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THE JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS & ART CRITICISM

EDITOR'S COMMENT: THE JOURNAL UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

With this issue, THE JOURNAL OF AESTHETICS AND ART CRITICISM begins a new chapter in its history. Published and edited since 1941 by Dagobert D. Runes of the Philosophical Library, New York, it was turned over by Dr. Runes to the American Society for Aesthetics this spring. The Society plans to continue its publication as a quarterly, and has asked the undersigned to act as Editor for the first two years.

Printing and distributing will be in the hands of the Waverly Press of Baltimore, which insures a high standard of typographical excellence. The JOURNAL is distributed free to members of the Society, and is available to other subscribers as indicated on the inside front cover. One of the primary aims will be promptness and regularity of publication, in so far as conditions permit.

Thanks are cordially extended to Dr. Runes for his gift of the JOURNAL to the Society, of which he was one of the founders; also for publishing the JOURNAL through four difficult, wartime years.

As an aid to reference and continuity of discussion, we publish in this issue a complete *Index* of the articles and reviews published during those four years. It will surprise many readers to discover what a substantial list of writings on aesthetics has already appeared in the JOURNAL. Dr. H. G. Schrickel, now in the Navy, deserves a good share of credit for this achievement, through his work as Managing Editor. Much of the material for the present issue was collected by Dr. Schrickel.

The future improvement of the JOURNAL will depend entirely on the support given it by interested readers and authors—financially, and through contributing articles and reviews. Anyone may subscribe or contribute manuscripts, whether a member of the Society or not; but membership is open to all interested persons, and it is hoped that many members will be active contributors. It is pleasant to look forward to an enlarged JOURNAL, published more frequently, and enlivened with pictorial illustrations. This will come if and when the Society's modest treasury is able to pay the increased printer's bills.

The final test of success, and means to further growth, will be the quality and range of manuscripts submitted. To the potential author with a vague idea for an article taking shape in the back of his head, the Editor counsels, "Write it now! Make it brief! Send it in promptly!" Notices of acceptance or rejection will be sent as speedily as possible. The help of Editorial Council members will be sought, in judging articles within their special fields.

It is hoped that a balanced diet can be provided in each issue, in the shape of articles dealing with several different arts from different philosophic, scientific, historical, and critical standpoints. The floor is freely open to expression of different opinions and tastes. Timely and pertinent letters to the Editor will be published, as space permits. During the coming year, they will be especially welcome when containing suggestions for improvement of the JOURNAL, or brief comments, pro or con, about articles and reviews which have appeared. What questions in aesthetics and art criticism would you like to see discussed, or take part in discussing? Perhaps a symposium can be organized on some of these questions.

The JOURNAL has an especially useful task to perform in the field of book reviews. The new Review Editor, Helmut Hungerland, is assembling a "stable" of competent reviewers in various fields, and will be glad to hear from others. He plans to print in each issue a few long reviews of important books, and short critical or bibliographical notices of many other books and articles. Reviews are omitted in this issue to make room for the *Index*.

For the first few issues, be patient with the JOURNAL's shortcomings. With your help, it can become an important factor in American intellectual and cultural activity.

T. M.

MUSICAL CONSONANCE AND DISSONANCE: A CULTURAL CRITERION

NORMAN CAZDEN

It is generally believed that the materials of music, when analyzed and reduced to fundamentals, are determined by demonstrable natural laws; that is, by the laws of mathematical proportion, by acoustical phenomena, by the physiology of hearing, by the psychological processes of perception. From this assumption it follows necessarily that the foundations of musical art are static, that they are valid for all times and places. The hypothesis is prominent even among those musicians concerned with innovation in creative music.

This view is inadequate as an explanation of historical change in musical art. For it is not possible that laws which are themselves immutable can account for the profound transformations which have taken place in musical practice, and are now taking place.

Among the important materials of music which have been declared subject to universal and eternal laws are the combinations of tones—intervals and chords—classified as consonant and dissonant combinations. Tone combinations taken in isolation can be said to present numerical ratios in the vibration frequency of their constituent tones. When these ratios are abstracted and considered as numbers, there is a certain correspondence between mathematical simplicity of ratios containing low numbers and musical consonance, and between mathematical complexity of ratios containing high or incommensurable numbers and musical dissonance.

In a philosophic sense, it is hard to decide what is meant by "simplicity" in this case. Abstractly speaking, the ratio $\pi:1$ or $\sqrt{2}:1$ is quite as simple and elemental, for example, as the ratio 2:1. Speculations of this nature have led to a kind of number magic, the mystery of the "harmony of the spheres." The composer Hindemith places his faith in "the electronic flux of a single tone and the proportions of its overtones."

Despite its poverty in metaphysics, the mathematical formulation of consonance cannot be readily dismissed. There is an actual connection between the proportional lengths of a string and the musical intervals produced. The musical tone possesses overtones in a harmonic series, whose vibration frequencies are simple multiples of the frequency of the original tone. The prominence of the first six overtones is said to cause musical consonance. Here are their ratios to each other, with the equivalent musical intervals:

1, ratio 1:1	unison	C—C	perfect consonance
2, ratio 2:1	octave	C—c	perfect consonance
3, ratio 3:2	fifth	c—g	perfect consonance
4, ratio 4:3	fourth	g—c′	perfect consonance
5, ratio 5:4	major third	c′—e′	imperfect consonance
6, ratio 6:5	minor third	e′—g′	imperfect consonance

The order of preference for musical consonances is likewise held to correspond exactly with this series; the lowest overtone ratios accounting for the best con-

sonances. The laws of harmony are therefore to be derived from the ratio 1:2:3:4:5:6, corresponding to an extended major chord, the "chord of nature." The aesthetic beauty of the common major triad is accounted for by the ratio 4:5:6. The accepted musical consonances of the major sixth (ratio 5:3, as g—e′) and the minor sixth (ratio 8:5, as e′—c″) fit readily into the same plan. The science of music has been "reduced" to the study of acoustical wave-forms.

Study of the physiology of hearing has demonstrated the importance of simple ratios not only in the production and transmission of vibratory wave-motions producing sensations of sound, but in their effective reception as consonances by the ear. Consonance has been described as the absence of disturbing beats in aural sensation; these beats being increasingly present when vibration frequencies are in complex ratios.

The transformation of vibration ratios into perceptual consonances must involve more than the receptive mechanism of the ear. The psychology of perception has been called upon to explain how certain objective wave-forms transmitted through the ear produce the subjective response called consonance. Speculative discussion and highly organized experimental investigations have resulted in the postulate of a "consonance sense" dependent upon such perceptive qualities as smoothness, purity, blending, fusion, and combinations of these.

If these criteria are effective determinants of the consonance response, they unfortunately do not agree in their predictions. Moreover, they are at variance with the orders of preference prescribed by the overtone ratios, as well as by commonly accepted musical usage.

One reason for the difficulty has been an initial assumption of distinct sensory atoms in perception. Even in the study of judgments of isolated intervals, pure tones have been consistently used—tones which may have a laboratory value, but which are not found in music. Musical perceptions do not arise from tones, they arise from structural relations among tones. The relations cannot be uncovered by observing and measuring response to isolated interval-qualities. The procedures hitherto used have sought at best a mystic "noumenon" which may be termed "psychological consonance of tonal isolates."

Though much effort has been wasted in philosophical blind-alleys, studies of the psychology of musical perception have produced important negative results regarding consonance and dissonance. The naive view that by some occult process mathematical ratios are consciously transferred to musical perception has been rejected. Fusion, or "unitariness of tonal impression," has been found to produce no fixed order of preference for intervals, with the remarkable exception of the octave. It has been discovered that individual judgments of consonance can be enormously modified by training. Perceptions of consonance by adult standards do not seem generally valid for children below the age of twelve or thirteen, a strong indication that they are learned responses.

A musical interval consists of two tones, but in addition it has an interval-quality whose characteristics cannot be reduced to those of the constituent tones. For instance, the interval retains its quality when it is transposed, that is, when two other tones are taken in the same relation. Beyond this level of "fifthness" and "major-thirdness" of intervals lie the relations among intervals and chords. The science of harmony is a study of these relations.

In musical harmony the critical determinant of consonance or dissonance is expectation of movement. This is defined as the relation of resolution. A consonant interval is one which sounds stable and complete in itself, which does not produce a feeling of necessary movement to other tones. A dissonant interval causes a restless expectation of resolution, or movement to a consonant interval. Pleasantness or disagreeableness of the interval is not directly involved. The context is the determining factor.

Frowned upon as a merely aesthetic distinction not readily demonstrated by scientific analysis and measurement, the variability inherent in the resolution relation has been undoubtedly troublesome to systematic minds. But what is more important, it makes necessary the recognition of what has for the most part been ignored by students of musical materials, namely, the *cultural context.* For the resolution of intervals does not have a natural basis; it is a common response acquired by all individuals within a culture-area. It becomes evident that the science of music is not primarily a natural science. It is a social science devoted to the properties of a musical system or language belonging to a specific culture-area and a certain stage of historical development.

There have been attempts to explain resolution on mathematical or psychological grounds. Calculations have been devised which purport to show how an interval "ought" to move. It transpires, however, that because of such "disturbing" structures as tonality, intervals move quite otherwise in musical practice. Such procedures can only result in increasing perplexity. The tools are inadequate for data which are social in nature.

The natural law hypothesis does not provide a correct description of the usage of consonance and dissonance in music. The discrepancies involve data that are *Systemic*, that is, the actual conditions of musical usage; *Historical*, that is, the changes in attitudes towards consonance and dissonance in various periods within the history of western music; and *Comparative*, the use of consonance and dissonance in cultures other than western.

In music, single tone-combinations are treated as consonances which are acoustically and perceptively harsh and disagreeable because of spacing or register. Contrariwise, certain undeniably pleasant sounds may be clearly treated as discords. For example, the major triad C—E—G taken in the "great" octave has been variously described as harsh, muddy, growling. Clashing of its prominent overtones may be demonstrated. Beethoven concludes the first movement of his Piano Sonata, opus 2, No. 3, on this chord. On the other hand, chords such as EE♭—E♭—g—f♯′—b♭′ or D—A—f♯—c—e played softly sound not only pleasant but cloyingly sweet. These chords have however active tendencies, they create expectations of movement, and are therefore dissonant.

Due to the tonality relation, probably the most powerful systemic structure in our musical culture of the past few centuries, the most familiar consonant harmonies may act as dissonances. The "chord of nature" itself, the C major triad, is a dissonance in the key of F; that is, as the dominant harmony, it requires resolution to the tonic. The requirement is a psychological imperative resulting from our conditioning; it has no basis in the nature of tone.

The origin of the minor mode and the minor triad in the overtone series has puzzled musical theorists for centuries. The ratios involved are, to say the

least, rather more complicated than those of many "dissonances." The methods devised to make them appear simple and comparable to those of the major harmony depend upon incredible gymnastics reminiscent of the Ptolemaic epicycles. The most common argument is that the minor triad is perceived as th inversion of the major triad. Musical response, however, suggests nothing s strained and indirect. The minor harmony is accepted as frankly consonant, and as fundamentally so as the major.

By recognizing the social data of a musical language, this issue is most easily solved by a simple definition derived from musical practice. The consonant harmonies are the major and minor triads, and to a lesser extent their first inversions. These are normally stable, inactive, or complete. All other harmonies are dissonant, or active, unstable and incomplete, and require eventual resolution to the major or minor triads. This does not end discussion of the problem of the minor; it states the known facts.

Musical notation partly indicates that intervals may be identical in sound and yet either consonant or dissonant according to their contexts. Enharmonic identity, a seeming anomaly, provides distinctive names and notations for the same tones, corresponding to their stable or active function. Fairly rational rules of "spelling" distinguish F♯ from the acoustically identical G♭. This reflects our perception of F♯, in relation to C, as an augmented fourth resolving by expansion, while the G♭ in relation to C is heard as a diminished fifth resolving by contraction. In combining these different intervals into the abstract tritone, which has no existence in musical response, acoustical, physiological and psychological studies applied to equally-tempered intervals have left these relations out of account. Not only direction of resolution but expectation, and consequently consonance or dissonance, may be represented by the apparently fictitious enharmonic notation. The augmented second, as c—d♯, is a clear dissonance and acts as such, though in isolation it is equivalent acoustically to the minor third c—e♭. The same is true of the diminished fourth c♯—f and the major third d♭—f. What seems in atomic studies an anachronism of the worst kind is therefore historically correct and logical in our present diatonic system. Musical notation, of course, does not exist independently of the system in which it functions. Given the premise of certain suggested techniques such as the twelve-tone system and others, enharmonic notation would indeed be a confusing, irrelevant and outworn misrepresentation.

So completely is a tonal combination perceived in its systemic context, that considerable acoustic alteration does not destroy interval qualities. Variability of intonation, which may be regarded as a phenomenon opposite to the enharmonic notation, is due only in very small measure to a psychological threshold of discrimination for small differences. Equal temperament, our current practice of deliberately mistuning every musical tone, has produced no essential change in the perception of interval qualities. The tempered major third, which is acoustically most badly out of tune, functions as the basic consonance in our system of harmony. Where untempered intervals are possible, as in string quartet and unaccompanied choral music, rather than use acoustically "pure" intervals the skillful musician will produce thirds still more out of tune,

in order to emphasize the major-minor contrast. Perceptual values of intervals make possible quick adjustment and identification of melodic and harmonic groups from their contexts, even for example in music played on pianos badly out of tune.

In the fixed evaluation of degrees of consonance predicated by the overtone series, the most perfect consonance, after the unison or identity, is presumably the octave. Now "octaveness" as a response of striking similarity between tones of different pitch is a remarkable perceptive phenomenon. Undoubtedly that response has its origin in an unusually clear relation of overtones, and perhaps physiological processes of audition as well, since its parallel is not found in vision. Yet in music the octave is not as good a consonance as, for instance, the major third. It has been described as empty and dull, not particularly pleasing, though not displeasing. Resolution of a dissonance to a simple octave is not quite satisfying, it produces a sense of omission of expected consonances. The octave, in fact, is not really a consonance at all. It brings no harmonic relations into music, it possesses no tendencies that produce distinct expectations of either stability or instability, of activity or inactivity. In terms of harmonic properties the octave is neutral, neither consonant nor dissonant. It is a euphonious relation indeed, but of exactly the same order as the unison, and for exactly the same reason—its unusual perceptive fusion. It is used for sonority rather than as a harmonic consonance in terms of resolution. Musicians call octaves "doubling."

Like the octave, the perfect fifth in our musical system is noncommittal in respect to resolution tendencies. It notably lacks definition of major or minor quality, important to the harmonic scheme; consequently it sounds "thin." Single or repeated fifths, like octaves, may act as neutral sonorities, as "drones," as reinforcements of overtones. If treated as having harmonic implications, successions of fifths are objectionable. Instead of being accepted as consonances, their amorphous neutrality causes a dissolution of tonality organization. Hence the notorious prohibition of such successions in the rules of harmony.

Octaves and fifths, then, are not in reality consonances within the meaning of harmonic relations. They appear in musical languages which do not have harmony in our sense. And they enter into our musical system as equivocal and neutral isolates, as sonorous embroidery.

The remaining "perfect consonance," the fourth, is actually a dissonance in musical practice; and what is worse, not consistently so. By intricate mathematical reasoning it has been argued that the fourth is a derived interval, in that it is present in the low regions of the overtone series but not in direct relation to the fundamental. This is however true also of the major and minor sixths, which are unmistakable consonances.

Ratios can hardly be expected to explain both the dissonant and "consonant" use of the fourth. The variation is clearly due to context. Such factors as the influence of rhythm on harmonic motion and the active tendencies of certain degrees of the scale, generally ignored in procedures concentrating on tones in atomic isolation, play a decisive role in this complex response. The fourth under certain conditions acts as a scale-degree dissonance in that it seems to de-

mand resolution to the third. On an accented beat the fourth, and its superstructure the chord of the six-four, act as suspended dissonances requiring resolution. When the fourth does not appear as a scale relation, or when it is not taken in relation to the bass, or when the six-four chord is not accented, it becomes a "resultant" doubling of neutral quality.

While the overtone series posits degrees of purity, it does not account for the normal musical division betwen the "perfect" and the "imperfect" consonances. Moreover, if we consider musical response, acoustic evidence to the contrary, there is a decided preference in our musical system for harmonization in major and minor thirds and sixths. These intervals have a definite quality of consonance in musical structure and function. Our more myopic scientists have gently overlooked this fact as being merely a question of aesthetic beauty.

In terms of the resolution relation, it is easy to see why there should be a sharp opposition between consonance and dissonance in musical practice. An interval or chord either requires movement or is the final result of movement. Perceptively this reaction overshadows mere differences in degree of pleasantness or harshness of isolated tone-combinations. Resolution polarity is the basis, for example, of many common musical effects such as hesitancy, suspense, deceptive cadences and the like. Any tone combination, however acoustically "pure" in isolation, instantly falls into the category of a dissonance when its position calls for motion: for example, an ordinary major triad on the dominant harmony before a full cadence; an octave when it occurs on the leading-tone of the scale; a chord, or even a single tone, on an upbeat. Polarity of consonance and dissonance is therefore one form of the general dialectic opposition, the thesis and antithesis of relationship among tones, which is the chief characteristic of our musical system. Resolution polarity belongs with the opposition of tonic and dominant in the tonality relation, with the contrast between major and minor qualities, with the opposition between rhythmic accent and relaxation, as a dynamic structural element in music.

No synthetic determinations of a "natural" order of preferences for consonances, whether founded on simplicity of ratio, prominence of overtones, absence of beats, or perceptive purity and the like, can hope to account for the complex tonal relations which form our musical language. "Natural" derivations cannot indicate where the threshold between consonance and dissonance should be, they cannot even account for the existence of the polarity. And indeed, the dividing line is a subjective one. It has undergone noteworthy historical change not easily attributed to natural causes. It is created in each individual by his adoption of the musical system or language response of his culture-area. Reactions to consonance and dissonance do not originate on the level of the properties of tones, but on the level of social communication.

That perceptions of consonance and dissonance are conditioned by culture rather than by objective or human nature implies that they must be subject to observed historical change, and to variation in accordance with the musical systems of different culture-areas. The teachings of historical and comparative musicology are consistent with these criteria.

In the musical system of ancient Greece, there were no "imperfect" con-

sonances. Major and minor thirds and sixths were considered dissonant. The fourth was the basic consonance for the formation of modes and systems of tetrachords. Early medieval organum also showed a decided preference for the fourth. Since some music of this period has survived and is occasionally performed, one can easily observe the extent of the change in attitudes by the expressions of distress which modern audiences exhibit. During the 11th century, apparently, the preference for the fourth gave way to an increasing and almost exlusive use of fifths and octaves. In the period when our modern musical system came into existence, with its dependence on tonality and the major and minor modes, thirds and sixths became consonances and fourths dissonances, the full triad replaced the empty neutrals, and the functional value of resolution crystallized. The new tonal gravitation, for example, produced in the elusive six-four chord a dissonant cadence function. In music since the turn of the 20th century, increasing use has been made of neutral fourths and fifths, as well as of the supposedly dissonant sevenths and ninths, for purposes of "harmonic color," a significant term which may be translated as sonority of isolated acoustic combinations, of the same order as the older organ mixtures. The tonal system, in spite of the alarm of conservatives, has not thereby been destroyed or endangered. The traditional rules of consonance and dissonance are merely not applicable to such use of neutral euphonies. More fundamental change is certainly possible.

Avoiding the anthropomorphic tendency to see the particular features of one's own cultural usages as the universal and eternal norms, we must grant that real and integrated systems of music other than our own can and have existed, are and were satisfactory and pleasing to their users. The "natural harmonic sense" is seen to be dependent upon historical and cultural setting. Some theorists and historians have indeed attempted to rationalize the change in attitude towards intervals by a sort of teleology. The overtone series, it has been claimed, presents the "true" natural harmonic laws towards which all systems are instinctively groping. Such mysticism is not substantiated by the historical information now available. It may be assumed that musical structures not common to all known musical systems cannot be inherent in the nature of music. Harmony itself as we understand it is not a necessary element of music. It is the product of the western diatonic scale system alone, and is a relatively recent arrival.

Resolution is a criterion that has no application to the pentatonic scales. That is one reason why, to our perceptions, Chinese music sounds so inconclusive, so lacking in tendency and definition. The acoustically "perfect" consonances are the rule in some musics, but are not inevitable foundations, for nothing close to the ratio 3:2 is found in certain Javanese and Siamese scales. Intervals which bear no resemblance to any in our diatonic system form melodies which to their users seem "instinctive" and self-evidently natural. Harmony in seconds, which we would consider flagrantly dissonant, seems to be practiced in the South Sea Islands and elsewhere. In the Icelandic "Tvisöngvar" the third appears to be treated as a dissonance. It could hardly be maintained that the natural laws presumed to determine harmony vary thus geographically

in their application. Nor would anyone today attribute fundamental differences in music to variation, apart from cultural influences, in the physiology or psychology of human beings.

In comparatively recent times the role of group experience in the creation of a common musical language has been overshadowed by the emphasis on intuitive individual imagination. The 19th century called up a concept of the romantic composer dreamily communing with his inspiring muse in a strange and beautiful world of sound located somewhere in the stratosphere. By some weird miracle of genius he managed to transmute his celestial fruits into a ripe and ready mundane form that just happened to fit snugly the musical habits of his neighbors. That lonely portrait is being slowly left behind us. The social group produces not only the anonymous folksong and the traditional music whose origins are long untraceable; it brings into being the conversational musical currency which one individual can speak and another understand. Musical structures arise from common experiences, and thus they acquire the functional associations of which musical meaning consists.

The neat and logical formulations of the natural sciences have little bearing on musical consonance and dissonance. The predictions of mathematical ratios, acoustic phenomena, beats and isolated perceptive qualities are consistently ignored and contradicted in musical practice. For the evidence called upon by natural science has been inadequate. It has left out of account the decisive historical and cultural factors. The data relevant to a description of music are primarily social. Sound waves and perceptions of sound are not music, they are its objective media. Spoken language also uses the medium of sound, but the laws of language structure and meaning cannot be deduced from that raw material.

Perceptions of interval qualities, though they do not arise on natural foundations, are neither arbitrary nor accidental. They are conditioned responses derived from the structural relations of a specific musical language and its history. In western music of the past few centuries, consonance and dissonance are the poles of a relation of resolution expectation. We recognize them because this relation exists in all the music we have heard. Structurally, one might say grammatically, consonance and dissonance are the polar forms of stability-instability, completeness-incompleteness, passivity-activity. This polarity is parallel and interlocked with other prominent features of our musical language: tonality (tonic-dominant), modality (major-minor), rhythm (relaxation-tension). In this broader sense, resolution may be described as the dialectic structure of our musical language.

Thus the materials of musical art are not to be discovered in natural phenomena taken in isolation, in tones and the responses to them, but in the more complex systems of tonal relations which are the historical products of human culture. These systems cannot be reduced to their constituent elements without losing their essential properties as organized wholes, and without losing their human content. In the course of development of a system, certain of the infinite number of possible tones are selected, organized, integrated. Historical forms of musical structure are developed which acquire the nature of laws. Tonal relations become stylized, artificial vehicles for associations which have

meaning for human beings. Significant change in a society, such as dramatic infusion from other cultures, may fundamentally alter a system. The isolated tone, interval or chord is a subsidiary abstraction given meaning by its systemic context. The organized systems of tonal relations are human rather than natural products. Their fate is determined by the history of music, by the social environment of music. They are for that reason peculiarly subject to change.

Speculations and experimental investigations have some effect on the internal development of music. Individual theorists have had and will continue to have a role in molding, systematizing, interpreting, rationalizing the system in use; sometimes in spinning questionable philosophical terraces on its basis, or in distorting that system on grounds of pseudo-scientific hypotheses. Musical science, while taking due account of the relevant physical disciplines, is essentially a social science. It is a branch of the study of human culture and history. Significant changes occur because of social needs.

The natural phenomena of vibratory wave-motions and their reception by the ear may be seen as a *limiting*, rather than as a *determining*, factor in the perception of consonance and dissonance. The most that can be said about their application is that they are a negative influence. Natural laws exercise control over the direction of musical practice only by providing a range beyond which musical materials can progress only with increasing difficulty, or beyond which their progress would have no corresponding real meaning. Such would be, for example, scales that ignored the octave ratio, tones beyond the physiological limit of perception, or minute intervals below the average threshold of aural discrimination. That these limits are no great handicap, and therefore of no great import, to the free range of musical art is manifest from the remarkable variety of practicable systems of music that have been used and proposed.

The historical causes of changing patterns in a musical system are problems still awaiting adequate investigations of a social nature. The laws of acoustic perception, like the laws of gravitation to which they have been frequently attributed, provide us with no comparable mutations. Cultural criteria, the fluctuations within a society, diffusions from without, technological improvements, new methods of musical production and distribution, institutional forms such as the concert hall and the symphony orchestra, church music, music at public functions, use of text and dramatic and choreographic adjuncts, have played an important role that has not been effectively recognized as applicable to the form as well as the content of music. The revolution in medieval musical practice, for example, seems to have resulted from the pressure of secular influences upon the learned music of the ecclesiastic "art forms," as well as from infusions from extra-European sources.

The difficulties in the study of consonance and dissonance dissolve as soon as we realize that these qualities are not inherent in perception as such, but are learned responses, adaptations to an existing pattern of the social group. Historical movements, changes in the social function of music, and not the harmony of the spheres, control and direct transformations in musical structures. It is suggested that where radical innovations in our musical system are proposed their real basis be sought in the needs of humanity, in the cultural movements of our historic time.

THE AESTHETICS OF SPACE IN ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURE, AND CITY PLANNING

PAUL ZUCKER

We speak of the space concept of the Gothic or the Baroque period, trying to cover something general and common to all works of art of the respective periods. Thus we imply that there exists a spatial expression typical for all the figurative arts of a given period. However, we should be always aware that each of the figurative arts creates its own independent space-world, each differing from the space-world of the other.

Unfortunately, discussing spatial feeling and spatial development, our terminology has become rather arbitrary, and even confusing. For example, it is virtually not true that a cubistic painting by Braque and a modern building by Gropius show identical space concepts.[1] The aesthetic concepts underlying both are utterly dissimilar, even beyond the fact that the painting shows reproduced space while the building creates real space.[2] The similarity lies only in the rhythmic organization imposed on the projected and on the penetrable space of painting and building respectively.[3] Again, there was no identical space concept in Michelangelo's sculptured Slaves,[4] painted Sibyls, and his Dome of St. Peter's in Rome. It is necessary to emphasize the truism that Michelangelo dealt with three different categories of space, when painting, sculpturing and building. He modified his instrinsic individual feeling for space in a way proper to the specific spatial character of the medium in which he was working. Of course, certain "Michelangelisms" stamp alike his sculptures, paintings and architectural works, such as the enormous increase of three-dimensional sensibility compared with the works of his contemporaries, or the enlarged plasticity of surfaces, the balance of volumes, and so forth.

These examples indicate how ambiguously sometimes the words "space," "spatial expression," and "feeling for space" are used in modern art criticism and aesthetics.[5] This ambiguity arises naturally, no doubt, from the fact that for some time modern criticism has been intent on searching out these formal similarities which a common spiritual attitude impresses on all the works of a given period. Yet in this search, critical terminology has ignored the aesthetic differences between the individual plastic arts, and too often substitutes confused generalities for precise definitions.

[1] S. Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, Cambridge, Mass., 1941.

[2] Robert Morris Ogden, *The Psychology of Art*, New York, 1938.

[3] Miriam Schild Bunim, *Space in Mediaeval Painting and the Forerunners of Perspective*, New York, 1940. Gives in the introductory chapter a clear and subtle definition of the problems of space-projection. The whole problem is basically analyzed by Alois Riegl, *Spätrömische Kunstindustrie*, Vienna, 1901–1921.

[4] As to the virtual values of Michelangelo's sculptures in the round, see especially John Goldsmith Philipps, "Michelangelo; A New Approach to His Genius," *The Metropolitan Museum Art Bulletin*, 1942.

[5] A. E. Brinckmann, *Plastik und Raum*, Munich, 1922.

It is proposed to examine here the aesthetic, not the psychological, differences between the individual plastic arts. From the psychological research at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century,[6] we might suppose that our apperceptions of mass as well as space take place only by a cumulative association of successive visual impressions in time, or by the combination of visual and haptic sensations. However, the psychological process as such does not explain the differences of the respective aesthetic effect. These effects concern:

1. Architecture: *Shaped space and formed masses*, giving rise to inextricably fused spatial and plastic sensations.
2. Sculpture: *Formed masses and spaces shaped by them*, giving rise to chiefly plastic and indirectly spatial sensations.
3. Urbanism, or city planning: *shaped space and organized directions*, giving rise to chiefly spatial and indirectly pictorial sensations.

I

The following examples of art have been selected because they are well-known enough to dispense with illustrations, and also because they bring into juxtaposition works of widely different periods and cultures. The more striking the stylistic differences, the more obvious the common aesthetic concept of space binding together all works executed in the same art-medium.

Architecture may consist of shaped space, or of formed mass. Examples of the first are the commonest: consider the interior of the Pantheon, Rome, the sequence of bays in a Gothic cathedral, the inner courtyard of a Florentine palace, the interior of St. Peter's, Rome, the sequence of rooms in the Palace at Versailles, the interior of a modern railroad station or a well-designed room in a modern private house. These buildings vary since they may reproduce in us a sense of shelter or of exposure, of stimulation or of repose, a sense of being firmly directed or of being swept away. Yet, *one* effect upon us is common to all, namely that we conceive of the space of each one as including ourselves, a space through which we can and must move, a space as real as our own since it is an extension of our own. Although the forms of walls and ceilings have long been considered as the main elements of architectuture, these forms are really felt by us mainly as a space-defining shell, only varying in dimensions and "decoration."

Besides this type of space-architecture there exists another kind of architectural form where the subject is not space but compact mass, apperceived from outside, as typified by the pyramid, the bridge, the aqueduct, the triumphal arch, dams, and so on. These objects may contain space, but their interiors, if any, are not essential to the aesthetic experience of their external mass, nor would their masses correctly imply any significant interior space.

On the other hand, structures like the free-standing church, the castle, the free-standing palace or public building, a modern country-house—in fact the majority of buildings since the Middle Ages, can be apprehended as shaped space

[6] Theodor Lipps, *Raumästhetik und Geometrisch-Optische Täuschungen*, Munich, 1897. E. Jänsch, *Zur Analyse der Gesichtswahrnehmungen*, Leipzig, 1909; E. Jänsch, *Über die Wahrnehmung des Raumes*, Leipzig, 1911.

and as formed masses simultaneously. All these structures, despite extreme stylistic differences, are masses belonging to the actual space-world of the beholder. When we look at them, we feel that they share in our reality. Unconsciously our eyes trace imaginary lines from ourselves to the buildings with the help of stones, trees, or other landmarks lying between, and as we look at the structures we search for some unit of motif, a door, or a balustrade, that will give us a human scale and create a correct ratio between our own dimensions and the dimensions of the building. Whatever the architectural object—pyramid, barn or bank—its mass is as real as our own persons, definite points within an indefinite space.

This reaction is not a matter of course, for a quite different aesthetic attitude might be possible: Consider, for instance, the impressions we receive from large masses in nature. In the mountains, the separate cliffs, rocks, and peaks never strike us as part of our own reality, but as something forcefully apart from ourselves and our "real" space-world. Nor can this alien feeling be a matter of size. Rockefeller Center has gigantic proportions, too, but it is part of our own space community as much as any small piece of architecture like an obelisk. In nature, on the other hand, masses, large or small, cannot be extensive with our own space unless the imagination first endows them with an extrinsic romantic "appearance" as of cathedrals, castles or the like,—in other words, until our sentimental fancy makes them look like what they are not. Nor, it may be added, can our unconscious perception of the man-made character of architectural masses in contrast to a mountain or rock, account for this difference in our reaction. It should be sought rather in the fact that architecture, through form and mass, *defines* space, and therefore brings everything and everybody into relation with it, whereas the accidental masses of nature, being essentially formless, inhabit a formless space.

Two conditions, then, characterize our aesthetic reaction towards architecture, whether it consists of architecturally shaped space (inside view) or of architecturally shaped mass (outside view). First, we ourselves and the object share in the same kind of reality; second, the particular space which is the subject of a given architectural structure may involve us (interior), or may involve us and the building together in a system of complex and automatically built up visual relations (masses apperceived from outside).

II

It is mass and space, too, with which we are concerned in the aesthetic apperception of sculpture. Like most architecture, each piece of sculpture is simultaneously the creation of space and mass; but sculpture imitates forms already existent in reality, while architecture organizes new functions and relations in that reality. Both these facts are of fundamental importance to the aesthetic effect of the respective works of art. However, with our problem of differentiation they are connected only indirectly. The principal distinction lies in this: in architecture we enjoy *either* formed space (interior) *or* formed masses (outside view). In sculpture we experience formed masses and formed space always *together*, in continuity and simultaneously.

A few examples, chosen from extremely dissimilar fields, and almost contra-

dictory since they are shaped by entirely opposite tendencies,[7] may illustrate this concept of sculptural space and mass: the cubic Egyptian statue, the free-standing Greek figure, a late Roman portrait bust, a Gothic altar figure, an equestrian statue of the Renaissance, a crouching woman by Maillol. Each of these figures creates a specific space about itself, as definite in volume and shape, and as impenetrable as the compact core of sculptured marble, bronze or wood. The modeled figuresgenerate these enveloping space forms, which differ from one another as do the enclosed sculptures.

The Egyptian figure, essentially composed for a frontal view, asks for a space-cube, the Greek for a cylindrical space whose radius centers in the figure, and so forth. Works of neo-classic periods may be enclosed by a flat rectangle, a concept which Adolf Hildebrand wrongly generalized as universally valid for all sculpture.[8] All these finite, ambient space-forms are created by the sculptures themselves, and whatever their specific size and shape, independent from style, period and artist, they have one common quality: namely, they *exclude* the spectator. That is the essential difference between the space of architecture and that of sculpture. Sculptured space is aesthetically as impenetrable and and unambiguous as the solid that gives rise to it. It is as separated from the spectator's space as the space of the stage is separated from that of the audience. It is even rigid, in contrast with the changeable or arbitrary frame that limits a painting. There can be no variety in the possible shape and size of the space-envelope of a sculpture. There is only one—that clearly defined by the figure itself. We may turn the statue about, enjoy it frontally or in profile—we must always reckon with this invisible but indispensable shell. We may discuss its extension or its direction, never its existence. And since the aesthetic apperception of this shell is vital to full enjoyment of sculpture, we can understand why the majority prefer painting to sculpture: namely, sculpture demands an active imaginative effort on the part of the spectator in realizing the space-shell which is not palpable.

In "torso" sculpture, we find a perfect proof for the existence and the creative function of this space-shell. For this preformed space about the torso allows us to complete the incomplete figure, and though the act of completion may not always be archeologically precise, it will be logically possible, essentially right and therefore aesthetically satisfying. On the other hand, a painting mutilated in the same degree as a torso, would become artistically ineffective, since there would be nothing beyond the torn edge of canvas to help our imagination.

A still more interesting proof is the sculptured group. Consider the "Niobides," the "Laocoon," and Rodin's "Burghers of Calais." The Niobides, in reconstruction, consist of individual figures without formal connection. The eye finds no aesthetic unity in the aggregate of figures. Their connection is rational—if one knows the story. Each figure has its own space, but there exists no spatial continuity enveloping all the figures. One might literally get into the space between the figures without destroying the aesthetic effect. Each figure may be enjoyed for itself and may be later on combined with the others

[7] Robert Morris Ogden, *op. cit.*, distinguishes between modeling and carving sculpture.

[8] Adolf Hildebrand, *The Problem of Form in Painting and Sculpture*, New York, 1932.

by the spectator's imagination. But there is nothing that would compel you to array them immediately in any premeditated way. The Laocoon group,[9] on the contrary, presents an inseparable unity, developing a continuous and definite space, allowing of no intrusions. It is a space sealed forever from the space-reality of the spectator. The "Burghers of Calais" by Auguste Rodin prove clearly that it is impossible, even for a great sculptor, to overcome the incongruency of individual sculptural spaces. Neither is it possible to conceive of the group as a whole,[10] nor can the single figures be enjoyed individually like the Niobides. The respective sculptural spaces of the individual figures and our reality-space are oddly interwoven and overlap each other. As a result, it is impossible to enjoy the group except in a photograph, where the three-dimensional work is reduced to two dimensions.

The autonomy of sculptural space can be still further clarified by a small violation of its form, as by the introduction of some untranslated realistic utensil into the sculpture, such as spectacles executed in wire on a portrait bust, an article of sport or a musical instrument combined with a figure. If the detail is entirely realistic, the unity of the figure is destroyed at once, since the eyeglasses on the bust or the tennis racquet in the hand do not impress us as a work of art, but as a more or less deceptive feature from a wax-figure cabinet. Spectacles and tennis racquet are part of our daily reality, and therefore of our personal space extension. Since they seem "lifelike," their deceptive realism penetrates the continuity of the autonomous space of the sculpture.

Another class again is the architectural sculpture in the round, such as Romanesque or Gothic portal figures. Here the problem of the space-envelope has another aspect, since these are not autonomous sculptures, but are felt as an element of the architecture. Their function in relation to the building would be the same if they were done in abstract form. They do not create space of their own, but share the space of the architecture, and therefore our own space, like any other element in the building. Though some of the greatest works of sculptural art belong in this category, yet they represent a figurative art which, while imitating the forms of real life, remains nearer to architecture and the associated decorative arts than to isolated sculpture.

The relief as a figurative medium holds a similar in-between place among the arts. While architectural sculpture represents a transition between sculpture and architecture, the relief represents a transition between sculpture and painting.[11] There are many gradations of proximity to the one or the other medium, from the almost wholly sculptural friezes of the Parthenon to the almost wholly painting-like reliefs at the end of the 18th century. Since Adolf Hildebrand already has analyzed the space of the relief,[12] the built-up layers, the limitation of its fixed background, these points need not be recapitulated here. However,

[9] Margarete Bieber, *Laocoon, The Influence of the Group Since Its Rediscovery*, New York, 1942.

[10] Roger Fry, *Transformations*, London, 1936, from another point of view, speaks of the lack of "liaison" and "uncoordinated monotony," meaning exactly the above stated lack of continuity.

[11] A. Schmarsow, *Plastik, Malerei und Reliefkunst*, Leipzig, 1899.

[12] Adolf Hildebrand, *op. cit.*

his fundamental error was the application of these principles to sculpture generally, since his findings are true for one specific period only, the neo-classic and the semi-classical. He overlooked entirely the values proper to the Egyptian, Gothic, Baroque, and even the later stages of Greek sculpture.

Torso, sculptural group, architectural sculpture and relief, all provide in different ways examples for the existence of the sculptural space: a continuous and impenetrable volume generated and shaped by the modeled figure, and separated from the spectator's reality in the same way as the mass of the sculpture proper.

III

While the architect and sculptor deal with space and mass, the city planner deals only with space. Though he uses masses to create this space, the masses are the means and not the object of his creation. Nor is he interested in mass for its volume, weight, material and density, but merely for its outlines, dimensions, and directions. (In this connection we are considering only the aesthetic elements of urbanism, not the functional ones such as social conditions, traffic, public health, defense and so on.) If Bernini's colonnades of St. Peter's, Rome, the fountain, the obelisk and the facade, even the pavement, were not executed in travertine and granite but in cardboard, and in full scale, their aesthetic function as urban art would not be changed at all. Another example is the layout of world fairs and exhibitions, all the buildings and gateways and columned and fountained promenades executed in provisional and sometimes extremely unreal building materials,—yet the artistic impression of this "urbanism" remains independent of the actual masses, volumes and materials of construction. This fact may explain the great inspiration drawn from urbanism by stage designers of the 17th and 18th centuries, and by men like Norman Bel Geddes in our own time.

Two aesthetic possibilities are open to the city-planner: the organization of space-volume, and of space-direction.

1. Organization of space-volume (the formation of a definitely shaped space). The aesthetic situation here is exactly analogous to that of interior architecture, although we are facing external or outdoor spaces like that of the St. Mark's Place, Venice; the Place Vendome, Paris; Place Royale, Nancy; the whole complex of the Royal Crescent, Bath, England; Rockefeller Center, New York City; the new Civic Center in Los Angeles, still in progress, and the ideal skyscraper city projected by Le Corbusier. These large-scale organizations, as well as smaller units like the courtyards of the Pitti Palace, Florence, the Place des Vosges, Paris, small village greens in New England, the courtyard at the Würzburg Residence, all include the spectator in their continuous space[13] which represents our own reality. We enter and pass through the spaces of these organizations, relatively independent and free in our choice of direction, whether the layout may be starshaped, square, crescent or a V. The aesthetic situation is that of an architecturally formed interior. In the absence of an actual roof,

[13] Ernö Goldfinger, "The Sensation of Space, Urbanism and Spatial Order," *Architectural Review*, London, 1941.

these public centers have the sky, a very definite ceiling,—recall how high the sky seems above the piazza at St. Peter's in Rome, and how very low it appears above the Place des Vosges in Paris. The size of the surrounding structures determines exactly how high or how low the sky-ceiling will appear. Moreover, it is the dimensions, directions, and outlines of these buildings which determine the aesthetic effect, not their architectural shape in the narrower sense of the word, nor the "inner form" of the façade nor their layout. If each building of the complex were reduced to a façade, it would still retain its value as element in the urban design. Monuments[14] like equestrian statues or fountains serve to articulate the space, as do pavement patterns and even differences in levels (the Capitol, Rome; the Piazza di Signoria, Florence).

2. Organization of space-direction. While we have stated analogies between the organization of space-volume in city-planning and the forming of interiors in architecture, no such analogies can be found to the other principal form of city planning, that is, the creation of a cogently directed space, popularly called "axes." These axes are not mere one-dimensional features, but defined volumes extending along the respective axis. There is one artistic aim underlying an Egyptian avenue of sphinxes, the main avenue of the Park of Versailles, the Rue de Rivoli and the Champs Elysées in Paris, and the Mall in Washington, D. C., namely the creation of a continuous tube or tunnel of space. Its sides may be formed by a sequence of individual forms, isolated and identical, "a simple order of betweenness,"[15] like sphinxes, obelisks, fountains, trees, statues; or the sides of the space-tunnel may be made up of continuous elements, house façades, arcades, rails, hedges. The ceiling is again the sky whose height is determined by the lateral walls of the axis. This "directed space" is an urbanistic phenomenon exclusively. There is no type of architectural interior which could be compared with it. Even the sequence of bays in a Gothic cathedral or the Galerie des Glaces in Versailles, have a different spatial character. The urbanist and landscape architect concentrate our interest only on the direction and volume of their open-space layout, while the architect of an interior involves us in a system of interacting space relations in which the main axis is the prime but not the exclusive feature. The nave of a Gothic cathedral urges us toward the altar, but at the same time compels us to experience the three-dimensional pillars and vaults.[16] The rectangular units of the individual bays are felt as restraints upon the main direction of the nave, the vaults are simultaneously experienced as three-dimensional forms overhead. At Versailles, the Galerie des Glaces, is not only a directing space-shell composed of walls and a ceiling, but shows many elements that distract our attention from the forward movement, so that the Galerie is not merely a place to walk through, but a place to stay in, too.

Many urban designs emphasize space volume *and* space direction. The 17th century concept of St. Peter's in Rome contains a main axis starting on the banks of the Tiber river (emphasis on direction), a large passage through the Borgo, then the pincer-like colonnades (volume), the convergent wings of the colon-

[14] A. E. Brinckmann, *Platz und Monument*, Berlin, 1908.

[15] David W. Prall, *Aesthetic Judgment*, New York, 1929.

[16] Paul Frankl, *Die Baukunst des Mittelalters*, Potsdam, 1926.

nades (direction), and finally the facade itself as a backdrop. There is a continuous change from directed space to involving or inclusive space, with the church entrance as the final goal, continued inside by the Maderna nave. At Versailles, a similar combination of direction and volume can be stated: starting with the main street of the town (directed space), the square between town and castle (volume), the further volume of the great *court d'honneur*, continued again in the continued axis through the castle itself (direction), out onto the terraces of the garden with its basin where the volume finally gathers itself and pours into the direction of the avenue through the Park.

We have not analyzed a special phenomenon of urbanism, the "towering" city. At San Gimignano, Italy, Mt. St. Michel, France, and other towns in France, Italy, England and Germany, a powerful artistic effect is achieved by a towering pile. But this effect is purely architectural and not part of urbanism. What we perceive is the impression of one structure rising above and drawing into itself the minor buildings. Despite the many and complex buildings that may actually constitute the "towering" mass, it is one architectural unit. The smaller subsidiary houses clustering about the roots of Mt. St. Michel are like the subsidiary apses that support the dome of St. Sophia, a kind of pedestal for the dominating main cathedral. The aesthetic unit here is a single building, not an integrated series of individual elements.

Another element of mediaeval urbanism[17] must be briefly mentioned, namely, the "winding street" which in many mediaeval towns opens picturesque and romantic views, wonderfully framed with surprising perspectives, virtually a series of changing and unexpected backdrops. This effect, although artistically effective, belongs in the realm of stage design, not in that of urban art, since the artistic aim is a two-dimensional view, not a three-dimensional unit. In the 19th century, the romantic revival which exploited such effects was a mere decorative movement, and not part of the history of modern urbanism.

Thus only two fundamental categories of urban art exist, both characterized by the organization of space proper.

[17] Pierre Lavedan, *Histoire de l'urbanisme*, Paris, 1926.

PROBLEMS OF DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS IN THE VISUAL ARTS

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The description of a work of art involves an analysis of the function of the components of its structure. The work in gestalt psychology has shown that components of a whole—although they can and must be treated as separable parts in an analysis—are not perceived as independently existing parts which are merely added together arithmetically. But they are perceived as functioning within a gestalt, and their function depends upon the gestalt in terms of which they are perceived, i.e., the function of the components changes with a changed conception of the gestalt. To give a simple illustration from the visual arts: the color areas in a landscape of Cézanne will appear flat if considered in terms of an Impressionist gestalt, whereas the same color areas will assume the function of creating a third dimension when considered in terms of a Cézannesque gestalt. Furthermore there seems to be evidence to support the assumption that perception of works of art is strongly influenced by certain expectations.[1] It is suggested here that there are different sets of expectations in terms of which different works of art can be perceived and that these expectations are largely determined by the artistic styles with which we are familiar. In other words, styles give rise to sets of expectations which strongly influence the gestalts, which in turn determine the function of components within a given work of art for a percipient.

This view requires a new analysis of the concept of style and its relationship to gestalt (or gestalts) as well as a consideration of the two usages of the term "style" as recently distinguished by Mr. Munro in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*.[2] These two usages are: (1) The term "style" is used to refer to the art of certain periods, regions, nations, schools or individuals. "Style" in this usage has a referent which is definitely located geographically or in history or affixed to an individual or a group of individuals. "Style" thus used will be referred to hereafter as "historical style." (The term "historic," in this connection, has no value connotations whatsoever, e.g., it does not mean that a "historic style" is one that is well known and/or has stood the test of history.) (2) The term "style" is used to indicate similarities between works of art of different regions, periods, etc. In this case the works of art in question are abstracted from their historical, cultural, etc., settings and hence the corresponding style may be called "abstract style." (In either case the term "style" is used without any value connotations.)

[1] James J. Gibson, "The Reproduction of Visually Perceived Forms," *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, **12**, 1929, pp. 1–39.

Edward Chace Tolman, *Purposive Behaviour in Animals and Men*, New York, London, 1932.

Wolfgang Metzger, *Gesetze des Sehens*, Frankfurt am Main, 1936.

O. H. Mowrer, "Preparatory Set (Expectancy)—A Determinant in Motivation and Learning," *Psychological Review*, **45**, 1938, pp. 62–91.

[2] Thomas Munro, "Form in the Arts," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, **2**, 1943, pp. 5–26.

Some elementary remarks must be made here in order to simplify later discussions. Within the realm of "historical styles" distinctions must be made between (a) temporal styles, e.g., the style of a century, a decade, etc.; (b) regional, i. e., geographical styles, e.g., the style peculiar to a certain country (France), a city (Venice), etc.; (c) national styles, i.e., styles of certain national groups, which may or may not coincide with the original region in which such national groups existed (e.g., the Arabs in Spain, etc.). Considered separately, temporal and regional styles appear to be in opposition to each other because if the temporal dimension is exclusively considered the peculiarities of the regional style must be submerged and *vice versa.* The styles which in the main are dealt with by art historians are a fusion or mixture of both dimensions, the temporal and the geographical.

Styles, in any usage of the term, could be defined naively in terms of arithmetical averages, i.e., all works of art existing at a certain time could be considered together indiscriminately and out of the total thus gained a common denominator mechanically constructed. The criterion in this case would be the fact of co-existence. Actually, I do not know of a case in which the style of a period or region has been constructed in such a fashion and the concept of style more commonly used could best be described as a mode, i.e., the most frequently occurring configuration of characteristics at a given time or in a certain region, implying the possibility that a number of works do not present all or even any of these characteristics. (I shall disregard for the moment the question of how a mode is established; this question will be considered later.)

The establishing of a historical style is simplified by the fact that the area within which certain particular (formal) characteristics occur most frequently is limited either in terms of time, geography or national character (defined in terms of anthropology or sociology). The abstract styles have no such precise limiting indices and this fact seems to complicate the definition of abstract styles to a certain extent. Usually the abstract styles are more or less modified historical styles, i.e., after the formal and other characteristics of an historical style have been defined they are applied to other works of art regardless of their temporal, regional or national setting, thus widening a particular (historical) definition into a general (abstract) definition. This usage involves a number of difficulties. For instance, if the name originally defining a specific historical style is used conjointly as the name for an abstract style, confusion is apt to arise, as evidenced by the use of the term Baroque.

The term Baroque, originally used as an adjective (*barocco*), denoting the irregular, grotesque and bizarre, was in the 18th century applied vaguely, and with derogatory connotations, to works of art which were felt to deviate from the clarity of Classic and Renaissance art (and was used in the 18th century as a synonym for *gothique*).[3] When Classicism became the dominant European style the term was used to designate both the preceding and the contemporary art to which the Classicists considered themselves opposed, the term retaining its

[3] *Cf.* Charles de Brosses, *Le Président de Brosses en Italie,* Ed. R. Colomb, Paris 1885, vol. 2, p. 105.

derogatory connotations.[4] Approximately in the middle of the 19th century Italian and especially German art historians applied Baroque as a descriptive term to the style of the visual arts of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. In the 20th century, Baroque thus defined as an historical style became also an abstract style. To my knowledge, Wilamowitz-Moellendorf (1881) was the first to speak of "Greek Baroque" referring to Hellenism as distinguished from the Classic period. The work of Wölfflin and his school advanced this usage, and since *ca.* 1910 Baroque has been widely used as applying to a historical style as well as to an abstract style (e.g., Greek Baroque, latent Baroque in the Gothic, etc.). The usage has been complicated further by applying Baroque to the late phase of any historical style (e.g., the Baroque of the Gothic) and, to add to the complications, various writers have inferred from a similarity of external forms and structure a similarity of attitudes, motives, intent, etc., upon the part of the various creators, regardless of the respective historical settings. At the same time attempts are made to demonstrate that the principles of Baroque visual art are also embodied in the other arts (poetry, music, etc.) as well as in the political, economic, etc. structures of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and this concept of a historical-cultural style has also been used as an abstract cultural style.

There can hardly be any objection to such a procedure except for the possibility that confusion may arise if such a term as Baroque is used without specifying qualifications, and vague as, for instance, the concept of Baroque as an historical-cultural style may be, no less an historian than Huizinga has emphasized its value as a descriptive term for the various phenomena of the culture of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries.[5] However, in addition to the above mentioned possible complications, which can be avoided through proper qualifications, there must be considered a difficulty which grows out of the fact that an historical style, as pointed out above, usually presents a fusion or mixture of temporal and regional or national styles and hence may contain heterogeneous, if not opposing, stylistic elements. This fact may prevent the formation of a unified (visual) style image and consequently lead to vagueness in the definition of the abstract style derived from the historical style. (This problem will be considered again later.)

The emergence and recognition of Baroque first as an historical and then as an abstract style illustrates one of the central problems of the definition of style in the visual arts. I referred above to this problem when I postponed considering the question of how a mode is established—a problem of which we are *now* less aware because, thanks to the work of art historians, a variety of concepts has been established which provide starting points for attempts to define, or re-define, historical and abstract styles. As long as art historians and aestheticians looked at the art of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries exclusively in terms of a Renaissance-art gestalt concept, the art of these centuries appeared to be "in a state of complete decadence . . . and florid excesses . . . ."[6] In other words, all formal characteristics which tended to support the gestalt concept of Renaissance art

[4] *Cf.* J. J. Winckelmann, *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerey und Bildhauerkunst*, 2nd. ed. Dresden & Leipzig 1756, p. 87.

[5] *Cf.* J. Huizinga, *Wege der Kulturgeschichte*, München 1930, p. 77.

[6] *Encycl. Brit.*, 1911.

were perceived as pointing towards this gestalt center, any divergent formal characteristics fell beyond the boundaries of the integrating force of this center and were dismissed simply as non-Renaissance. Not until another and new gestalt concept was recognized could these bizarre, etc., non-Renaissance form-characteristics be perceived in terms of a centered gestalt, i.e., as a style.

The introduction of a (visual) gestalt as a basis for the definition of a style can, but need not necessarily imply the introduction of valuation and standards of value into the definition of style. This would happen only if one rigidly insisted upon equating style with easily and spontaneously apprehended wholes, i.e., "good gestalts" in the sense of sensory material well ordered, independently of learning and acquired meanings. If only "good gestalts" in this sense are to be considered styles then there can be no such thing as a manneristic, an eclectic or a surrealist style, and yet there can be no doubt that all three can be established as historical styles. However, the concept of eclecticism and mannerism as the combining of not-integrated components of integrated styles presupposes the acceptance of "good gestalt" styles— the former can only be perceived in contrast to the latter and becomes meaningless without it.

It is relatively easy to establish mannerism or similar phenomena as an historical style because the temporal and regional boundaries simplify the establishing of a mode within such limits. If such styles, however, are considered as abstract styles they become rather vague because they can be clearly limited only negatively, i.e., one can state that the works of art in question are *not* integrated in terms of known gestalts, but it is difficult to state the gestalt in terms of which they *are* integrated. Hence a style like surrealism (as an abstract style) can be practically all-embracing outside of the clearly delimited domain of established styles. (The case of surrealism shows that the definition of a style cannot always be restricted to visual characteristics only—a question which will be considered later.) When describing mannerism or eclecticism as rather vaguely defined abstract styles one should keep in mind the possibility that we might be now in the same position in regard to, let us say, Hollywood architectural eclecticism as Winckelmann was in regard to the art of the Baroque, i.e., that Hollywood eclecticism appears to us as a conglomeration of scarcely related style components because we have not (yet?) found an integrating center in terms of which this particular visual phenomenon could be perceived as a gestalt. One might even argue that (although this is most difficult to imagine) Hollywood eclecticism might cease to disturb us once its gestalt is found. The history of art history seems to provide examples for the assumption that gestalt perception can be a matter of acquired sensitivity towards visual phenomena. Such examples of a refining of the perception of style-gestalts are the case of Baroque art, of Rococo art (still often enough referred to as "gingerbread"), the differentiation of Baroque and Mannerism, or the criticism of Wölfflin's category of "painterly" as covering Rubens as well as Rembrandt.

As mentioned above, practically all the abstract style concepts now in use are expanded historical style concepts, and our whole manner of perceiving or formulating new style concepts is, of course, strongly influenced by the various style concepts previously established. It would be of great interest, however, to

investigate experimentally the validity of existing styles in regard to underlying gestalts and possibly discover new style-gestalts.

It was pointed out previously that visual gestalts could not always suffice as a basis for the definition of a style (cf. surrealism), and this holds true obviously when the attempt is made to apply such style concepts as Gothic, Renaissance, etc. not only to the visual arts but also to all the other arts and the whole culture of a period. Again one could start with the naive assumption that temporal co-existence necessarily implies stylistic congruity, i.e., one might assume that the same principles are necessarily embodied in the art, literature, political institutions, etc., which exist at the same time or in the same region and that hence they can be classed together under the same heading. Aside from the fact that the tempo of historical growth and development of the various cultural fields differs, this assumption presupposes a degree of cultural integration which cannot be taken for granted without careful investigation. The criticism of such an assumption presupposes some idea or knowledge concerning the congruity between the structural characteristics of styles in different media and the congruity or similarity of the ideas expressed in these media.

For the purpose of investigating such congruities between styles in different media, it seems advisable to distinguish between:

(A) Definitions of style which are based upon the immediate perception of visual gestalts (obviously usable only in the visual arts), and

(B) Definitions of style which are based upon the perception of gestalts which are, at least in part, the result of learning and acquired meanings.

Styles of the first type, established through pre-analytical visual perception (and verifiable experimentally), may cut across the boundaries of established historical styles, and even the work of an individual artist might belong to two or more such styles (of the first type). An example for this type of style would be the grouping together, for instance, of some of the work of Rembrandt, several of the Impressionists, some of Turner's work, etc., and it seems to me advisable that abstract styles in the visual arts should be defined in this manner.

Styles of the second type are established by means of an intellectual analysis and interpretation of the function and meaning within works of art of the various components and the manner in which such components are integrated. An example for this second type is the grouping together under Baroque, or under the heading of "painterly," of the works of Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Pieter de Hooch, Jan Vermeer *et al.* To be sure, after having been exposed to Wölfflin's finely discriminating analysis of, for instance, the diffusion of light in the work of the painters mentioned above, one's perception becomes more sensitive. Under Wölfflin's guidance one perceives the similarities between manners of integrating which, in the pre-analytical perception, seem to have little in common. Any definition of style which is intended to apply to the visual arts as well as to literature, music, etc., is, of course, a definition of the second type. However, if the definition of such a comprehensive style takes the visual arts as its departure it seems desirable to take definitions of the first type as a starting point.

To take again Baroque as an example: an investigation of the relationship between poetry and painting of the Baroque would be needlessly complicated at

the outset if such a complex phenomenon as the historical style of Baroque were taken as the visual counterpart of, let us say, the poems of John Donne. In this case Donne would have to resemble, for instance, both Tintoretto and Rembrandt. In other words, the qualities of Donne would be measured in terms of criteria drawn from perceptibly heterogeneous material. It would be more useful rather to ask at the outset: "Does Donne resemble Tintoretto or Rembrandt as exponents of two visually different abstract styles?" If one wishes to establish congruities between visual arts and poetry in terms of Baroque, it would be necessary to make classifications in both fields from the same viewpoint.

SUMMARY

The main points presented in this paper may be summarized as follows:

1. There are different sets of expectations applicable to and strongly influencing the perception of different kinds of works of art.
2. These different sets of expectations are determined largely by familiarity with the different styles—hence the name "style expectations" is suggested.
3. There is a need to investigate the relationship between accepted styles in regard to underlying gestalts.
4. There is a need to investigate further the role of training, acquired meanings, etc., in the perception of style-gestalts in the visual arts.

NOTE ON "A HISTORY OF ESTHETICS"

VAN METER AMES

Members of the art-for-art's-sake movement did not merely turn away from the ugly results of the industrial revolution. They opposed the effort to enlist art in the struggle for a better world, fearing to compromise the purity of art. Professors Gilbert and Kuhn seem to share this fear in their *History of Esthetics*[1] when they associate Guyau with sociological thinkers who have asked the artist to help "save mankind and to build up a noble and free life," and say, "This ideal appeal was enforced by brutal pressure" to conform to "the configuration of modern mass civilization with its capitalistic patron as well as its under dog . . ."(p. 485). Called "the seamy side" of the "moral and material demand" upon the artist is the tendency for him to become the "obedient servant" of the masses. *Les Misérables*, by Guyau's hero Victor Hugo, is mentioned as a case in point, because "industrialized" and sensational. It is asked: "How were art and beauty to survive under the terrible pressure of a mankind estranged from the esthetic tradition either by a hard life or by the greedy pursuit of wealth?" (*loc. cit.*).

It is prostitution for art to cater uncritically to sinister tendencies; and when the time is out of joint it may seem that the way to maintain continuity with past achievement is for the artist to hide in an ivory tower. As Gilbert and Kuhn point out, this made it possible to carry on "the romantic vision of beauty in the face of an avowedly hostile world" (p. 486). But while the behavior of belatedly romantic artists can thus be explained, it is disturbing when excellent aestheticians (known to be humanitarian) deprecate the call to the artist, "Help us to save mankind and to build up a noble and free life," (p. 485) on the ground that this appeal has been perverted to favor the disvalues rather than the values of the modern world. Guyau's conception of the social role of art seems then to be identified with catering to appetites debased by industrialism. The kind of artist whose withdrawal from life he deplored as decadent appears justified in defending "art's aloofness and purity;" and it is true that the social reformer has often shown ignorance of art, whereas the "pure" artist has done much to enrich art. Yet, in their last word on "Society and the Artist" when Gilbert and Kuhn come to say that despite the negative orientation of art-for-art it led around indirectly to what Tolstoy called "the highest and best" (502), they vindicate Guyau and the sociological thinkers who inspired him; for it was clearly from him that Tolstoy borrowed his attack upon the decadents and his banner of art for life.

Gilbert and Kuhn, however, hang back from the trend of life and art. They devote only their short final chapter to "Esthetics and Art in Our Time," because to them "recent esthetics seems mainly to carry on and to develop the notions and methods prevailing in the last decades of the nineteenth century"

[1] Gilbert, K. E., and Kuhn, H., *A History of Esthetics*, Macmillan, N. Y., 1939.

(553). It is not plain whether they think "those two schools of thought which wield the largest immediate influence over artistic creation" are something new or not, because they are mentioned only to be dismissed: "the materialistic esthetics which envisages art as an instrument and expression of class struggle" and "psychoanalysis which reveals the subconscious animal instincts disguised in artistic imagery" (555). Gilbert and Kuhn think there is need of new work to bolster up the "ancient esthetic edifice," since its two pillars, "tradition and representation, are crumbling. The pre-war public, recruited largely out of the bourgeois class, is about to disappear; the future public, the masses, are not yet won and are meanwhile at the mercy of propaganda and the entertainment business, which control both radio and moving pictures. The artist has to throw his seeds to the wind." They ask: "What have recent estheticians done about this crisis? How are they affected by these violent events? Have they tried to build a wall against the whirlwind of modernism, have they lent their moderating advice and guided the bewildered imagination? Many an observer will judge that they did not do either of the two things but preferred to mind their own business (or what they considered to be their business)" (553).

But in the light of the history of aesthetics as Gilbert and Kuhn have presented it, as well as Bosanquet, one must ask if there has ever been an edifice of aesthetics whose architecture deserved perpetuation. Appeal to tradition is confusing in view of the many traditions, unless it is a plea to turn back to some period which seems congenial in retrospect. The wish to have representation restored can scarcely be read as a desire to scrap expression for the ancient view of imitation as the method of art, however interpreted. In *A History of Esthetics* this wistfulness about representation follows denunciation of the course of art in recent decades, in which "art has been passing through 'not so much revolution, which implies a turning-over, but rather a break-up, a devolution, some would say a dissolution. Its character is catastrophic.' Painting and sculpture have abstracted themselves from all the normal objects of perception, poetry from grammar, music from classical harmony, dancing from ballet rules, all of them from that kind of intelligibility which is the result of both habit and permanently renewed experience" (pp. 552, 553, including a quotation from Herbert Read, *Art Now*, p. 59).

Evidently Gilbert and Kuhn are not worried merely about art going to the dogs of propaganda and entertainment. They seem equally unhappy about the tendency toward abstraction from the normal, the classical, and what was considered permanent. One might regard this phenomenon as a continuation in some respects of the nineteenth century art-for-art movement which received absolution at the end of the 16th chapter of *A History of Esthetics*. And it is interesting that the authors regret the passing of the bourgeois class on which art-for-art geniuses poured contempt. Gilbert and Kuhn seem in the end to forget the argument they invoked against *forward-looking* reformers: that it would be surprising if preoccupation with the idea of the world as it ought to be should contribute much "to our knowledge of a creative activity which, on the whole, teaches us to delight in the world as it is" (477). Or is the world what it was more than what it is becoming?

Granted that there is aesthetic and other evil in propaganda and the entertainment business, that it distorts the social ideal of art to use it for the aggrandizement of one class, and that absurdities abound in contemporary art, there is a better way out than to bolster an "ancient edifice" which has collapsed. John Dewey's *Art As Experience* is mentioned in one sentence by Gilbert and Kuhn as the consummation of the evolutionist school. While this classification of the man now most in line with Guyau is not very informing, it is added that "Dewey's interpretation emphasizes the societal aspect of art" (554).

CAN WE HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL DANCE?

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY

The fervor and the concentration of jive devotees remind us that the dance began as a holy rite. The rouse of the flesh forever harks back to the spirit.

From religion, the dance has journeyed on many paths. In the orient, to which we shall return, it has remained close to the temple; elsewhere, its steps have been less holy bound. In joyous processions of pagan creeds, the dancing lingered when the deities waned, and grew into the festival dance and the folk dance. In many lands this type of dancing took a specific national pattern, still preserved in village gatherings, flowering in the flamenco and provincial groups and solos of Spain. The girl dancers from Cadiz were noted in ancient Rome.

Even within the religious forms, as part of the courtship festival and the fertility rites, the erotic element of the dance was clear. This motif the sooner grew into a separate solo art, with spectators more than participants, as Salome at the court of Herod. Thus the early Christians discouraged the practice, as New York in recent piety banned the strip-tease of burlesque.

The national dances, religious or folk, persisted, or developed with new racial consciousness. Thus the ethnological dance is the primordial form of the dance as art. In the east, partly from the requirement of magic, patterns, at first mimetic, were reproduced in detailed accuracy of movement, then were formalized into a sustained tradition. With the spread of industrialism in the west, however—not to mention the desolation, and the destruction of national patterns, wrought by World Wars—the spontaneous or traditional village gathering grew less frequent; its memory must be preserved by Folk Dance societies. Save for an occasional outcropping, as of African modes, these dances remain in the field of art only through the Spanish and the Far Eastern forms.

"Classical" ballet, the most prominent, at least the most successful, of art dances of the past century, is already dying. Born of a courtly code, with autocratic gentlemen and dainty aristocratic ladies, its pirouettes and *entrechats* and trippings *sur les pointes* remain as a lavender fluttering of olden beauty. Every ballet company keeps some of these dances in the repertoire, but for an exhibition of technical virtuosity or as a period piece. The padded shoes, the short tarlatan skirt, and the *maillot*, however they have been associated with the classical form, do not constitute the essence of ballet, which in its origins and in its hardy continuance is a story told in gesture-language, to accompanying music. This is true whether it be as "classical" as *Swan Lake*, using all the old techniques, as "romantic" as *Scheherazade*, or as "modern" as *Three Virgins and a Devil* or *Billy the Kid*, drawing movements from pantomime and folk motifs, and scorning even the conventional ballet costume. The ballet is the only dance form that did not rise from the common culture of the folk; it is likely to survive only through constant freshening with folk forms and impulsions. The so-called modern dance, of which Martha Graham is our outstanding exponent, is in

reality a thrust of personality onto the concert stage. There is no modern dance; there are only modern dancers. Indeed, the very term modern dance is ignored by the encyclopedias. The *Fourteenth Edition* of *Britannica* has a section (under *Dance*) on *Modern Dancing*, of the popular variety, by Arthur Murray; under *Ballet* it has a picture of Martha Graham, but no discussion of modern concert work. The entire article on the *Dance* in the *Encyclopedia Americana* is by Arthur Murray, who accords three sentences to the modern dancers.

The more lyric flow of the classic technique, vibrant when Isadora Duncan and her Isadorables swept upon the stage in the *Marche Militaire*, has largely been abandoned for a plastic growth, rather a succession of postures than a fluent continuum of ever-shaping form. Such poses as marked Isadora Duncan's later work are more prominent in Martha Graham's, where there are often moving groups around her poised central figure.

Here again we must not be misled by loosely applied terms: the Charles Weidman *Flickers*, or the Catherine Littlefield *Barn Dance*, the Martha Graham *Letter to the World*, or her *Punch and the Judy*, is no less a ballet than *Fancy Free* is a modern dance. That is to say, when they tell a story, the ballet and the modern dance coincide. They move from different training grounds of abstracted technique toward a common center of suggestion, neither ballet nor modern but eternally renewed mummery and miming.

But in its non-narrative movements the modern dance, even more than most other dance, remains an individual action. In it is plainly revealed the basic lack of the art: it has achieved no common language. No two modern dancers (save, too obviously, one dancer and her pupils) interpret the same mood in the same way. Gestures and postures—while no longer, as with Ruth St. Denis, changing from performance to performance—change from dancer to dancer. Although it is a commonplace of musical programs for one violinist to play another's composition, or even another's arrangement, merely to suggest that Doris Humphrey, say, dance a work of Tamiris, sounds ludicrous. And is. So much is the modern dance a solo of choreography that Martha Graham's company seem often ill at ease in the parts she designs for them—in which she herself would doubtless be unsurpassable.

Not only has the modern dance no common language, it has no tongue at all. Call *Frontier* by such names as *Wan Hope* or *November*, and the spectator will with no trouble fit the movements to the term.

Dance, like song, is deep-rooted in man's spirit; it is safe to say that it will never die. Yet it seems doomed to be eternally ephemeral. Its forms lack the precise scales and harmonies of music, which in turn falls short of the embracing significance of words. Thus, while literature abides and musical compositions endure, dancing continues but dances pass away. Contemporary forms are outmoded then forgotten, and new patterns preen for their glinting day. In the popular dance the course to oblivion speeds still more rapidly on; during the "dance craze" from 1912 to 1915, over a hundred new dances swept the floors—perhaps because the folk are more inventive than the individual artist, perhaps because they sooner grow bored.

Yet in one field of the dance a language has grown. Through its long tradition

of ritual—as the first writings in every land were religious—the Hindu dance has developed a complete system of symbols. Working in the main not with the more active but with the more expressive members, it has found a meaning for gestures of head and face, arms and hands, so that those acquainted with the dance language can follow it as a printed page. Thus to every Hindu dancer a movement has always the same specific meaning; the many dances are fashioned from this one code; each artist of the same dance-words builds the different dance-poems.

In anticipation, there may already be thought that this is an eastern, to us alien, tongue, and that it is wholly inapplicable to our western ways. What has the symbol for *lotus* to convey, that the machine age can use? It is probably true that there must be modifications of these symbols, modifications in some cases amounting to new signs—as out of Assyrian, Phoenician, Hebrew, Greek, characters emerged the Latin and English alphabet—before the Hindu dance language becomes adapted to our times. Much of it seems not to have advanced, in form, beyond the pictograph. To the westerner, it may often seem like hieroglyphics; nor can spectators be expected to wait for a Rosetta Stone. But elsewhere we have only jargons; here is the one dance-dictionary we possess. Nor is it all hieroglyphic to our time and western world, as La Meri daringly demonstrated, in the sharpest challenge to dance complacency in our generation when she presented (in New York, 1944) the ballet *Swan Lake* in the dance idiom of India. Using the identical music, and every dance sequence, of the classical production, she varied the choreography only by replacing the "ballet" steps with Hindu movements. Her "Scheherazade" (1945), with less strict adherence to hand gesture forms, is even more successful, is fully and universally comprehensible and enjoyable as art. Her performances have drawn increasing numbers of ballet dancers to watch and ponder; they will continue to waken thought about the potentialities of the art of the dance. For if this is not to remain the phoenix of arts, dying and being born anew with every culture; if, like literature, painting, and music, it is to grow into an art retained, its great works a continuous rouse down the generations, an ever fresh exaltation, that growth must come through its acquiring a language all dancers can speak and successive ages understand. Thus far, every dance has been temporary, and national; the work of La Meri is the first reaching toward an international dance.

SOCIETY AND SOLITUDE IN AESTHETICS[1]

THOMAS MUNRO

American scholars in aesthetics have recently been called upon to decide whether that subject, and their individual parts in it, can best be advanced in isolation, or through cooperating in an organized society. Those present at this first national convention of the new society have answered the question by coming, and only the future can show whether the new device was fruitful. Yet the question must remain to some extent in the minds of all of us, "how much real value can any formal association have along these lines?" and "is it worth the time and trouble it will involve?"

In stating this dilemma, I found myself using a title from Ralph Waldo Emerson, an author whom I read too seldom, perhaps because of basic disagreement with his philosophy. Nevertheless, it seemed only courteous, after borrowing the title, to reread the essay itself, on "Society and Solitude." What would the benign sage of Concord have said, almost a century ago, about our Society for Aesthetics? I knew without asking that his friend Thoreau would have turned his back on us without delay, preferring the society of birds and squirrels. Walt Whitman, on the other hand, would have taken us in at one hearty gulp, merely because we were human, and along with any miscellaneous groups of longshoremen, farmers, soldiers and housewives that happened to be present. But Emerson would be more carefully discriminating.

In turning through the essay, I was perplexed to find him rather dubious about both alternatives. "Solitude is impracticable," says Emerson, "and society fatal." He looks with an especially dour expression upon society. "No man is fit for society who has fine traits." If Archimedes and Newton "had been good fellows, fond of dancing, port, and clubs, we should have had no 'Theory of the Sphere' and no 'Principia.' " "Dante," he continues even more depressingly, "was very bad company, and was never invited to dinner. Michel Angelo had a sad, sour time of it. The ministers of beauty are rarely beautiful in coaches and saloons." This statement, it would seem, applies with especial ruthlessness to experts in aesthetics.

Dissatisfied with these generalities, I looked farther in the volume of essays, and at last found one more to the point, on the subject of "Clubs." It seemed to me that here Emerson was more shrewd and discerning in his application of common sense to practical situations; less vaguely dogmatic than when he moved on exalted metaphysical levels.

He speaks an encouraging word for learned societies: "I need only hint the value of the club for bringing masters in their several arts to compare and expand their views, to come to an understanding on these points, and so that their united opinion shall have its just influence on public questions of education and politics. It is agreed that in the sections of the British Association more informa-

[1] Presidential address read at the first annual meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics, in Cleveland, Ohio, on September 12, 1944.

tion is mutually and effectually communicated, in a few hours, than in many months of ordinary correspondence and the printing and transmission of ponderous reports . . . .Every man brings into society some partial thought and local culture. We need range and alternation of topics and variety of minds."

Emerson must have been in a genial mood when he wrote this essay. "Of all the cordials known to us," he declares, "the best, safest, and most exhilarating, with the least harm, is society; and every healthy and efficient mind passes a large part of life in the company most easy to him . . . .Conversation is the laboratory and workshop of the student. The wish to speak to the want of another mind assists to clear your own . . . . What are the best days in memory? Those in which we met a companion who was truly such. How sweet those hours when the day was not long enough to communicate and compare our intellectual jewels . . . . It was to meet these wants that in all civil nations attempts have been made to organize conversation by bringing together cultivated people under the most favorable conditions."

Emerson has some pointed warnings for us, also. There are hidden rocks ahead, in the effort to organize conversation on a refined and liberal plane. "Some men love only to talk where they are masters. They like to go to school-girls, or to boys, or into the shops where the sauntering people gladly lend an ear to any one. On these terms they give information and please themselves by sallies and chat which are admired by the idlers; and the talker is at his ease and jolly, for he can walk out without ceremony when he pleases. They go rarely to their equals, and then as for their own convenience simply, making too much haste to introduce and impart their new whim or discovery; listen badly or do not listen to the comment or to the thought by which the company strive to repay them; rather, as soon as their own speech is done, they take their hats. . .

"The only sin which we never forgive in each other is difference of opinion. We know beforehand that yonder man must think as we do. Has he not two hands,—two feet,—hair and nails? His dissent from me is the veriest affectation . . . .

"The club must be self-protecting, and obstacles arise at the outset. There are people who cannot well be cultivated; whom you must keep down and quiet if you can. There are those who have the instinct of a bat to fly against any lighted candle and put it out,—marplots and contradictors. There are those who go only to talk, and those who go only to hear: both are bad. A right rule for a club would be,—Admit no man whose presence excludes any one topic. It requires people who are not surprised and shocked, who do and let do and let be, who sink trifles and know solid values, and who take a great deal for granted. It is always a practical difficulty with clubs to regulate the laws of election so as to exclude peremptorily every social nuisance."

I have quoted with some fullness from Emerson's remarks on clubs, because they seem to provide us with some pertinent advice as we seek to establish a kind of club—a foretaste of its pleasures, along with some danger signals. As I remember the attitudes of myself and my contemporaries when we first embarked on our professional careers, we were rather scornful toward most societies and conventions. The jibes of H. L. Mencken and other sophisticates were ringing

in our ears, about the type of American who was called a "joiner"—whose lapel and watch-chain were covered with emblems of various lodges; who frequented noisy assemblies, and feared to be alone with his own thoughts. We smiled at Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt, with his Boosters' Club and his professional society of real estate men, who preferred to be called "realtors." Hence it was fashionable to "hate conventions." One went to an occasional convention, read with keen interest a paper of one's own, and was bored by most of the others.

Did this mean that one preferred solitude? No, but one did prefer the society of a small, informal group of friends, around some café-table or in each others' homes for dinner and long discourse over Prohibition beverages. As a young instructor, one enjoyed the society of one's students, where it was still somewhat thrilling to have one's ideas treated with marked respect. It was also pleasant to be the only specialist in one's field at a miscellaneous dinner-party, and (as Emerson hints) it was not quite so pleasant to be at a meeting of specialists in that field. So many of them displayed an annoying slowness to be impressed by one's original ideas; an aggravating stubbornness in holding to their own wrong-headed opinions; a tedious enthusiasm for their own rather dull and unimportant lines of research.

In speaking of these attitudes in the past tense, I do not mean that I have entirely outgrown them. I still find it difficult to sit through a long program of technical papers, some of which are inevitably boresome in the best of meetings, while my thoughts keep wandering like a schoolboy's to other things I could be doing on a fine afternoon. I would not urge the value of a formal society upon anyone who, like Santayana in his European seclusion, is temperamentally averse to it. I still enjoy talking with a class of students, or with a small, informal group of friends, more than I enjoy most formal meetings and programs of discussion. Most of us, no doubt, feel the same way.

Nevertheless, we realize that the intimate, informal type of conversation is limited in certain respects. One can never develop a given line of thought very far along systematic or technical lines; hence discussion is apt to remain simple and rambling. One who specializes in an uncommon field such as aesthetics may be in the midst of society, enjoying conversation of a high general level, yet almost isolated in regard to his special field of interest. In the college classroom one escapes this limitation, but lacks the contact with one's intellectual contemporaries. One receives intelligent questions, but not informed, expert criticism. At the university faculty club, one lunches with giant intellects, but usually they are experts in fields of knowledge other than one's own. Hence they are unable to give more than a layman's reaction to each other's technical opinions.

The professional, technical association provides a kind of human society not ordinarily available elsewhere. Without it, if we write technical articles and books, we do so almost in a vacuum; without seeing or even visualizing our readers, especially if we live outside the largest cities. We rarely get searching criticism, confirmation, or stimulating controversy. Our published words arouse no heartening reverberations, but trail off into the eternal silence of periodicals in bound volumes, row on row in library shelves; to be considered

seriously sometime (we hope) by Posterity, or by that choir invisible of really qualified and sympathetic readers which must exist somewhere, though we rarely meet them in the flesh. In a professional society, we do meet each other in the flesh and amicably take in each other's washing. For the rare privilege of explaining the truth to an audience of experts, we gladly endure the slight boredom of listening to their own mistaken ideas in return. For the bracing shock of having our views on aesthetics taken seriously, we gladly receive occasional objections. Like Saint Sebastian in a Renaissance painting, we greet these arrows with a beatific smile.

The value of professional societies has been so abundantly demonstrated in other fields—in fact, almost everywhere except in American aesthetics—that there is no need of laboring the point. Systematic collaboration, especially in the sciences, has rapidly accelerated the progress of knowledge through exchange of findings. It has quickly led, in one field after another, to joint projects of research and publication, to useful bibliographies and translations; to the founding of lectureships; and to the development of an informed public for the reception and use of new ideas. All these possibilities lie immediately ahead for the American Society for Aesthetics. It can rapidly become the spearhead of an organized movement to develop aesthetics in this country during the next generation, as psychology was developed two generations ago. The latter was aided to a considerable extent by the activities of the American Psychological Association.

At the risk of being classed with Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt, I venture to say that what aesthetics needs at present is a "Boosters' Club", not entirely unlike the one which Mr. Babbitt addressed in Zenith City. Living in twentieth-century America, we have learned that it is hard to start a movement, or any sort of collective enterprise, without some organized effort. Methods vary, and in our case a slightly more subtle approach than Mr. Babbitt's is required, with all due professorial dignity. But the idea is much the same.

I confess also to a good deal of sympathy with Mr. Babbitt's wish to establish the term "realtor" instead of "real estate man." After many years of joining good-humoredly in the jokes which greet the word "aesthetician,"—the comparisons with "beautician," "mortician," etc.—I have come to wish that a name could be found for a person who works in our field, which is not quite so amusing in its connotations. Furthermore, "aesthetician" is analogous with "physician," and seems to suggest a practical emphasis which is not wholly correct in our case. Webster's *Dictionary* also allows the word "aestheticist," which is analogous with "physicist" and "psychologist," and which may suggest an emphasis on pure science or theory. Perhaps some future conclave of this Society will explore the issue and pronounce a decision.

That future conclave might do well, at the same time, to decide the other weighty issue, of whether "aesthetics" does or does not begin with the letter "a". Both spellings are in current usage, and one never knows where to look for the word in an index. I have good friends on both sides of this heated controversy, and refrain at present from taking a positive stand. The American Society for Aesthetics has apparently begun with the policy of following tradition in

such matters—perhaps not unmindful, also, of the fact that words beginning with "ae" come at the head of most alphabetical lists, as in college catalogues. On the other hand, modernism favors the simplified spelling, and may triumph when the younger generation takes control. Our English colleagues retain the "ae," but pronounce it as in "Caesar," which is a little disconcerting to the American visitor. It may take the World Court to iron out this difference.

I am somewhat more concerned about the misleading and prejudicial meanings which the word "aesthetics" has taken on in popular English usage. (No such associations exist in German, French, or other languages, at least to any comparable extent.) Thousands of persons who have never heard of aesthetics as a subject understand the word "aesthetic" as suggesting the decadent, effeminate "aestheticism" of Oscar Wilde and the "yellow nineties"—the kind which Gilbert and Sullivan satirized in *Patience*. People assume that anyone concerned with aesthetics is an "aesthete" in this derogatory sense.

These false associations have tremendous power to obstruct the advancement of aesthetics as a subject in schools and colleges. They are of little theoretical importance, but great practical importance. Either of two courses can be followed in dealing with them. One is to avoid the word "aesthetics" and use some partial equivalent, such as "philosophy of art," "comparative arts," or the like. None of these is wholly adequate. The other is to destroy the false associations by familiarizing the public with the word "aesthetics" in a serious, technical sense. The latter, I believe, is preferable, and not too difficult.

A similar confusion can be laid more fairly at the door of many writers on aesthetics themselves. This is the notion that aesthetics is concerned exclusively with the meaning of beauty and aesthetic value, and with the supposed laws of beauty in art. If this is all aesthetics means, many intelligent people will continue regarding it as too abstract and specialized to deserve much place in the educational program. I have no intention of offering now a formal definition of aesthetics, for that is a large problem in itself. But it is a fact that the word has recently come to be used in a somewhat broader sense, as including more than philosophical speculations about Beauty. In this sense it includes what the Germans term *allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* or "science of art"—that is, the study of the arts, and of related types of human experience, from various scientific standpoints—those of psychology, sociology, cultural history, and so on. The English-speaking world has not taken kindly to the term "science of art," perhaps because of doubt as to whether there can be such a science. In any case, there seems little advantage in insisting upon a fine distinction between "aesthetics" in a narrow, traditional sense and the many other approaches which are now being made to art and aesthetic experience, from various scientific and scholarly points of view. A name is needed to designate them all together, as a related group of inquiries, extensive in scope and diverse in methodology. "Aesthetics" is already fairly well established in this broader sense, and by agreeing upon it we can facilitate clear discussion.

This does not mean, at all, that philosophical approaches to aesthetics and the problem of beauty are obsolete. But they are only a part of the subject; not the whole subject. Aesthetics is not a purely evaluative, normative subject.

It has a descriptive function also; in investigating the nature and varieties of art; the varieties of human experience related to the arts, and the causal factors which help to explain their development. It has enormous tasks ahead in analyzing the principal types and styles of form in all the arts, and in tracing their origins in social culture and individual personality; their actual and possible effects in education and social control.

Returning to the theme of "boosting"—or, in more sedate language, "advancing" our subject—there is much to be done along this line in education. It can be done better through concerted effort than individually. There should be more courses on aesthetics in colleges, graduate schools, art and music academies, even secondary schools. These should include, not merely short, abstract courses on general theory, but comparative studies of the arts themselves in a broadly integrated, philosophical spirt. This Society could undertake to help students find the necessary opportunities for advanced work in aesthetics, including scholarships and fellowships. It could help young graduates and instructors to find the right jobs, and recognition for their abilities. It could work for the establishment of special lectureships and professorships in aesthetics at various universities. These are all basic parts of the mechanism of a vigorous and growing subject in the academic world.

Perhaps the main test of this Society's value will be in the realm of ideas, rather than in that of administrative machinery. It will lie in the quality and quantity of books, articles and lectures which are produced through the Society's influence. But can a Society, or any artificial agency, really stimulate good writing?

There are two ways in which creative projects are undertaken, in aesthetics or elsewhere. One is highly individualistic, in that the author takes no direct suggestion from anyone, but writes whatever he wants to write at the time. Another is by direct request or suggestion. Some excellent works are written thus, although the author may feel that he does better when left to his own devices. The editor of a magazine may ask several writers to contribute to a symposium on a certain subject—for example, the recent one on "Art in a Post-War World," in the *Journal of Aesthetics*. In the same way, the program committees of our future meetings will call for papers on specified topics. Publishers often ask a certain author to write a book which they think is needed. Professors suggest research, dissertations, articles by graduate students and assistants. Universities invite lecturers to discuss a certain subject, and publish the lectures out of a special fund.

During the last few years, I have found myself writing on art education more than I really wanted to, and less on aesthetic theory, simply because I was asked to do so for one special occasion after another. Art education is an active, well organized field, with many periodicals, lectureships, and organizations, while there is little explicit demand in aesthetics. The mere fact of having a *Journal of Aesthetics* in existence has stimulated a great deal of writing which would otherwise not have been done, because there would have been no place to publish it. Many of the papers read at this convention were written specially

for the program, and would not have been written otherwise. In all these ways, the Society can stimulate writing.

Today, we are in the midst of a program of some twenty-five papers, on topics freely chosen by the speakers. That program is itself suggestive as an indication of the present range of interests in aesthetics. It gives a fairly good cross-section of present opinion, method, and content in the subject. Such programs are suggestive to authors and teachers; they provide starting-points, indicate what ought to be done or said next. Where do we go from here? New problems are raised; old ones seem unsatisfactorily answered, and challenge the prospective writer.

In general, we can try to create in this country a stimulating atmosphere of experimental thinking, discussion and controversy, in regard to aesthetics. We can make it clear to everyone—ourselves, our students, college faculties, the public—that aesthetics is a subject in which there is something to be done; not one on which the last word has been said. Too many of our best writers, unfortunately, leave us with the latter impression, and hence do not inspire students to enter the field. George Santayana is open to this criticism, in spite of his own distinguished contributions. His conception of the subject, as set forth in the essay, "What is Aesthetics?"[2] is an extremely narrow one. His attitude toward it is negative and discouraging. John Dewey, on the other hand, constantly summons the student to fresh experience, and to the solution of new problems. He offers a flexible methodology of experimental logic, which can be adapted to the exploration of new fields.

Aesthetics is a comparatively new subject, especially in the United States. It is an almost unknown continent, calling for exploration. There are discoveries to be made; false ideas to be corrected, techniques of inquiry to be worked out; contributions to human welfare invented, through a better understanding of art and human nature. This will not be a dull and stodgy subject, bogged down in endless hairsplitting, but one as full of opportunity for the enlargement of knowledge as psychology was in 1885. It will be a coöperative subject, like the older sciences, with sharing of results, joint projects, and cumulative progress. It will be a clear-headed subject, not given over to vaporous rhapsodies about beauty, but based on the detailed observation and analysis of specific works of art; making use of all relevant scientific techniques, but adapting them to the unique requirements of aesthetic phenomena.

Since we have taken Emerson as our starting-point, one more reference may be in order. In 1837, his lecture on "The American Scholar" contained a plea for cultural independence from Europe. "We have listened too long," he said, "to the courtly muses of Europe . . . . We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds." Emerson did not live strictly up to his own advice in this respect: he imported an exotic transcendentalism from Europe, and indirectly from the Orient. But he altered and applied it to the American scene, domesticated it, and helped to make it a persistent strain in American thought. This remote and pale reflection of Hindu religion, com-

[2] Published first in 1904, and reprinted in *Obiter Scripta* (Scribner's, 1936).

bined with genteel New England Protestantism, was set forth with charming style and pontifical assurance.

The essays on "Art," on "Beauty," and on "The Poet," coming early in the history of American aesthetics, have set the tone of much later writing in that field. Steeped in pantheism and romantic mysticism, they smiled loftily at any attempt by natural science to penetrate the mysteries of life, mind, and beauty. They have tended to discourage and delay the application of science in aesthetics, and to perpetuate instead a literary approach, in which the well-turned phrase, the graceful essay, take the place of dry factual investigation. This often passes for philosophy, but is hardly rigorous enough in its logic to deserve that name. It abounds in dogmatic evaluations, personal affirmations and denials. Its vague and sweeping generalities are apparently supported by concrete instances; but these are hand-picked, providing literary color, rather than logical evidence. In a wise and penetrating mind like Emerson's, this approach can produce literary art of high quality. It is interesting as an expression of taste, both of one man and of his cultural setting. But it makes no step toward science or objective demonstration.

Emerson's influence has helped to make us susceptible, especially in New England, to repeated waves of transcendentalism from Germany and India. Of late this transcendentalist approach to aesthetics has received a strong transfusion of blood, directly from Oriental sources, in the writings of the distinguished Indian scholar, Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy. Hence we may perhaps expect a revival in aesthetics of this faith, whose followers exalt it as "Philosophia Perennis." Meanwhile a somewhat similar approach to aesthetics, that of Catholic Neo-Thomism, is also on the ascendant; through the influence of Jacques Maritain and other Catholic scholars. Librarians and booksellers tell me that there is an increasing demand for books on transcendentalism and mysticism in general, and for Emerson's in particular. Evidently naturalism and scientific method are not to have a clear field in American aesthetics, for the present at least. My own inclination is toward scientific method, in a broad sense not confined to laboratory measurements. Nevertheless, I hope that our programs will continue open to the expression of all mature and informed approaches. It is a pleasure to note that many different points of view are now represented in the Society's membership. Let us hope that such diversity will continue to thrive among us.

In many branches of learning, we have learned since Emerson's day to walk on our own feet and think for ourselves. At the same time, we have not been too narrowly patriotic in cultural matters. We have borrowed ideas from the farthest ends of the earth, and used them in our own ways. In aesthetics, we have leaned heavily on English authorities and on the hollow shell of Benedetto Croce's over-rated system. Of late, the melting-pot has been spiced by modern French art, with its emphasis on bizarre types of non-realistic form; also by Russian Marxism, with its emphasis on sociological interpretations and collective enterprise.

Future historians will probably say that the subject of aesthetics was in its early infancy in the United States in 1944. It is a little discouraging to

see how few American works are listed in the bibliographies of aesthetics by Hammond[3] and by Chandler and Barnhart[4], or to see how few sentences are required by Gilbert and Kuhn[5] to sum up American contributions to the history of aesthetics. (Perhaps the last two writers go to extremes in minimizing the American contribution.) We have made several promising starts, in the form of capable writers who seemed on the point of establishing aesthetics as a recognized branch of learning in the United States. But when their individual careers ended, the lines of work they began were usually dropped. No continuous tradition was established, as in the case of research institutions where unfinished projects are handed on from one generation to the next, or as in strong university departments where great teachers communicate a lasting glow of enthusiasm to their young assistants. It is a little depressing to see what an excellent start in comparative aesthetics, based on wide factual knowledge of the arts, was made by Raymond[6] at Princeton in the nineties, and earlier by Samson[7] in Washington, whose encyclopedic treatise on the arts was published in 1867. If these had been followed persistently, we should be much farther along at present. It is discouraging to remember Santayana's classical works on *The Sense of Beauty* and *Reason in Art*, produced at Harvard in the nineties and early nineteen hundreds; the pioneer work of Münsterberg in the psychology of art and art education—then to realize how little activity goes on in these fields at Harvard at the present time. Who is carrying on Gayley's[8] notable work in the aesthetics of literature at the University of California, or Moulton's[9] at the University of Chicago?

One reason for these lapses, no doubt, is the lack of any research institution or professorship in a major university, definitely endowed for the perpetuation of work in aesthetics. Their establishment is one objective toward which this Society might well aspire.

Why, in general, has aesthetics been so backward in this country? Must we fall back on the usual answer of our cultural youth, and of the need of stressing practical problems in the conquest of a new continent? Shall we also blame, in part, the overspecialization of scholarship which obstructs any philosophical approach to the arts? No doubt these factors have been operative. But mature abstract thought has not been lacking in this country. Speculation about ethics—sin and virtue, right and wrong, the sanctions of morality—has been brisk ever since Puritan days. Social philosophy, logic and epistemology,

[3] W. A. Hammond, *A Bibliography of Aesthetics*. Longmans, Green, N. Y., 1933.

[4] A. R. Chandler and E. N. Barnhart, *A Bibliography of Psychological and Experimental Aesthetics*. Univ. of California, Berkeley, Cal., 1938.

[5] K. E. Gilbert and H. Kuhn, *A History of Esthetics*. Macmillan, N. Y., 1939.

[6] G. L. Raymond, *Art in Theory: an Introduction to the Study of Comparative Aesthetics*. Putnam, N. Y., 1894.

[7] G. W. Samson, *The Elements of Art Criticism*. Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1867. (On drawing, sculpture, architecture, painting, landscape gardening, and the decorative arts, with preliminary psychological chapters.)

[8] C. M. Gayley, *Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism: The Bases in Aesthetics and Poetics*. Ginn, Boston, 1899.

[9] R. G. Moulton, *The Modern Study of Literature*. Univ. of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1915.

the philosophy of religion, general and applied psychology—all these subjects, related to aesthetics in some respects, have been vigorously pursued by American thinkers.

Perhaps we can list one additional reason. Until recent times, the arts themselves have had a very minor place in the American scene. The value of American folk art, and of American Indian and Negro contributions to the arts, has not been taken seriously until recent years. American original work in architecture and the film has been a product largely of the twentieth century. The great wave of importation: of building and filling art museums, playing and recording exotic music, translating exotic literature, has come largely since 1900. Up to the present time, the visual arts have had little place in our educational system. Naturally, theorizing about art seemed vain when art itself was not an important factor in American life, and not yet present in sufficient variety to provide a basis for inductive study.

The subject of aesthetics, first distinguished as a branch of philosophy by a German in the 18th century, still remains pre-eminently a German subject. There are worthy French and English contributions, but few in comparison with the German. No other country can equal the monumental contributions of its periodical, the *Zeitschrift für Aesthetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, which was founded by Max Dessoir in 1906 and published until the present war, lately under the editorship of Richard Müller-Freienfels. The German Society for Aesthetics, also led by Max Dessoir, numbered several thousand members, and took an active part in sponsoring projects in the field. Several international congresses on aesthetics were held in Germany and France, mostly under the same leadership. Books and articles of outstanding importance were published in German, until the Hitler tyranny put an end to all free cultural enterprise. They dealt in great detail with aesthetic theory, cultural history, the psychology of art, children's art, methods of art education, the aesthetics of particular arts, and many allied subjects. The great mass of these have never been translated, and are almost unknown to American students. German aesthetics has gone far in applying scientific methods to the study of art and aesthetic experience. On the whole, it has gone a long way from the transcendental doctrines which it once exported to New England.

In founding a Society and a *Journal* in this country, we are carrying on the work of Max Dessoir and his associates, and would do well to recognize our debt to them. The recent influx of German scholars to this country, some of whom are welcome members of this Society, makes us still more indebted to Germany, and in a sense less independent from Europe than we were before 1933. But, in another sense, we are forced to be independent, since cultural activity in aesthetics and other subjects has almost ceased in Germany and continental Europe during the war. No one knows when it will recommence. In the mean time, the European scholars who come here will gradually cease to be European. They will not be satisfied merely to repeat what they learned abroad, but will adapt their approach to the English language and the American cultural background, thus enriching our culture as they become a part of it.

Several of our members were associated with the German Society and Journal of Aesthetics. They can assist us in maintaining cultural continuity with its work, while at the same time we go on to independent thought and action. With their aid, we should rapidly translate and appraise the whole German contribution to aesthetics, to decide how much is usable here and how much is not.

One of these German scholars, the late Dr. Felix M. Gatz of Scranton, Pennsylvania, was among the first to propose an American Society for Aesthetics. He took a step toward it by assembling two meetings or "congresses" on aesthetics. At the second, held in Washington in April, 1942, the formal organization of the Society was begun.

This first national meeting is a milestone and a starting-point. In every respect the time seems ripe for a vigorous renewal of life in our subject. For several years, advance has been impeded by depression, the fear of war, and war itself, which caused the nation to bend all its efforts along practical lines. The moment peace is declared, a return to cultural values and pursuits is inevitable.

Our Society can play a considerable part in this rebirth, and in the more effective teaching of the humanities, if we as individuals can muster the necessary will to work together and keep on working together. The Society will not succeed automatically. The mechanics of keeping it alive, of directing and financing projects, of arranging and attending meetings, requires work on somebody's part. There is no call for extreme, year-round activity, but on the other hand the Society can easily lapse into a perfunctory state which will be of no value to anyone. Other interests will compete, and personal frictions are sure to arise. We shall differ on policies, and become impatient with each other. We shall all feel at times like dropping the whole matter. If we do so, it will be long before anyone else has the courage to make a similar attempt. Let us pick out each year a set of officers and trustees with energy, patience, and idealism; let us give them our support, and hope that posterity will keep the Society alive as long as it is needed.

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NOTES AND NEWS

(Readers are invited to send in items for publication in this department. They may deal with activities of the Society, personal news about individual members, or events of general interest in the field, such as academic appointments, research projects, lectureships, and publications.)

1945 ANNUAL MEETING

Plans are being made to hold the annual meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics in New York, on the Friday and Saturday following Thanksgiving. The holding of this meeting is subject to the Office of Defense Transportation's rule that not more than fifty persons from outside the local and suburban zone travel to the meeting. Members not residing in the vicinity of New York, who plan to attend, should therefore notify the Secretary. Members who wish to submit papers for the program should, as soon as possible, send them, or a substantial abstract, to the chairman of the program committee, Professor Max Schoen (Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pa.). Papers must not exceed 2000 words. Members will be notified later of the specific arrangements for the meeting.

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR AESTHETICS: HISTORICAL NOTE[1]

The American Society for Aesthetics was organized on April twenty-fifth, 1942, at the close of a meeting held at the Catholic University in Washington, D. C. This meeting, entitled "The Second American Congress for Aesthetics," had been assembled on April 23rd, 24th and 25th, by the late Dr. Felix M. Gatz, head of the Department of Art and Music at the University of Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Gatz had conducted the First Congress in Scranton on April 13th, 14th and 15th, 1939, in emulation of the European congresses led by the German aesthetician, Max Dessoir. To Dr. Gatz belongs the credit, therefore, of having taken the first steps toward forming the American Society. It is to be deeply regretted that his death in 1942, shortly after the Second Congress, prevented him from seeing the full realization of his efforts.

Dr. Gatz had used the term "American Society of Aesthetics" before April, 1942, to designate the participants in the two American Congresses; listing himself as President, Dr. Max Schoen as Vice-President, and Professor Alexander Kostellow as Secretary. Further names were listed on the program of the Second Congress, as comprising a "Board" and "Honorary Board" of the Society. However, there was no definite membership or formal organization, and hence no society in the strict sense of the word, before April 25th, 1942. Many of those listed as Board or Honorary Board members did not join when the Society was actually formed. Thus Dr. Gatz's references to the Society before this date indicate rather a hope for the future than an accomplished fact.

The small group which met at the close of the Second Congress, on the stage of the empty auditorium of the Catholic University, consisted of Van Meter Ames, Felix M. Gatz, Charles A. Hart, Craig LaDrière, Thomas Munro, Carroll C. Pratt, Dagobert D. Runes, Max Schoen, and Ralph B. Winn. As an organizing committee, they voted to establish the American Society for Aesthetics, and elected the following officers: President, Thomas Munro; Secretary, Ralph B. Winn, and Treasurer, Max Schoen. Annual dues were fixed at two dollars, and were paid to the treasurer by each member. The committee decided to invite a selected list of additional persons to membership. A Constitution was to be drawn up and submitted, together with the list of officers, to the enlarged membership for ratification.

[1] Reprinted from *Proceedings of the First Annual Meeting, The American Society for Aesthetics*, Sept. 11–13, 1944. A letter to the Editor of the *Journal of Aesthetics*, signed with my name and published in Vol. I, No. 4, p. 73, was incorrectly altered in proof, and does not contain an accurate account of the facts. T. M.

In 1940 and 1941, a series of conferences had been conducted in New York and California by Dr. Munro, under the auspices of the Carnegie Corporation, looking toward the establishment of a national association in the field of aesthetics. In addition, they surveyed the possibilities of developing research and publication in this field, of establishing a periodical, and of bringing together scholars interested in theoretical studies of the arts from different viewpoints, such as philosophy, psychology, education, cultural history, and the various arts. A report of the New York meeting, held at the Hotel Biltmore on December 16, 1940, was published by the Corporation under the title *Informal Conference on the Arts*. It was republished, together with a report of the meetings at San Marino and Berkeley, California, under the title *The Future of Aesthetics*.[2]

After the organization of the Society in 1942, the Carnegie conferences began to bear fruit. Invitations to membership in the Society were sent to those who had participated in the conferences. Most of them joined and helped to build up active groups of members in New York and California. The California group, in particular, has carried on a vigorous program of local meetings until the present time, under the leadership of Helmut Hungerland.

In November, 1942, the list having reached one hundred and fifty-one, ballots were sent out to all members. The slate of officers, tentatively chosen in April, was ratified. In addition, an Executive Council was elected, consisting of the following members in addition to the officers: Van Meter Ames, George Boas, C. J. Ducasse, Irwin Edman, Katharine Gilbert, Theodore M. Greene, Stephen C. Pepper, and Carroll C. Pratt. Dr. Ames was designated Vice-President, having received the largest number of votes for membership on the Executive Council.

The tentative draft of a Constitution was drawn up by the President and submitted to all Council members for criticism. On May 23rd, 1943, the Executive Council held its first meeting at the Columbia University Faculty Club, with the following present: Ducasse, Edman, Greene, Munro, Pratt, Schoen, and Winn. Because of pressure of other duties, Dr. Winn relinquished the post of Secretary, which was given to Dr. Schoen as Secretary-Treasurer. The Constitution was discussed in detail, revised, adopted, and later ratified by the whole Society. Lots were drawn by the members of the Council to determine the length of their respective terms, with the result that Drs. Edman, Gilbert, and Greene were chosen to serve for three years; Drs. Boas, Pepper, and Pratt for two years; Drs. Ducasse and Winn for one year.

The Constitution authorized the organization of regional branches of the Society, and three such organizations have been established. One is on the Pacific Coast, with Dr. Helmut Hungerland as Secretary; one in Cleveland, Ohio, with Dr. Thomas Munro as Secretary; and one in New York, with Dr. Emanuel Winternitz as its first, and Dr. Paul Zucker as its present Secretary.

The first national meeting of the Society was held in Cleveland, September 11th, 12th and 13th, 1944, as part of a convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Meetings were held at the Cleveland Museum of Art and Western Reserve University, with a dinner meeting at the Wade Park Hotel. At a business session, the Society was incorporated under the laws of Ohio as a corporation not for profit, with its principal office in the City of Cleveland. The name of its executive body was changed from "Excutive Council" to "Board of Trustees," and other necessary verbal changes were made in the Constitition. . . .

The Board of Trustees also nominated the following members as officers and Trustees for the year 1945: for President, C. J. Ducasse; for Vice-President, Katharine Gilbert; for Trustees, Lester D. Longman and Carl Thurston. These nominations have since been submitted to the entire membership by mail and duly ratified.

THOMAS MUNRO
VAN METER AMES
MAX SCHOEN

[2] Edited by Thomas Munro, and mimeographed in 1942 by the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio. (111 pp.)

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR AESTHETICS: ACTIVITIES OF REGIONAL GROUPS

1. PACIFIC COAST DIVISION

The *third annual meeting* of the Pacific Coast Division of the American Society for Aesthetics was held from May 4th to May 6th, 1945, at the College Women's Club, Berkeley, California. It was opened on Friday night, May 4th, with the *David Wight Prall Memorial Lecture*, the inaugural lecture of a series to be presented annually. This lecture was given by Celestine J. Sullivan, Jr., on "Beauty and the Social Order." This series was established by a group of members of the Pacific Coast Division in cooperation with former students and friends of the late D. W. Prall.

The following later programs were presented:

Saturday, May 5th, morning session on "Aesthetic Experience in Education": A. W. Foshay, "Art Education in the Lower School"; J. Donald Young, "Art Appreciation in the Liberal Arts College"; Carl Thurston, "Aesthetics and the Museums."

Saturday, May 5th, afternoon session on "Art Criticism": Yvor Winters and Kenneth Rexroth, "The Criticism of Poetry"; Douglas MacAgy and Helmut Hungerland, "The Criticism of Painting."

Sunday, May 6th, afternoon session: Henry P. Eames, "Aesthetics in the Undergraduate College"; A. I. Elkus, "Changing Values in the Interpretation of Music"; Paul R. Farnsworth, "Further Data on Musical Eminence"; B. E. Jessup, "Aesthetically Valid Truth-Judgments in Art."

For a third consecutive year, a *Seminar in Aesthetics* was held in 1944–45, under the auspices of the Pacific Coast Division, San Francisco Bay Area Group. The seminar continued to meet regularly once a fortnight under the direction of Mr. Hungerland, at the home of Miss Josephine Miles in Berkeley. The attendance at the seminar meetings increased during the third year. The average attendance was twelve persons for a total of twenty-three meetings, as compared with an average of seven persons for the preceding year.

The seminar helped to organize the third annual meeting of the Pacific Coast Division, and the annual *David Wight Prall Memorial Lecture.*

After discussion, a program of study was adopted on August 25, 1944, which served to guide the studies of the seminar in its third year. This program established as the main aim of the work of the seminar the study of standards relevant to modern art. The procedure decided upon was as follows: analysis of (1) works of art; (2) the standards which are proclaimed (a) by artists (manifestoes, etc.), (b) by critics; (3) the functioning of such standards, i.e., the relationship between standards and works of art; (4) the cultural setting which conditions the standards, i.e., the relationship between aesthetic standards and non-aesthetic factors.

As had been envisaged, so complex a project could not be completed within one year and it is planned to synthesize the material further with a view to developing workable sets of criteria relevant to modern art.

The following papers were presented:

Isabel Creed Hungerland: "General Analysis of Standards"; "A General Account of the Use of Standards with Application to Surrealist Art"; "The Relationship Between General Standards and Specific Kinds"; "Report on Koffka's Account of the Function of Classes in Aesthetic Judgment."

Helmut Hungerland: "Symbolism, Impressionism, and Expressionism"; "Analysis of the Standards of Modern Painting (Matisse and Kandinsky)"; " 'Principles' and Standards of Modern Painting"; "Some Suggestions for a Theory of Art Criticism (with Special Reference to Modern Painting)"; "Suggestions from Gestalt Psychology for Art Criticism"; "The Problem of Classes in the Arts."

I. de LaHarpe: "The Development of the Poetry of Louis Aragon, with Special Reference to Technique."

Josephine Miles: "Analysis of a Poem by Robert Penn Warren, in order to Determine the Standards of Judgment Involved"; "Exemplification of Different Types of Standards in

Symbolist Poetry"; "Values in Modern Poetry"; "A Criticism of Three Modern Poems (Robert Penn Warren, Dylan Thomas, John Berrymann)"; "An Analysis of Standards in Relation to 'Bad' Poetry"; "A Critical Analysis of N. R. F. Maier and H. W. Reininger's 'A Psychological Approach to Literary Criticism' "; "The Problem of Classes in the Arts."

Alexander Nepote: "The Treatment of Space in Modern Painting."

Manuel Olguin: "The Historical Background and the Standards of the French Symbolist Movement."

Margaret Prall: "The Style of Claude Debussy"; "The Treatment of Rhythm in the Music of Bela Bartok"; "The Style of Darius Milhaud."

Catherine Rau: "Standards of French Symbolism as Illustrated in Poems of Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé"; "Standards of French Symbolism as Illustrated in Poems of Jules Laforgue, Stuart Merril, G. Kahn, Viele-Griffin, Henri de Regnier"; "The Problems of Classes in the Arts."

The Southern California Group of the Pacific Coast Division held its third meeting on December 9, 1944 at Occidental College, Los Angeles, under the chairmansip of J. Donald Young. The papers presented by J. D. Young, C. Thurston, K. Baer, I. C. Hungerland, H. Hungerland, S. Spaulding dealt with architecture and its place among the arts. The fourth meeting was held on March 11, 1945, at the American Contemporary Gallery in Hollywood. Milton S. Fox was chairman, and the subject was "The Art and Craft of the Motion Pictures." The speakers included David Raksin, composer, Herman Rotsten, director, and James Wong Howe, photographer.

2. OHIO DIVISION

The Ohio Division of the American Society for Aesthetics was organized in the fall of 1943, with Dr. Thomas Munro acting as secretary. During the winter of 1943–44 the group met four times at the homes of various members. The programs usually consisted of a talk by one of the local members, followed by a period for questions and discussion of the topic.

November 13, 1943: Milton S. Fox, of the Cleveland Museum of Art, on "The Art of the Motion Picture," and Joseph Remenyi, Professor of Comparative Literature at Western Reserve University, on "Wit in Literature."

December 28, 1943: Finley M. K. Foster, Oviatt Professor of English at Western Reserve University, on "William Blake, Artist and Poet."

February 19, 1944: Arthur Shepherd, Professor of Music at Western Reserve University, on "Wit in Music."

April 22, 1944: Paul B. Travis, Instructor at the Cleveland School of Art, on "Wit in Graphic Art."

In the fall of 1944, Dr. Remenyi became secretary of the Ohio Division, succeeding Dr. Munro. The programs of the 1944–45 season were as follows:

November 25, 1944: Otto Ege, Instructor at the Cleveland School of Art, on "Some Points of Fine Bookmaking."

January 13, 1945: Wolfgang Stechow, Professor of Art History at Oberlin College, on "Some Problems Concerning the Kinship of Music and the Fine Arts."

March 24, 1945: W. T. Higbee, on "My Fifty Years in Photography."

May 19, 1945: Jared S. Moore, Professor of Philosophy, Western Reserve University, on "Art as Revelation."

3. NEW YORK DIVISION

Dr. Paul Zucker was appointed Secretary of the New York Divsion, to serve from September 1, 1944, to December 31, 1945. Under his direction, three meetings were held during the winter season.

January 12, 1945: Dr. Rudolf Arnheim, Professor at Sarah Lawrence College, on "Art and the Psychology of Abstraction."

April 6, 1945: Mr. M. D. C. Crawford, Research Director, Fairchild Publications, on "The History of Textiles in Relationship to General History of Art."

May 25, 1945: Dr. Paul Schrecker, former professor at the Sorbonne, Paris, and Professor at the École Libre des Hautes Études, on "The Structure of the Aesthetic Province of Civilization."

CONTRIBUTORS

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PRUDENCE MYER, of the Cleveland Museum of Art's Educational Department, is now on leave of absence for graduate work in art at New York University.

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