louis XIII, whose special royal favors were, however, not enough to keep the homesick painter from yearning for Rome. It is in Rome that Poussin died, and the Quarrel in which his name appears came after his death. Some modern critics see a rational, philosophic conception in each of his canvases, and even during his own time he was called the philosopher-painter. But this may have been a way of avoiding criticism of his rather drab, colorless manner. Certainly line to him was more important than color, for line, he believed, expressed the essentially and fundamentally beautiful, color being but an added pleasure.⁶⁰ Félibien says of him: "Ce peintre, dans le coloris de ses figures, s'étudiait à les représenter telles qu'elles paraissaient dans le naturel, lorsque par la distance qui se trouve entre elles et celui qui les voit, l'air qui est interposé les rend plus grises, et fait que la carnation n'est pas si vive et si agréable."⁶¹ Hence, too, Poussin's love of detail, his close observation of nature⁶² but also his cold, austere, formal manner, his curious analysis of what he calls the "modes" by means of which "nos braves anciens Grecs" produced such marvelous effects: the Doric made for grave matters, the Phrygian for finer modulations, the Lydian for lamentable subjects, the Hypolydian suited to divine matters, the Ionic for dances and

⁵⁹ The head of his Christ was even found, by some critics, to resemble too much a thundering Jupiter. PERRAULT, *Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France*, 1701, v. I, p. 193.

⁶⁰ In this he would have had the support of ARISTOTLE, *Poetics*, 1450B, 1-3.

⁶¹ *Entretiens sur la vie des Peintres*, Paris 1666-1688. Dixième Entretien, cited by FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁶² FONTAINE, p. 12, quotes Vigneul-Marville (*Mélanges d'histoire et de littérature*, p. 141) as saying he used to meet Poussin among the ancient Roman ruins, in the country, and on the banks of the Tiber where he was drawing. He would see him bringing home in his handkerchief pebbles, moss, and flowers to copy exactly according to nature.

fêtes.⁸³ Fontaine claims to find in Poussin a certain *raison* which he interprets not as logic, clarity or good sense but as "that quality by which we establish the series of differences among beings, bringing some together, separating others, never confusing the primordial character with superficial traits; reason is then the critical sense, the philosophic spirit which does not stop at appearances but endeavors to penetrate reality; it is also in works of art the unity that the author puts into all their important or secondary parts in order to create in us the unity of impression by which aesthetic emotion and admiration are exalted."⁸⁴

For the aestheticians of this age, then, who took the Ancients for an artistic canon, there was no agreement as to whether the poet or painter is greater for having imitated the great Ancients,⁸⁵ or that the Ancients were a model to be adapted to current times by additions and embellishments drawn from the younger culture, or even that they were to be a mark which the modern artist should be encouraged to surpass.⁸⁶

IV

We have discussed above the argument common to the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries that the superiority of the Moderns is due only to the passage of time and that the Greeks, given two thousand years more, would have evolved the same culture, made the same discoveries as the Moderns. But we did not point out the implications of this view. Clearly it implies a negation of standards or absolute values. It allows for no distinction due to genius or the element of chance and presupposes a determinism at once absolute and unequivocal. The formula, the seventeenth century is to the Ancients as posterity is to the seventeenth century, takes as sole determining factor the immuta-

⁸³ *Lettres de Poussin*, pp. 240-241. In the Introduction to these letters, Pierre du Colombier asks what all this detailed subdivision of modes means, which the most subtle commentators of Poussin admit themselves unable to distinguish in the artist's own work.

⁸⁴ FONTAINE, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

⁸⁵ BOILEAU, *Lettre à M. Perrault de l'Académie Française*.

⁸⁶ FÉNELON, *Letter to La Motte*, May 4, 1714.

ble, irreversible passage of time, leaving no place for the influence of the most important element in the development of history—the human element. When Fontenelle prematurely flattered posterity with the neat reflection that just as his time surpassed the Ancients in the art of reasoning so would later centuries surpass his own, he was, of course, assuming the continuous, uninterrupted, unvarying stream of the progress of the human mind. Reasoning is a special branch of learning, he argued, the most difficult of all and so far the least cultivated. He believed the Ancients were able to appear to prove difficult points of philosophy in so easy and light a manner because they did not go to the depths of problems. How lucky they were not to have had a Descartes, he boasts, whose method not only is one of the glories of his age but far superior to his own philosophy, a large part of which is proved false or at least doubtful by the very rules he has himself given us.⁶⁷

By the same token Fontenelle believes the Romans superior to the Greeks in all branches of the arts for the “natural” reason that they came later in time. He makes one exception: tragedy, without however explaining the lack of progress in this field. Poetry, history, and rhetoric, Fontenelle believes, have not progressed since the days of Augustus for the reason that they are limited in perfectibility and in usefulness, and that they therefore reached their point of perfection with Cicero, Livy, and Vergil.⁶⁸ Pasquier, too, felt that eloquence was less practiced in France than in Greece or Rome where it was necessary to impress the people by means of soft, flattering words, while in a monarchy the people try to please the King by their acts alone.

Most of the proofs of the inferiority of the Greeks to the

⁶⁷ *Digression sur les Anciens et les Modernes*, ed. 1767, pp. 182-3. Fénelon makes the same remark about Descartes and his method but applies the parallel to the Ancients themselves who, he says, through their frequent examples of the beautiful, furnished us with standards for judging their faults and avoiding them. *Letter to La Motte*, February 15, 1714.

⁶⁸ Velleius Paterculus explained the cessation of examples of a given genre by the discouragement that comes over a writer who sees perfection already attained by his contemporaries. And Voltaire speaks of a kind of disgust that fills a man of the eighteenth century at the sight of the profusion of masterpieces in the seventeenth. *Siècle de Louis XIV*, ed. 1823, v. II, p. 334.

Moderns rest on their religion, their immorality, and their lack of the "mœurs" of the salons of the seventeenth century—arguments which, in the end, usually come to the same conclusion, namely, that priority means inferiority. Christianity, the "bien-séances," the monarchy⁶⁹ and the court etiquette of the age of Louis XIV seem to most of the defendants of the Moderns to be logical and conclusive proof of their own superiority.

To most writers of the seventeenth century any poem or other work of art can be justified only in so far as it leads us away from vice and toward virtue. This Christian attitude, applied to Homer and Sophocles, could not make for an intelligent understanding of ancient Greek writers. La Motte's chief criticism of the *Iliad* is that virtue does not count in determining the Gods to side with one hero rather than with another, but merely their own divine fancy. "Il faut donc que le poète représente la vertu et le vice sous des traits qui justifient notre goût et notre aversion; et ne fût-ce que pour l'intérêt de plaire, il doit être presque aussi fidèle à la bonne morale, que s'il n'avait dessein que d'instruire." In Homer's time vengeance and pride were held in esteem. Homer left them there and his age was not shocked to see them represented under traits conforming to its judgments. The only real moral La Motte can praise in the *Iliad* is the insistence on our need of the help of the Gods. But even this is spoiled by refusing to make the heroes' protection by the Gods contingent on their faithfulness to their religion.⁷⁰ Homer's treatment of the gods is such that even the pagans must, he believes, have been scandalized by it. La Motte has a rather difficult time accounting for Homer's reputation in spite of his immorality and scandalous attitude toward the gods. For, he says, if censors did appear in more enlightened times to condemn his lack of morals, Homer's out-living their censures is due not to the truth of his ideas but rather to the prejudice of education, one age echoing the applause of another.

⁶⁹ La Motte, in dedicating his translation of the *Iliad* to the King, attributes Homer's "unworthiness" to his not having lived in the age of Augustus or that of Louis XIV.

⁷⁰ "Et que leur importe de savoir qu'ils ont besoin du secours des Dieux, si l'on ne leur enseigne aucun moyen de l'attirer." *Discours sur Homère*.

It is amazing to another writer of this period⁷¹ that even Christianity was unable entirely to reform the character of the Greeks; he points to their vanity, their superstitions, their "grand babil," and love of exaggeration, calling them "grands amateurs de fictions et de mensonge." "Posterity," he says, "has not found this characteristic altogether strange in the poets of that nation, whose profession was to "feindre et mentir," but it has judged it absolutely unendurable in the historians. The critics of good sense have not been able to tolerate that a people who pretended to be so much in love with wisdom should have so unworthily treated history whose soul is unadulterated truth." The dangerous model responsible for all this is, of course, Herodotus. And when Christianity did come, except for the Church Fathers and a small number of ecclesiastical writers, "on ne peut pas dire que les autres se soient garantis de cette infection qui paraît avoir été universelle dans tous les temps et dans tous les lieux, où cette Nation avait répandu son esprit."

Since the decisive proof of the superiority of one of two rival ages would seem to be the admission of inferiority by one of the contestants, La Motte makes Homer who had been dead for three thousand years proclaim the superiority of the seventeenth century. The pride and vanity of his heroes seem at every moment to force their admission of our superior greatness, he believes. And when he calls on Homer to inspire him in his translation of the *Iliad*, Homer, with uncanny perspicacity, advises him on how to please the auditors of the seventeenth century. He would aim above all to be entertaining, and therefore would make several changes, several omissions for the French "dans leur sobre et modeste langue." So La Motte greatly abridges the *Iliad* "in order to say more succinctly what it is claimed Homer meant to say"; that is, La Motte will follow Le Père Le Bossu who gave

⁷¹ Baillet, *Jugemens des Savans*, v. I, p. 131. Bayle, too, stresses the lack of proper religious attitude among the Ancients. Lucrece, for instance, might have served much better as an example of virtue for, "si elle avait aimé la chasteté par un principe de Religion, elle aurait mieux aimé abandonner sa mémoire à la calomnie, que de se fouiller dans un adultère: pour ne pas dire . . . qu'on ne pouvait guère se porter à la continence, par des principes de Religion, lors qu'on savait que les Dieux eux-mêmes étaient impudiques." *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, December, 1685.

as the purpose of the *Iliad* the demonstration of how fatal is discord to those whom it separates. "Il n'est pas bien sûr," admits La Motte, "qu'Homère y ait pensé; mais quoiqu'il en soit, j'ai tâché que cette vérité se sentît dans mon ouvrage."⁷²

V

Since, in spite of La Motte's ingenuous resuscitation of Homer, we cannot be sure that he would have written differently for the age of Louis XIV from the way he wrote for his own, we must try to account somehow for the great difference of opinion regarding the author of the *Iliad*. The Homeric controversy, although its germ can be found in Perrault's *Siècle de Louis le Grand*, properly constitutes the last stage in the Quarrel. Mme Dacier had made a literal translation of Homer (omitting only one or two passages that the refined seventeenth century would not have tolerated), and La Motte, who knew no Greek, criticized it as being unsuited to his time. He set to work to make a very free adaptation, compressing twenty-four books of the *Iliad* into twelve, changing many passages, shortening descriptions, avoiding repetitions, etc. Perrault, too, had condemned the "discours indécents" of Homer's Gods, his frequent repetitions and boring tales. While admiring the great poet he excuses his faults as being due to the profound ignorance of his age "trop voisin de l'enfance du monde."⁷³ Had Heaven graced France with the birth of Homer, the poet would have avoided many blemishes that are due solely to the age in which he lived.⁷⁴ His warriors, for instance, would not have held their hands raised so long before running

⁷² *Discours sur Homère*. This kind of presumption leads critics more recent than La Motte to interpret ancient poets according to a theory evolved by the critics themselves. We are told for instance that Sappho had "an unquenchable intensity of feeling, a yearning of which she herself need not have been conscious." U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Sappho und Simonides*, p. 78.

⁷³ *Le Génie, Epître à M. de Fontenelle*, 1688. What Perrault failed to note was, as Sainte-Beuve says of L'abbé de Pons, that the art of prosody might have reached its highest development and a marvelous maturity even at the origin of civilization. *Causeries du Lundi*, v. 13, p. 156.

⁷⁴ *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*. Bayle says of Homer, "s'il vivait aujourd'hui, il ferait un poème épique où il ne manquerait rien." *Dictionnaire, Andromaque* (H).

each other through, and he would not have tired his readers with so long a preface on the striking facts of the heroes of his race:

Ta verve aurait formé ces vaillants demi-dieux
Moins brutaux, moins cruels et moins capricieux.
D'une plus fine entente et d'un art plus habile
Aurait été forgé le bouclier d'Achille. . . .

Never, according to Bayle,⁷⁵ had gentility and decency been greater than they were in his day; never had the laws of "bien-séances" been more strict, more widespread. For if his age be not more chaste than others it is, at least outwardly, more polite and more proper. For a reader of the seventeenth century, says La Motte, the Homeric heroes lack a kind of dignity, unknown to their time but to him indispensable. For instance, one might be surprised to find that no crowd of guards and officers surrounds the king; the royal offspring work in the gardens and act as shepherds, the palaces appear small, the tables not sumptuous, Agamemnon actually dresses himself, and Achilles prepares with his own hands the meals he offers the ambassadors of Agamemnon.⁷⁶

It would be ridiculous, continues La Motte, to reproach the poet with these breaches of etiquette for the poet could, after all, not describe what did not yet exist. But they do reveal the boorish qualities of that age. Those times, called heroic, show us the reign of the lowest and most unjust passions, the very triumph of avarice. The chiefs are no less avid for spoils than the soldiers, and Homer himself speaks sometimes of gold with an admiration that betrays him. Not to a "virtuous simplicity," as some have stated, is due the lack of luxury in his time, but to "grossièreté" and ignorance.

If Homer was then a great poet and has endured so long, we must attribute his glory to his gift of expression, for no work written to please has ever endured without a beauty of expression conforming to its matter. We can presume, in general, La Motte believes, that Homer's language is beautiful on the testimony of

⁷⁵ *République des Lettres*, June, 1684.

⁷⁶ *Discours sur Homère*.

ancient writers who knew Greek. But how can we account for the popularity of the *Iliad* in those early times, he asks, except by attributing it to the novelty of his ideas, his prodigious fictions, as well as to the harmony and beauty of his language. For there must have been some men, the nobler minds, who were conscious of the rudeness of their age. Since Homer went from town to town reciting his verses his auditors were impressed by the story without being able to analyze the poem. Yet even had they been able to read it they would not have appreciated it the less since their taste was as yet unformed by good works and literary principles. Du Bos, however, points out that in Homer's day poetry was still regarded as an historical monument, and that Homer would have been to blame had he changed any characters or altered certain known events. He was forced to represent his age and his age was to blame for his faults.

La Motte finds, then, two standards whereby to judge the Ancients. Was Homer, the poet, superior to his age? Must we evaluate him by the nobility to which his personal genius rose in spite of his age? Or must we judge his work by the light of our own age? La Motte insists on the double standard, implying of course as Perrault had claimed, that the *Iliad* would have been a great work had Homer been born in Perrault's time. And Bayle summed up the argument as being finally not a question of whether "les esprits sont meilleurs dans notre siècle qu'anciennement; mais si notre siècle possède mieux les idées de la perfection."⁷⁷

Again we perceive through all these arguments on the one hand the assumption of the constancy of genius, and on the other that of the uninterrupted progress of the course of history. To transpose Homer to the seventeenth century, to make him a Racine or a La Fontaine is to consider as true the lines of Perrault:

De cette même main les forces infinies
Produisent en tout temps de semblables génies.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ *Dictionnaire, Andromaque* (H). Cf. Du Bos: We do not esteem certain works for having been produced in a certain age; it is the age we revere for having given birth to these works. *Op. cit.*, v. II, p. 557.

⁷⁸ *Siècle de Louis le Grand*.

Because La Motte sees Homer as being the greatest poet of his country in any age, he concludes that by taking him in this sense we may say that he is the master of those very poets who surpassed him.

VI

Any intellectual controversy that is characterized by the vehemence and intensity of the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns constitutes an important phase in the history of ideas. In its wider sense, the Quarrel represents the conflict, inherent in the human race, between acceptance of the new and retention of the old; the impetus to forge ahead free from past bonds is curbed by the realization that the past is valuable for its storehouse of human experience. The struggle for emancipation begun by the Renaissance, compromised by the dogmatic reaction of the seventeenth century, reached its apex during the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns and led to the untrammelled individualism of the eighteenth century.

The revolt against authority which is implicit in the works of all the partisans of the Moderns, was, however, not merely a revolt against authority as such. In poets as early as Du Bellay and as late as La Motte there is apparent a striving for a national literature, a conscious desire to seek for an indigenous past to which French poets may have recourse, and for a common, popular tongue, a French language in which national epics may find expression. The *Franciade* of Ronsard and Voltaire's *Henriade* pretended to be such an expression. Characteristic of seventeenth-century France and purely national, the Moderns believed, were the galantry and elegant refinement of manners which they saw about them. It is this quality that transforms Homer's *Iliad* on the one hand into Mme Dacier's careful but genteel version and on the other into the distorted adaptation of La Motte.

The excuse behind the revolt was the valid one that a writer must aim to please his contemporaries and that the way to this end was through an appeal to their taste and their manners. The first duty of the dramatist, Corneille had said, is to entertain, and

Molière repeated the injunction without, however, deeming it necessary to justify by three discourses an infraction of Aristotle's supposed rules on the theatre. It remained for the eighteenth century to declare the total subjectivity of taste, a relativism which proved highly appealing to the fashionable salons and the unimpeded, ornate style of Louis XV. Charles Coypel, Dubois de Saint-Gelais, Roger de Piles and Du Bos represent the growing chafing at Academic rigidity, the appeal to individual liberty in matters of aesthetic judgment and the overthrow of reason as arbiter in the field of art. "Reason" herself forbids our calling upon her to determine the merits of a painting or a poem, Du Bos believed.

As in literature so in painting. A Boucher replaces the austere Poussin; a Watteau, the academic Le Brun, and Claude Lorrain yields to the graceful and delicate Nattier. Art is still often unlikelike, unrealistic and artificial, but it has broken through the rigid academic rules that had required above the imitation of nature the imitation of the Ancients. For Descartes' determination to cultivate his own reason Voltaire was to counsel each individual to cultivate his own garden.

Yet while the revolt against authority led to complete relativism in the years following the Quarrel, stripping the aesthetic experience of the necessity of resorting to codes and rules, the Moderns at first merely set up one authority in place of another; a new dictator, Descartes, replaced the old, Aristotle. The Cartesian spirit constitutes a kind of compromise between the urge to dispense with authority and the desire for intellectual guidance. The age of reason seemed at first to have cut off all recourse to principles outside of individual human reason. Descartes' immense influence, however, called forth a cult as fervent in its worship of the French philosopher as had been the scholastic worship of Aristotle, so that the true liberation he professed really was attained only long after his time.

In addition to these two motivations of revolt, then—the spirit of nationalism and the abrogation of authority—there was still a third, discussed above: the anthropological theory which with



THALIF CHASSÉE PAR LA PEINTURE BY CHARLES COYPFL

*Engraved by Lépicier, reproduced from " Les Doctrines d' Art en France
by André Fontaine, Paris, 1909*

some plausibility asserts the unlikelihood of Nature's having changed the composition of men's minds since ancient times. The argument that the Greeks were people like ourselves was, however, at the same time calculated to appeal to contemporaries looking for a vindication of action and expression untrammelled by rules or the toilsome study of obscure subjects.

Just as the repudiation of authority by the "Moderns" carried with it a significance wider than the mere overthrow of Aristotle's principles, so the defense of the Ancients by the partisans of classical Greece and Rome implied more than a mere appeal to authority for its own sake. They held the ancient artists to have attained an excellence worthy of admiration and imitation, believing that the Greeks had had the power to see the significant in nature and that it was only by studying their results that the Moderns could learn to understand nature intelligently.⁷⁹

They believed also that ancient writers and artists had a certain dignity which was lacking in their contemporaries, as La Fontaine says in a passage quoted above. And finally they made the important distinction between knowledge and intelligence, pointing out that the two do not vary directly with each other and that the former is merely an accumulation which of itself does not further reasoning. They held too that ancient works which still remain have been proved excellent by tests which modern works have not yet stood. In the first place some of the defenders of the Ancients believed the Greeks to have been more sensitive and severer critics than other peoples and that therefore the ancient works of art had in the very beginning passed the most exacting scrutiny. Furthermore, no one denied that the extant works had withstood the criticism of many successive ages, as well as the corroding influ-

⁷⁹ So much did the critics of this period take for granted that the artistic method consists in imitation that Du Bos, in answering the objections to one of his theories concerning the rise and fall of the arts, denies that the decline of Greek art was due to the Romans' having carried away all the Greek masterpieces, which would have continued to form the taste and to excite the emulation of the young artisans. His refutation of this objection, however, was that plenty of excellent statues still remained for the artists to use as models. The basic aesthetic assumption of the argument he does not question, namely, that the ancient Greek artists themselves could have proceeded only by imitating the works of their predecessors.

ence and mechanical accidents of time. So that only the best, those with the widest and profoundest appeal, had endured.

That the human quality of all men leads them in the end to agree upon the merits of a work of art and so to render it eternal was the belief of Du Bos and, before him, of Boileau. Although the author of the *Art Poétique* finally takes his stand with the Moderns,⁸⁰ having carefully weighed them against the Ancients in many branches of learning, he stresses the point, and this may be said of all the defenders of the Ancients, that not all ancient writers are to be included among the immortals. Homer, Plato, Cicero, Vergil—these are the noblest. It is, however, not their antiquity that renders them the objects of our esteem but the long tradition of constant and genuine admiration that they have aroused since their time. This admiration they have evoked not only from scholars, says Boileau, but from sensible, intelligent laymen of all ages. "L'antiquité d'un écrivain n'est pas un titre certain de son mérite, mais l'antique et constante admiration qu'on a toujours eue pour ses ouvrages est une preuve sûre et infaillible qu'on les doit admirer."

This judgment is not to be dismissed lightly. The diversity of interpretation throughout the ages shows us that a work of art has many phases. Although the interpreter may see only one of these and may interpret even that one incorrectly, this is an indication of its universality because the work which is a unit can be interpreted in so many fashions and has such a wide appeal. If no one of these interpretations represents the work in its entirety, this is no more evidence that the work is not great and a unit in its greatness than it is that the work does not exist.

That the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns was so long and heated, returning with renewed vehemence after it appeared to have subsided or to have spent itself on foreign shores, testifies to the intellectual vitality of the seventeenth century, and the long history of its consequences and far-reaching significance gives it an important position in the history of ideas.

⁸⁰ Boileau seems to come nearest of any of his contemporaries to formulating the thought of Pindar, that we must "praise the ancient wine but the flower of newer song."

Germany was the great paradox in the growth of the Greek Tradition. Though in Winckelmann she gave to Europe one of the most potent exponents of classicism, in Herder she produced its greatest enemy. His hostility to the idea was undoubtedly founded in part upon a sense that Germany's especial talents were given no opportunity to flower. Hence a school of writers emphasized the inherent interest of German folk-literature as compared with Greek mythology, the inherent expressiveness of the German language as compared with French, the inherent beauty of German poetry as compared with classic models. This emphasis upon one's own values, regardless of what the world may think, could easily degenerate into a kind of pathological provincialism as in Krieck and Rosenberg. But the tradition emanating from Winckelmann has never died and the interest in classical literature remained a potent force in Germany up to our own times.

THE GREEK TRADITION IN GERMANY

by

Ernst Feise

IN THE year 1755 there appeared in Dresden a small pamphlet of forty pages, *Thoughts on the Imitation of the Greek Works of Painting and Sculpture*,¹ by an unknown man of thirty-eight years, Johann Joachim Winckelmann, which was destined to infuse into German thought, art and letters of five generations, from the date of this publication to our day, a ferment of intoxicating effect. What Winckelmann had to say in his *Thoughts* was nothing especially new. Charles Lebrun, in defending Poussin's Greek figures before the "Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture," had proffered the arguments of climate, physical exercise, light clothing, nakedness, freedom from prudery as favoring the Greeks in producing extraordinary physical beauty. Laokoon had been called before Winckelmann "a model of ideal beauty, by the imitation of which the artist could correct the imperfections of nature." Classicistic ideology had recommended a synthetic process of joining separate parts of the body of particular beauty, studied in nature, in a work of art transcending nature. Nevertheless, Winckelmann's treatise and subsequently his *History of Antique Art*² (1766) broke into the self-sufficient and academic theorizing of classicistic rationalism with the effect of a firebrand, for although he still used the language of these theorists, he did not mean what they meant.

When he said "der gute Geschmack" he did not mean "bon goût" as a code of rules for a static art, a system of measures and proportions according to which an artist could quietly in his studio manufacture neoclassic works; he meant to overthrow in the first

¹ "Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst." Reprinted in *Deutsche Literaturdenkmale*, vol. 20. Stuttgart, 1885.

² *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums*. Reprinted by the Phaidon Verlag, Wien, 1934.

place the ideals of baroque art, which wavered between self-assertion and self-annihilation, between sensuality and mystic withdrawal. He wished to put in its place that "noble simplicity and calm grandeur" which resulted from a pagan joy of life, from a *καλοκαγαθία* in the sense of Shaftesbury, a beauty of body and soul such as only the Greeks had known and which, in his opinion, had paled in the world in proportion to a geographic and chronological distance from Greece.

Winckelmann, the son of a cobbler, raised in poverty and narrowness, depending on alms and stipends for his education, largely self-taught, had "broken through" (and a religious experience it was) into the world of beauty by a monomaniacal study of the Greeks, had accumulated an unusual knowledge not only of their language but also of their literature, had gazed at the plastic works of the Dresden collection, which was housed in a miserable shed; and now he turned Catholic to be able to go to Rome with a protector, live amongst the gods of Greece, and quench his insatiable thirst for a world which had hitherto been vitiated by Roman tradition for centuries. All his pent-up longing for liberty and beauty is now sublimated in his archaeological studies.

Art, he holds, leads the way to nature, for Bernini (1598-1680) was wrong when he maintained that nature was the best teacher. Did he not discover beauty in nature through the study of the Venus dei Medici? Thence it follows "that the study of nature must be at least a longer and more arduous way than the study of antique works." But imitation in the sense of the classicistic recipe is also insufficient; *Natur* (that is truth and not reality), *Geist* (inspiration in the sense of the Greeks), and *Kunst* (technical perfection) are the necessary requirements for transcendent beauty. Originality may be reached only after the apprenticeship of imitation has been served; only then the artist—an original in the sense of Young's *Conjectures on Original Composition* (1759)—may create in the manner of the Greeks or of their disciple Raffael, whose Madonna combined the countenance of innocence with a stature greater than that of mortals, whose posture was blissfully calm with a contour of grandeur and nobility.

That Winckelmann should derive these often quoted words of noble simplicity and calm grandeur from the Laokoon group may seem strange to us who know that it is not the work of the best period but only of the second century before Christ; but perhaps because it is so near to the baroque age in style, Winckelmann could first detect in it the difference between the art of his time and those traits which he considered essentially Greek in spite of Laokoon's motion and pain, the heroic and pagan soul. On the other hand, his influence of the following generation of the young Titans of the Storm and Stress movement may have been secured by the very choice of this model, for they were far from accepting calmness as their ideal, but sensed under the calm grandeur of Winckelmann, the man of fifty, a wish-fulfillment of a soul as fiery and revolutionary as their own. Noble simplicity, on the other hand, they interpreted with Diderot, who introduced Winckelmann to the French, and with Rousseau as a return to a more natural because more emotional and less sophisticated existence. Their common enemy was, after all, the rationalism and intellectualism of their elders while the Greek meant for them radiant youth, unhampered by powder and wig, by authority and convention, meant creators, heroes, titans of action, driven by a passionate will to embrace life as a whole:

All things grant the immortal gods, the infinite,
To their loved ones complete;
All delights and glories, the infinite,
All the infinite pains complete. (Goethe) ^a

But if Winckelmann had, to a certain extent, still in accord with classicistic views set up Greek ideals of beauty as norms, valid for all time, Herder in his essay, *Another Philosophy of History for the Education of Mankind*,⁴ (1774) radically broke with this tradition. He ridicules the philosopher of his age who weighs on his toy scale the happiness of nations and favors or condemns his-

^a *Goethe's Gedichte und Sprüche in Prosa*, ed. Friedrich Bruns. New York, 1932. Translation by John Rothensteiner.

⁴ *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung des Menschengeschlechts*, Werke, ed. B. Suphan, Berlin, 1893, vol. 5, 475 foll.

torical epochs in retrospect. What are Hume, Voltaire, Robertson in the light of truth? What blindness to ask: which people in history was the happiest, since the concept of happiness changes from epoch to epoch! Every nation has its center of supreme happiness in itself as a sphere has its center of gravity. Every people has its growth, bloom, and decay. Every perfection is national, secular, individual. It evolves what is determined by time, climate, exigency of the moment, world destiny. No two moments are the same.

In the light of this historical relativism it is impossible to demand a return to a "golden age." German art and culture must be evolved from peculiar conditions of the northern and national character of the people. Yet, even for Herder, the Greek age is one of unique beauty and splendor, grace and joy of life, abundance, unity, and diversity. It is the age of the youth of mankind to which the childhood of Palestinian, Egyptian, and Phoenician days are only a prologue and overture. Greece is the *Zwischenland* of culture, a beautiful bride served by two suitors, oriental and occidental, whose gifts she raises into the realm of the ideal. Later, in his *Ideen towards a Philosophy of History*⁵ (1783-1787), the maturer Herder rounds out this conception of the Greeks, devoting his thirteenth book to a composite picture of Greek civilization, a first attempt at a chronological development of their culture, or, as he calls it, a "physiology of their national body." A maximum of culture is reached by the Greeks; man enthroned on the altar of an anthropocentric era. Yet, Herder is not entirely blind to the dangers and shadows of Greek civilization, the decline of their morals, and the deterioration of the individual citizen through the claims of the state made upon him. But, all in all, the Greeks remain for him the teachers of the way to national culture and art; understanding the Greek epoch may bring about an emancipation of man from the senile tendencies to rationalism and abstraction, a rebirth, palingenesis, just as once before civilization had been reborn through the barbaric tribes whose divine mission it

⁵ *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, *ibid.*, vols. 13 and 14.

was to take upon themselves the spread of Christianity in a declining world.

Thus, like Winckelmann, Herder becomes to the young generation of his time the emancipator from neoclassicism and points the way to the true classic. But he also, in lauding the pristine energy of youthful peoples, of primitive folk poetry which he finds in the Bible, in Homer, Ossian, Shakespeare, directs them from overcivilized, declining cultures to younger ones, from Roman-French models to the kindred nordic ones; and if he may be called the initiator of these peculiar race theories, he cannot be blamed, in spite of his errors due to the lack of historical knowledge of the time, for their extravaganzas.

If we now turn to the young Goethe, we find in his early rhapsodic essays, *Shakespeare's Day*⁶ (*Zum Schakespears Tag*, September 1771) and *On German Architecture*⁷ (*Von deutscher Baukunst*, 1771-1772), a close following in Herder's footsteps with his condemnation of French neoclassicism and with his espousal of the "characteristic art" of the north. He sneers at the "little Frenchman" in his Greek armour which is too large and heavy, at his tragedies which are only self-parodies while Shakespeare vied with Prometheus, imitating him in creating his characters in colossal stature, animated with his breath. Thus also Erwin von Steinbach created his Strassburg Gothic cathedral which the Frenchman calls child's play as he taps with his fingers triumphantly upon his snuffbox *à la Grecque*, while the Italian imitates Greek buildings, encircling the court of Saint Peter's with marble galleries which lead nowhere. Characteristic art is organic art, develops from walls in the north and not from columns, and out of a need and special conditions.

The Greek world, however, is not excluded from Goethe's early production. In his witty assault upon Wieland's neoclassical *Alceste* (*Götter, Helden und Wieland*,⁸ 1773) he pictures Wieland meeting in his dream the heroes of his play and not understanding their language because it is Greek. Wieland is horrified

⁶ *Der junge Goethe*, ed. M. Morris, vol. II, 137-140.

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. III, 101-109.

⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. III, 329-347.

at Alceste's waistline, at the colossus Héracles whom he expects to find an average-sized man and who does not understand what Wieland means by virtue and boasts of his ability of begetting fifty boys in one night. Prometheus, the symbol of the creator since Shaftesbury, now becomes the hero of Goethe's fragmentary drama, in which the poet, two generations before Nietzsche, senses the tragic substratum of Greek art; even the gods are subject to a cruel fate, and hybris, that pride of gods and demigods, is threatened by a common doom. For Goethe's Greek world is not that of a golden mean, of a "peuple policé" and a "juste milieu" as Rousseau saw it; and the lines with which Goethe has Prometheus fondly address his creatures are directed against Rousseau:

You are not degenerated, my children,
Are industrious and indolent,
And cruelly mild, generously avaricious,
You resemble all your brothers in fate,
Resemble the animals and the gods.⁹

It is this fullness of life, life to be lived, loved, and suffered which the titanism of the Storm and Stress finds in the Greeks. For the titan himself, called by fate to vie with the gods to dare and die, incurs not a moral but metaphysical guilt. He is amoral, like nature, whose very essence is to create and destroy.

It is fascinating to trace Goethe's development from this titanism to the humanism of his classic epoch, a development dramatized in his *Iphigenia in Tauris*. For in this drama Orestes, the son of the haughty and cursed race of Tantalos, bowed down by the inhuman avenging matricide and haunted by the Furies, is chastened and soothed by the pure humanity of his sister, a Greek of noble simplicity and a Madonna of calm grandeur. But it is significant that this drama was conceived during the early Weimar days and completed only in Italy, for Goethe's whole evolution in Weimar is a maturing toward the crowning experience of his Italian journey.

The poet makes his peace with the world and the gods. His many-sided administrative activity with a rigid self-control and

⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. III, 391.

systematic ardour of dutiful attention to the smallest details turns his rhapsodic naturalism into a dutiful self-denial. Wide contact with people in all walks of life teaches him the value of humble service, conscientiousness in simple tasks and artisan efficiency, but also the civilizing meaning of customs and tradition and the observance of conventions as devices to economize in time and to æsthetize daily intercourse. A task well done is a step toward perfection of character; a duty outside of the ken of one's talents, a step from individuality to totality. Restriction and through it real self-expansion are recurring themes in his letters. *Entpersönlichung* (depersonalization), objectivity, *reine Schau* (pure observation) are demanded by his scientific studies of nature.¹⁰

In some of his references to his scientific efforts there runs an undercurrent of related Greek study which he accomplishes during this period, as when he says: "How readable the book of nature is becoming to me I cannot tell you—my long elementary lessons (he says "buchstabieren" = spelling; spelling in plant morphology = spelling in Homer and the tragic authors) my long spelling has helped me; now suddenly I am progressing and my joy is unspeakable." The impatient questioning of fate, the challenge of Olympus becomes a humble prayer:

For God has
Unto each prescribed his course,
Which the fortunate
Speedily runs
To his joyous goal.¹¹

And

Manly resisting,
Patient persisting,
Never despairing,
Doing and daring
Call down the arms
Of the gods unto thee.¹²

¹⁰ June 15, 1786 to Charlotte von Stein, ed. Petersen, Leipzig, 1923, vol. II, 1, 249.

¹¹ "Harzreise im Winter," *Jubiläumsausgabe* II, 48 (translation mine).

¹² "Beherzigung," GOETHE'S *Gedichte*, etc., ed. Bruns, p. 43, translation by R. M. Fullarton.

This objectivity, depersonalization, characterizes his whole Italian experience. If Winckelmann was guided to nature through art, Goethe finds his way to art through pure observation of nature. "What a precious, splendid thing—such a living creature," he exclaims at the sight of shellfish on the Lido in Venice.¹³ "How commensurate to its existence, how true, how being" (*seiend* = essential, functional, or physiological—a favorite word with Goethe at this time); and "true" for him is a step on the way to the great, the sublime, "which is only the highest, purest state of the true."¹⁴ "The smallest object of nature," he writes on December 23, 1786,¹⁵ "has its sphere of perfection in itself and all I need is eyes to see in order to discover its interrelation of parts and to be sure that within a small compass is enclosed a whole, true, organic existence. A work of art, in contrast, has its perfection without, first of all in the idea of the artist, which he seldom or never attains, then in certain accepted conventional laws which, though derived from the nature of art and its craft, are not as easily comprehended and deciphered as the laws of organic nature. There is so much tradition in the works of art, while works of nature are always like a word of God just spoken."

Italy for this initial stage in pure observation means for Goethe geography, fauna and flora, people and their customs, landscape, i. e. observation—to speak with Herder—of "the physiology of a national body" and, at the same time, of the Mediterranean man, the Greek. "I now understand much better the long dissertations pro and contra in the Greek tragedies. The Athenians liked to listen to speeches still more and could speak even still better than the Italians, and they learned it at their law courts where they lounged around all day long."¹⁶ In Sicily he recognizes the character of the Homeric landscape, which he sees through the eyes of Poussin and Claude. And now he proceeds from pure observation

¹³ "Was ist doch ein *lebendiges*, für ein köstlich herrliches Ding. Wie abgemessen zu seinem Zustande, wie wahr! wie *seyend*! Oct. 9, 1786 to Ch. v. St. (*ibid.*, II, 398).

¹⁴ September 30, 1768 to Charlotte von Stein (*ibid.*, II, 1, 365).

¹⁵ December 23, 1786 to the Duchess Luise (ed. von der Hellen, Stuttgart and Berlin, vol. II, 259).

¹⁶ October 6, 1786 to Ch. v. St. (ed. Petersen, II, 1, 383).

to the learning of the techniques of art, sketching, modeling, painting with his friends, especially with Tischbein and Angelica Kaufmann, and at last Rome discloses to him the meaning and essence of Greek art.

It is instructive to compare a passage from Winckelmann's *History* with one from Goethe's *Italian Journey*, to see the similarity but also the difference of reaction. In Winckelmann's famous description of the Apollo of Belvedere we read:¹⁷ "Think yourself in the realm of unearthly beauty and attempt to become a creator of divine nature in order to steep your spirit with beauties that transcend nature: for here is nothing mortal, nor what human inadequacy must have. Neither veins nor tendons to warm and move this body; rather it is as if a heavenly spirit, which has infused itself like a gentle flow, fills the whole contour of this figure. . . . I forget everything else over the sight of this miracle of art, and I find myself assuming a lofty pose, in order to be worthy to contemplate it. My breast seems to expand with veneration and to fill like the one which I see swelled with the spirit of prophecy and I feel transported to Delos. . . ."

What Winckelmann seeks to express here is beyond the power of the vocabulary of his time. Three times he uses the word "spirit," once for mind (*animus*), once for soul, and once for breath (*animus*). His Apollo as well as its description is unphysiological, and Winckelmann's reaction at the end is, though physiological (imitative posture), still of rationalistic pride over man's ability to rise in spirit to the level of the gods, a thoroughly euphoric reaction. Goethe's response is twofold: he acknowledges the educating, humanizing effect, the *paideia* of Greek art, but it is overwhelming; the gods cannot be approximated—there we have the difference between classicism and the classic.

"In such presence," Goethe says in speaking of the collection of the French Academy in Rome,¹⁸ "we grow beyond our own being (" *wird man mehr, als man ist* "); we feel that our worthiest occupation should be that with the human form, which one sees here in all its manifold splendor. But who does not sense at such

¹⁷ *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums*, p. 365.

¹⁸ *Italianische Reise*, April 11, 1788.

a sight at once how inadequate we are; even though prepared we stand annihilated (*vernichtet*).” Goethe’s use of the impersonal “we” (*man*) and “who” in contrast to Winckelmann’s subjective “I” is the difference between classic objectivity and rational subjectivity.

Before these antique statues, Goethe says on September 6, 1787,¹⁹ “everything arbitrary, imagined collapses. Here is necessity (“Notwendigkeit”), here is God.” Necessity means both, organic innate law according to which a thing of nature develops as well as the technical treatment dictated by the material with which the artist works. “All arts begin with necessity,” we find in his *Kunst und Handwerk*²⁰ (1789) in which he now condemns Gothic architecture because it transfers the technique of the carving of wooden shrines to an alien material.

The artist must not only know his craft and the exigencies of his material but he must, through exact and comprehensive study of nature, understand the essence of things. For this he has to compare individual variations of the type, observe its organic evolution from bud to seed, from root to crown or to know the motion of a body from first impulse to goal. Such a study will also teach the choice of the “pregnant moment” which concentrates the process into its most revealing instant. Past and future are embodied, physiologically, organically, “seiend” — as Goethe would say — in a present, seemingly static and yet dynamic. “*Dasein ist Pflicht und wär’s ein Augenblick*” — were it but a moment, our duty is — to be,²¹ as Faust expresses it in experiencing the ideal of Greek beauty in Helen of Troy.²² Thus art presents in

¹⁹ “Alles Willkürliche, Eingebildete fällt zusammen, da ist Notwendigkeit, da ist Gott.” *Italienische Reise*, September 6, 1787.

²⁰ See in this connection Goethe’s essays: “Kunst und Handwerk. Einfache Nachahmung, Manier, Stil” (1789); “Bildende Nachahmung des Schönen” (1789); “Einleitung in die Propyläen” (1798). The importance of the classicistic tradition as a preparation for Goethe’s classicism has justly been stressed by M. Sommerfeld in his *Goethe, Umwelt und Folgezeit*, Leiden, 1935, pp. 113-159.

²¹ *Faust II*, line 9418.—Life itself may become such a work of art. Goethe says, “Ich statuere keine Erinnerung . . .” was vergangen ist, muß mit uns “eins werden . . . und so ewig bildend in uns fortleben und schaffen.” *Goethes Gespräche*, ed. Biedermann, IV, 311.

²² WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT: *Kleine Schriften*. Reclams Universalbibliothek.

space so to say, what nature works in time: it separates the object from nature (conception), raises it to truth (embodied law), and gives it reality through workmanship upon material. Every great work of art is in this way a type, a symbol, a synthesis of the ethical and the sensuous, multiplicity unified, incorporated energy, an infinite flow in finite contour, an entity of parts in complete harmony with the whole. Its concentration demands from the onlooker a similar concentration, fetters his free reactions, robs him of arbitrariness. Abandoning himself he will be restored to himself as a higher and purified being.

Such a Greek work of art Wilhelm von Humboldt sees in Goethe's *Hermann and Dorothea* with its Homeric objectivity. Humboldt also enlarges upon the idea of the typifying of the Greeks in two essays, *On the Masculine and Feminine Form* and *On the Difference of Sexes and its Influence upon Organic Nature* (1795).²³ Individuation, he reasons along Platonic lines, splits the perfect ideal of human form into masculine and feminine traits. Our mind unconsciously restores the unity and postulates that difference of sex be not overemphasized, otherwise two individual and less perfect types of beauty will result instead of the one ideal. In actual life, man, inclining toward the side of freedom, becomes a one-sided being without the admixture of the female traits, inclining toward nature. The ideal of beauty, elevated over the polarity of one-sided individuation, free from the peculiarities of sex distinction, maintains, like the ideal of humanity, a most complete balance. In the divine everything strives toward the purity and perfection of type. The character of the sexes fuses and in the youthful form of the gods, the sharp contours of the male body are lost in a mild gracefulness which avoids hardness without extinguishing definiteness." We are here on the way toward the romantic conception of the androgynous type (man-woman type; it must not be confused with the hermaphrodite which is a simple combination of sexes). "What is

²³ "Ueber den Geschlechtsunterschied und dessen Einfluß auf die organische Natur," pp. 69-97. Ueber die männliche und weibliche Form, pp. 98-140.

uglier than accentuated femininity, what more nauseating than an excess of masculinity which dominates our customs, our opinions, even our better art?" asks Friedrich Schlegel. "Plato . . . has eternalized with few strokes a woman who satisfies both his tender feeling and the high ideas of his reason, Diotima, in whom the grace of an Aspasia is joined to the soul of a Sappho in high independence, whose sacred spirit represents a picture of complete humanity."²³

The thinking in polarities with their balance and the resulting tension is typical of the classic spirit of this period. Friedrich Schiller in his *Letters on the Esthetic Education of Man*²⁴ (1773-74) contrasts the Greek and modern age. While the totality of the species was represented in every individual Greek, modern man is a specialized drudge, a cog in the wheel of society. Society itself is cleft in classes, churches, profession. Torn asunder are state and church, law and customs; enjoyment is separated from work, means from purpose, labor from compensation. Man is a fragment, an expression of his business, his science. The dead letter has taken the place of live comprehension and a dead memory guides more surely than genius and instinct. Yet this specialization of man is beneficial for humanity as a whole for it leads to higher attainments, higher culture of the species; but it is detrimental to the individual, for it uses man as a means and not as an end. Since, however, we cannot go back to a "golden age" of undivided, unconscious, naïve beauty of the Greeks, a way must be found which restores to humanity its lost unity and totality and this is possible through art, through æsthetic education. The Greeks must be our teachers, but teachers to the freedom of our own development.

Here we are at the turning point of the classic epoch, for Schiller enters into the *Querelle*, the centuries-old discussion of the merits of the Ancients and the Moderns, in which he defends his own type of poetry, modern, sentimental, or, as we should now call it, elegiac or romantic, against the overwhelming "naïve"

²³ FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL: Ueber die Diotima (*Jungendschriften*, ed. Minor, I, 59).

²⁴ SCHILLER: Ueber die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen. Ueber naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung. *Säkularausgabe*, vol. 12.

poetry of Goethe. The Ancients, he reasons, are what we hope to become again. They were perfect by nature, hence their perfection is not their merit since it is not the achievement of their free will. Thus they procure the peculiar pleasure to us of being our models without being a cause of humiliation. The very feature that constitutes their character (i. e. nature, necessity, naïve life) is precisely what is lacking in ours to make it complete; what distinguishes us from them (i. e. our conscious striving with freedom of choice) is precisely what they lack to be divine. We change (since we set our own goal); they remain static (for they are the result of a law of nature). If, therefore, their absolute perfection is greater since their goal is finite and was reached by them owing to nature, our goal, an ideal, being infinite, being perpetually set higher, can only be approximated. But through our ethical striving as well as through the infinity of our goal we are superior to the Greeks.

Thus antiquity and modernity become stages of the human road to perfection. But Schiller is not satisfied. Having disposed of the rankling superiority of the Greeks through philosophical deduction, he now accepts their challenge (a word he had used in an earlier essay, *Letter of a Traveling Dane*,²⁵ after he had seen the Greek statues of the Mannheim collection in 1785), he accepts their challenge on their own ground—the field of the drama. He introduces the Greek chorus in his *Bride of Messina* (1803) in which freedom of will triumphs over the despotism of fate.

Meantime a younger generation had grown up to follow in the footsteps of their elders and to outdo them in the praise of the glory that was Greece. Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), brilliant but without the philosophic clarity of Schiller, abounding in eccentric paradoxes and superlative judgments, set out to write a history of Greek literature.²⁶ Spurred by the achievements of "holy Winckelmann," he succeeded in distinguishing periods of development. He evaluates Homer on the basis of his Greek critics and, as the first, recognizes the late origin of the Orphic poetry of the

²⁵ Brief eines reisenden Dänen. *Säkularausgabe*, vol. 11.

²⁶ See especially the early essays of FR. SCHLEGEL, now accessible only in: *Friedrich Schlegels prosaische Jugendschriften*, ed. J. Minor, Wien, 1882, vol. I.

Greeks in which "a first presentiment of the infinite fills the suddenly awakened consciousness not so much with joyous wonder but with the awe of astonishment and horror," and thus lays the foundation to a discovery of the Dionysian side of Greek culture.

The history of Greek literature seemed to Schlegel a "general natural history of poetry and at the same time a perfect and normative system of poetics." From both of them a clear conception of the goal of modern poetry should be abstracted through the setting up of an æsthetic archetype (*Urbild*), an embodied law. Modern poetry seemed to him to suffer from an anarchic striving for piquant and striking novelty, from a mixing of national characteristics of different peoples, from an isolation of individual authors and their false originality. Its theory was overshadowed by the authority of the Ancients, proceeded on a path of trial and error, and attempted to establish laws without an inner organic principle. Only Goethe, in Schlegel's opinion, possessed to a large extent what the Moderns were lacking, the objective style.

This radical solution of the "Querelle" evoked Schiller's scathing distichs:

Scarce have the feverish chills of Gallomania abated,
Graecomania breaks out with a more burning attack.

Greekdom, what was it? Clarity, measure, and reason! And therefore
Patience, gentlemen, please, ere ye of Greekdom discourse.²⁷

Yet, Schiller might have saved himself this warning, for both Schlegels had already, more swiftly and radically than he himself, turned away from the Greek ideal to the romantic. August Wilhelm von Schlegel,²⁸ less original than his brother but more systematic and lucid, contrasts antique and romantic art in an antithetic typology (which was fruitfully revived in our days by Heinrich Wölfflin to set in relief baroque art against that of the Renaissance), while Friedrich Schlegel in subsequent editions of his works accentuates the failings of the Greeks which lead to the decline of their civilization, the lack of stable ethical concepts

²⁷ SCHILLER in: *Xenien*, 1796, ed. E. Schmidt and B. Suphan (*Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft*, vol. 8) Weimar, 1893, p. 97 (translation mine).

²⁸ A. W. SCHLEGEL: *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur*, Erste Vorlesung. Ed. G. V. Amoretti, Bonn, 1923.

based on truth and religion instead of a sensual nature worship, the nefarious influence of sophistry upon public life, and the incessant warring of tribal states.²⁹ Slowly the splendor of the æsthetic image of Greece is overshadowed by a criticism of its social and historical foundations. The Napoleonic war stimulates the interest in Greek history; liberalism and reaction judge its institutions from partisan standpoints. Ernst Moritz Arndt,³⁰ for instance, speaks of "those terrible aristocracies" of the small states and their serfdom. "In order that some citizens, perhaps ten or twenty thousand men, could live without oppressing work, need, and distraction, that they could train themselves in arms, arts, exercises of every sort, in eloquence and demagoguery, in order that such a happy indolence could produce beautiful bodies and minds, the unfortunate large mass of people were degraded to deepest ignominy." Boeckh, in his *State Economics of the Athenians*, maintains that "the Greeks were in all their splendor of art and in the bloom of freedom unhappier than is mostly assumed." "They carried in them the germ of decay, and the tree had to be felled when it was rotten." And Solger leads to the tragic undercurrents of Greek thought with his question, "Whence that predominant melancholy tone in the whole Greek art? . . . Is the monstrous bitterness of a *Prometheus*, of the *Seven against Thebes*, the expression of joyful possession or the deeply mysterious foreboding sadness of *Oedipus at Colonus*, by which this work was filled, that of an ennobled sensuousness?"

The time is ripe for the twilight of the gods. Three currents of the epoch join to banish the resplendent images of Olympus from their sunny abode, catholic orthodoxy, the turn of the romanticists toward mystery and "the night side of life," and their newly originated studies of symbolism and mythology. Friedrich von Stollberg assails the "heathenish brood of paganism," Adam Müller discovers the religious origin of Greek drama, and Görres and Creuzer publish their *History of the Myths of the*

²⁹ FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL: *Gesammelte Werke*, Wien, 1846², vol. 13 (Philosophie der Geschichte).

³⁰ E. M. ARNDT: *Geist der Zeit*. A. BOECKH: *Die Staatshauhaltung der Athener*, Berlin, 1917. SOLGER: *Nachgelassene Schriften*. (Quoted by Rehm, pp. 392-394).

Asiatic World (1810), *Symbolism and Mythology of the Ancient People, Especially the Greeks* (1810-12).

"The little bit of serenity which the Greeks are supposed to have brought into the world is darkened entirely by misty images of Egypt and India," Goethe complains in the year 1819 to one of his friends,⁸¹ and it is perhaps not without romantic irony that in the second part of his *Faust*, Mephisto reviles the world of pagan beauty. As a Christian devil he can still say:

'Tis true, indecency is our ideal,
But the antique is too alive and real.

But when he assumes the rôle of the stewardess of Helena's household as Phorkias, hideous monster of the night, he assails her æsthetic ideal of Greek paganism from the standpoint of Christian ascetic morality:

Old is the world, yet high and true remains the sense
That Modesty and Beauty never, hand in hand,
Pursue their way along the verdant paths of Earth.⁸²

As early as 1797 Novalis in his *Hymns to Night* had sung the praise of Mother Night who holds in her lap the idle splendors of the passing light. From her we come; to her we return. To the forced joy of the banquets of the pagan gods she sends her fearful messenger, Death, whose power is ultimately broken by our saviour Christ, who summons us to his eternal nuptials. Using such conventional mythological traits in a thoroughly independent and unorthodox interpretation, he had really sung the curse of individuation and the return to an incorporeal union of soul. Plato and Plotinus had pointed the way to the realm of the "mothers," the chthonic, the dark lap of earth, the mysteries, through the dissolution of images into ideas. The origin of all religions and all races leads to mother India, the focus of new literary and linguistic studies for Schlegel, Humboldt and others. Even Hölderlin, perhaps the most fervent, gentle, and melodious eulogist of Greek beauty, attempts to reconcile Christ and Dionysus, addressing the Saviour thus:

⁸¹ *Goethe*, an H. MEYER, August 25, 1819.

⁸² *Faust*, II, 7086-7; 8784-6.

And boldly I declare that Thou
 Art also the brother of Dionysus
 Who yoked to the wagon the tiger
 And went down to further India,
 Proclaiming joyful service
 And planted the vine-tree
 And tamed the wrath of the peoples.
 But yet a shame forbids me
 To compare Thee with those worldly ones,
 Nevertheless I know that Thy creator,
 Thy father is the same. . . .⁸³

For more than a generation we may in the first half of the nineteenth century speak of an exile of the Greek gods in spite of Heine's unsuccessful attempt to solve the conflict between Hellenism and Nazarenism in the Chiliastic Empire of a Saint-Simonian Utopia. He realizes himself that his Venus is only a little Paris Grisette and proposes to drown his disenchantment in a punch mixed with the waters of the memory-effacing river Lethe.⁸⁴ Yet the chain of Greek tradition remains unbroken; from Heine's poems, Venus and her knight Tannhäuser pass into the opera of Richard Wagner, and from the Indian asceticism of Schopenhauer's philosophy Nietzsche brings the Dionysus of Hölderlin back to the Mediterranean shores and the glory of Greece.

There are two gods, Nietzsche reasons in his *Birth of the Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*:⁸⁵ on the one hand Apollo, the serene god of life, of rhythm, measure, form, and harmony, of mastery over fate and life's senseless sufferings, a plastic dream and symbol of man's trust in his power of individual existence, in individuation; on the other hand Dionysus, the god of drunkenness, of earth's dark, unconscious, unbounded procreative urge, of the undivided terror of death and orgasm of birth, of simultaneous woe and ecstasy, of a pristine will to live, the direct expression of which is music and dance. Whenever man awakens

⁸³ HÖLDERLIN: *Der Einzige* (translated by E. M. Butler, *The Tyranny . . .*).

⁸⁴ HEINE: *Die Götter im Exil*. Werke, ed. Elster vol. VI, 75. *Der Tannhäuser*, Werke, ed. Elster, 2nd ed., I, 309. UNTERWELT, *ibid.*, 347.

⁸⁵ NIETZSCHE: *Die Geburt der Tragödie aus dem Geiste der Musik*. Klassikerausgabe, Stuttgart, 1921, vol. I.

from the delusion of his triumphant safety of isolation, from his Apollonian dream and wish fulfillment of the principle of individuation, he takes refuge in the formless and fetterless realm of the Dionysian unity of life. "Either through the influence of a narcotic drink, of which all primitive men and peoples speak in their hymns, or at the powerful approach of spring, which pervades all nature with sensuous pleasure, those Dionysian emotions are awakened, in which his subjectivity is swallowed up in complete self-forgetfulness," as in the Christian Saint John's and Saint Vitus' dances of the Middle Ages, the bacchic chorus of the Greeks, the orgiastic hashish transport of the orientals.⁸⁶

Barbarian ecstasies ended in cruelty and sexual debauches, but the Greek mysteries created, as a first step toward the drama, the paeans of satyrs. Half human, half animal in form, these satyrs betray their origin, man fused with nature, freed from the shackles of civilization, freed from the suffering and isolation of individual existence, restored to an unbounded, primordial instinctive life and urge. The dance and singing of these satyrs transport their Greek audience into a holy enthusiasm, out of which rises a vision, the god Dionysus, whom these paeans extol. Impersonate Dionysus and we have the second step toward Greek tragedy in the ensuing dialogue.

But now a complementary element of Greek genius asserts itself, the Apollonian gift of creative dream, out of which rise the triumphant plastic figures of the Olympian gods. Through this art of raising the principle of individuation into a radiant and glorious illusion, the Greek—and Homer in particular—has become victor "over his most sensitive capacity for suffering and over his concept of the abysmal senselessness of life."⁸⁷ Instead of yielding to the impulse of negating and destroying life—which can only be accomplished through the destruction of its only means of existence, individuation—he has affirmed and justified existence in the only possible way, as an aesthetic phenomenon, for life is beautiful in spite of its senseless terror.

In the dynamic interrelation of these two worlds, the Dionysian

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

and the Apollonian, consists the tragic art of an Aeschylus and a Sophocles, while Euripides, imbued with the Socratic probing for rational truth, no longer possesses the power of creating æsthetic illusion and kills the spirit of tragedy with his maxim that "everything must be conscious to be morally good." Through the spirit of Socrates the shallow principle of poetic justice is introduced into tragedy; the chorus, the Dionysian element, becomes thoroughly superfluous and with it the spirit of music vanishes from the stage.

The second part of Nietzsche's essay is devoted to a justification of Wagner's opera which—he hopes—will recreate the tragedy of the nineteenth century since music is a direct expression of the will of life, the immediate idea of an eternal life. The death of the tragic hero, which only means the incessant change of the phenomena of life, may arouse fear and pity in the onlooker but fuses him with life's eternal will to live and to create.

The effect of these ideas may be traced in the neo-romantic authors, for instance Hofmannsthal (*Death and the Fool*, *Electra*, *Oedipus and the Sphinx*) and in the Expressionists; the strongest influence, however, Nietzsche exerted with his ideal of the superman, which, appearing in all variations from the "blond beast" in Sudermann to the creative artist in Hauptmann, probably finds its most adequate conception in Stefan George's seer and leader with his followers of a physical and spiritual aristocracy. In George's world, the Apollonian rises again triumphantly from Dionysian woes:

From nether dark the seeds spoke out of sight:
"Nothing but has its birth in damp and gloom. . . .
Do not condemn the dread environing womb
Be not afraid before the vasts of night—
This is the travail all must bear to be" . . .
But I behold the days when joyfully
Our mutual fruit shall laugh into the night.⁸⁸

In Rainer Maria Rilke the Dionysian world seems to predomi-

⁸⁸ STEFAN GEORGE: *Der Stern des Bundes*. Berlin, n. d., p. 69, "Mir sagt das Samenkorn." Translated in: *Contemporary German Poetry*, by Deutsch und Yarmolinsky, New York, 1923.

nate, yet he also pays his tribute to the god of light, especially in the poems which followed his plastic experience with Auguste Rodin. The *paideia*, the educative principle, which the world of Greek art meant to the German world, is summed up epigrammatically in Rilke's *Archaic Torso of Apollo*. The poet once more points to that unity of organic and dynamic life which the splendor of even the fragmentary Greek statue radiates. As though its missing eyes were diffused over the whole body, they behold the spectator and speak to him their stern ethical message:

We did not know his legendary head,
in which the eyeballs ripened, but
his torso still glows like a candelabrum
in which his gaze, only turned low,
holds and gleams. Else could not the curve
of the breast blind you, nor in the slight turn
of the loins could a smile be running
to that middle, which carried procreation.
Else would this stone be standing maimed and short
below the shoulders' translucent plunge
nor flimmering like the fell of beasts of prey
nor breaking out of all its contours
like a star: for there is no place
that does not see you. You must change your life.⁸⁹

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⁸⁹ RILKE: *Werke*, Leipzig, 1930, vol. III, 117. *Translations from the Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke* by M. D. HERTER, Norton, New York, 1938.

One has but to walk down an American street to see the effect of the Greek Tradition in this country. Our banks, our railroad stations, our schools, even our churches combine to give the effect of a classic stage setting. If one runs over a map, one sees such names as Athens, Troy, Syracuse, even Rome. Our colleges, which no longer pay much attention to Greek, and whose students can barely decipher the Greek alphabet, still harbor fraternities whose names are edifying Greek mottoes. Perhaps Phi Beta Kappa—whose name means "Philosophy the Pilot of Life"—membership in which is supposed to confer honor upon the chosen, illustrates most clearly what this tradition meant at the period of its greatest potency.

Philosophy in the late eighteenth century meant not merely the present subjects of philosophers, but also the natural sciences. To make philosophy the pilot of life was in those days to discard revelation, or at any rate to give it and authority a secondary position. It was to become a Philosopher, as the French Revolutionists used the term, a man whose pride was his reason. This was the classicism of David with his revolutionary pageants, his paintings of Brutus, the Horatii, Leonidas. It was the classicism of Jefferson as that philosophy appeared in his plan for the University of Virginia.

We have in large measure forgotten those rationalistic days, but at least the architecture of the period survives in village and small town to remind us that there was a time when American boys were called Vergil and Horace and had houses with Ionic porticoes.

THE CLASSICAL REVIVAL IN AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE

by

Talbot Hamlin

THE CLASSIC revival in American architecture is but one expression of a movement which swept over the entire western world, from St. Petersburg to the Mississippi. It was, on the one hand, a protest against the Palladianism, the Baroque, and the Rococo, which together had ruled architecture for almost two centuries; on the other, it was the reflection of a widespread excitement at new archeological knowledge, especially at the dramatic discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii, where classic life seemed suddenly to come alive again after seventeen centuries under the ashes of Vesuvius, and at the rapid spread of knowledge of the beauty and refinement of Greek architecture, which came with the work of the Dilettanti Society in London and the publication of the *Antiquities of Athens*, between 1762 and 1830, and the first three parts of the *Antiquities of Ionia*, between 1769 and 1840.

Yet, though this movement was as wide as western culture, its American expression was especially significant and unique in its character because of the special conditions which surrounded the North American colonies. For the American Revolution brought a cultural as well as a political liberation. Hesitant at first, American leaders turned more and more away from British influence in the arts, though large conservative elements still for many years turned back to the past and still, in matters architectural, considered England, if no longer the mother country, at least a benevolent and wise governess. But the cultural leaders of the country—men like Washington and Jefferson—took a different view. If England was no longer the cultural inspiration, a more real inspiration for them came to take its place—that great fecundating

inspiration that for three hundred years and more had sent wave after wave of influences across the surface of western life—the inspiration of the ancient classic world of Greece and Rome. This new cultural direction taken by the leaders, and especially by Thomas Jefferson, was the “correct” turn; it was a turn in the direction which world sentiment and taste were pursuing, and sooner or later even the most conservative were almost perforce to follow, too. The whole country became at last architecturally free—and architecturally “classic.” The colonial attitude was dead.

In one sense this love of classic antiquity had been a living force all over the world for at least three centuries. Addison's *Cato* was but one of a long series of heroic dramas on Roman themes that edified the theatergoers of eighteenth-century England; Racine in France had similarly filled the French stage with his magnificent figures from Greek mythology—Andromaque, Iphigénie, Phèdre. Was it from these that a new popular idealism was slowly forming? In the “high world” of fashion, as in the minds of the literati, all that earlier eighteenth-century classicism had passed many decades before, in favor of the castles made popular by Walpole and the growing love of medieval panoply; in England fashionable gardens were full of “dusky grotts” and “wandering streams.” Yet, underneath the somewhat hysterical swings of fashion, in the minds of the multitude the classic ideal still held sway. And, just at the time when the American and the French Revolutions were coming into troubled gestation, the new discoveries of Pompeii and Herculaneum were giving new life to the Roman ideal, making it at last something almost suddenly reborn, suddenly human and alive.

Perhaps it was this new discovery, perhaps it was the fact that it took decades for the high ideals of Roman and Greek life held up by the essayists and dramatists of France and England to permeate the popular mind and become at home there, perhaps it was merely the fact that eighteenth-century medievalism seemed the rather effete plaything of the wealthy; in any case, the revolutions in France and America brought a quick rush of new life to this

enthusiasm for the classic. The Roman citizen became the ideal of the perfect republican, the Roman tribune the great leader, the Roman general the ideal of all generals. Cincinnatus called from his plow to be the leader and the saviour of his people—who could be a better image of the patriot? It is no accident that veteran American Revolutionary officers called themselves the Cincinnati, or that at a later date the sculptor Horatio Greenough, meditating on the idea of Washington—"Pater Patriae"—should conceive his monument in an antique mould, a seated Zeus-like figure, nude to the waist, swathed in classic draperies below.

America, then, was born at a time when every writer of letters to the journals—and in those times of excitement and political controversy writing letters to the papers was a flourishing occupation—signed himself "Brutus" or "Cives." It was a time when enthusiastic citizens, often harried and perplexed by the thronging problems that surrounded the birth of a new nation, more and more turned back to ancient Rome (the mother of republics as of empires) and to ancient Greece (the country whose greatness came through her democratic city-states) for inspiration and for comfort. Those ancient peoples flowered and prospered; so should America. The classic world became, first, an inspiration; second, a refuge; third, a sort of marvelous vision of a Golden Age.

Of necessity, architecture followed the classic popular trend, rather than the medievalism of the new literary rebellion. Bryant's verse and the novels of Charles Brockden Brown might follow the romantics in England, but the architects, in style at least, followed the inspiration of Rome and Greece. Yet their architecture was not the classicism of the eighteenth century, merely re-vamped by new forms borrowed from Pompeii and Greece. A profound gulf separates eighteenth- and nineteenth-century classicism. A new nation was being born, and Washington and Jefferson realized that the buildings which were to enshrine its activities must be new too; in the country at large, the more intelligent gentleman-amateur builders as well as the few architects had come to realize the futility of trying here in the United States to reconstruct a little England.

Thus, classic ideals became the controlling elements in American architecture. At first, it was the Roman phase which dominated. Jefferson's interests were Roman; under his influence it was Roman forms—the dome and the Roman temple, like the *Maison Carrée* at Nîmes—and Roman grandeur of scale which governed the earlier buildings, like the United States Capitol and Jefferson's own house, Monticello, as well as Jefferson's designs for Bremond, for the Virginia State Capitol, and for the University at Charlottesville with its rotunda as a climax and its temple-faced pavilions. But in this country the Roman phase was of short duration, and from 1820 onward it was Greek architecture which usurped the leadership. Latrobe, first, in various details in the Capitol, showed the exquisite beauty and refinement of the Greek orders and Greek mouldings; Latrobe's pupils, Mills and Strickland, used the Greek inspiration almost constantly. At the same time, in the north, another center of Greek enthusiasm was born in the coterie in New Haven and New York of which Ithiel Town, with his magnificent library, and, later, A. J. Davis were the chief architectural creators. A third center developed in Savannah, under the leadership of Jay.

From these three centers, and a later Boston group consisting of Willard, Parris, and Rogers, the Greek movement spread like wildfire. Enthusiasm for the Greek struggle for liberty added fuel. Yet the universal popularity of the Greek forms as interpreted in the American Greek Revival had a stronger base than a Byronic interest in the Greek war for liberation. The Greek Revival in America became general, because its ideal was not the reconstruction of Greece, not the production of a Greek architecture, but the development of an architecture essentially American. To the American architect of those days, the Greek influence stood for liberation and not for imitation. On this point the architects themselves are clear.

Latrobe, the originator and precursor of this later Greek Revival, expressed in his own work and stated in his own words the principles which later dominated it. "My principles of good taste," he writes, "are rigid in Grecian architecture. I am a bigoted

Greek in the condemnation of the Roman architecture of Baalbec, Palmyra, and Spalatro. . . .” But he also says, “Our religion requires a church wholly different from the [Greek] temples, our legislative assemblies and our courts of justice, buildings of entirely different principles from their basilicas; and our amusements could not possibly be performed in their theaters and amphitheaters.” This double attitude is well illustrated in his Bank of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia, 1798, and his Baltimore Cathedral. In both he uses Greek types of the order, but in both the entire basic space conception is fresh, originally conceived, and direct; his admiration for the Greek purity of detail never superseded his love for the dignity and the spatial unity of the Roman dome.

Robert Mills, the most distinguished of Latrobe’s immediate followers and pupils, was even more insistent on the liberating function of the Greek ideals, and for that reason strong in his demand for an American architecture, rising anew through the force of the Greek inspiration. He writes in an unfinished essay on *The Progress of Architecture in Virginia*, printed in Mrs. Gallagher’s *Robert Mills*, “I have always deprecated the servile copying of the buildings of antiquity; we have the same principles and materials to work upon that the ancients had, and we should adapt these materials to the habits and customs of our people as they did to theirs.”

This chorus of voices becomes stronger as the years go on, as the style develops in strength and flexibility, and as the general principles of Greek architecture are more and more appreciated. Had the Greek Revival in America meant merely the copying of Greek forms, it would never have made over the face of the country, or seemed equally at home on the shores of the Connecticut, the Potomac, the Ohio, or the Mississippi. In a lecture given before the Franklin Institute in 1841, Thomas U. Walter said, “The popular idea that to design a building in Grecian taste is nothing more than to copy a Grecian building is altogether erroneous;—even the Greeks themselves never made two buildings alike. . . . If architects would oftener *think* as the Greeks thought, than to *do* as the Greeks did, our columnar architecture would possess a

higher degree of originality and its character and expression would gradually conform to the local circumstances of the country and the republican spirit of its institutions." And the beautiful details of the plates in the books of Minard Lafever show with what exquisite creative freedom the architects' own works expressed this spirit.

But there were other reasons for the success, and the brilliance, and the universality of the Greek Revival in America. The more one studies the architecture of the United States between 1820 and 1850—and in places all the way to the Civil War—the more one wonders at its unity, its harmony, the quiet loveliness of so many towns, the restful serenity of so many houses and churches, the dignified impressiveness of so many public buildings (capitols, city halls, court houses), the more one is led back to the reasons behind this achievement, to the life which gave it birth. Why did the Greek Revival have such a quick and universal flowering? The answer to this question must be sought on two planes, different but related: in the general culture of the period, its ideals and its character, and in the economic state of the country.

The *Memoirs* of Margaret Fuller Ossoli begin with an autobiographical chapter, written in 1840, describing her youth. Her education, as she described it, began with—Common Sense. Then, "in accordance with this discipline . . . was the influence of the great Romans, whose thoughts and lives were my daily food during the plastic years. . . . Architecture was the art in which Rome excelled, and this corresponds with the feeling these men of Rome excite. They did not grow—they built themselves up, or were built up by the fate of Rome, as a temple for Jupiter Stator. . . .

"We are never better understood than when we speak of a 'Roman virtue,' a 'Roman Outline.' There is somewhat indefinite, somewhat yet unfulfilled in the thought of Greece, of Spain, of modern Italy; but Rome! it stands by itself, a clear Word. . . ."

And this knowledge of Rome, this deep founding in the strict humanism of the classic ideal, came to her from her own voracious reading of Latin, as hardly more than a baby. "I was taught Latin and English grammar at the same time, and began to read Latin

at six years old, after which, for some years, I read it daily." Yet her interest in the classics was not to stop with the severe grandeur of this Roman ideal; for Margaret Fuller, as for the great artistic movements of her time, the Roman served but as a stepping stone to the Greek. . . .

"Ovid," she writes, "gave me not Rome, nor himself, but a view into the enchanted gardens of the Greek mythology. This path I followed, I have been following ever since; and now, life half over [she was just thirty years old when she wrote], it seems to me, as in my child-hood, that every thought of which man is susceptible, is intimated there." In those young years, indeed [she was scarcely in her teens at the time of which she speaks], I did not see what I now see, but loved to creep from amid the Roman pikes to lie beneath this great vine, and see the smiling and serene shapes go by, woven from the finest fibres of all the elements. I knew not why, at that time,—but I loved to get away from the hum of the forum, and the mailed clang of Roman speech, to these shifting shows of nature, these Gods and Nymphs born of the Sunbeam, the wave, and the shadows of the hill. . . .

"With these books I passed my days. . . ." And she was not yet fifteen when to the Latin and the Greek mythology she added Shakespeare, Byron, Ariosto, and Molière. At fifteen she writes to a former beloved teacher, ". . . Thus, you see, I am learning Greek, and making acquaintance with metaphysics, and French and Italian literature."

Margaret Fuller was, of course, a genius and even in her own day renowned as a child prodigy, the product of her unconventional father's intensive education. Yet she was less exceptional than is usually realized, and other girls in that springtime of American life were having educations not too dissimilar.

Two things stand out in this strange education: first, the deep classical foundation, and, second, the strong aesthetic emphasis that this diet of poetry and languages necessarily produced. And what was true of her was true in lesser ways of thousands of others who were growing up in this period. Poe, Emerson, and Channing had this in common, that in all three it was the aesthetic

sense which somehow formed the great motivating drive that made them what they were. Poe's poems became almost disembodied aesthetics; Emerson's was an aesthetic as well as a self-assertive philosophy, particularly in his earlier days; and Channing's Unitarianism was aesthetic religion par excellence.

Indeed, one might almost say that the most marked change in cultural direction between the America of the years just after the Revolution and of the years between 1815 and 1845-or-50, lay precisely in this: that before 1815 culture had been rationalist and theocratic; after that, it became primarily aesthetic and libertarian. Later still, after the Civil War, it became chiefly acquisitive, but that is another subject.

It was no accident that this period became the great era of strange sects, of free-thinkers, of all types of free-love communities that scandalized the righteous. The "great revival" of the forties may have been partly a protest against the aesthetic and moral freedom of the thirties.

It was as if mankind in America, about 1820, had rediscovered his five senses—suddenly, like one breaking out from the forest to sun-drenched, sea-bordered downs and all at once conscious of bright sun and distance and freedom; had suddenly discovered that it was better to see and hear beautiful things than ugly; had, in a word, waked up from a nightmare. At once the fine arts achieved a position which they had not held before. Education was based on poetry rather than theology, and was an education of the physical senses as well as the sense of duty. Painting in America had, before this awakening, been almost limited to portraiture. Sculpture had been practically non-existent except in ship figureheads, overdoor eagles, mantel decorations, and so on. And architecture had been hobbled by rationalist conservatism. Now, everything changed rapidly. The thirties saw portrait painting made a fine art as well as a trade; good artists like Copley and West no longer had to seek Europe to find a public; and a new school of American landscape and genre painting was born. The same period saw American sculptors working, and admired; and architecture could not but feel the same sudden quickening, sym-

bolized partly by the change from builder-architects to professional architects, so that what had been the exception before—the professional architect, like Latrobe or Mills or Hallet—became the rule, at least in buildings of serious pretension.

This new aesthetic sensitiveness was nationwide. It might sigh away in the languishing, affected manners of the fashionable miss, it might fade into the mawkish sentimentality of the earlier Godey's *Ladies' Book*, it certainly produced a flood of completely unreadable literature; but it was, at bottom, real and vital. If we laugh at its occasional pretensions, we must nevertheless accept, and reverence, its real achievements—Emerson's and Thoreau's prose, Melville's imaginative fiction, the superb clear richness of the best painting of Inman or Washington Allston or Morse, which killed forever both the intellectual academic aridity of the dying Reynolds tradition and the soft, sentimental lushness of the Romney or Lawrence school. And especially, I think, we must realize and admire its architectural achievements—not only the great monuments, like the Ohio Capitol, or the New York Merchants' Exchange, or the Bowers House in Northampton, but even more the hundreds of dignified churches and academies and courthouses, the thousands of restrained and elegant houses, big and little, that made the character of American towns from the Atlantic to the Great Lakes and the Mississippi. Never, before or since, I believe, has there been a period when the general level of excellence was so high in American architecture, when the ideal was so constant and its varying expressions so harmonious, when the towns and villages, large and small, had in them so much of unostentatious unity and loveliness, as during the forty years from 1820 to the Civil War. One has only to walk through Nantucket, to look at Hudson in Ohio, to see the fine old houses of Ann Arbor in Michigan or the older farmhouses and store buildings of southern Illinois, to fall at once under the influence of this spirit, to feel at once that these buildings were designed by, and built for, a people who had a new, vivid, almost overmastering aesthetic sensitiveness and love of beauty in form and lines.

The amount of interest in art shown by the periodicals of the

time is significant. True, there were no architectural magazines, but there were many magazines which showed pictures of American buildings and contained architectural criticism or articles on architecture. In fact, the ordinary educated man, as opposed to the technician, from the pages of the *New York Mirror* or the *Analectic Magazine* or many others, could and did get a clearer view of the architecture of his day during the thirties and forties than the same type of man can get today.

It is also obvious that the whole educational basis of the culture of the period was classic, and that a surprising number of women as well as men had an intimate knowledge of at least some of the great Greek and Roman writers, and had, what is more, if Margaret Fuller's experience is at all typical, a full realization of the whole artistic atmosphere of the classic world and of classic myth, an atmosphere expressed with the warmest clarity, though dyed with its own characteristic New England coloring, like a magnificent sunset sky seen through rose glass, by Nathaniel Hawthorne in the *Twice-Told Tales* of 1837.

Morover, it is obvious that the culture of the period was much more free, much more aesthetic in its bias, than that which had preceded or than that which followed. The old aristocratic aesthetic culture of the eighteenth-century plutocrats had died, it is true, but Thomas Jefferson's own exquisite taste presided at its funeral, and it left a heritage which widened to include almost the entire country. There was, of course, much crudity and naiveté, but there was almost everywhere an intense and unaffected search for the beautiful, and there was an overweening pride in artistic achievement.

This bookish, classically-founded, aesthetically sensitive culture was widespread and it was not standardized. The centralization of culture, which was to follow the Civil War and to make a few centers, like Boston and New York, the artistic dictators of the country, had not yet set in. Almost every county seat had its weekly or its monthly; almost every one of these, in addition to being a distributor of news and a political forum, was also an artistic center, with a page or a column devoted to literature,

music, and the fine arts. No wonder academies and colleges grew up everywhere like mushrooms, even in newly settled Ohio and Indiana; the people who built them, if not learned, admired learning, if not artists they admired art, and they had all of them the feeling not of copying distant centers but of being themselves creators—creators of a new America and a new art. They believed they knew what they wanted, and what they wanted was the beauty of nobility and freedom and grace.

To this intellectual culture we must add one more quality, if we are to understand the time—its feeling about wealth. We must avoid the danger of seeing it through too rosy glasses, as a sort of golden age. Slavery was at its height. Sectionalism was growing. Andrew Jackson's daring was increasing the consciousness of economic struggle between the haves and have-nots. Great fortunes were developing in New York and Philadelphia, and in the large eastern cities increasing immigration was forcing the subdivision of old houses into flats; the causes of the slums had begun their deadly work. In the new factories which were going up so rapidly, labor was shamefully exploited.

And yet the basic structure was still sound. Agriculture and industrialism were still in balance; rivals, perhaps, but not yet at each other's throats. Industry was still in a personal, paternalistic stage, and the employer often preserved a strong sense of responsibility towards those he employed. One has only to read the admiring accounts which foreign travelers wrote of the welfare work and the high idealism of the Lowell Mills, for instance, to realize that the thirties had an industrial atmosphere quite different from that of the sixties and seventies. Even if there were no contemporary accounts, the buildings would tell the story themselves; for in Manchester, in Lowell, in Nashua, in many smaller manufacturing towns of New York and Pennsylvania and elsewhere, there are rows of workingmen's houses from the thirties which are ample, dignified, gracious in detail, and set in lots adequately large—houses that are a remarkable contrast to the crowded jerry-built slums of forty years later. And there was hope; there was still the West—either the civilized west of Ohio and Michigan, or

the wild frontier beyond the Mississippi—the West clamoring for settlers, for development, full of opportunities for those who could save a little and who had ambition and initiative.

Above all, there was not yet in the free part of the country any hard-and-fast class distinction based solely on wealth. There were the rich and there were the poor, of course; but the mere fact of wealth or poverty did not form a reason for superciliousness or fawning. Mary Starbuck, brought up in Nantucket before the Civil War, in *My House and I* tells a story that perfectly expresses the feeling. She had remarked to a playmate that one of her friends was wealthy. An aunt of hers who had overheard the conversation interrupted at once. "Let me never hear you refer to anyone," she said, "as either rich or poor!" That was the ruling tone; and again the architecture is expressive. In town after town, in Ohio, in Connecticut, in New York, one will find small houses and big houses of the thirties and forties, but all have the same "manners," the same graciousness of detail and rightness of proportion. Squalidness is so rare as to be violently noticeable. Big and small houses, yes; but excepting certain areas of the largest cities, and certain shacks and cabins of the purely shiftless, rich and poor houses, never.

Such was the culture, such the conditions, in which the Greek Revival flowered, and of which it was the perfect expression. A culture learned, founded on classic myth, classic literature, classic art. A culture perhaps more completely aesthetic than any American culture before or since. A culture flowering lustily in hundreds of local centers, not yet centralized in the big cities. A culture radical, libertarian, experimental, eagerly searching for American expression. A country rich, expanding, not yet densely populated; a country with its agriculture and its growing industry still in fundamental balance. A country with growing towns and cities, new blossoming farms; a country pressing ever westward, demanding an amazing amount of building of every kind. . . .

Is it strange, with such a culture and such a country, the Greek Revival flourished and with all its variations produced an architecture alive, native, gracious, and sensitive, and towns that are delightful in their quiet harmony?

