

and feelings in all countries but that at the same time, something supra-national links them together. We used to believe that this relationship existed only in the realm of geometrical ornamentation, masks and idols—in the service of magic, whereas we now also see that the more individual artistic personalities belong together and that there is a link between all these similar talents.

To anyone coming to Switzerland from England in the hope of being able to discover, study and admire living peasant art at its source, I am regretfully compelled to admit that this popular art has died away in the age of machines and that its unconscious naïve creative force is extinct. In some compensation for this, the highly commendable efforts of the *Heimatwerk*, a commercial organization of home industries, have succeeded in providing us with good copies and in ensuring a certain preservation of tradition, at least for such articles of daily use as textiles, straw and woodwork.

But the time will come when we shall have to acknowledge these childlike creative natures as real artists. For they too help us to look into the human spirit and, by their landscapes, into the general world character. It would indeed be a very great pleasure for me to show with your help in England a few carefully chosen examples of this art.

Yours with best wishes,

CHRISTOPHE BERNOULLI

[Translated by PETER WATSON]

HEINRICH WÖLFFLIN: HIS MEANING FOR EUROPE DR. GEORG SCHMIDT

(Director of the Municipal Art Collections in Basle)

It was, I might say, almost a salutary shock to be invited by the Editor of HORIZON to mark the death of Heinrich Wölfflin, by writing a short article on the significance of the man who was unquestionably the greatest art historian of our time.

It is not only since 1939 that those of us in Switzerland who write and speak German have recognized an increasing cleavage

between writing in German and feeling as a German, and have felt a growing responsibility as German-Swiss to think in European, even in universal, terms, thereby preserving a body of universal thought expressed in the German language. Yet none of us has really been able to free himself completely from the natural and (in favourable circumstances) desirable interconnection between linguistic idiom and thought-content.

Nor was 1933 the first year which signified for those German-Swiss with a European vision, a breach between 'German' thought and the written word. This occurred first at a much earlier date, namely in the year 1813 when the German rising against Napoleon, which began as a fight for European democracy, was side-tracked on to feudal-nationalistic lines. It occurred again in the year 1848, when the democratic and republican revolution in Germany was sacrificed to the growing imperialism of the Prussian monarchy. The breach between German and European thought reached its extreme in the First World War. The German defeat in 1918 was followed by a short period of *rapprochement*. But by 1930 the breach was already as wide again as ever before.

To my own surprise, this opportunity of writing for English readers an account of Wölfflin's achievement—measured for once by absolute European standards and not simply as a leader of German thought—has helped me to see more clearly than before the indubitable greatness but also the limitations of his thought.

Wölfflin's supreme contribution to art history, which has European validity in the fullest sense, is his absolute insistence that the study of art must be based on the formal analysis of the visual experience of individual works. Wölfflin never wearied of re-stating that a work of art is primarily a visible, formal image and that, therefore, in looking at works of art one should confine oneself primarily to what can be seen, to the thing and its form.

In this essential respect there is a similarity between Wölfflin's contribution in the field of art studies and that of Cézanne in the field of art, both of which are of equal European significance. For we shall always speak of the pre- and post-Wölfflin schools of art history, just as we speak of art before and after Cézanne.

However, if we carry artistic analysis one step further—from what has to what will have form, from the created to the creating,

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from the product to the producer—then Wölfflin's conceptions fail. For Wölfflin provides us with no key to understanding the psychological determination of form by the artist's character and experience. And if we look beyond the psychological conditions peculiar to the individual and consider how the creation and mutation of forms may be determined by social necessity, then we shall find that not only Wölfflin, but almost every art historian, breaks down. And yet even the psychology of the individual is only in part innate in his character and explicable as such. At the very least, an equally large part of his psychic acts are reactions against the influence of his surroundings. But the life process of a work of art does not emanate simply from the reaction of one individual to his surroundings, nor does it end with the act of creation. Before the act of creation there exist, whether expressed or not, the requirements of the customer, and after the act the customer's reaction to the thing created and through it to the creator. The individual artifact is embedded in the psychic framework of the creating individual just as he in his turn is embedded in the wider reality of his social surroundings. Thus a really comprehensive study of art history will only be possible when an equally precise set of concepts as exists already for describing the objects themselves has been forged to describe the individual creator, the society whose wishes he executes and which supports him, and the limitations of both. But we are still a long way from that!

Now Wölfflin did not derive the categories of his formal analysis just from any works of art: he concentrated on a particular historical period. To be more precise: he concentrated not on *one particular* period in history, but on *two consecutive* periods. And his theory was not primarily designed to isolate form as such, but to bring out the contrast between the formal vocabulary of the one period and the formal vocabulary of its successor; between, that is to say, the Renaissance and the Baroque. Wölfflin's famous pairs of conceptions, which he calls *The Fundamentals of Art History*, are the product of his exceptional study and intense experience of the formal antithesis between the two periods. Wölfflin's *Fundamentals* are as clear and comprehensible as all antithetical conceptions; but like all purely antithetical conceptions they are dangerous and of limited validity.

No historical development can be expressed in terms of a duality. Development can only be expressed by the dialectical trinomial of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, which means that every thesis is in its turn the antithesis of a preceding thesis and simultaneously the synthesis of a preceding antithesis. Thus synthesis is never the end but always at the same time the thesis for a new development.

We cannot help realizing how failure to think historically made it possible for Wölfflin to stick at the Renaissance as thesis and the Baroque as antithesis once we are aware that though, for example, the contrast between Raphael and Rubens can be expressed as a contrast between a 'linear' and a 'painterly' approach, yet Raphael on the one hand is 'painterly' in relation to Masaccio and Rubens on the other is 'linear' in relation to Tiepolo. Going further back, Giotto is 'linear' in relation to Masaccio; and going forwards the Impressionists are 'painterly' in relation to Tiepolo. However, going back beyond Giotto to the Romanesque, and coming forwards from Impressionism to modern art, Wölfflin's *Fundamentals* lose even their purely relative meaning. Wölfflin's categories are as useless to describe all pre-classical art before it became naturalistic, as they are to describe all post-classical art after it ceased to be naturalistic. Yet, largely on account of Cézanne, these are the very periods which concern the art historians of the post-Wölfflin era.

But with his concepts Wölfflin can only describe and cannot explain the mutation of form from the Renaissance to the Baroque. He can only supply the answer to the question 'How has the form changed?' He has no answer to questions of history such as 'Why did the form change?' However, no art historian has ever asked himself the question 'How?' with such determination, nor answered it so concretely, as Wölfflin. That is his great contribution. And the younger generation of art historians should not try to undo Wölfflin any more than modern painters can with impunity undo Cézanne. But there is a task ahead of us: to forge concepts capable of expressing with the same precision as Wölfflin's the form world of both pre- and post-classical art, and of expressing also the sociological and the individual psychological determinants of form and its mutations.

The development from the Renaissance to the Baroque is a phenomenon of European significance and Wölfflin's

comprehensive analysis of this development may be of European interest, yet in science we cannot overlook the historical standpoint of the observer. For even the scientific observer is not outside his own time, no matter how little he is aware of it. Wölfflin's master, Jakob Burckhardt (b. 1818) made no secret of his standards of artistic value; he turned his back on the realism of the Impressionists and escaped into what was for his time the nearest to Renaissance idealism, namely the art of Arnold Böcklin (b. 1827). In their youth both Burckhardt and Böcklin shared the democratic-realist outlook of the movement that led to the revolution of 1848 in Germany; but before 1848 both of them had taken refuge in what was, from a European point of view, a belated form of classicism.

The step that Wölfflin took from the 'linear' classicism of the Renaissance to the 'painterly' Baroque exactly corresponds to the advance of Hans von Marées (b. 1836) over Böcklin. Like Cézanne, who was three years his junior, Marées was passionately concerned with form. But, whereas Cézanne built his new form language out of the disintegration of colour—the great achievement of the Impressionists—and shared with the Impressionists a realistic outlook, Marées could never escape from the classicistic mode of thought no matter how much he aspired to non-naturalistic form.

When considered in terms of Europe, the Classicist tendencies of the latter half of the nineteenth century are seen to have been a product of the anti-democratic, monarchical reaction: Böcklin and Feuerbach in Germany, Puvis de Chavannes in France. Marées stands as a tragic and undecided figure between monarchical reaction and democratic progress, whereas Cézanne stands firmly on the side of the progressive forces in Europe. The fact that spiritually Wölfflin's (b. 1864) position does not correspond to Cézanne's but to Marées' is proof enough that he is closely linked with the specifically German lines of thought which prevailed in the decades before the First World War. It was at that time characteristic of large sections of the bourgeoisie, even in Switzerland, that they closed their minds to the realistic acceptance of actuality, which characterized radical, democratic thought, and took refuge in an aristocratic idealism.

It is this attitude of Wölfflin's which is ultimately decisive in explaining the curious fact that in his mind the ontogenetic antithesis

Renaissance-Baroque (which has general European validity) cuts across the nationalistic, anti-historical antithesis between 'German and Italian feeling for form'. Indeed, since the nineteenth century, it has been part of the paraphernalia of German Nationalism to see the whole of Germany's past in terms of a time-defying racial antithesis expressed as 'German-foreign', 'German-Latin' or 'Gothic-Classical', and to talk either of a basic German longing for the Mediterranean-Classical or *vice versa*, according to the current state of political relations between Germany and Italy. For example, the German Renaissance (Dürer and Holbein) is now accused of being a betrayal of the basic German-Gothic feeling for form. Naturally Wölfflin, in his book *Italy and the German Feeling for Form*, published in 1931, never descended to the depths of nationalistic phraseology. But there is, nevertheless, an irreconcilable contradiction between on the one hand the nationalistic, time-defying conclusions of this book (which depend on an identification of classical art with 'Italian'), and on the other, the *Fundamentals of Art History*, in which the conclusions have, like all true historical concepts, a supra-national validity and relate to a very definite stage of historical development.

[Translated by DOUGLAS COOPER]

SWISS COMPOSERS OF TODAY

ERNEST ANSERMET

IN the musical sphere, Switzerland is characterized by the fact that she gives no scope for nationalism. That does not mean that the Swiss musician, whether he be composer, performer or listener, is not strongly marked by his race: he is Germanic or Gallic (the Italian community, peasants, artisans and hotel-keepers, have, as yet, no significant musical life), but this racial character does not, so to speak, infuse his body; it remains an individual trait in a musician who lives in the midst of a wider culture. A French or a German composer almost inevitably participates in the fate of his national culture; he benefits by its momentum and its prestige, and suffers from its limitations. A Swiss musician has neither this privilege nor this handicap. He is not borne forward by his