ART FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS

BY K. DE B. CODRINGTON, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF INDIAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

It can hardly be denied that the Archaeologist should know something of the History of Art, for art is an integral part of culture and the Archaeologist can hardly be satisfied with the limited view of culture his excavations by chance give him. The author of a recent publication on the Cave Paintings of the Kalahari Desert reminds us that the great Abbé du Breuil believed that these works dated from the Palaeolithic. He then proceeds to divide them up into periods to which he attaches precise dates. It is not only that there is here a complete want of comparative material to support such a chronology, but that the use throughout the discussion of the magic word "style" is unwarrantably confident. Have not Giorgiones and Rembrandts in reputable Art Galleries been challenged on the basis of distinction of "style", and was there not a Dutchman who repeatedly deluded the combined expertise of museum-curators, art-dealers and art-journalists, and in more than one "style"? In the Dresden Gallery alone the great Morelli renamed no less than forty-six paintings including Giorgione's *Sleeping Venus* which had been catalogued as a copy of a lost Titian by Sassoferrato. Students of the History of Art are fully aware of the difficulties implicit in a naïve reliance on style-dating. The Archaeologist should at least know how wrong on occasion we have been. Every great museum has its Chamber of Horrors of fakes bought in good faith.

People may well ask "What is the proper entry into the study of the History of Art?" This question actually means: "Isn't there a nice, short book on the subject which will tell me all about it?" There are such books, and the best of them, such as Salomon Reinach's *Apollo* will not mislead. But art cannot be studied at the desk or by the fire-side. The Archaeologist will find that it is an exhausting pursuit, demanding more

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1 A lecture delivered in the John Rylands Library on Wednesday, the 6th of May 1964.
energy than pushing a wheel-barrow or wielding a trowel, and far more persistence. In order to arrive at some idea of what art is, the student must obviously begin by tramping the galleries of museums, both national and provincial. He may then go on to the cathedrals and the parish churches, large and small, and the great houses and private collections, all the while keeping an eye on the Sale Room where the prices paid have an integral bearing on the subject and are often illuminating. After two or three years of this, he should have arrived at a fairly clear idea of the extent and scope of what is called "art", and of the various kinds of professional interests it provides a field for. Whatever is to be said about the artist and the self-styled aesthete, there are a great many other people concerned in the business, including critics, dealers, collectors, journalists and pedants, all the motley crowd which Tonks used to refer to scornfully as "the Art Boys".

It is plain that though some of them make money out of art, the Art Boys are sterile as far as the production of art is concerned, though they talk about it all the time. In order to understand the vocabulary they use to express their personal interests, it is advisable to know something of what has been said about art in the past.

"The arts of painting, poetry, music, dancing and sculpture are all imitations", said Socrates. "There are three beds," said Plato, "—there is the Idea, which is the essence of bed, born of God, a truth beyond the truths of this universe. There is also the copy of the Idea made by the carpenter. And there is the bed painted by the artist, which is a copy of the carpenter's bed and, therefore, a copy of a copy, thrice removed from the Platonic truth". Art is not merely an imitation; it is an imitation of an imitation. What the artist does is no more than a mirror, or some kind of moving mirror, does. But this conception of the artist as a mirror, and of art as what is reflected in a mirror, is actually contradicted by two other contemporary theories. For techne in Greek and ars in Latin actually meant craft, something done, something implicating skill and practice, something personal which one man could do and nobody else. Moreover, Plato makes Socrates, in pursuit of irony perhaps, rather than of the logical object of his dialectic, bludgeon the
wretched Ion into admitting that the poet cannot depend on his craft or personal experience, but has to await the descent of the divine afflatus which puts him quite out of his right mind. The artist is not only, therefore, a mirror, but some kind of lamp which must be lit, or an Aeolian harp which is mute until the wind, which is the spirit, makes music on it. These three metaphors of the Mirror and the Lamp and the Aeolian Harp dominated criticism up to the end of the nineteenth century. But the idea of art as mere craft had become unpopular long before that. It was, indeed, all along in conflict with the idea of the artist as divinely inspired. It did not accord at all with the gentlemanly poetry of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the pretensions of the English portrait painters, Hogarth’s phiz-mongers and drapery hangers, who had assumed gentility under the presidency of deaf old Joshua Reynolds. The Romantic Revival, led by a peer of the realm and the heir of a baronet, blew their newly established pretensions sky-high. But the Romantic Legend of the Artist as staged in Montmartre, Chelsea or Greenwich Village was no substitute for the conversational ability and good manners of the Age of Reason.

In Aristotle’s Poetics, as in the Platonic dialogues, the use of the term *mimesis* implies that works of art are constructed upon prior models. But Aristotle chooses to move in the existing universe and has no need of extra-mundane ideas or ideals. He is discussing art and, having distinguished poetry from other kinds of art, he goes on to discuss the kinds of poetry that actually exist. The criterion of all criticism, first of all and above all, must surely be that the critic is obliged to make it clear what he is talking about.

Dr. Johnson said that Dryden was the father of English criticism. He wrote: “Having shown that imitation pleases (as Aristotle had done) and why, it follows that some rules of imitation are necessary”. The legislators were available in the person of the gentlemen of the Age of Reason, who met frequently to discuss the interests of the town over their coffee; Dryden at Will’s in Russell Street, Addison and Steele at Button’s opposite Will’s, Hogarth and Gainsborough and other artists, including, at the very end of the epoch, poor Benjamin Haydon,
at Old Slaughter's in St. Martin's Lane. But they are all gone. The dissolution is complete. All that is left are the art-reviews of the Sunday papers and the B.B.C.'s little weekly conversation piece, "The Critics". John Stuart Mill was intimately concerned with poetry, for he admits that he owed his sanity to it. He also admits, that in his day, poetry was of the nature of a soliloquy and that the poet's audience had been reduced to a single member, the poet himself. Many modern artists would say that they are not in search of an audience and that art is a function of the instinct of self-expression and has no reference to society or the world. Sartre in his last book comes to the conclusion that the whole thing is meaningless and unnecessary. There is nothing left, it seems, to discuss.

Archaeology owes an unforgettable debt to Flinders Petrie, especially for his insistence upon the urgency of exact chronology. But he was not satisfied with Prime Chronology, the landmarks of the King List, which tell us the year and the month and the day. He also sought to fill in the gaps, by means of the Secondary Chronology of sequence datings based on the corpora of pots and other everyday objects, which he taught us how to make. Art with all this talk of styles and trends must also be made to contribute to history. His book on art is the only unreadable book Petrie wrote. It was born dead for it looked only to the dead past. When Lord Elgin saved the Elgin marbles for the British Museum and the world, the pedant Payne Knight said that they were artistically valueless and, indeed, not Greek at all. Since then, in an incredibly short time, the Elgin marbles established Greek sculpture as a standard of artistic beauty, it has been said, for all time. Rawlinson wrote to Layard of his newly found Assyrian sculptures: "... The Nineveh marbles are not valuable as works of art ... Can a mere admirer of the beautiful, view them with pleasure? Certainly not, and in this respect they are in the same category with the paintings and sculptures of Egypt and India ... We have specimens of the very highest art and everything short of that is, as a work of art ... valueless ... your winged God is not the Apollo Belvedere ...". In spite of this Ferguson, who was a friend of Layard, thought fit to extend his professional studies on the
History of Architecture to India, and was willing to question whether Greek art was the only criterion of beauty. Indian art, too, was beautiful, but Petrie, our father in Archaeology, eighty years later knew nothing of it.

W. G. Collingwood’s *The Philosophy of Ornament* is of considerable interest, for R. G. Collingwood, who in turn was archaeologist and philosopher of art, must have been familiar with it. In it Greek art finds a place between the Asiatic schools and the Gothic. Collingwood in 1883 was able to write “... it is most important to remember the continuity of art history. So far from Greek art being a mysterious and spontaneous growth we have traced its development out of natural barbaric motives, common to the infancy of all nations and individuals, but impelled and instructed by Egypt and Assyria ...”. When Petrie wrote, an exhibition of African sculpture had already been staged in Paris, the first of the great series of international art exhibitions on which the twentieth century must base its opinions on art. Burckhardt had long ago established the study of art as an integral part of history, and Wölfflin, confining himself to Europe, had provided a method of analysing art-history intelligibly. In the last paragraphs of his “Principles” he warns the Archaeologist that significance can very easily be lost in the catalogue of minor works of art and lesser artists. Intellectual self-preservation demands that we should classify the infinity of events by which we are faced in the world of art, by reference to a few, clear results. For instance, an understanding of European painting can certainly be best arrived at through the study of the great originals. We have to deal with what Giotto, Masaccio, and Giorgione did to Italian painting, and we cannot, therefore, altogether do without the lives of the painters. But what of the anonymous past? What of the origins of art? What of the mechanics of the visual heritage out of which the traditions of the great periods of art grow? How does it all come about?

Dogmatic theories abound. Art is born of religion. It arises from the celebration of popular festivals. It is the product of racial history, and can be discussed, as Strygowsky did discuss it, under two heads, Northern Art and Southern Art, or under
three heads, as Worringer did, Northern Art, which is German, Mediterranean Art which is Classical, and Oriental Art which he identified with Egyptian art. The result is hardly illuminating, for Egyptian sculpture has little in common with Chinese or Indian sculpture. Moreover, such wide generalizations lead to historical fallacies, such as the assumption made by Goethe (and Worringer) that Gothic art is German, whereas it is known that it originated in the Île de France, the personalities and corporations responsible being recorded. The Archaeologist must insist that a theory of art should not obscure the facts of history.

In much the same way generalization has confused the meaning of the terms used to describe the various kinds of art that exist, to such a degree that their usage has become almost meaningless. Is Realism something other than Naturalism? And is there not a measure of Abstraction in all Impressionism? Realism is a committed term in general philosophy and is, therefore, perhaps better avoided altogether when talking of art. It would, perhaps, also be better to speak of a naturalistic manner of representation rather than of Naturalism, for we are here faced by a very common kind of art which fulfils the old ideas of imitation. That there are various degrees of imitation is clear enough. The classical dance was an imitation, but, as with so-called “realistic” art, what sort of imitation is not immediately clear. In one passage, Lucian gives an account of the mistakes made by dancers. He remembers an instance when a dancer, who was supposed to be dancing the Birth of Zeus, danced by mistake the calamities of Thyestes. If such a mistake could be made, in what did the imitation lie? Yet, in other passages Lucian says that the performance of the skilled dancer was immediately intelligible to his audience. The dance was, therefore, representational and the representation was recognizable. The Impressionism of the nineteenth century was also representational and recognizable, and so must be the art of the caricaturist who draws a portrait in a few strokes of the pen. It would seem, then, that Impressionism has its origin in the representation of reality. It is a way of doing it. But the existence of the Salon des Refusés suggests that the content of
the pictures of the great French Impressionists was not immediately recognized, but only later became so. Collingwood rightly comments on the naivety of attempts at total non-selective representation. Impressionism implies a high degree of selection; only the significant features are aimed at. Indeed, since a work of art is a work of art, and not the thing represented, total representation is impossible. Art does not deceive; it convinces.

On the other hand, Abstract Art, which purports to express the artist's feelings without reference to the given facts of the real world, is something different, for all Abstract Art must stand or fall purely by the values of line and mass and colour out of which it is compounded. Abstract Art is "design"; it satisfies by functions other than representation and recognition. Pure unrepresentational designs of this sort have, of course, long been used as an embellishment in architecture or in embroidery, and are, perhaps, best referred to as "ornamentation" or, if repetitive, as "pattern". The bonding of bricks and the laying of tiles and the weaver's warp and woof are all sources of patterns. In every case the conventions and techniques of the period must be considered. They form the most distinctive elements in the "style" of the period. Both tool and material contribute to art. Islamic art would not be what it is if the Muslim architects had not been able to use ceramic tile-work ornamentally.

In the use of many art terms there is, unfortunately, discernible a certain systematic ambiguity. Some are obviously obsolete; some are merely analogical, suggesting likenesses rather than identity; some are mere courtesy terms, like the "Esquire" we write after our names. All these displace the living current terms we are in search of in order to express the facts of today as we see them. For this reason modern art-criticism tends to be diffuse. Herbert Read thinks it worth while to quote Schopenhauer's statement that all arts aspire to the condition of music, and says that Schopenhauer was thinking of the abstract qualities of music for "in music, and almost in music alone, it is possible for the artist to appeal to his audience directly, and without the intervention of a medium of communication in common use for other purposes". He tells us that "the psychological reasons
which lead an artist (and the artist is in all of us) to express himself in pattern are obscure, though no doubt they can be explained physiologically”. It is very doubtful if there is an artist in all of us, but, whatever physiologists may say in the atomic future, it is inescapable that men have been addicted to art from very early times. Most critics when dealing with the cave-art of Upper Palaeolithic times have called it realistic, naturalistic or impressionistic, though some have found “abstract” qualities in it—whatever that means. The approach has been universally anthropological. It is agreed that we have to do with art as the tool of magical rituals. Yet these works attract modern artists as works of art, and some, like Skeaping, have allowed their interest to be reflected in their own work. It must, however, be remembered that when Skeaping produces drawings of palaeolithic horses of this sort, he frames them and exhibits them in some gallery or other. He certainly expects people to look at them and probably hopes that they will buy them. In other words he is committed to the world of the Art Boys.

Yet all modern art-critics say that art is to be contemplated and that the result is a heightening of the sensibilities, a kind of excitement. This is, of course, the reverse of Wordsworth’s poetry as the product of recollection in tranquillity. If the artist has any other object than this, that is to say, if he uses his art as a vehicle of mere amusement or persuasion of the political or advertising kind, he debases it into a craft. Yet the great artists of the Renaissance were willing enough to design pageants, trionfi or rappresentazioni, or, indeed, a ducal bath-room. They served the needs of their day as their patrons demanded, and were not at all dismayed at the ephemeral quality of all these shows. What did Palaeolithic man do with his art? To begin with he did it in a dark and damp cave, where nobody lived and few people came, and if the anthropologists are right, he expected the people, who did go to see it, to stab at it with spears or shoot at it with arrows.

We, on the other hand, assume that we are capable of aesthetic experience and, until quite recently, we have supported our pretensions by postulating the existence of something we call Beauty. The modern art-critic with his memories of the great
international art-exhibitions reviews dispassionately a Greek Aphrodite, a Byzantine Madonna, and a savage idol from New Guinea or the Ivory Coast, and is willing to support his judgements by relying on Croce's hard-worked term "intuition" or Lipps's obscure "Einfühlung" or Gentile's alarmingly simple generalization that everything is Art in so much as everything is Feeling. The art-dealer and the collector are more practical. They are forced to accept the standards set by current sale-room prices, and the History of Art demonstrates clearly enough that art-prices are largely a matter of fashion. In Greek, in which language the whole debate has its origins, to call a thing beautiful is to say that it is admirable or excellent or desirable. Homer calls the sandals of Hermes beautiful.

Yet the anthropologists must be allowed to have their say. Mitchell's remarkable book The Past in the Present: What is Civilisation? is a good introduction to the subject for those in search of the origins of art in the primitive. He draws attention to the resistance shown in certain regions to the intrusion of foreign fashions and techniques. Until recently in the Isle of Lewis hand-made pottery fired on the open hearth was still made, and the spindle was preferred to the spinning-wheel. Moreover, the quern was still in use and, also, the water-wheel with a vertical axis. In Africa, the potters' wheel and the quern never intruded, and the quern was unknown in India until the Roman period. In speaking of survivals of crude methods of working among sections of a people who are actually in a high state of civilization, Mitchell points out that, when carefully and fairly studied, they are found to have considerable merits. In any case, it is clear that "mere rudeness of workmanship cannot be accepted as evidence of great age."

The study of what is called "primitive art" is largely based on the work done in the first half of the nineteenth century in America, by pioneers such as Bancroft and Holmes, and Cushing. In 1893 Henry Balfour published his The Evolution of Decorative Art and this was followed in 1895 by Haddon's Evolution in Art, based largely on new material from New Guinea and the Torres Straits. Haddon believed that the artistic expression of a highly civilized community is a very complex matter and that its
complete unravelment would be an exceedingly difficult and, indeed, impossible task. He, therefore, turns to the arts of less developed communities and proposes to study them geographically, as a zoologist would study the birds and butterflies of a region. Balfour is more philosophical, but he and Haddon are in complete agreement in their general conclusions.

Modern art-criticism finds a place for the objet trouvé, the natural object, twisted root or flint nodule which can provide aesthetic pleasure in itself, and it is clear that the natural form of such objects have often suggested art-forms. A stone Haida charm from the Queen Charlotte Islands is such an object. The addition of an eye to a natural pebble converts it into the representation of a fantastic animal, and the same thing is done by the Esquimaux to pieces of walrus ivory, the natural form of which is developed by the addition of a few engraved lines into the representation of whales or fishes. It is not surprising that the seed-capule of a Martynia plant is used as a charm against snakes, for the natural form is immediately suggestive of the head and fangs of a viper.

It is, also, clear enough that design or ornament can emerge from a purely practical, mechanical process. In the Torres Straits the nodes of bamboo arrows are smoothed to avoid cutting the thumb of the bow-hand on which the arrow rests. The fact that the cortex of bamboo peels easily has been used to make various stepped designs at each node. But the greater part of the designs Haddon and Balfour illustrate are beyond any doubt representational. There are crocodile and snake-and-man arrows carved in wood, the representation, which is recognizable, being acknowledged by the name given to them. The variation within these representational types is infinite, and must be accepted as contemporary, that is to say, as the product of the individual craftsman's skill and vision, and not evolutionary. In one specimen the crocodile's formidable teeth are shown as fangs, while in another they are reduced to a wavy line, and it is the same with the eyes, nostrils and limbs. Of these representational designs the frigate bird provides the basis of much ornamentation, varying from the observable bird-form to all-over designs of spirals developed from the head and eye. Even in
these advanced cases, in which the natural features of the model are overlaid in the making of a repetitive pattern, the representa­tional origins of the design is preserved in the name given to it, and it is the same with the creeper-designs found in Ceylon and in many other instances all over the world. Representation, therefore, plays an important part in the art of the so-called uncivilized or backward peoples.

Balfour in the face of this evidence of what might be called " primitive realism " , carries out an experiment in copying. The plates he publishes show the results of copying where many hands are implicated. The same point might be made by setting side by side the versions of well known motives which have travelled over the world and survived the passage of time. Coins have achieved a wide distribution and so have seals and intaglios, and they have carried with them many ancient designs, for instance, Hercules and the lion which is older than Greece, and the Gorgon's head, which found an established place in Indian art and persisted for many centuries.

For some time educationalists have interested themselves in children's drawings and, indeed, they have been made the object of a cult, for the naïve has a charm of its own. The development of a child's drawings usually follows a set line. The early circular scribbling is an excellent muscular exercise leading to control of the pencil. But if the fond parent is foolish enough to ask " What is that, dear ? " he is likely to be told it is " Dada " or " Mama ". The human figure provides set problems, especially when the full face with dots for eyes, nose and mouth, and loops for ears, is put on one side for the more sophisticated profile. Here the hidden ear and eye are often included, displaying the meticulous attention given by the child to the necessary details implicit in his idea of representation. He includes what he cannot see, because he knows it is there.

But the charm of naivety and the processes of the training of hand and eye are not everything. In a world of advertisements, television and illustrated papers, copying starts at an early age. The publication in a woman's fashion paper of drawings in the manner of Marie Laurencen has been traced in the crayon and water colour drawings of girls in schools widely distributed over
the country. Indeed, the ability to make such copies plays a great part in the development of the artist in his own right. That the artist must have special gifts is undeniable. Only some children persist in drawing. Many turn away from it, probably because they are critical of their own work and find it unsatisfactory.

Teachers are given to insisting that work done in school is wholly original, but examination of children's drawings shows the inevitable influence of museum visits and illustrated books, and advertisements. Line drawings, pen and ink sketches and engravings seem to be particularly effective from this point of view, and glimpses of Daumier and Degas have been caught and reflected by children whom the teachers were trying to interest in other things. The captions given by children to their drawings are always interesting. In spite of pattern-making, which begins at an early stage in our Primary education, most children's drawings are obviously illustrations, either of stories, or of events, or of things done.

It should be clear that in the development of an artist, ability and teaching are both implicated. In the annual exhibitions of many Art Schools one can still see examples of Cézanne's apples with black rings around them or Lucien Freud's heads with sausages under the eyes. Modern art uses distortion for its own purposes, but it is doubtful if a tradition of distortion can end in anything but boredom. Yet it is from this background that the individuality of genius must arise, or rather, break away.

Just as art is used by school-masters for the purposes of their teaching, so it has more recently been used by psychologists for the purposes of diagnosis and therapy. The drawings of the insane rightly appear in psychological text-books, and exhibitions of them have been held with explanatory catalogues written by the psychologists concerned. Here it is very difficult to make certain that the work is really individual and not conditioned by therapeutic theory and practice, nor is it always possible to make certain that the patient has not been taught art at some stage or other. It seems that most paranoid schizophrenics are very willing to talk about the meaning of their drawings. Each detail is significant, though if the session is repeated, it is often evident
that the alleged meanings have completely changed. It seems, therefore, in these cases that the subject of the drawing and its parts are variable in their meaning. We are not able to identify the symbolism that produced them. Psychologists often ask their patients to state their reactions when shown a series of chance forms, such as ink-blots. This is not a matter of interpretation, but rather of self-expression and has an element of creation in it. Just as the great original artists impose a new way of seeing on their public, so the great critics can transfer their own specialized experience to those who read them. Once it was enough to describe the subject of pictures. Later this became tiresome and critics took refuge in what they told us was pure aesthetic experience. So it came about that the artist was divorced from his work, and art as lived by the men who make it was eclipsed by the critics' interpretation of it. When it happens this is intolerable, for one must be allowed to look at art with one's own eyes. It also makes the writing of the History of Art impossible. The artist, of course, belongs to his period, but he has certain rights. He is the man who makes art, which is something most of us cannot do.

Academically the History of Art is a new subject and as such has its peculiar difficulties. For instance, when reading art-criticism, it is always advisable to know what the critic is talking about, that is to say, how much art he has seen. In our school text-books, which we find so hard to forget, the story of the Renaissance is dominated by the fall of Constantinople. The revival of learning was the revival of Greek, though it could not have happened had not the printing-press made Greek books generally available for the first time. Yet the new learning hardly touched European literature. Cardinal Bembo's poems are Latin, not Greek, though this is of no historical consequence, since Italian literature had long since burst upon the world to open a new heaven and a new earth. The Renaissance in poetry and in art is Italian.

Yet Greece held the imagination and the perfection of Greek sculpture and painting was discussed by the pedants in the same terms as were the great epics and tragedies. Greek literature was available. They knew what they were talking about. But
how much authentic Greek art had been seen by those who wrote and spoke of it so glibly? The Apollo Belvedere, a copy of a third-century work, has been known since the end of the fifteenth century. Later the Laocoon, a copy of a second-century work, and the first-century Hercules by Appolonius, and the Florentine Niobe, a Roman copy of a fine second-century original, became known. Winckelmann was fully justified in quoting Montfaucon’s blunt admission that he did not believe that any work of Greek sculpture existed earlier than the Roman period. This was not true, of course, though it is a fact that what we now call Archaic Greek sculpture was entirely unknown until the excavations on the Acropolis in 1881. Lessing, when he wrote his great and highly original work, had only engravings and drawings of the Laocoon before him. Winckelmann, who brought into being a new era of classical scholarship, never saw Greece and did not see Rome until 1755.

In 1786 Goethe undertook his Italian journey with what Winckelmann had written as his guide. The only Greek monument he saw was the temple at Paestum. Conditioned by late Roman art and his enthusiasm for Palladio, he found it strangely disturbing, its columns heavy, its whole structure overweighted and threatening. He was forced to take himself in hand and argue himself into some kind of appreciation of this relic of the Greek ideal. It is significant that he studied Worsley’s rather poor drawings of the Parthenon sculptures zealously, but refused the chance of seeing them for himself. It was only in his old age that he was able to catch a glimpse of the real thing in a plaster-cast of one of the horses’ heads among the Elgin marbles, at last available to the public in the British Museum. It is also worth remembering that Payne Knight, a scholar of some standing as his gifts to the British Museum bear witness, regarded the Parthenon frieze as a Roman copy unworthy of the Museum, and that it was the practising artists led by Haydon who forced the Trustees to acquire them.

Payne Knight made the mistake of labelling Greek classical sculpture Roman, but until the Elgin Marbles were put on show in Bloomsbury, Roman sculpture or Roman copies of late Greek sculptures commonly passed as Greek. Winckelmann founded
his classification of Greek art on Scaliger's periods of Greek literature. His last period covered Roman art, which was decadent because no longer purely Greek. It indulged in portraiture and narrative. Its "realism" set it apart from the "idealism" of true Greek art as essentially inferior. No one treated Roman poetry in this way and Ovid continued to dominate the classical encyclopedias from which Keats and others derived their picture of "Greek" civilization. But this is how Roman art was treated, until Wickhoff began to teach in Vienna in the nineties. In displaying the individuality and richness of Roman art, he laid the foundation of Art History as we know it today. Beside the copies of Greek sculptures, he places the swags and garlanded pillars used decoratively in the *Ara Pacis* and architecturally on well-heads. In these naturalistic foliage, flowers and fruit are put to a strictly formal use in a way that was new and purely Roman, and not at all decadent.

He made mistakes, of course. In discussing the Roman use of sculpture for the purposes of narrative, he draws attention to the repetition of the figures of the chief protagonists as the tale is told. In the representation of his Dacian campaign of 102 A.D. Trajan is portrayed ninety times on his column, and Wickhoff sees this device of continuous narrative as being a distinctive feature of Roman art. In point of fact, the Indian Bharhut sculptures of the first century B.C. use the same trick, and Michelangelo, also, used it in a drawing which once belonged to Cosimo de Medici, now in the Uffizi. But Wickhoff's discussion of the art-objects available to him is always illuminating, for he sets himself to work out in the examples he puts before us, how art is done and how it works. Turning to early Christian art, he is thus able to ask the all important question: "Where do these new forms come from?"

Series of illustrations of the Bible did not appear until the fourth century A.D. The relations of literature and representative art are clear enough. Illustration is at any rate one of the functions of art. The texts spoke of the *Teraphim* Micah laid in David's bed in order to deceive Saul and of the figures Gideon set up out of the booty he took from the Midianites. But these, and the *Cherubim*, and the bells and pomegranates of Solomon's
temple were forgotten and dead. The visual tradition had been broken. When the need for illustrations of the Bible arose, the pictures had to be created out of the imaginative content of a different world. Christianity had little in common with Rome as far as its religious practices went, but it was forced to use contemporary figures of speech and visual forms, and these could only be Roman. Wickhoff, therefore, describes the origins of Christian art as a process of “filling in the poetic framework from which imagery had fallen away with a fresh imaginative context and a different cycle of forms”. The fourth-century Book of Genesis in the Vienna Library is the product of this process.

Here, in one panel, Eve is shown offering the apple to Adam and then together they hide in the bush, shamed by the voice of God. Here are the serpent and the tree, and Adam and Eve at the gate with its forbidding Cherub. This is the continuous Roman narrative method. Exactly in the same way, on a late sarcophagus Selene is shown alighting from her chariot to kiss the beloved sleeper and again mounts her chariot to depart.

But the forms included in the narrative are even more strikingly contemporary. The Cherub at the gate of Paradise is winged Victory and the fountain at which Rebecca gives Eleazer to drink is a nymph leaning on an urn, a viable emblem from the contemporary repertoire of art-forms. In the dramatic Exile scene, the method is even further extended to heighten the tragedy of the story. There is to be seen, besides the figures of the protagonists, a female figure with bowed head who plays no part in the story, but is the emblem of Grief or Tribulation.

Art History had its origins in anecdotes about artists. The retreat from History into Pure Aesthetic brought into being a highly technical vocabulary, which recently seems to have worn a little threadbare. Unrepresentational art sets a hard problem for the critic, for after he has had his say the artist can always reject his evaluation and say that that was not what he meant at all. The attempt to individualize art, making it the product of personality or mood or psychological reaction, is a denial of tradition. The exaggeration of the value of originality, also, ends in a denial of tradition. But if art is studied as Wickhoff taught us how to study it, it is evident that tradition plays a radical part
in the development of the great periods which are the back-bone of the History of Art. Art functions neither mechanically nor cosnically. It is not to be confined to the schools, nor sought in the "Zeitgeist", nor dissipated in mysticism. It is the result of the simple fact that artists, who are the makers of art, are naturally interested in it, and that they remember what they see. Tradition is the product of a visual craft heritage, and within it and out of it the great originals create what is for us, who are not artists, a new way of looking at things.

In discussing art, the word "symbol" occurs regularly and frequently, though examination of the passages in which it occurs shows that it is used in various senses. In its simplest sense it indicates a visual sign representing a more or less complex entity. The rose represents England, and the leek Wales but, though heraldic symbols are usually simple, all symbols are not as simple as this. The figure of a blindfolded woman, holding a pair of scales and a sword, is a widely intelligible symbol for Justice, though separately, a blindfolded woman, a pair of scales and a sword might stand for widely different ideas or events, and are better regarded as emblems. The First Sermon of the Buddha, an event, is generally represented in Indian art by a wheel representing the Buddhist doctrine, and two or more deer representing the Deer Park at Sarnath in which the event took place. The deer are clearly simply an emblem of the Deer Park, but the wheel represents the whole emotional and notional complexity of the Buddhist faith. It is a symbol, though in this particular case it is reduced by the addition to it of the emblematic deer to the lesser status of an emblem of an historical event. A cornucopia is an emblem, as is the mace in Parliament. But when an object, such as a national flag or a religious image, is injected with emotion, as a flag is in battle or a miraculous image in a cathedral, it becomes something more and acquires the status of a symbol. War cries are symbols, and political slogans, too, when they have any significance at all. Jung and Herbert Read postulate the existence of a corpus of primitive symbols, which have activated the mind of man from the beginning of time. Psychoanalysis seeks to elucidate the individual mental symbols behind which we take refuge from reality. In this case, it is possible that the same
symbol will not have the same significance for two or more people, for by definition it is the product of a personal conflict. Without declaring their attitude to these two diametrically opposed definitions of symbolism, most art critics assume that the artist has a meaning, and that his meaning is embodied in his work which conveys it to the spectator. It is, indeed, difficult to see how art could have persisted as a means of livelihood if this were not so. But how does the transference take place?

I had arrived at certain ideas based on the term "transference", and the "reference" of feelings to things, and of things to feelings, when I discovered that Whitehead in his Barbour lectures before the University of Virginia (1927) had forestalled me, and it is in largely his words that I formulate the following argument.

It is vitally necessary that we should start with a formal definition of symbolism. Whitehead's definition is based on the assumption that the human mind is functioning symbolically, when components of its experience elicit consciousness, beliefs, emotions, and usages, respecting other components of its experience. The former set of components are defined as "symbols", and the latter set constitute the "meaning" of the symbols. The organic functioning whereby there is a transition from symbol to meaning may be called "symbolic reference". This symbolic reference is active and is, in fact, contributed by the nature of the percipient. In this way, therefore, it is possible to assign to the percipient an active part in the production of his own experience. The working of these relationships may be illustrated by a practical example: if you are a poet and wish to write a lyric on trees, you will walk into the forest in order that the trees may suggest the appropriate words. Thus for the poet in his ecstasy (or perhaps, agony) of composition, the trees are the symbols and the words are the meaning. The poet concentrates on the trees in order to get at the words.

But most of us are not poets, though we think we can appreciate poetry. For us the words are the symbols which enable us to capture to some degree the experience of the poet in the forest. The poet is a person for whom visual sights and sounds and emotional experiences refer symbolically to words. The poet's
readers are people for whom his words refer symbolically to the visual sights and sounds and reactions of their everyday lives. Thus, in the simplest possible terms, in the use of language there is a double symbolic reference: from things to words on the part of the speaker, and from words back to things on the part of the listener. The same fundamental process is entailed in the creation and appreciation of art.

It is, therefore, evident that in every instance of symbolism there are certain aesthetic features shared in common. The meaning acquires emotion and feeling, which are directly excited by the symbol. This is clearly the basis of the art of literature, namely that emotions and feelings excited by the forms of the words should intensify our emotions and feelings arising from contemplation of their meaning. In whatever terms the matter is discussed, something of what is here called "symbolic transference of emotion", must lie at the base of any possible theory of art. For example, it explains the importance of a rigid suppression of irrelevant detail in art. For emotions either inhibit each other or intensify each other. Satisfactory appreciation is nothing but a complex of emotions mutually intensifying each other; whereas irrelevant details supply uncorrelated emotions which, because of their irrelevance, diminish the effect. Thus symbolism, including the symbolic transference by which it is effected, exemplifies the fact that a unity of experience arises out of a conflict of many components. Art both isolates and puts in order the disparate facts of real life.

It may be said that mankind by means of this elaborate system or symbolic transference achieves miracles of sensitiveness to the significance of the past and the present and the problematic future. As society changes, so the symbolism on which it rests changes, and the change may be favourable or unfavourable in so much as it produces harmony or conflict. Codes, rules of behaviour, canons of art, may be regarded as attempts to impose an acceptable, systematic organization upon man's way of life. But the community may be subordinate to the individuals composing it, or, on the other hand, the individuals may be subordinate to the community. Free men obey rules which they themselves make or agree to. In this way, the sense of
personality on which so much, including art, depends, is maintained. But the History of Art makes it clear that society must not only maintain the symbolic code which makes it a unity, but from time to time must fearlessly revise it to meet the conditions and ideas of the nascent future.

But the future of art does not lie in verbal analysis, but in the eyes and hand of the artist. It is not only that behind him are the visual, craft traditions of his profession, but that, where there is genius, change is implicit in tradition. The great originals set themselves new problems to solve and they solved them professionally. The French Impressionists gave the world a new vision, but they did it for their own specific reasons. Manet's *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* is an original picture in spite of the fact that its structure and the disposition of the figures are derived from Raphael through a painting by Marcantonio Raimondi which must have interested Manet and which he obviously studied. Being Manet, he made this borrowed framework contemporary, and for us it has now acquired the additional and spurious values of a pretty period piece. In his *Le Christ aux anges*, now in the Metropolitan Museum, he again forces the art-historian to consider his work in terms of his purpose as a practising artist. As Edgar Wind has pointed out, this picture was not painted for the same reasons as Mantegna's picture of the same subject. It is not a religious painting. Its values are not derived from the transference or reference of religious ideas and feelings. It is a modern painting intended for exhibition and for admiration as a painting. Unfortunately, we can no longer live with art. It will soon all be in museums and to get at it we shall have to pass through the turn-stiles during the ordained hours of opening. While we admire it, we shall be ourselves under the eyes of the uniformed attendants and our admiration must stop when they ring the bell at closing time. Obediently we must leave it all behind and return to the real life we have made for ourselves.