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THE CONCEPT OF MANNERISM IN 'CINQUECENTO' LITERATURE

City University of New York PH.D. 1980

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THE CONCEPT OF MANNERISM IN CINQUECENTO LITERATURE

by

FRANCESCO BONAVITA

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

1980

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1980

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Comparative Literature in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

Mannerism, as a critical category in the visual arts as well as in Literary Criticism, has not yet become an established term in the standard manuals on the history of Renaissance culture. The notion of mannerism is very often relegated to an ephemeral role; one that embodies affected and unbalanced qualities. Its origin may be traced as far back as the Attic oratory of the Hellenistic age, because of its turgid and declamatory style, down to the Surrealistic movement of the Twentieth century for its emphasis on Subjectivism.

The purpose of this study is to put the term mannerism in the proper perspective for until now the term itself has evoked considerable confusion. Is the concept of mannerism in literature different from the idea of maniera in the visual arts? What is so peculiar about mannerism in relation to other critical categories? Part of the reason is that since mannerism was originally an art category some literary scholars have argued over the advantages of borrowing critical techniques inherent in the area of the visual arts but substantially inadequate for the structural composition of a literary work of art.

In essence, the subject of this study is based on the concept of literary mannerism in Cinquecento literature. Its value remains intrinsically comparative in nature

in the sense that no discussion of literary mannerism is conceivable without an understanding of mannerism in the visual arts. My immediate aim is to show the history of the concept mannerism as a critical category. I shall show its development by examining the principal figures of both art and literary criticism without necessarily reducing the subject matter to a historiographical phenomenon. The interpretation of mannerism in the twentieth century has produced some of the most fascinating critical accounts, some of which are still being debated. I have attempted to group the major critics whose contributions have shaped in some ways the question of mannerism into four princple areas. The first body of criticism is perhaps oldest in that it stems from the Neo-Classical mentality: namely, it sees mannerism as a degeneration of the values of the studia humanitatis. The second dominant posture is very modern, for it sees mannerism as the creation of a new stylistic expression revolutionizing the course of Western Art. The third notion sees mannerism as an aesthetic quality capable of standing on its own merits without necessarily being connected to a particular time or space. The last group of critics understands mannerism as based on the Horatian simile: Ut pictura poesis. The inflationary proportions attained by the use of the term mannerism have produced the most ambiguous and divergent interpretations, so that it becomes imperative to establish an accurate chronological view and to attempt to

formulate a proper notion of what constitutes the concept of mannerism.

The notion of mannerism is concomitant with the very idea of crisis in the Cinquecento. But to hasten to establish the Sack of Rome of 1527 as the chronological inception of the theory of mannerism is a rather risky proposition. While the so-called "Geistesgeschichte" dynamics may be of intrinsic value to the historian of ideas, they possess an inherent sensationalism which too often preclude one from examining the objected nature of things. The attitude of the artists of the Cinquecento assumes greater intelligibility when we examine the rhetorical transformation and the formalistic experimentation during the course of the Late Renaissance.

The development of classical rhetoric, formal rhetoric, had always been committed to an ideal. The transmutation of mannerist rhetoric, on the other hand, in its emphasis on achieving a discordant, irregular and modern projection may seem similar to the Asianism of Gorgias. In other words, the rhetoric of mannerism is not the essence from which objective reality must be persuasively presented; rather it becomes a means from which the subjective realm may be artistically projected. The contrast between the phenomenal reality and the world of imagination is greatly accentuated. The traditional patterns of rhetorical figures have been intentionally warped so that a relativistic conception of the universe could be projected. The work of art originating from the manneristic

realm embodies an original mode of being which marshals its own system identifiable in relationship to the boundaries of time and space of Cinquecento dynamics. Be it Pontormo's Deposition or Scève's Délie that one examines, the affected movement that will emerge as a result of formalistic and metalinguistic observation will always correspond to the irreducible cosmogony of the post-Renaissance period.

Acknowledgements

The idea of writing in depth on the subject of Mannerism came to me upon researching a graduate paper for Professor Aldo Scaglione. Although the core of my study was to focus on Tasso's Aminta my critical observations were to illustrate the "mannered" elements in this pastoral compostion. Needless to say, bibliographical sources on Tasso, himself, were rather copious. Specific studies on Mannerism and Tasso or on Mannerism itself, were remarkably limited in scope. It was for this reason, therefore, that I decided to embark upon this subject not simply to delineate a historical development of the term mannerism throughout the ages but to attempt to formulate on a conceptual level a proper meaning of Mannerism. In the end, I wish to make a positive contribution in an area in which the notion of Mannerism has, for quite some time, been considered an exclusive category of art criticism and only with a degree of skepticism in the context of literary criticism.

To this end, I would like to take this opportunity to express my utmost gratitude to Ezio Raimondi for discussing with me this subject area and, above all, for having guided me and for his valuable suggestions in reading the manuscript. My deepest gratitude goes to Fred Nichols, my mentor, whose benevolent criticism of my manuscript made it possible for me

to maintain my style as well as the content within a rational perspective. So, too, Mary Ann Caws for having encouraged me in the completion of this project and for her valuable assistance in reading the manuscript. I wish to thank also Luigi Ballerini and Frank Warnke for their valuable time in taking part in the supervisory committee of this dissertation. My deepest apprecition is reserved for my wife, Mariella, who has provided me with persistent spiritual support as well as reading and discussing my manuscript. A particular thank you to Umberto and Michele, my sons, who as young as they are, understood the importance of my task and the precious time I required to accomplish it.

I wish to make a final acknowledgement, with respect to researching, to the City University of New York for having made certain books available to me through its Inter-Library loans service. So, too, to New York Public Library where most of my reading was done, and to my friend Emanuel Paparella who made possible for me to do research at the Sterling Library of Yale University.

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INTRODUCTION

Mannerism, as a critical category in the visual arts, has become a permanent term in the standard texts on the History of Art. Its function, with respect to denoting periodization or expressing a particular value, is confined to the realm of vacillation. The very notion of Mannerism is very often relegated to an ephemeral role; one that embodies affected and unbalanced qualities. Its origin may be traced as far back as the Attic oratory of the Hellenistic age, because of its turgid and declamatory style, and down to the Surrealistic movement of the twentieth century for its emphasis on Subjectivism. Because of this shifting image which has been unjustly attributed to the term Mannerism, it necessarily implies a catalytic phase precipitating an affected and an unbalanced order of things. Thus, in the art of the Cinquecento, the concept Mannerism, until recently, was construed in terms of exaggerated and imitative forms of the classical art of the High Renaissance resolving itself into the grandiloquent forms of Baroque style. Obviously, the negative implication of the term Mannerism is less likely to be encountered today, but its vestigial attributes of unevenness, the affected, the unclassical, persist, at least insofar as the standard manual of Art History is concerned.

Now, if one examines the fate of the term Mannerism in Literary Criticism, one is immediately dismayed by the lack of importance conferred on such a critical term.

The validity of Mannerism as a tool of periodization is, even to this day, greatly overlooked. Thus, a respectable critic, Ettore Bonora, in his Critica e letturatura nel cinquecento (Torino: G. Giappichelli, 1964) omits Mannerism altogether and the presence, in Cinquecento Literature, of an Aretino is explained in terms of "estetismo decadentistico."[1] As recently as Rene Wellek's Concepts of Criticism one senses that Mannerism is an ill-conceived term, displacing rather than illuminating the already established time-period of the Baroque epoch.[2] Even a scholar as sophisticated as Morris Croll, on whom I shall lean considerably during the course of this study, makes no effort to distinguish Mannerism from Baroque. Mannerism as a critical criterion reflects Heinrich Wölfflin's notion that Mannerism is essentially a degenerative style, one that originates from the classical style of the High Renaissance, constituting an intermediary structure for the development of Baroque. Much of what today is referred to as Mannerism was identified by Croll as a developmental phase which ultimately led to the Baroque period.[3]

The production of Literary Criticism dwelling on the concept of Mannerism is relatively limited. Mannerism as a literary category provokes a reaction that other terms, such as Impressionism, Decadence, Surrealism, to mention only a few, very often do not.[4]

What is so peculiar about Mannerism in relation to other critical categories? Part of the reason is that since Mannerism was originally an art category some literary scholars have argued

over the merits of transferring critical techniques inherent in the field of the visual arts but substantially incongruous and unilluminating for the structural compositions of a literary work of art. I shall elaborate on the concept of "Ut pictura poesis" and its relative merits. For the moment, however, it will suffice to say that Mannerism as a literary category existed as early as the Early Renaissance, but because of historical reasons the term fell into oblivion.

In essence, the subject of this study is based on the concept of literary Mannerism in Cinquecento literature. Its value remains, intrinsically, comparative in nature in the sense that no discussion of literary Mannerism is conceivable without an understanding of Mannerism in the visual arts. My immediate aim is to show the history of the concept Mannerism as a critical category. I shall show its development by examining the principal figures of both art and literary criticism without necessarily reducing the subject matter to a historiographical phenomenon. Indeed, the inflationary proportions attained by the use of the term Mannerism have produced the most confusing and divergent interpretations, so that it becomes imperative to establish an accurate chronological view and to attempt, at least on the conceptual level, to formulate a proper notion of what constitutes the concept Mannerism.

In dealing with the chronological realm of Mannerism, it is quite tempting to insist on its extension and its application to Modern Art when examining Expressionism and Surrealism. On

the other hand, one cannot ignore its affinity, as if "avant la lettre," with these modern movements and, above all, th fact that the very interest in Subjectivism has led many Ar. Historians to re-examine the concept of Cinquecento Mannerism. In his article, "Lo Spirito del manierismo," Eugenio Battisti points out the theoretical affinity between Surrealism and Mannerism, the stress on the playfulness of composition, the emergence of social consciousness in the Cinquecento artist, and the invaluable contribution made by the Art Historian, Max Dvořák, whose analysis of Geistesgeschichte in the Cinquecento paved the way for an eventual interpretation of Mannerism.[5] In a similar direction, although producing overwhelming generalizations and devaluating to a great extent the precise function of the term Mannerism, Jacques Bousquet, has recognized the significant dimension that this rediscovery of Mannerism has added to the assessment of European Art. Although irreversibly widening the mannerist notion from Rabelais to Milton, from Rosso's maniera to Cubism, the French Art historian calls for a fundamental "revision" of key concepts such as Baroque, Romanticism, Expressionism and "contemporary art" movements, since Mannerism constitutes indisputably the embryonic stage for Modern Art.[6] The significant contribution of Bousquet's work will become apparent later on, especially on the comparative level, its ability to transcend the boundaries of periodization, referring for instance to the rapprochement of the psychological composition of a Bosch and the Weltanschauung reflected in Impressionistic paintings.[7] Let

it be said, however, that the elusive denotation of Mannerism and the tantalizing effects one derives from such a course of study, despite having produced sensational results, may do very little to enhance the "elucidation"[8] of the concept itself. It was precisely for this reason, namely to dissipate the nebulous and undefined aspect of the concept of Mannerism, that in 1960 a congress was convened by the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei on the subject: "Mannerism, Baroque and Rococo: Concepts and Terms."[9] The legitimacy of the term Mannerism in Literature is dramatized significantly when one considers that the Congress allotted significant roles to the sister arts, namely: the visual arts and music.[10] One significant contribution to emerge from this Congress is the invaluable bibliographical service rendered by Ezio Raimondi to the scholarly community. Although the relative absence of studies on Mannerism is noted in Italian and particularly in French Literature where, (except in the work of Hatzfeld) Les Essais are still looked upon as a "Baroque book,"[11] Raimondi is quick to point out the indelible impression made by the Anglo-Saxon school of Literary Criticism. The strength of this article is that it acquires comparative overtones and does much to enhance the notion of Mannerism; it is as much a European as an interdisciplinary phenomenon.

One area to be examined is the legitimacy of the concept Mannerism in Literary Criticism. At one end of the spectrum, there is the school of thought originating with Ernst Robert Curtius whose important study European Literature and the Latin

Middle Ages seeks primarily to locate Mannerism independently of aesthetic categories. In a somewhat mitigated form, one finds theorists in the tradition of Wellek and Warren whose conception of Literary Criticism and the other arts is conceivable only insofar as it is reduced to the notion of "Geistesgeschichte" limited only to social and cultural similarities.[12] In view of this ambivalence one may ask, what ought to be the proper criteria? An obvious answer is that one cannot shun aesthetic formalism when considering literary Mannerism. Perhaps, had Baroque been a less totalizing term or, as Raimondi suggested, had not Mannerism created a direct confrontation with literary Baroque, its legitimacy would have been indisputable.[13] Despite the opposition of the purists who may find interdisciplinary studies a futile exercise of the intellect, the idea of the paragone was an established notion in the Sixteenth century.[14] Indeed, James Mirollo in his article, "The Mannered and the Mannerist in Late Renaissance Literature," points out the intrinsic quality that literary Mannerism may have in elucidating the very notion of Cinquecento Renaissance.[15] It may ultimately deliver us from Burckhardt's anachronistic notion that "renaissance" is a totalizing phenomenon; that its yardstick is necessarily located in the axiom of Classical Antiquity; that, consequently, any deviation from its humanistic premises must be explained in terms of schizophrenia. The implications of this will be discussed in a future chapter; let it be said for the moment that the preponderance of Mannerism in the Cinquecento appears to be greater than expected.

It is no wonder that the traditional approach to the idea of the "Renaissance" may have conditioned negative interpretations of the concept Mannerism. As early as the eighteenth century, the French philosophes helped the create the notion of the Cinquecento as a concordant epoch emerging from the centuries-long "darkness" of the Middle Ages.[16] Thus, in tracing the scientific spirit since classical antiquity to the Age of Enlightenment, D'Alembert, in his "Discours préliminaire" of the Encyclopedia, attributes the rebirth of knowledge to the great inventions brought about by political stability: "...car il n'y a que la liberté d'agir et de penser qui soit capable de produire de grandes choses, et elle n'a besoin que de lumières... Aussi fallut-il au genre humain, pour sortir de la barbarie, une de ces révolutions qui font prendre à la terre une face nouvelle: ... l'invention de l'imprimerie, la protection des Médicis et de François I raniment les esprits; et la lumière renait de toutes parts."[17] The Romantic mystification of the notion of "Renaissance," as conceived by Michelet, has, according to Franco Simone, come to form "uno schema storiografico" which will last long into the contemporary analysis of Humanism.[18]

Contrary to established opinion, the Cinquecento Renaissance is an epoch of remarkable chaos. In her celebrated book, The Stones of Florence, Mary McCarthy gives a considerable account of the great sufferings inflicted on the Florentine people during this period of the so-called "Ideal Republic." Taking place just a few years after the dramatic departure of Pontormo's

conception of nature into the realm of deformity and disharmony of forms, the plague of 1527-28 in Florence and its vicinity is said to have taken the lives of thirty thousand people.[19] In a similar direction, Battisti is able to confirm the questionable impact of Humanism on the urban disposition of Florence simply on the basis of topographical observations: "Inoltre, e basta girare per Firenze per convincersene, pur con la sua carica di modernismo, l'umanesimo artistico quattrocentesco riuscì, assai a fatica, ad affermarsi nell'urbanistica complessiva. Le vie strette, i vicoli, gli improvvisi e irregolari spiazzi...la topografia mossa e confusa dei tetti...denotano la mancanza di una pianificazione generale."[20]

This aura of uneasiness by no means enveloped the city of Florence alone. It extended itself well into the Italian peninsula and beyond. The Sack of Rome in 1527, executed by the Imperial troops of Charles V is said to have had devastating consequences--the violent sequence of events, the numerous atrocities committed by the invading soldiers (the pillaging of churches and palaces, the raping of ladies and of nuns,) the explicit desacration of the actual bivouacking of troops in the Basilica of St. Peter's, the ubiquitous plague and famine accompanying the evils of war.[21]

Working within the Hegelian dynamics of history and Hauser's identification of "Angst" as the basis for the origin of Mannerism, the Hungarian critic Tibor Klaniczay has provided a fascinating account on the causes of Mannerism by presenting a

Western and Eastern European documentation of Cinquecento life. Thus, the political chaos emanating from the "Guerres d'Italie" of 1494, the Sack of Rome, and the Fall of Florence in 1530, is paralleled with the threatening Turkish invasion as far East as the Ukraine, in Hungary, and in the West.[22]

The thirty thousand religious murders committed in France, during the night of St. Bartholemew in 1572, are confronted with the "systematic genocides" inflicted upon the Portuguese and the Spanish people.[23] In keeping with Marxist notion of class struggle and economics as a dynamic force, the economical and social situation of the Cinquecento, as viewed by Klaniczay, appears rather bleak and dehumanizing. Thus, the well-known twentieth century phenomenon of inflation can be traced to the monetary collapse of the Medici and the Fugger bankers with debilitating consequences for the rest of Europe.[24] The ethical implication of the Cinquecento system of capitalism is identified with the initiation of slavery in Africa.[25] The sanction of slavery during this period of the revival of studia humanitatis which strove for an ideal mean in the formation of human perfection, seems, to me, to constitute a definite blow to the humanist program in its attempt to restructure the ethical picture of modern society.

To be sure, there was more slavery in Europe in the Middle Ages than in the Renaissance. Its great flowering came in the seventeenth century and merely as a result of the failure of humanism. What is suggested here, however, is that the absence

of human rights compounded with the plight of the human condition in the sphere of temporal needs reinforces the precarious nature of the Cinquecento social dimension.

The phenomenon of population explosion which characterizes the political, social and moral composition of the contemporary world, is also seen by Klaniczay as an ubiquitous shroud heralding famine and epidemics.[26] Such gloomy conditions have had enormous consequences on all social classes of the time. In the proletarian classes, besides rampant organized crime, there is a serious revolutionary activity which threatens to overthrow the established monarchies. Consider the Peasant Revolt and the radical Anabaptist sect of 1524 in Germany. On the other hand, the remarkable stride forward made by the bourgeoisie had a serious setback on the collapse of the Medici Family in 1530, and the "re-féodalisation" of Europe with the emerging noble classes.[27] The crystallization of these forces, namely, the political, social and economic disintegration, together with the intellectual crisis of the Cinquecento, appear to Klaniczay as the inception of the affirmation of Baroque structures: "Aux alentours de 1600, nous sommes témoins d'une stabilisation graduelle, une stagnation faisant suite au grand essor et aux profondes catastrophes puis une lente concentration des énergies survient, mais déjà sous le signe d'une nouvelle période de la civilisation, le baroque."[28] Undoubtedly, the dynamics of "Geistesgeschichte" are of intrinsic value to the Historian of Ideas, but they possess an inherent

sensationalism which too often preclude one from examining the objective nature of things. Thus, critics have hastened to establish the Sack of Rome of 1527 as the chronological inception of the theory of Mannerism; as if to say that a Parmigianino suddenly, having been dispossessed of his property, turned to Mannerism. That the attitude of the artist might have been profoundly affected is indisputable. To say that a calamitous event is the cause par excellence is to ignore, in effect, other essential cuases that contribute to the phenomenon of Mannerism long before the second decade of the Cinquecento. The very notion of Mannerism, I believe, is concomitant with the very idea of crisis in the Cinquecento. But if the concept Mannerism is to constitute a critical notion for the literary historian, it necessarily must take into account other less sensational means of evaluation. Thus, the rhetorical transformation and the formalistic experimentation taking place during the course of the Cinquecento will add greater intelligibility to the concept Mannerism. The marshaling of these elements together with the aesthetic observations of Cinquecento Mannerism is the fundamental preoccupation of this study. In summary, by examining the most divergent schools of thought around the notion of Mannerism I hope to contribute modestly toward a greater understanding of Literary Mannerism. My ultimate aim is to attempt to arrive at a notion of Literary Mannerism from a conceptual viewpoint.

Footnotes

1. Bonora, Ettore, as quoted in Amedeo Quondam, Problemi del Manierismo, (Napoli: Guida, 1975), pp. 8-9.

2. René Wellek, Concepts of Criticism, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 125.

3. Morris W. Croll, Style, Rhetoric and Rhythm, ed. Max Patrick et al. (Princeton: Pr. U., 1966), p. 164.

4. Quondam, Problemi, p. 5.

5. Eugenio Battisti, "Lo Spirito del manierismo," Letteratura, IV (1956), pp. 6-7.

6. Jacques Bousquet, Mannerism: The Painting and Style of the Late Renaissance, Trans. S. W. Taylor, (New York: Braziller, 1964), p. 31.

7. Bousquet, p. 27.

8. Helen Gardner, The Business of Criticism, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 14. I am borrowing the term from Helen Gardner who sees the critic's primary function as that of illuminator rather than a sensationalist: "The torch rather than the sceptre would be my symbol for the critic."

9. Luisa Becherucci, "Mannerism," Encyclopedia of World Art, 1964 ed., p. 452.

10. Becherucci, p. 452.

11. Ezio Raimondi, "Per la nozione de manierismo letterario (Il problema del manierismo nelle letterature europee), "Manierismo, Barocco, Rococo: Concetti e Termini, (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1962), pp. 65-67.

12. René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt, 1962), pp. 128-29.

13. Raimondi, "Per la nozione...," p. 59.

14. James V. Mirollo, "The Mannered and the Mannerist in Late Renaissance Literature," in The Meaning of Mannerism, ed. F. W. Robinson and S. G. Nichols Jr., (New England: Univ. Pr., 1972), pp. 8-9.

15. Mirollo, "The Mannered...," p. 10.

16. Paul Oskar Kristeller, Renaissance Thought II, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 57. Kristeller points out that the harmonious view of the humanist and his world has been widely misunderstood: "Renaissance thought was interested not merely in moral rules of conduct or in the specific ways of life that an individual might choose according to his status or profession, but also in the general situation in which human beings find themselves on earth, in the chief forces determining this situation, in the place man and his world occupy within the larger universe. There has been a widespread belief that Renaissance humanists held an optimistic view of life and were prone to enjoy this earth without caring as much for the future life after death as thier medieval predecessors had...we must try to avoid exaggerated opinions. Even in Lorenzo de' Medici's famous lines, 'Let him be happy who so desires, for we are not sure of the next day,' which used to be quoted as the quintessence of Renaissance view of life as frivolous and superficial, we have learned to hear melancholy undertones."

17. D'Alembert, "L'Encyclopédie," in The Age of the Enlightenment: An Anthology of Eighteenth Century French Literature, eds. Otis E. Fellows and Norman L. Torrey, (New York: Appleton-Century, 1942), p. 318.

18. Franco Simone, Umanesimo, Rinascimento, Barocco in Francia, (Milano: Murzia, 1968), pp. 17-18.

19. Mary McCarthy, The Stones of Florence, (New York: Harcourt, 1959), pp. 107-8.

20. E. Battisti, L'Antirinascimento, (Milano: Fletrinelli, 1962), p. 22.

21. Bousquet, pp. 54-55.

22. Tibor Klaniczay, "La crise de la Renaissance et le Maniérisme" Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, Tomus, 13, (1971), p. 271.

23. Klaniczay, "La crise...," p. 272.

24. Klaniczay, p. 272.

25. Klaniczay, p. 272.

26. Klaniczay, p. 273.

27. Klanicazy, p. 274.

28. Klaniczay, p. 275.

Part I - An Historical Consideration of the Concept Mannerism.

Chapter I - The Meaning of Mannerism in the Sixteenth Century.

We have seen already, in a general way, that the meaning of Mannerism has been obfuscated considerably. Part of the problem is the multifaceted nature and the imprecision of the term Mannerism as a tool of periodization. Another difficulty lies in its ambivalent position as a critical category stemming from its dual function: the visual arts, and literary criticism. In an effort to arrive at a proper study of the notion of Mannerism, this chapter will focus on the state of the term as conceived in the sixteenth century. First, let us consider the etymological question.

According to the unabridged version of the Oxford English Dictionary, the term Mannerism is relatively alien to the Anglo-Saxon speaking world. Appearing as late as 1803, in the Edinburgh Review, the term Mannerism denotes: "Excessive or affected addiction to a distinctive manner or method of treatment especially in art and literature."[1] Whereas the term Manner may appear somewhat earlier it denotes nonetheless a pejorative meaning. Thus, Dryden, in Parallel Poetry and Painting says that "Plato himself is accustomed to write loftily, imitating, as the critics tell us, the manner of Homer".[2] The equivalent of Mannerism in Italian is manierismo which seems to have been introduced by Luigi Lanzi in the eighteenth century. As in

the case of his English colleagues, the Italian critic introduces manierismo in an aesthetic frame of reference expressing a negative connotation. In order to arrive at a more objective view of the term Mannerism, then, one must look to its original meaning, for it is also the way in which sixteenth century critics saw it. The term manierismo derives from maniera, but according to the Vocabolario etimologico italiano there is no appreciable difference between the affected meaning conveyed by Mannerism in the Age of Enlightenment and the term maniera in the Renaissance. Both notions embody a "mancanza di naturalezza,"[3] an affected disposition. In this reference dictionary one sees a progressive degeneration of the term mannerism which goes from maniera to manieraccia, from manieroso to manierista, from manierato to ammanierato, without necessarily qualifying it.

Whence does the definition of Mannerism come? According to Luisa Becherucci, the merit of having used maniera in a distinct way is to be conferred upon Vasari.[4] Like his predecessor Cennini, in the late Trecento, Vasari used maniera to indicate the individual mode of composition, a stylistic trait which enables one to differentiate among artists. As with Ghiberti, in the Quattrocento, Vasari utilizes maniera as a tool of classification. Thus, the maniera moderna, the style of the Cinquecento, may be contrasted with other historical maniere: the maniera greca, which is the Byzantine style, the maniera gotica, and so on. The ultimate distinction lies in the bella maniera, denoting good style in an absolute sense. The bella

maniera not only embodies the great qualities of Quattrocento painting --"regola,...ordine,...misura...and disegno"--[5] it partakes also of the Neo-platonic notion of the absolute Idea in sharp contrast to an object which is an elusive reflection of one's intellectual experience. The bella maniera is not a mere era of great artistic achievement, it is the ultimate representation of reality. Unlike previous efforts characterized by the principle of becoming -- the acquisition of objective knowledge by means of cognitive experience as well as rational operations -- the bella maniera partakes of the objective reality, the working of the artist, and the triumph of the imagination. One perceives the divine quality of the bella maniera in Vasari's first edition of Vite which opens with Cimabue, and culminates with Michelangelo's unparalleled contribution. The idea of progress in art is illustrated with the rise of Cimabue's art in Florence emerging from the "dark" civilization of maniera gotica: "Erano per l'infinito diluvio de' mali che avevano cacciato al disotto e affogata la misera Italia non solamente rovinate quelle che veramente fabriche chiamar si potevano, ma - quel che importa - va più - spento affatto tutto il numero degl artefici, quando, come Dio volle, nacque nella città di Firenza l'anno MCCXL, per dar e' primi lumi all'arte della pittura, Giovanni cognominato Cimabue..."[6] Vasari's teleological aesthetic conception is finalized in Michelangelo who embodies the realization of the bella

maniera in the Neo-platonic sense:

> "Mentre gl' industriosi ed egregi spiriti col lume del famosissimo Giotto e de' seguaci suoi si sforzavano dar saggio al mondo del valore che la benignità delle stelle e la proporzionata mistione degli umori aveva data agl' ingegni loro, e desiderosi di imitare con l'eccellenza dell' arte la grandezza della natura, per venire il più che potevano a quella somma cognizione... ancora che indarno si affaticavano il benignissimo Rettore del Cielo volse clemente gli occhi alla terra, e veduta la vana infinità di tante fatiche, gli ardentissimi studi senza alcun frutto...per cavarci da tanti errori si dispose mandare in terra uno spirito, che universalmente in ciascheduna arte ed in ogni professione fusse abile, operando per sé solo a mostrare che cosa sia la perfezione dell'arte del disegno nel linare...Volle oltra ciò accompagnarlo della vera filosofia morale con l'oramento della dolce poesia...E perché vide che nelle azioni di tali esercizi...gli ingegni toscani...molto osservanti alle fatiche ed agli studi di tutte le facultà sopra qual si voglia gente d'Italia, volse dargli Fiorenza...per patria, per colmare al fine la perfezione in lei meritatamente di tutte le virtù, per mezzo d' un suo cittadino."[7]

In essence, the concept of imitation in Vasari's terms is substantially different from that of the classical principle.

Thanks to Marsilio Ficino's enormous labor of translating Plato's works, as early as 1463, the philosophy of neo-platonism was widely diffused in the intellectual life of the Cinquecento. The vital relationship that exists between this conception of the duality of the world which presupposes phenomenal existence as an imperfect representation of reality, where the ultimate true knowledge lies in the Idea, and Vasari's notion of maniera will become apparent when discussing the chivalric idea of courtly love. Let us digress briefly and

see the development of maniera within the context of the critic's workshop.

In his discussion of Anti-Mannerism, Walter Friedlaender stresses that the literal meaning of maniera, the "concept of mere manual activity, of handiwork,"[8] was in effect an important reason why major critics of art in the seventeenth century, particularly Giovanni Bellori and Carlo Malvasia, looked upon the art of Mannerism as a repetition of those forms greatly conceived in the High Renaissance. This practice of distinguishing maniera orginiates also from Vasari who criticizes certain sculptors for having abandoned the creative process for the mechanical reproduction of established patterns. Friedlaender concludes:

> Thus it was that the older style, (which I have called anticlassical, for lack of a better word, but which is usually termed manneristic...) became mannered. In other words, the noble, pure, idealistic, and abstract style, lasting approximately from 1520 to 1550, was transformed in the succeeding phase (about 1550 to 1580) into a manner: it became di maniera by repetition, cleverness, and playful exaggeration on the one hand, by weak concession on the other.[9]

This trend towards the deterioration of the term maniera is also seen by Wylie Sypher in his book Four Stages of Renaissance Style. According to Sypher, Vasari has contributed to the notion of affected maniera simply by praising the artists for their efforts in the inconspicuous emulation of

the "fine manner... There [are] a variety of manners: those of Leonardo, Raphael, Correggio, Parmigianino, and Michelangelo."[10] Maniera is reduced to a variety of topoi or a storehouse of forms whereby the artist is invited to select the subject befitting his particular composition. "So mannerism came to mean a kind of facile learning, an abused ingenuity, a witty affectation, a knowing pose, a distorting through preciosity, or a play with conventional proportions, images, and attitudes."[11] There will be occasions to comment upon Sypher's text. It may suffice to say that the term maniera is applied indiscriminately to marginal areas without differentiating the terms. The distinction between manierismo and ammanierato is not simply a philological necessity but it may also be crucial in terms of establishing an accurate chronological interpretation of Mannerism. That is to say, the term manierismo may refer to a specific artistic dimension in a specific sphere of time and place, namely, the Late Renaissance. The term ammanierato, on the other hand, may refer to an artistic tendency closely related to maniera by means of its configuration but it remains distinctly remote in the chronological sphere, namely, the maniera of all ages. In a chapter entitled "Mannerism or Mannerisms" Hauser points out the great fallacy committed by Curtius and others for having assumed the perennial recurrence of the mannered quality replacing, by contrast, a somber mode of composition.

This historical view of Mannerism is rejected by Hauser who insists on the unique historical circumstances surrounding the term Mannerism.[12]

Perhaps, a significant attempt to elucidate the intrinsic quality of maniera is offered by the art historian Ernst H. Gombrich who views the historiographical conception of the Art of Classical Antiquity, based on the idea of becoming, as the essential "historiographical pattern"[13] of Manneristic art. The notion that Mannerism is not a mere embodiment of decorative and extrinsic expression coincides with Vasari's aesthetic idealization mentioned above. The view that the art of the bella maniera reflects an Aristotelian entelechy in the historical development of Cinquecento art is crucial to the very notion of Mannerism. Although focusing on the "stylish style" as the ultimate preoccupation of Mannerism and stressing its aestheticism as if it were strictly an "art for art's sake" movement, John Shearman has correctly identified the positive connotation of maniera in the sixteenth century. Though acknowledging the various uses of maniera, Shearman equates the term mannerism with style. While some of the most prominent figures of the Cinquecento, Raphael and Castiglione among them, utilized maniera to denote refined style, the English art historian is careful to point out the literary origin of the term.[14]

Indeed, maniera is not only conceivable in literary history but it existed prior to its adaptation in the realm of the visual arts. Manière, as with its Italian derivative, is an established term in the chivalric literature of the Middle Ages. It projects a configuration of courtly grace, an idealization of values, such as that expressed by the courtly civilization of Eleanor of Aquitaine, Marie de France, and Chrétien de Troyes. In the lyrics of the troubadours and in the French epic of the eleventh and twelfth century is reflected not just a literature of the Medieval period but also a conception of understanding and living life. In the troubadours, an idealization of life, that of the leale amante, the refinement of social values, a manière reflecting the courtly class are suggested. The imposing typological representations of reality are fused in the overwhelming poetic personality of Chrétien de Troyes whose archetypal patterns are projected on various levels of existence, without being denuded of their coherent traits: "...nota essenziale dell'ideale umanità dei trovatori è la giovinezza alacra e gioiosa...elegante e raffinata...nella figura di Lancilotto...l'incarnazione piena ed intera dell'ideale cortese della vita: ... prodezza e alacritas, ensenhamen (cultura) e misura, amore e virtú guerriera."[15] Perhaps no major critic of art and literature has illustrated the vital relationship between maniera and manière with greater

illumination than Georg Weise. In his study, "La doppia origine del concetto di manierismo," Weise points out that in contrast to the Vasarian notion of maniera, which deviates from the Classical principle of imitation of nature, the medieval idea of manière is a deeper source of the meaning of Mannerism:

> I primi esempi ci riportano alla letteratura francese del Duecento e del Trecento. Col crescente sviluppo della cultura cavalleresca un raffinamento aulico e cortigiano viene accentuato ... il concetto della manière, espressione complessiva per tutte le qualita del saper vivere e della buona educazione. In questo senso la dame manière tiene il primo posto tra le allegorie delle virtu che ornano il perfetto cavaliere. Si loda la belle manière, la manière douce, la manière assurée nelle donne e nei cavalieri.[16]

In Italy this refinement of the notion of love based on the manière appears in the first half of Quattrocento in love lyrics:

> Giusto dei Conti esalta l'angeliche manière elette e care, le virtù, la beltà, la maniera della sua donna; Lionardo Guistiniani le maynere triumphale, ... le maynere e la zentilezza ... Lorenzo de' Medici esige dalle donne ingegno grande ... maniera e gesti eleganti ... Galeazzo Maria Sforza chiede ai suoi ambasciatori incaricati di negoziare il suo matrimonio con una principessa francese se è elegante o di buone maniere ...[17]

Such features of courtly love are in essence a reelaboration of the classical culture which was continued by medieval auctores. As early as the sixth century, the tendency to abstract one's vision from the temporal order of existing

things is seen in Venantius Fortunatus, one of the first courtly poets. The woman to whom the poet "addresse ses hommages respectueux" or "voue une tendre adoration ..." the woman "dont le poète s' approche avec une certaine tendresse de sentiment et qu'il n'ose cepedant point désirer, car le désire détruirait ce qu'elle a de plus digne d'amour: son intangible pureté ... (Bezzola)," [18] This woman embodies the courtly ideal.

This "intangible pureté," this abstracted notion of love which becomes a mere category of the mind, has its origin in the Platonic view of the world. The concept of maniera as the ultimate expression of style must likewise be comprehended within the diametrically opposite sphere of "this worldliness" and "other worldliness." Mannerism cannot be reduced to a mere recurrence of stylistic patterns deviating from the classical norm. As a stylistic phenomenon, it must be understood as an authentic testimony of the artistic expression of Cinquecento art. "Works of art ... are not simply sums of sources and influences, they are wholes in which raw materials derived from elsewhere cease to be inert matter and are assimilated into a new structure." [19]

Lovejoy's contention seems to suggest that the basis for Western thought is essentially Platonic. With one fundamental difference, however, each age has sought to formulate its own theory of the world sometimes reaching "undesired and

undreamed-of" conclusions. The ultimate expression of an epoch ought to be considered in terms of the duality of the world, the "other-worldliness" and "this-worldiness." The latter constitutes an elusive and contingent reality, for it comprehends mutable objects, whereas the former is real, for it partakes of the immutable Essence. Since man's knowledge of reality, derived from temporal and ever-changing existence, is deceptive, it follows that man seeks constantly to transcend the shackles of "this-worldiness" in order to aim at some stages of absolute knowledge.[20] It is Plato's theory of Ideas which lies at the basis of Western attitudes. The true object of rational knowledge lies in the immutable essence of things. The Existence of an object, as the mind apprehends it, is only a vague notion; its true representation lies in its Essence which is the highest good.[21] This good which is the ultimate source of contemplation is:

> an indescribable beauty and cannot be literally brought under even the most universal of the categories applicable to other objects of thought; far from being identical with reality ... it actually transcends it in dignity and potency ... the Form of the Good is the universal object of desire ... and the chief good for man even in this life is nothing but the contemplation of this absolute or essential Good.[22]

Now the Good of Plato becomes, insofar as our study is concerned, the "intangible pureté," "la bella maniera," Tasso's leap, if you will, from hopelessness to "ens

perfectissimum," the summit of the hierarchy of being, the ultimate and only completely satisfying object of contemplation and adoration."[23]

The attainment of the bella maniera, as a category of artistic style, is an absolute achievement in the eyes of the sixteenth century critic.

> By sixteenth century usage, as for ours, having style ... implies sophistication and some quality like that of grace. For the historian of the mid-sixteenth century, a modern style of art had begun in his own century with the accomplishment of the masters of the High Renaissance; ... the maniera moderna ... was regarded as a permanent conquest for all subsequent art.[24]

How could the notion of maniera, then, one may ask, have degenerated into a negative term? Why has the term mannerism fallen into oblivion in subsequent centuries? The retrospective analysis which must be made from Bellori's view of maniera, in the seventeenth century, to Max Dvořák's rediscovery of mannerism, in the first half of the twentieth century, will be the subject of our next chapter. The importance of these observations is that it will not only shed further light on the concept of Mannerism in Cinquecento Literature, but it will also illustrate the course and the dimension of criticism in this respect.

Footnotes

1. "Mannerism," Oxford English Dictionary, 1979 Edition.

2. "Mannerism," Oxford...

3. "Maniera," Vocabolario etimologico italiano, Grazanti, 1970, Ed.

4. Luisa Becherucci, "Mannerism," World Encyclopedia of Art, 1960 ed, p. 444.

5. Luisa Becherucci, p. 444.

6. Giorgio Vasari, Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori, ed. Rosanna Bettarini, II, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1966), p. 35. See also the English version edited by Betty Burroughs, Lives of Artists, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967).

7. Giorgio Vasari, Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori, VI, (Firenze: Salani, 1963), pp. 379-80.

8. Walter Friedlaender, Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting, (New York: Schocken, 1970), pp. 47-48.

9. Walter Friedlaender, pp. 48-49.

10. Wylie Sypher, Four Stages of Renaissance Style: Transformation in Art and Literature 1400-1700, (New York, Doubleday, 1955), p. 108.

11. Wylie Sypher, p. 109.

12. Arnold Hauser, Mannerism: The Crisis of the Renaissance and the Origin of Modern Art, 2 Vols., (New York: Knopf, 1965), pp. 38-39.

13. Ernst H. Gombrich, Norm and Form: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance, (London: Phaidon, 1966), p. 100.

14. John Shearman, Mannerism, (Baltimore: Penguin, 1967), p. 17.

15. Antonio Viscardi, Letterature d'oc e d'oil, (Florence: Sansoni, 1967), p. 16.

16. Georg Weise, "La doppia origine del concetto di manierismo, " in Problemi del manierismo, A. Quondam, Ed., (Napoli: Guida, 1975), p. 48.

17. Georg Weise, p. 49.

18. Antonio Viscardi, pp. 44-45

19. René Wellek, p. 285.

20. Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea, (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 25.

21. A. Lovejoy, pp. 34-35.

22. A. Lovejoy, p. 41.

23. A. Lovejoy, p. 42

24. Sidney J. Freedberg, "Observation on the Painting of the Maniera," Art Bulletin, XLVII, 1965, p. 187.

Chapter II: Mannerism after the Cinquecento.

1. The Seventeenth Century

> ... Quelque sujet qu'on traite, ou plaisant, ou sublime,
> Que toujours le bon sens s'accorde avec la rime:
> L'un l'autre vainement ils semblent se haïr;
> La rime est une esclave et ne doit qu'obéir.
> Lorsqu'à la bien chercher d'abord on s'évertue,
> L'esprit à la trouver aisement s'habitue;
> Au joug de la raison sans peine elle fléchit
> Et, loin de la gêner, la sert et l'enrichit.
> Mais lorsqu'on la néglige, elle devient rebelle,
> Et pour la rattrapper le sens court après elle.
> Aimez donc la raison: que toujours vos écrits
> Empruntent d'elle seule e leur lustre et leur prix ...
> Évitons ces excès: laissons à l'Italie
> De tous ces faux brillants l'éclatante folie ...

This celebrated quotation from the Art of Poetry, published in France in 1674 by Boileau, reflects the general tone of most of literary criticism in the seventeenth century. It is essentially a Neo-classical age with particular emphasis on "le bon sens," "la raison," good taste, and clarity. The allusion to the Italian examples of "concettismo," "ces excès," "ces faux brillants," "l'éclatante folie," can be characterized as a denunciation of manneristic ideals in favor of a somber and reasonable ideal, that of the honnête homme. Seen in this perspective, it is not hard to imagine the kind of reception which the notion of Mannerism was to receive. Likewise, the Art critic of the seventeenth century became suspicious of Mannerist works of art and began to see in them an erosion of "classical" values.

The decadent connotation of Mannerism was not entirely new in the Neo-classical epoch. Giuliano Briganti in his historiographical study of Il Manierismo e Pellegrino

Tibaldi, has shown that such a negative perception of maniera is implicit in the very historiographical mechanism of Vasari's Vite itself:

> Che infatti...dopo la morte di Raffaello e dopo la Sistina, l'arte iniziasse una sua lenta discesa, era un pensiero che già cominciava a diffondersi verso la metà del secolo e del quale troviamo i primi accenni nello stesso Vasari ... egli ha certo il vago sentimento che all'altezza raggiunta debba seguire necessariamente un periodo d'arresto ... caduta .... D'altronde, questo pensiero era conseguenza coerente del sistema vasariano, nel quale il concetto di evoluzione si modellava su di uno schema ... del fiorire, del dar frutti e dell'appassire."[1]

This cyclic conception of history will have a profound influence upon art historians of subsequent generations.

The first formulation of maniera that is reduced to a configuration of superficial meaning is credited to Bellori. In his book, Le vite de' pittori, scultori, e architetti moderni, published in Rome in 1672, Bellori condemns maniera, and sees it as a negative concept deviating from the balanced form, and the principle of imitation of nature in the High Renaissance: "... sicché [the Art of the High Renaissance] dileguossi in breve ogni sua forma; e gli artefici, abandonano lo studio con la maniera ..."[2] Whereas the pre-Mannerist artist had to rely on the ontological perception of the subject matter to be represented, it was conceivable for the Mannerist artist, on the other hand, to transcend the empirical order of things, and to leap, if you will, from the sensible world into the realm of the imagination. In other words, the

epistemological differences between the former and the latter may be explained on a philosophical as well as on a historical level. In a way, one may characterize the pre-Mannerist artist as an Aristotelian creator whose perception of reality is immediate and intuitive. By contrast, the Mannerist artist is a Platonic creator whose subject matter presents itself as an abstract form. Unlike his predecessors, who thrived on the optimistic Humanist premises, the Mannerist artist became fearful of phenomenological representation of reality. The maniera artist creates his work from established patterns; he uses, in a sense, previous auctores not as a sanction, rather as a mere aesthetic presence. The physical world, one must bear in mind, represents a hostile reality in the eyes of the Mannerist thinker. The disintegration of moral and religious values, the decay of social and economic order is a very definite presence in the sixteenth century. The ambivalent option between the finite world and the intellectualized reality is never quite reconciled -- rather, the gap is widened -- by Cervantes' Don Quixote. Where does authentic being lie for Hamlet? These are just two of the many artistic representations embodying the alienated situation of man and his world. To put it in the context of Martin Heidegger's concept of Da-sein and Sein, there is an anticipation of Existential conditions in that the Mannerist thinker sees himself geworfen, hurled up into the universe as if he were without a purpose, experiencing Angst as the sole mode of existence.

It is precisely this modus operandi of the Mannerist artist that ultimately led Bellori to interpret Mannerism as a serious alteration of the Classical composition: "fantastica idea ... tutta soggietta alla fantasia."[3]

Bellori's remarks were made in connection with his biography of Annibale Caracci in little more than a page where the author is expressing a nostalgia for the great masters of the High Renaissance. With Raphael no longer in the picture, Bellori is lamenting the fact that the Art of maniera is "appoggiata alla practica, a non all'imitazione."[4] This rather skeptical assessment of the Art of maniera was to remain undisturbed right up to the twentieth century. All subsequent critics have essentially leaned on Bellori's judgment. Thus, Baldinucci in his Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno, published in 1681, listed maniera as having pejorative qualifications imitating a false notion of reality in contrast to the principle of imitation of nature in the classical sense.[5] In this respect, maniera is always assessed in direct opposition to the Classical mode of composition: "crude, washed out, pinched, languid, wooden, imitative, dry, etc."[6]

To summarize, the negative assessment expressed by Bellori's laconic criticism on Mannerism is, in effect, a Baroque reaction. To put it in Wölfflin's terms, the juxtaposition of the "painterly style" with such notions

as "capriccioso," "bizzarro," "stravagante," soon led to the synthesis of the "grand style" and the "massiveness of forms." The impelling need of order and clarity in the vision of things must have been an overwhelming priority, and as such, it led many critics to underestimate the authenticity of Mannerist expression in the sixteenth century. But there was also another concept which conditioned and rigidified the parameters of criticism considerably, namely, the historiographical idea of rebirth and disintegration, "rise and fall," amply illustrated by G. B. Agucchi, in 1610:

> After Painting had been as good as buried and lost for many centuries, the art had masters in our modern times who brought about a kind of rebirth.... It would not have been reborn and perfected so speedily, however, had the modern artists not had the shining example of the ancient statues in front of their eyes.... It is the truth that the aforementioned masters and so many other worthy artists who followed in their footsteps proceeded to the perfection of art and thus acquired for our age the glory of rivalling the age of antiquity... it is no less true, however,...that after the times in which the heads of schools...flourished, and when all others strove to imitate those masters with good taste...it came to pass that Painting declined ...while new and different manners arose... with the artists content to feast the eyes of the populace...while that beautiful profession was thus infected....[7]

2. The Eighteenth Century

The menaing of Mannerism in the Eighteenth century remained virtually unaltered. As a critical category, maniera was rigidly confined within the codification established by Ellori in the previous century, namely: repetition of empty

forms. The art of the bella maniera was largely construed within the norm of "mannered-art," deviating from the sublime art of the High Renaissance. Luigi Lanzi's Storia pittorica d'Italia constitutes perhaps the most significant event in the development of maniera during the Age of the Enlightenment. Although basing the notion of maniera on the premises that it was affected art, Lanzi's judgment represents considerable change from previous accusations insofar as it attempts to establish an historical frame of reference. Presumably for the first time, the term mannerism appears in an effort to classify the so-called "mannered" paintings appearing in Italy immediately after the Sack of Rome in 1527: "...after this," writes Lanzi in 1789, "that capital gradually declined in painting and was filled with mannerists."[8]

In his study, "Cinquecento Mannerism and the Uses of Petrarch," Professor Scaglione has indicated other variations of maniera in the Eighteenth century. Pier Jacopo Martello, in his Comentario of 1710, is said to have used manierista in association with the poetics of Petrarch and Marino: "Martello introduces Raphael as saying that the modern poets ought to combine the virtues of Petrarch with those of Marino. Just as the modern painters combine Raphael's own virtues with those of the manieristi, especially those of the time of Caracci. Marino is characterized as manieroso e dolce."[9]

For the most part, however, no major critical formulation on art history significantly alters the negative assessment of Bellori's maniera. With its emphasis on "reason", "good taste," "nature", "rules," and "bienséance," as the basis of sound imitation, Literary Criticism during the Age of the Enlightenment could not have been sympathetic to Manneristic principles. As Johann J. Winckelmann states in his Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums, and later in his Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechischen Werke in der Malerei-und Bildauer-Kunst, in 1755, the veneration for classical Antiquity was an overwhelming component in shaping considerably the critical attitude of the Age of the Enlightenment: "Der einzige Weg für uns, unnachahmlich zu werden ist die Nachahmung der Griechen."[10]

3. The Nineteenth Century

By common consent, the Romantic interpretation of the Renaissance has it that the Sack of Rome marks the inception of moral dissolution, and the abatement of Humanistic values. This view coincides with that of Jacob Burckhardt, who in his book "The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, cites the Humanist Pierio Valeriano's own account of the deplorable state of the studia humanitatis in 1527 in a book called On the Infelicity of the Scholar. Burckhardt himself corroborates this position upon examining the fall of the Humanists in the sixteenth century:

> After a brilliant succession of poet-scholars had, since the beginning of the fourteenth century, filled Italy and the world with the worship of antiquity, had determined the forms of education and culture, had often taken the lead in political affairs, and had, to no small extent reproduced ancient literature - at length in the sixteenth century, before their doctrines and scholarship had lost hold of the public mind, the whole class fell into deep and general disgrace.... to the two chief accusations against them - that of malicious self-conceit and that of abominable profligacy - and a third charge of irreligion was now loudly added by the rising powers of the Counter-Reformation.[11]

Insofar as the concept of restitutio bonarum litterarum, and the notion of proportion and harmony constituted the principal unit of measure in the marshaling of historiographical material, it is not surprising that artistic productions deviating from the classical norm should be judged with contempt. Such an attitude was manifested in his Cicero by Burckhardt, who spoke of Mannerist paintings as projecting "effects with causes," with a penchant for over-crowding the image with unnecessary details.[12] Similarly, the German Art critic Alois Riegl, in his book Entstehung der Barockkunst in Rom, published in 1908, justified the presence of exaggerated forms in Mannerist Art as the leavening component for Baroque culture.[13] This tendency to look at Mannerism as a transitory phenomenon prevailed right through 1922.[14] Even as late as 1919, the Art Historian Werner Weisbach, in his study, Der Manierismus, insists on the extrinsic quality of Mannerism:

> Der Manierismus ist kein Stil in dem Sinne, dass er den Ausdruckswillen einer Epoche in einer neuen Formgebung zusammenfasste und in einendem

> Wesen nach neuen tektonischen und dekorativen System manifestierte, sondern eine in einer gewissen Periode ihre Klimax erreichende Erscheinung, die, auf historischen soziologischen und psychologischen Voraussetzungen beruhend, mit einem vorhandenen Formenapparat weiterschaltet dessen Elemente nach bestimmten Seiten ubertrieben, verzerrt und dadurch zur Selbstauflösung geführt werden.[15]

Generally speaking, the nineteenth century evaluation of Mannerism is very much in line with Bellori's assessment. The prejudice against post "Hoch Renaissance" Art was somewhat mitigated when the attempt was made, for the first time, to view Mannerism as a catalyst. The stigma, however, of affectation, of extravagant decorations, of decadent expression, has remained as an indelible trait of the art of maniera. Ironically, the most signifcant contribution of Mannerist culture was furnished by Heinrich Wölfflin in his effort to establish a precursory link for the concept of Baroque.

Wölfflin's thesis is essentially a history of style showing the dissipation of Renaissance forms and their ultimate transformation into Baroque Art. Rather than examining the development of individual artists, Wölfflin focuses his investigation on architectural styles. The originality of Wölffflin's formalistic inquiry is indisputable. Indeed, the influence emanating from this methodological approach has extended well into critical systems initiated by such divergent minds as Curtius', Sypher's, and Shearman's. Nonetheless, Wölfflin's intention of setting up a pedestal

for the legitimacy of Baroque Art at the expense of Mannerist Art is clearly perceptible. Thus the "free and painterly" style, and the formless quality of Baroque Art are cleverly juxtaposed to the rigid forms of Renaissance style. But whatever Mannerist expression may exist, presumably between 1520 and 1600, is irretrievably fused with the Baroque phenomenon. One is left with the impression that the death of Raphael marks the disintegration of Renaissance style and, simultaneously, a progressive affirmation of Baroque style took place.

Thus, in Wölfflin's delineation, the Baroque style lasted approximately two hundred years, from the end of the Renaissance to the second half of the eighteenth century. Stylistic changes preceding the official entry of Baroque culture in 1630 are clearly defined by Wölfflin and are simply acknowledged as "symptoms of the coming baroque style."[16] An intermediary phase between the Renaissance and the Baroque style is hardly implied by Wölfflin when the "free and painterly style," the "formlessness," the "massiveness," which are deemed inherent qualities for the Baroque Art, are attributed to Michelangelo: "...the origins of this new art may be traced to none other than Michelangelo. Michelangelo is justly called the father of baroque...because he treated forms with violence, a terrible seriousness which could only find expression in formlessness...."[17]

This concludes, in part, our survey of the adventure of Mannerism after the Cinquecento. As a critical category, Mannerism was relegated to an ephemeral role yielding to a more permanent notion: the Baroque. There have been a series of critical events, from the seventeenth to the twentieth century, whereby the whole dimension of Mannerist Art was put into different perspectives.

Wölfflin's efforts are not without merit. His perspicacious critique, for example, which looks into the stylistic transformation of Post-Renaissance Art in terms of corporeal configuration rather than the historico-cultural frame of reference, is indisputably revolutionary. That is to say, the differences between Renaissance and Baroque style are ultimately reduced to the degree of bodily projection. The former treats the human figure striclty within the canons of classical dimension: proportion, theory. The latter, on the other hand, represents the human figure in terms of the painterly, formlessness, and the unbalanced. While Wölfflin's formalistic methodology is incalculably valuable in that it can be extended ad infinitum to other realms, it precludes, nonetheless, any explanation of the periodization of Mannerism. Complex figures like Michelangelo, Raphael, and Tasso are hastily enmeshed in the web of Baroque culture. At best, Wölfflin's contribution, insofar as our study is concerned, represents the dawn of criticism in the Mannerist evolution. One would have to await the rehabilitating task of Max Dvořák in 1922 before a whole myriad of

critical components might be set in motion.

Footnotes

1. Giuliano Briganti, Il Manierismo e Pellegrino Tebaldi, (Rome: N. P. 1945), p. 39.

2. G. Briganti, p. 41.

3. G. Weise, "La doppia origine del manierismo," p. 47.

4. E. Battisti, "Lo Spirito del manierismo," p. 3.

5. L. Becherucci, "Mannerism," World Encyclopedia of Art, p. 445.

6. L. Becherucci, p. 445.

7. G. B. Agucchi, Trattato (c. 1610), as quoted in E. Gombrich, Norm and Form, pp. 104-05.

8. L. Becherucci, p. 445.

9. Aldo Scaglione, "Cinquecento Mannerism and the Uses of Petrarch," reprinted from Medieval and Renaissance Studies, No. 5, (1972), p. 155.

10. Hermann Ammon, Deutsche Literatur-geschichte in Frage und Antwort, II Band, (Bonn: Dümmlers, 1963), p. 114.

11. Jacob Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy, Vol. 1, (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 272.

12. As quoted in G. Weise, "Le Maniérisme: histoire d'un terme," L'Information d'histoire de l'art, VII, (1962), p. 114.

13. As quoted in G. Weise, "Le Maniérisme...," p. 114.

14. In 1922, Max Dvořák's book appears under the title: Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte. It is a very important study because it is the first major attempt to rehabilitate the notion of Mannerism.

15. As quoted in G. Weise, p. 114.

16. Heinrich Wölfflin, Renaissance and Baroque, (New York: Cornell Univ., 1964), tr., K. Simon, p. 7.

17. H. Wölfflin, p. 82.

Part II - The Interpretation of Mannerism in the Twentieth Century

Chapter 1 - The Chronological Points of Reference of Mannerism

In a recent article in the New York Times, Mr. Richard Eder, reviewing a Canadian production of Troilus and Cressida, deplores the fact that this Shakespeare's play was poorly performed with "gaudy and mannered" devices; that the "gaudiness and mannerism" detract conspicuously from the substance, rendering the conception rather "flawed" and making the production "full of oddities."[1] It is interesting to note that as late as 1978, the term mannerism should be equated with "gaudy, wooden and empty" forms. This tendency further corroborates our observation made earlier that Mannerism as a critical category is quite frequently relegated to a pejorative role. Furthermore, such a posture assumed by certain critics reinforces the ever-encreasing need to establish a proper periodization of Mannerism. Precisely what constitutes the chronological points of reference of Mannerism will be the topic of discussion in this chapter. Obviously, this argument will comprise other important considerations such as the critical legitimacy of Mannerish for, as Mr. Eder implies in his article, Mannerism is not at all a critical category but simply an adjective to describe a deviation from classical patterns of artistic forms regardless of time and place.

The mannered use rather than Mannerism as a constant in the history of art in opposition to established principles of expression is assumed by Heinrich Wölfflin. In his study Renaissance and Baroque, Wölfflin implies that Mannerism is a period of stylistic decay following the unparalleled attainment of the High Renaissance. There seems to be a period of disintegration which moves from the rigid forms of the High Renaissance to a "free and painterly[2] style, from the form [to] the formless ... The history of ancient art," Wölfflin goes on to say, "... does provide a comparable phase ... Ancient art dies from symptoms analogous to those with which the Renaissance ended."[3] This seems to indicate a cyclical view of history. Rigidity of norms follows a flexible order of things. The imprecise definition of Mannerism resulting from this kind of periodization is inadequate. To use Mannerism as a critical tool in this narrow sense would certainly strip it of its effectiveness. It would not, strictly considered, help towards the elucidation of the Mannerist text. For whatever historicity and validity may be attributed to a critical text, its general quality which encompasses all ages, on the other hand, tends to discredit it.

The Wölfflinian cyclic conception of history is to a certain degree recapitulated by Curtius in his famous study, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages. In a chapter entitled "Mannerism," the German scholar insists on Mannerism

as "the complimentary phenomenon of the Classicism of all periods."[4] The essence of great art, according to Curtius, is classical in nature. Since classical art "thrives only in brief periods of florescence," the remaining bulk, Curtius goes on to say, can really be labeled as "baroque" art. Unfortunately, the term "baroque" cannot be disassociated from certain historically established notions, and the term "mannerism" is preferred by Curtius as "the common denominator for all literary tendencies which are opposed to Classicism, whether they be pre-classical, post-classical, or contemporary with any Classicism."[5]

The idea of a periodization of Mannerism occupying a specific domain in the history of literature is inconsistent with Curtius's conception of Literaturwissenschaft. Rather than reducing Mannerism to a codification of method and to pigeon-hole it into historical epochs, Curtius is concerned with providing a historical argument to further elucidate Mannerism as a constant for all ages. Thus, the earliest testimony of Mannerism, that is to say, that which is presented as "abnormally" artificial and affected, is traced to Lasus, a poet and musician of the sixth century B. C.[6] The poetic composition of Lasus in which the systematic exclusion of a specific letter of the alphabet takes place is obviously not intended by Curtius to establish some sort of demarcation. The critic of the Toposforschung is interested primarily in

identifying certain intellectual modes that are referred to as "formal mannerisms."

The seven types of Mannerist posture are given by Curtius a periodization which first appears during the sixth century B. C. and is manifested for the last time in Spain's siglo de oro. To be sure, this intellectualism in literature, that is to say the affected composition deviating from the harmonious classical form, according to Curtius, continues unabated from Mallarmé's hermetic composition to the "gigantic manneristic experiment" of James Joyce but it is really with the siglo de oro that these modes are highly pronounced. The "formal mannerisms" of seventeenth-century Spain ought to be understood, insists Curtius, in relation to the vast recurrent background of these intellectual modes independent of Geistesgeschichte interpretation.[7] Curtius is highly skeptical of literary criticism based on aesthetic, cultural, political, and even national considerations. The German critic favors a totalizing system which would take into account the literature of all ages and reflect itself within the dynamics of Weltanschauung. But how else, one may ask, can the Petrarchian concettismo, Baltasar Gracián's agudeza, and the pointed style of the seventeenth century be examined without analyzing the rhetorical transformation that took place during the Cinquecento? Any basic assumption in the direction of Mannerist conceptualization, that is to say arriving at a theory of Mannerist composition,

would have to take into account the Geistesgeschichte approach. Clearly, then, Curtius' periodization of Mannerism is ineffective for it allows for too many literary experiments to be comprised within the realm of Mannerist composition, independent of historical necessity.

The accusation of gaudiness and a tendency to the ornate that is often attributed to Mannerist composition, though remarkably similar to the Attic oratory of the fifth and fourth century B. C. because of its declamatory emphasis, is essentially a product of the rhetorical transformation of the Cinquecento. Although, I will present a specific chapter on "The Rhetoric of Mannerism" which will explore the relationship between the rhetorical patterns of composition employed by the Mannerist artist and his vision of things, it should be noted here that a linguistic revolution took place during the Renaissance period. At this time, there appears to have been a growing opposition to the Ciceronian model in favor of the Stoic rhetoric which stresses the practice of the genus humile. Morris Croll, however, has amply demonstrated that although the rhetoric of the genus humile embodies, at least theoretically, the philosophical essay style emphasizing brevity and clarity-- de re hominis magis quam de verbis agitantis-- in practice, for the rhetorician of Late Cinquecento, genus humile implied the figures of "metaphor, antithesis, paradox and "point."[8]

The author of Style, Rhetoric, and Rhythm points out that the literature of this period measures rebellious overtones--The Mannerist poet saw the traditional patterns of composition as too inadequate and strove to warp them so as to project a vision of things more complex than its Ciceronian counterpart--on the Ciceronian scale of composition. While the anthropomorphic vision of the universe could be adequately conveyed, through the humanistic canons of rhetoric, the aberrant mind of the Late Cinquecento searched assiduously for a new sign, a codification, with which the ambivalent vision of a world increasingly out of focus might be expressed. "The ideal form of style to which it (the Late Cinquecento mind) refers is of course the natural style which expresses naively the candor of the soul ... the style it demands for its self-expression is one that has been wrought upon with subtle art to reveal the secret experiences of arduous and solitary minds."[9] Although Mannerism is here understood in terms of the Wölfflinian formula, i.e., degeneration of Renaissance stylistic premises, it is significant to note that according to Croll there is a fundamental revision of rhetorical technique operating with the anti-Ciceronian movement led by Justus Lipsius in 1575. In establishing the time-period of Mannerism in this rather late phase of the Cinquecento, Croll is obviously preoccupied with the advent of the Baroque style. The geneses, nevertheless, surrounding the phenomenon of Mannerism are quite

consistent with my previous contention concerning the chivalric origin of the bella maniera. Of the Late Cinquecento, Croll goes on to say that:

> It was not only its social and political state ... that turned its literary tastes in the direction of the inferior Atticism ... its artistic culture ... had not yet cast away the love of rhetorical ornament for its own sake which had descended to the Renaissance from the Middle Ages. Its purpose indeed was to escape from the tradition ... to be as little ornate and rhetorical as possible, but it could not express even this purpose except by means of artifice, mannerism, device. It was still somewhat Gothic in spite of itself.[10]

The revival of Attic rhetoric in the prose of Lipsius, Montaigne, and Bacon is identified by Croll as part of an overall phenomenon culminating with the Baroque style. Croll's total devotion to arriving at an understanding of Baroque form obscures significantly the unfolding process of other expressions such as Mannerism, Marinismo, Concettismo, Gongorismo, Metaphysical Poetry, and so on. Although I shall discuss the difficulties of transferring aesthetic notions to the domain of literary criticism, it should be recalled that while the year 1575 is suggested by Croll as a point of demarcation insofar as it denotes a departure from Renaissance forms, the Mannerist style in the visual arts had already attained a degree of eminence by the time Raphael died. Thus, Walter Friedlaender identifies the Mannerist parentheses as an authentic phase of art.

> With Raphael's death classic art-- the High Renaissance-- subsided ... Its immediate successor is the new, anticlassical viewpoint-- the mannerist-- subjective.

> Despite all the counter-currents this dominance persists for almost sixty years ... Pontormo, Rosso, Parmigianino, with the genius of Michelangelo hovering above them and reaching beyond them, introduced this period, which is not a mere transition, not merely a conjunction between Renaissance and Baroque, but an independent age of style, autonomous and most meaningful.[11]

Hence, the approximate periodization of Mannerism from 1520 to about 1580 is presented by Friedlaender as a concrete historical category as opposed to the phase of critical notion embodying exteme refinement, sophistication, and bravura envisioned by John Shearman.

To be sure, Shearman asserts the autonomy of Mannerism as an art form capable of being judged "on its own terms." He cites the Cinquecento as the indisputable period of Mannerist forms independently developed from the norms of Stil- and Geistesgeschichte interpretation. This British art critic insists on Mannerist style as an entity in itself. Whether or not the development of civilization in the Cinquecento coincides with the unfolding dynamics of the Mannerist style it is simply immaterial. To Shearman, it appears that although the fate of style and civilization may encroach on similar territory each retains its own autonomy. Indeed, Shearman goes so far as to say that part of the confusion concerning the periodization of Mannerism is the result of the subject matters being tainted with contemporary critical bias: "My conviction is that Mannerist art is capable of standing on its own two feet. It can be and ought to be

appreciated or rejected on its own terms, and according to its own virtues, not ours."[12]

Part of the problem, for Shearman, lies not in establishing a time and place for the question of stylization in Mannerism as an art form but in defining the term as a critical category. Among the various difficulties which may prevent one from understanding the problem of Mannerism, there is the immediate confusion of the "ism" attached to the word maniera. But if the term itself appears to be ill-conceived, creating inevitably the illusion of a movement, Shearman is very careful not to fall into the temptation of adding to the existing confusion of alternate notions. The ambiguity of "mannerisms" as constants in literature created by Curtius is significantly mitigated by Shearman. The author of Mannerism suggests that ammanierato-- that is to say, ammanierato refers to the affected, and pointed style appearing in the literature of all ages when the latter is not expressing a classical mode, namely, clear, harmonious, and concise-- as a recurrent phenomenon is clearly distinct and cannot be equated with maniera which is a peculiar manifestation of sixteenth-century style: "Mannerist art should not be identified with mannered art, for while the first is always to some extent mannered the second is not always Mannerist since it may be anything but graceful and accomplished."[13] This analytical method which presupposes Mannerism as "the stylish style" with "its roots deep in the High Renaissance" is sealed off

from other critical considerations, from being obfuscated even by the slightest historiographical account. The invasion of Italy by Charles VIII of France in 1494, the plague of 1522 and the Sack of Rome in 1527, are to be conceived of as separate historical realities, irrelevant to the premises of the "style drenched in maniera." But such an interpretation makes even the most intransigent of minds question the thinking that the lugubrious personality of a Pontormo or that the psychic instability of a Tasso might have been untouched by the underlying tragic setting of sixteenth-century society. Moreover, having established the origin of maniera as an intrinsic extension of the classical art of the High Renaissance, Shearman rejects categorically the affinity of Mannerism with Gothic forms. Whatever association there appears to be it is simply dismissed as inconsequential: "Now it so happens that some characteristics of Gothic-- expecially of late-Gothic-- align themselves easily with those of Mannerism: tendencies towards grace, complexity, preciosity and so on ... Mannerism proper ... is born of the rich experience of classical form harmony and gravitas that is the High Renaissance ..."[14]

If one opposes this ahistorical conception which excludes the Gothic element, one is reminded of Johan Huizinga's book The Waning of the Middle Ages. I shall briefly quote here a passage describing the difficulties of studying the transitional phase from the Late Middle Ages to the Humanist epoch:

> The transition from the spirit of the declining Middle Ages to humanism was far less simple than we are inclined to imagine it. Accustomed to oppose humanism to the Middle Ages, we would gladly believe that it was necessary to give up one in order to embrace the other ... Classicism did not come as a sudden revelation, it grew up among the luxuriant vegetation of medieval thought ... The characteristic modes of thought of the Middle Ages did not die out till long after the Renaissance.[15]

The rejction of historical continuity, a priori, is quite consistent with Shearman's negation of the presumed cultural affinities between gothic and maniera. On the other hand, the element of continuity established between Mannerism and Baroque and even Rococo appears to be in contradiction with Shearman's method: "There was certainly no clean break between Mannerism and Baroque... It was, however, in the eighteenth century that there occurred a resurrection of the spirit of Mannerism, not just of its bodily forms. In Rococo decoration, or furniture, there was a direct revival of the most extravagant grotesque-work of the sixteenth century..."[16] In view of such affirmation, then, it appears that the original postulation, presented at the outset of PartOne, is valid--namely, that the gothic quality of maniera lies at the core of basic assumptions made towards the conceptualization of Mannerism.

Employing the historical dynamics of the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic based on the grouping of opposites --the interaction of the positive in the negative--or as Karl Marx would say,

the inevitable social antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, Tibor Klaniczay has been led to marshal substantial evidence into arguing for the massive crystallization of a feudalistic system in the political, social, and economical life in late sixteenth-century Europe. This revival of feudalism is not just an overwhelming reaction to the inadequacy of early capitalism-- one may recall the great inflation of 1550 causing the devaluation of money and bringing devastating economic conditions due to the newly imported gold and silver from the New World--[17] as a sanctification of the Protestant work ethic but it is also an inextricable consequence of the very failures of the humanist conception based on the infinite knowledge of things. Klaniczay states, "La crise économique-sociale de la Renaissance et la naissance de la nouvelle société baroque du féodalisme tardif ont été accompagnées d'une crise intellectuelle générale ... La crise économique-sociale et politique a conduit, presque partout ... à la restauration et à la consolidation de la société seigneuriale et féodale."[18] An analogous situation appears to have taken place in the Late Trecento and Early Quattrocento when the remarkable stride forward made by the studia humanitatis suddenly witnessed a reversal[19] with the advent of the so-called "International Gothic," by the Flemish School of painting. In Italy, this restoration of the medieval element is identified in what is

often called the "gothic personality" of Boiardo. In the visual arts, one may recognize this convoluted temperament in the configuration of The Adoration of the Magi (1423), by Gentile da Fabriano, because of its extremely artificial colors. Indeed, the idea of continuity of the medieval element in European civilization has led many scholars to give new dimension to the very axioms of renascence in the Renaissance of the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries. Thus, the French historian Courajod proposed the concept of "renaissance avortée" on account of the Hundred Years War and the triumph of Flamboyant Gothic in Burgundian Art. The restitution of the medieval element was considered by the great philosopher of the Middle Ages, Étienne Gilson, who goes as far as asserting that the Renaissance of the Cinquecento was a replay of "the Christian civilization of the Middle Ages."[20]

In view of this background, then, Hauser's declaration of the affinity between Gothic and Mannerism is by no means unfounded. Hauser sees Mannerism as:

> The first great international style since Gothic ... But this international character is not the only thing that mannerism has in common with the Gothic. The religious revival of the period, the new mysticism, the yearning for the spiritual, the disparagement of the body, and the absorption in the experience of the supernatural lead to a renewal of Gothic values, which only finds outward and often exaggerated expression in the slender forms of the mannerist style.[21]

While the periodization of Mannerism is indisputably centered within the cadre of the High Renaissance, it ought to be

recognized that Mannerism as a formal notion is closely tied to the Late-Gothic revival of the Quattrocento.

Establishing the geographical setting as well as the chronological limitations of Mannerism from stylistic and cultural perspectives is an arduous task; it is even more difficult to fit a significant part of Cinquecento literature into a rigid interpretation based on aesthetic considerations only. The differentiation between Mannerism in the visual arts and Literary Mannerism is imperative. We may recall Curtius' efforts to establish Mannerism as a constant since classical antiquity so as to minimize its dependence upon stylistic formulae and ultimately to establish the autonomy of literary mannerisms. Professor Scaglione, a well-known scholar of the Renaissance, has enthusiastically endorsed the pursuit of analogies between Literary Mannerism and the Fine Arts but the same critic is eager to admonish us against exaggerating the comparison based on the assumption that it will eventually weaken the very validity of Literay Mannerism:

> The reinterpretation of portions of Italian Cinquecento through the concept of Mannerism seems to me one of the more engaging endeavors in current literary studies ... The matter is still fresh and highly problematic ... We must resist the temptation to overexpand the value of a periodic concept beyond that of a cultural denominator, lest it becomes a dogmatic schema ... art history and literary history necessarily show analogies, yet follow each their own tracks.[22]

The insistence on the autonomy of literary study can hardly preclude the quest for Mannerism in all disciplines, for as

Walter Friedlaender has suggested, the advent of Mannerist art does not confine itself to formalistic aesthetic changes, but is also found in the spread of a new sensibility dislocating and fragmenting the Classical canons.

The extent to which this new sensibility affected musical composition during the period in question is not easily determined. Quite obviously, the medium and the concepts that govern this discipline are not readily transferred as are those in the visual arts and in literature. A feeling for the musica nuova, nonetheless, operates in the latter part of the Cinquecento. There is an awareness of the transformation of musical forms which might have been generated in part, by the accessibility of Quintilian's Institutio oratoria as early as 1470, in which a significant discussion on the relationship between music and rhetoric is put into focus for the first time. Although there appears to be no specific account of the word manierismo in writings on music theory of the Cinquecento, there is, nevertheless, a pronounced awareness which the critics refer to as musica nuova or nuova maniera. The musicologist Claude V. Palisca, in his article "Ut Oratoria Musica: The Rhetorical Basis of Musical Mannerism," cites the work of the theoretician Joachim Burmeister, whom I shall cite briefly as one of the principal exponents of this new sensibility.

> In the art of oratory ... that power resides not in the simple collection of simple words ... always even and equal. Rather it resides in those things

> in which charm and elegance lie concealed in ornament and through words charged with wit ... Thus also this art (music) ... offers to the sense through the intermingling of dissonances [a high form of oratory] ... a single example may be selected from among many of the work of Orlandus (i.e., Lassus) in the song Deus qui sedes (super thronum) ... He interpreted the text ... so artfully.[23]

However skeptical one may be about applying the terminology of one art to another an overwhelming consensus appears to emerge that the parallel between literature and its sister arts is indeed a useful one. Although we will explore the implication of Mannerism and the concept of Ut pictura poesis in a subsequent chapter, suffice it to say, at this point, that the notion of paragone was virtually an accepted attitude in the sixteenth century. Thus, the intention and the mimesis, between the artist and the poet, while differing on the level of the medium,-- that is to say, the painter deals with colors, shades and the like, whereas the poet works with words-- were, on the other hand, quite close on the level of expression. In conclusion, then, the arguments for the autonomy of literary studies, particularly those presented by René Wellek and Austin Warren in their Theory of Literature,[24] are not in my opinion, applicable to the study of Mannerism for they exclude by necessity interdisciplinary data simply because the development of a specific art and literature does not always take place at the same time, or that the categories of art may be applied ad infinitum to literature. As Rosalie L. Colie points out in her article, "Literature and History," the aim of literary

studies ought to be pluralistic" ... subdivisions clearly overlap one another-- social overlaps economic history, both overlap (or underlie) cultural history, cultural and intellectual history are inevitable bedfellows."[25]

Footnotes

1. Richard Eder, "Stage: Canadians Produce Troilus," New York Times, Late City Ed., 26 Jan. 1978, Sec. C, p. C14, Cols. 1-4.

2. The term "painterly" (from the German "malerisch") was employed by H. Wölfflin in his Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe in a special technical way to characterize one of the opposed dualities in painting (Linear and Painterly), one defining configurations by contours (the harmonious form of the Renaissance), the other embodying configurations by means of relation of color and tone which combine into each other (the "unclear" form of the Baroque). Thus Botticelli and Durer are said to be strictly linear painters whereas Titian, Velasquez and Rembrandt are malerisch painters. "Wenn man," writes Wölfflin, "den Unterschied der Kunst Dürers und der Kunst Rembrandts auf einen allgemeinsten Ausdruck bringen will, so sagt man, Dürer sei zeichnerisch und Rembrandt sei malerisch. Dabei ist man sich bewusst, über das Persönliche hinaus einen Unterschied der Zeiten charakterisiert zu haben. Die abendländische Malerei, die im 16. Jahrhundert linear gewesen ist, hat sich im 17. Jahrhundert nach seite des Malerischen im besonderen entwickelt." Wölfflin, Heinrich. Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Das Problem der Stilentwicklung in der neueren Kunst. Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1948, pp. 16-17.

3. Heinrich Wölfflin, Renaissance and Baroque, (New York: Cornell Univ., 1964), tr., K. Simon, pp. 15-16.

4. Ernst Robert Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, (New York: Harper, 1963), tr. W. R. Trask, p. 273.

5. E. R. Curtius, p. 273.

6. E. R. Curtius, pp. 282-83.

7. E. R. Curtius, p. 292.

8. Morris W. Croll, Style, Rhetoric and Rhythm, ed. Patrick J. Max, et al, (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1966), p. 92.

9. M. W. Croll, p. 95.

10. M. W. Croll, p. 95.

11. Walter Friedlaender, Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting, rept., tr., (New York: Schocken, 1970), p. 43.

12. John Shearman, Mannerism, rept., (Baltimore: Penguin, 1969), p. 15.

13. J. Shearman, p. 22.

14. J. Shearman, pp. 25-26.

15. Johan Huizinga, The Waning of the Middle Ages, rept., (New York: Doubleday, 1954), p. 323.

16. J. Shearman, pp. 180-85.

17. Tibor Klaniczay, "La Crise de la Renaissance et le manierisme," Acta Litteraria Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae, No. 1-4, Vol. 13, (1971), p. 272.

18. Tibor Klaniczay, p. 275.

19. Not only did the Black Death of 1348 interrupt the flow of great prosperity and political stability in Italy, but it also brought about a profound spiritual crisis of man's attitude in the world. Thus, on the art level, the historian Millard Meiss points out that paintings in Florence and Siena in the Late Trecento cannot easily enter the stream of evolution going from Giotto to Masaccio. See Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death, (Princeton: Princeton Univ., 1957), p. VII.

20. Franco Simone, The French Renaissance: Medieval Tradition and Italian Influence in Shaping the Renaissance in France, (Toronto: McMillan, 1969), tr. H. G. Hall, p. 133.

21. Arnold Hauser, The Social History of Art, Vol. II, "Renaissance Mannerism, Baroque," tr., Stanley Godman, rept. (New York: Random, 1951), p. 106.

22. Aldo Scaglione, "Cinquecento Mannerism and the Uses of Petrarch," Medieval and Renaissance Studies, No. 5, (1972), pp. 122-23.

23. Claude V. Palisca, Ut Oratoria Musica: The Rhetorical Basis of Musical Mannerism," The Meaning of Mannerism, eds, F. W. Robinson and S. G. Nichols Jr., (New Haven: Univ. New England, 1972), p. 40.

24. Wellek and Warren contend that the periodization of literature should be based solely in terms of literary

phenomena and that the literary interpretation ought to be a mere coincidence with the conclusions derived from the analysis of the Geistesgeschichte or any other historiographical approach. "But even if we had a series of periods neatly subdividing the cultural history of man--politics, philosophy, the other arts, and so forth-- literary history should not be content to accept a scheme arrived at on the basis of various materials with different aims in mind. Literature must not be conceived as being merely a passive reflection or copy of the political, social, or even intellectual development of mankind. Thus the literary period should be established by purely literary criteria." René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature, 3rd ed., (New York: Harcourt, 1962), p. 264.

25. Rosalie L. Colie, "Literature and History," Relations of Literary Study: Essays on Interdisciplinary Contributions, James Thorpe, ed., (New York: MLA, 1967), p. 23.

Part II. The Interpretation of Mannerism in the Twentieth Century.

Chapter 2. Mannerism as the Degeneration of Renaissance Artistic Premises.

The interpretation of Mannerism in the twentieth century has produced some of the most fascinating critical accounts in both the arts and literature, some of which are still being debated. For the purpose of elucidation, I have attempted to group the major critics whose contributions have shaped in some ways the question of Mannerism into four principal areas. The first body of criticism is perhaps the oldest in that it stems from the Neo-classical mentality: namely, it sees Mannerism as a degeneration of the values of the studia humanitatis. The second dominant posture is very modern, for it sees Mannerism as the creation of a new stylistic expression revolutionizing the entire course of Western Art. Max Dvořák is the principal exponent of this school of criticism. The third notion is also modern in many ways but it exponents argue that Mannerism as an aesthetic quality is capable of standing on its own merits without necessarily being connected to a particular time or space for this is the way sixteenth-century artist conceived it. Finally, the last group of critics understands Mannerism as based on the Horatian simile: "Ut pictura poesis." This view of criticism seeks to rehabilitate the integration of Literary Mannerism with the visual arts.

The idea of Mannerism as deviating from the norm of humanistic values is very often ascribed to a precise event: namely, the Sack

of Rome of 1527. In an important book, The Counter Renaissance, Professor Hiram Haydn proposes the term "Counter-Renaissance", for that intellectual movement which strives to repeal the Thomistic world view with its emphasis on a rational order of the universe. But the empirically oriented axiom of the "Counter-Renaissance" notion, interestingly enough, does not originate in the sixteenth century; rather it is identifiable as early as the fourteenth century. States Haydn:

> I have come to believe that there are three large distinct intellectual movements discernible between the mid-fourteenth and the early seventeenth century. The first of these is the classical renaissance...the second I call the Counter-Renaissance, since it originated as a protest against the basic principles of the classical renaissance, as well as against those of medieval Scholasticism...the third movement, led by Galileo and Kepler, is perhaps best termed as the Scientific Revolution.[1]

It is nonetheless in the Cinquecento that this protest is greatly intensified. "What unites," continues Haydn, "these otherwise dissimilar thinkers of the sixteenth century is that they share completely an anti-intellectualistic, anti-moralistic, anti-synthetic, anti-authoritarian bias."[2] Working within a frame of reference completely alien to that of Curtius's topology, Haydn seems to confirm the theory of Mannerism as a constant in Western literature. Apparently, the two notions, "Mannerism," and "Counter-Renaissance," are perfectly compatible terms. The whole function of the term "Counter-Renaissance" might be described as a process of dislocating and demolishing the humanist program whose basic assumption originated from an anthropomorphic dimension, and of restructuring the vision of man within a relativistic

guideline as conceived by Giordano Bruno. Bruno, whose book De Caelo may have demystified the theoretical elaborations of the humanists in that the locus, that is to say the logic of the universe, may be found in any given circle, illustrates his attitude in relation to other influential thinkers of the "Counter-Renaissance":

> Each of the four moves on eventually toward a positive program of his own: Montaigne to the establishment of a new natural law for man...Agrippa to the search for the occult truth in the "secrets" of God and nature; Machiavelli to the establishment of pragmatic rules for the state to follow in a world of tooth-and-claw; and Bruno to the predication of single substance which animates and holds together his plurality of worlds and all the atoms with them...their destructive work on the old order and their repeal of its body of centralized and universal law had wide repercussions, and eventually contributed to decisive changes.[3]

Among the various elements examined by Haydn as part of the rethinking and reshaping process generated by the "Counter-Renaissance" notion, the concept of nature is given a very important consideration. This is further strengthened by the fact that the term nature bears a multiplicity of meaning in the Renaissance. Haydn suggests that there are five essential groups that have altered significantly the meaning of nature"...the Christian humanists; the fideists of occultism and those of early Reformation; the naturalist of Montaigne's sort; the romanticists like Pico and Bruno; and the materialists or animalists of Machiavelli-Cuicciardini brand".[4] The "Counter-Renaissance" idea of nature differs greatly from that of the humanists for it does not partake of Reason:

> The world-views of the various schools of the Counter-Renaissance contain one important constant in their attitude toward Nature. However much they otherwise vary, and even contradict each other, they share a disbelief in the identity of, or complementary cooperation between Nature and Reason. Whether an individual thinker or a given group within the Counter-Renaissance finds Nature "good" or "bad", he gives the lie to the traditional humanistic concept of the close and intimate relationship between Nature and Reason.[5]

A further differentiation occurs in the realm of nature and art. Whereas the humanist saw no apparent contradicton between the latter duality and merely propagated the old Aristotelian premise that imitation of Nature constitutes good art, the"Counter-Renaissance", or the Mannerist, if you will, saw a definite fracture between Nature and Art.

> Among the various groups of the Counter-Renaissance... it was primarily the naturalist who took a direct issue with this humanistic interpretation of the relation of Nature and Art. ...they were the only genuine and thoroughgoing primitivists among these Counter-Renaissance groups. And it is a primitivist position to refuse to admit the refining and completing process that art...adds to nature, and to insists rather upon the essential opposition of nature to art, while endorsing the former.[6]

The mannerist artist operated within the context of this primitivist position.

This dichotomy between Nature and Art which characterizes the attitude of the Mannerist artist, was seen, by Walter Friedlaender, as the seminal ingredient for modern art; he, incidentally, is the first critic of the twentieth century to argue that Mannerism is an anti-classical reaction. One may argue soundly that the principle of Aristotelian imitation is capable of generating the highest poetic

expressive manifestation of intellectual activity, existing on the pre-civilized level as studied by Vico, Wordsworth, and Croce. Concerning the problem of imitation one may recall that the Aristotelian artist, unlike Plato's, who erroneously contemplates only phenomenological imitation, is capable of imitation of the highest value especially when he selects tragedy as means of representing reality. Says Aristotle: "...There seem to have been two causes for the origin of poetry, each of them natural. For imitation is natural to men from childhood...man is very imitative and obtains his first knowledge by means of imitation... harmony and rhythm too..."[7] The principle of classical imitation is, nevertheless, totally incongruous in the cadre of the topsy turvy reality and the deplorable state of confusion of social values in the Cinquecento. The tragic hero, Hamlet for one, who is capable of inspiring a noble action as envisioned by Aristotle, simply cannot exist in a decentralized universe. In his Discourse in the Defense of the Divine Comedy, the Cinquecento critic, Jacopo Mazzoni, endeavors to show the success of Dante by minimizing Aristotle's role as a model of composition. Plutarch is summoned up by Mazzoni to illustrate the idea that the image of ugliness in art should not be rejected for art ought to embody all aspects of man's activities. Mazzoni insists on a conception of poetry that "disorders the will" and on a poet who, endowed with a "sophist faculty," is a constructor of images with no concern for the truth as an epistemological notion"... If there were set before the poet two things equally credible, one which was more marvelous than the other, though it was false, so long as it was not impossible the poet ought to take it over and give

up the less marvelous one..."[8] Likewise, the Mannerist artist, according to Friedlaender, alters radically the principle of classical imitation:

> ...the canon apparently given by nature and hence generally recognized as law is definitively given up. It is no longer a question of creating a seen object in an artistically new way, "just as one sees it," ... Neither is it a matter of recreating the object "as I see it," as the individual person observes it as a form of appearance. Rather, if one may use a negative expression, it is to be recreated "as one does not see it, "but as, from purely autonomous artistic motives, one would have it seen."[9]

Consequently, the symmetry of forms as well as the harmonious distribution of space is consciously fragmented. "...The proportions of the limbs can be stretched, more or less capriciously... The length of the head changes...this freer and apparently more capricious rhythm carries with it the fact that symmetry...is dislodged or more or less broken up."[10]

The notion of Mannerism in Friedlaender's terms does not evoke a mere antagonistic force against the canons of studia humanitatis, it also represents a very significant stylistic transformation. With the art of Pontormo, Rosso, and Parmigianino, an authentic formulation of new stylistic forms takes place which will greatly influence the course of Western Art. To be sure, Michelangelo is also included within the parabola of Mannerist art, but the intial stylistic revolution occurs with Pontormo's Gothic configuration. The volume of body introduced by elongated figures simply shatters the classical temper. In considering Pontormo's work such as Vertumnus

and Pomona, Christ Before Pilate, the Pietà, and the Ressurection, Professor Friedlaender puts into proper focus the spaceless -- undefined configuration -- effects and neurotic sensibility that comes to form the historical testimony of an artistic generation striving to capture a spiritual aura amidst the labyrinth of an alienated society. The revival of spiritual values is not only closely akin to the medieval maniera, it also precipitates a fermentation of a new radical vision in art quite different from the Florentine school of painting of the Quattrocento. With Rosso, who introduced crowding of figures and verticality which displaces the classical idea of balanced space, with Parmigianino, who was by far the most important figure of Mannerism in art known for his shocking achievement of the uneven spatial relation and for his undefined lines, Friedlaender tends to view the phenomenon of Mannerism as a transitional phase. Although distinctly autonomous, the message of Mannerism is short-lived, and at the close of the Cinquecento, the once experimental and original maniera evolves into mannered, superficial, and empty movement to be swallowed, in the process, by the grandiloquent forms of Baroque Art. Professor Friedlaender's contribution marks an important stride forward in the history of Mannerist criticism, dissipating the Bellorian prejudice against Mannerist Art as a negative tendency and postulating, for the first time, Mannerism as a new sensibility in Western Art.

Friedlaender's definition of Mannerism as being basically an anticlassical notion and failing to state its classical coordinates

at the same time, is found to be inadequate by Arnold Hauser who strives for a more totalizing concept capturing the essence of that artistic phenomenon of the early Cinquecento. Although born in Hungary, Arnold Hauser lived for the most part in Germany and Austria. The "Vienna School" of criticism dominated by Riegl and Dvořák is said to have had considerable influence on Hauser whose sociological and literary analysis embody a Marxist-oriented approach. Whatever makings have gone into the critical elaborations of Hauser, one thing remains clear: his publications of Social History of Art (1951), Philosophie der Kunstgeschichte (1958), and Der Manierisums (1964), translated world-wide, have had a substantial impact among students of Mannerism.

The idea of Mannerism, according to Hauser, is basically one which originates in an atmosphere of complex crisis. Indeed, the entire history of the West might be characterized as the unfolding process of suffering and misery of the human condition and its conscious struggle to affirm itself in a socio-political reality. The deceptive historical trajectory which may lift the lot of humanity out of its oppressive state into extenuating mitigations is called by Hauser an "interval". Such an "interval" is a short-lived phenomenon in the historical process while the tragic conditions prevail.

> ...The Renaissance was such an interval, but its foundations were never secure, and thus the tormented art of the mannerists, impregnated with the mentality of crisis and so much denounced and decried for insincerity and artificiality, is a much truer reflection of the age than the ostentatious peace,

harmony, and beauty of the classics.[11]

The notion of the "interval" as an historical dimension is closely paralleled by Curtius's idea of Mannerism as a "constant" in Western literature. But whereas the latter identifies Mannerism as a stylistic irregularity, emerging from an expressive need of transformation, the former predicates Mannerism on a precise philosophical magnitude: the crisis of the Renaissance. Such a crisis implies, in effect, the inadequacy of Humanism as a system of philosophical, political, artistic, social, religious, economical, and pedagogical value. The absolute faith in man is shattered, and the tragic sense of life, together with a skeptical posture, replaced the classical harmonious view of the world. Mannerism is understood in a climate of tension:

> A proper understanding of mannerism can be obtained only if it is regarded as a product of tension between classicism and anti-classicism, sensualism and spiritualism, traditionalism and innovation, conventionalism and revolt against conformism: for its essence lies in this tension, this union of irreconciliable opposites... The idea of paradox could provide the basis of a definition...[12]

Ironically, what began as a rebuttal to Friedlaender's presumably ambiguous definition of Mannerism as an anti-classical notion, appears, in my opinion, not to be radically different. Indeed, consider the following remarks:

> ... A classical work of art is a synthesis. It is directed towards the rendering of things regarded as the quintessence of life. The objective is to leave out nothing essential, and to dismiss from the picture of reality everything inessential, accidental, marginal...

> In contrast to this synthesis, the objective of an anti-classical mannerist work of art is the analysis of reality. Its aim is not the seizure of any essence, or the condensation of the separate aspects of reality into a compact whole; instead it aspires to riches, multiplicity, variety ... The Mannerist revolt against Renaissance classicism was directed chiefly against the oversimplification it imposed on the variety of phenomena.[13]

Obviously, the structural differences between Friedlaender's and Hauser's modes of criticism can be minimized, at this point, for their respective patterns of analysis are intrinsically similar: namely, Mannerism is an anti-classical reaction.

Perhaps the new critical approach of Hauser lies in having postulated the premises of Mannerism as a new stylistic formulation emerging not simply in terms of the classical and anticlassical schematic opposition. It rather articlualtes the notion of the fluid self born out of the capitalist system, and the relativistic philosophy of the Cinquecento. The struggle of the artist is seen in his tragic predicament of his impossible leap of wanting to transcend the natural order of things. The dichotomy between nature and art is irretrievable:

> ...To the mannerists the meaning and object of art was to make something of reality that is not and cannot be...to them artistic form...was...a vehicle for escaping from a world that seemed to...be alien and often very questionable, of ridding themsleves of it in one way or another, either denying it or ignoring it in a dream like sublimation or high-spirited play...[14]

There is a new vision of man predicated on a disintegration of the Renaissance as a system, rather than the affirmation of man based on the institutionalization of Humanism. Hauser considers the shift of man from the anthropocentric position of the humanist

cadre to the relativistic position of the so-called "fluid-self" resulting from excessive capitalism and the scientific revolution of the sixteenth century:

> ...The distortion in the visual arts, the strained and restless use of metaphor in literature, the frequency with which characters in drama masquerade as others and question their own identity are only ways of expressing the fact that, while the objective world had grown unintelligible, the identity of the self had been shattered, had grown vague and fluid.[15]

Hauser implies a kind of existentialism whose system of ethics is contingent upon situations; no pre-given forms of moral values exist.

Hauser makes the most striking observations on the melancholy state of the Mannerist artist. Never before in the history of Western Art, does the "schizophrenic hero" appear with greater frequency. Faust, Hamlet, Don Juan, and Don Quixote are mythographical representation of this psychological crisis. The painters: Pontormo, Salviati, and Goltzius are said to have been manic-depressive. Orlando Lasso, Tasso, and Góngora are said to have died in a psychotic state of mind; "El Greco", states the critic, "ne supportait ni le monde extérieur, ni la lumière, passait ses jours dans une chambre obscurcie par d'épais rideaux, afin de pouvoir recréer ses visions artistiques sans être troublé par la réalité..."[16] Hauser centers the notion of Mannerism in its proper historical condition: the crisis of the Renaissance. All elements which led to this crisis are examined and reduced to the Marxist category of alienation:

> ...The individual's sense of uprootedness, aimlessness, and loss of substance is and remains basic to the idea of alienation...Men whose world is still homogeneous and undivided are not yet alienated and are still whole, but those who have lost that universality...have become "abstractions: in the sense of the word used by Marx, to whom it is a synonym of alienation and loss of universality.[17]

It is precisely the notion of alienation which forms and develops Hauser's critique of Mannerism that ultimately entangles it and raises objections even among the staunchest of Marxist critics. Such is the case, at least, with another Hungarian critic, Tibor Klaniczay, who disagrees with Hauser for having attributed the origin of alienation to the implacable rise of capitalism which rendered the sixteenth century society extremely institutionalized; Mannerist Art is seen also as a symptom of alienation. Now, it follows that at the time in question Venice boasts some of the most bureaucratized institutions in Western Europe and, as Klancizay concludes, Mannerism in Venice is rather belated and inconspicuous.[18] Another objection to be raised against Hauser's concept of Mannerism is that Cinquecento Mannerism is really an aristocratic movement, one which lacks social commitment. As such, Hauser's notion of Mannerism is not terribly innovative compared to that of a Wölfflin or a Friedlaender whose critique of Mannerism is conceived of in terms of a transitional phase leading to the more homogeneous Baroque Art. "Towards the end of the sixteenth century," states Hauser upon introducing the Baroque of the Chatholic Courts in his Social History of Art,

> a striking change takes place in the history of Italian art; cool, complicated, intellectualistic mannerism yields to a sensual, emotional, universally

> comprehensible style -- the baroque. This is the reaction of a conception of art which is partly intrinsically popular, partly held by the ruling cultural class but with consideration for the masses as against the intellectual exclusiveness of the preceeding period.[19]

That Hauser's contribution is one which occupies an important position in the history of Mannerist criticism is indisputable. The reevaluation of the term, the indissoluble connection of Mannerism to Gothic style and the medieval tradition, the rehabilitation of the vital link of Mannerism to literature and the visual arts, and above all, the Marxist categories as a new dimension of Mannerist criticism; these are, undeniably, a testimony to the accomplishments of Hauser. However, concerning the over-all assessment of the concept of Mannerism in so far as it pertains to the History of the Criticism of Mannerism, it must be said that Hauser fails to widen the Mannerist perspective. Mannerism remains very much the category of anti-classicism.

The notion of Mannerism as an anti-classical phenomenon is also held by Ernst Robert Curtius. But whereas Hauser sought to add a new concrete dimension into literary studies by implementing the mechanism of Geistesgeschichte, the critic of European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages endeavored, on the other hand, to examine Mannerism as a typological phenomenon. Indeed, Mannerism was conceived of as an opposition to objective reality. There was a fundamental difference: whereas Hauser considered the transformation of Mannerist style strictly in relation to the crisis of the High Renaissance, the critic of the Toposforschung saw Mannerism as a body of changeless and timeless topoi which recur with intensity

or with less intensity throughout the history of Western Literature. The perennial mannerisms endowed by well-known and other less-known metaphors represent a continuity of the literary tradition:

> Only in words does mind speak its own language. Only in the creative word is it in its perfect freedom: above precept, above concept, above doctrine. It is safeguarded, but it is also emptied and externalized by the transmissional techniques of grammar, rhetoric, the "liberal arts," the schools. These techniques are not an end in themselves, nor is continuity. They are aids to memory. Upon memory rests the individual's consciousness of his identity above all change. The literary tradition is the medium by which the European mind preserves its identity through millenniums.[20]

In essence Curtius's interpretation of Mannerism is ahistorical. His understanding of Mannerism is not confined to the elucidation of a specific literary phenomenon, rather it is part of his total design which is to illustrate the coextensive homogeneous quality of European culture at a time when the European civilization appeared to be at the brink of annihilation, namely: World War II. Another important preoccupation of Curtius's which I have already mentioned lies in wanting to establish a literary criticism that would rely on sound methodology namely: rhetorical analysis. Curtius insists on a concept of Mannerism that is completely autonomous of the analogies of the visual arts. The governing principles of this Stilgeschichte approach presuppose art as the unintelligible "medium of ideas"[21] in contrast to the literary message which is a more faithful representation of history. "To

understand Pindar's poems," concludes Curtius in a rather naive way, "requires severe mental effort to understand the Parthenon frieze does not. The same relation obtains between Dante and the cathedrals, and so on. Knowing pictures is easy compared with knowing books."[22] Curtius's bias appears to be justified in his efforts to establish a more scientific body of criticism. The postulation of topological structures -- the so-called hyperbaton, circumlocution, annominatio, mannered metaphor, and the formal mannerisms -- represents indeed a step in this direction. I shall examine further the formalistic distortions implicit in the use of the topoi in a later chapter on the "Rhetoric of Mannerism." For the moment, be that as it may, it suffices to say that Curtius's method appears to exclude other disciplines somewhat. It is a self-contained system which refuses to see the authenticity of Mannerism as its vital link to the visual arts.

In a much disguised form, whether under the auspices of Geistesgechichte, Stilgeschichte, or other, the fact is that the tendency towards understanding Mannerism as an anti-classical reaction still previals long after the model of Friedlaender has made its mark. In fact this position of Mannerism as a notion of subjectivism in contract to the objectivism of the High Renaissance has remained a key element for many critics, including Luisa Becherucci:

> The Florentine artists Pontormo, Il Rosso, and Bronzino were most keenly aware of the crisis of style implicit in High Renaissance art, and it was in direct consequence of the critical confrontation with the weighty inheritance from the past that the characteristics of this art of formal

> and spiritual originality of the first generation of mannerists were determined..[23]

Even among the most prominent critics of the twentieth century, the Wolfflinian notion of Mannerism as a degenerative style of Renaissance forms is rather preponderant. In Helmut Hatzfeld's thesis of Mannerism, for example, the definition of Mannerism is asserted as "una maniera o otra que consiste, segun los casos, en una prolungación, refinamiento, dilatación, retorcimiento, raptura, Cruce o encubrimiento de las formas renascentistas."[24]

The idea of Mannerism as an anti-classical notion appears to have had a definite impact upon the course of criticism of the Renaissance. It has unquestionably redressed the scope of Renaissance studies; the discovery of Gothic forms brought a new dimension to the artistic life of the Cinquecento; the whole notion of the Baroque was put into proper perspective. Nonetheless, the concept of Mannerism based on a reaction against classical values appeared to be headed on a sterile course, and it was not until a book called L'Antirinascimento, published in the early nineteenth-sixties, that any suspicion of bankruptcy was quickly dispelled. Indeed, the author of L'Antirinascimento, Eugenio Battisti, whose knowledge in the field of Art as well as the discipline of literature has earned him an international reputation, set out to prove, once and for all, that Mannerism is an anti-classical notion and, most importantly, the legitimacy of Mannerism in literature. Battisti's merit lies in avoiding the pitfall of a total definition of Mannerism

whereby every account must be swiftly classified within a pattern of opposites and contrasts in relation to the Renaissance. Battisti's analysis is one in depth, one which deplores the artificial unities imposed by the "Counter-Renaissance" of Haydn. The intrinsic mechanism of Mannerism, asserts the author of L'Antrinascimento, lends itself to be understood in the context of tragic existence.

While ample ground may exist to affirm the homogeneity of the Mannerist form in the visual arts, a similar disposition may be difficult to find in literature. For this reason, Battisti favors a view of Mannerism based on thematic components existing in various levels of composition. It is the theme of the fantastic, the taste for the bizarre, the element of magic in direct contrast to the objective world of Humanism that Battisti examines. Battisti seems to suggest that within the classical tradition there appears simultaneously in various degrees the thematic component of the irregular. It is an irrational current which pervades the classical composition of the Cinquecento cultural life..

> ...Troveremo così entro il cosiddetto periodo del manierismo un filone... che culmina in Michelangelo, nel Pontormo, nel Rosso, in Lelio Orsi... un filone fantastico - il manierismo dello Hocke - che trionfa, se si vuole, nell'arte dei giardini e delle bizzarrie... una corrente mirante ad una sempre maggiore funzionalità in architettura; una problematica religiosa...che determina gli stili individuali e l'iconografia generale; un edonismo decorativo capriccioso come la moda... generi artistici, come la grottesca, la caricatura, la scena di genere... il Cinquecento nasce da questo coro molteplice, ed è proprio il numero, l'intensità, ...la concordia o discordia... a caratterizzarlo rispetto ad altri secoli.[25]

Among the various trends in Mannerist composition, the theme of the boorish character is examined by Battisti in conjunction with the peasant revolt generated at the height of the Reformation in Europe. The function of this projection is dual. On the one hand, the pessimistic tone on the part of the peasant, the impossibility of transcending his feudal servitude is fully documented. On the other hand, the theme of the boorish character is presented as a collage phenomenon anticipating the modern Surrealist composition in its conscious effort to dismember the conventional pattern of composition. Of particular interest is the collage illustrated by the Paduan playwright Ruzzante, in his comedy Reduce. I shall cite a brief example whereby Ruzzante, upon returning from the war in a shabby and feeble state, encounters his godfather Menato:

> Menato: Compare! Ma siete voi! Chi vi avrebbe mai riconosciuto? Siete così patito da sembrare un luccio fritto. Non v'avrei mai riconosciuto, compare. Siate il benvenuto.
> Ruzzante: Sciupato, eh? Se foste stato dove sono capitato, non direste così compare.
> Menato: Venite adesso dal campo? Siete stato ammalato o in prigione? Avete una brutta cera, compare. Sembrate uno di questi traditori. Perdonatemi, compare: avrò visto un centinaio d'impiccati, ma nessuno aveva la vostra brutta cera ...[26]

This dialogue is freely translated from Latin into Italian from Erasmus's Militaria:

> Hanno. Unde nobis redis Vulcanus, qui Mercurius hinc abieras?
> Trasymachus. Quos Vulcanos, aut quos Mercurios mihi narras?
> Hanno. Quia alatus videbare quum abires, nunc claudias.
> Trasymachus. Sic a bello rediri solet.[27]

The relationship between Ruzzante and Erasmus cannot be reduced to a mere rehabilitation of the Militaria. It also confirms Ruzzante's classical formation as well as a sardonic penchant for the denunciation of the human condition in the vernacular language. A similar dislocation underlining the negative aristocratic qualities in the visual arts of the Italian Quattrocento appears in the graphics of Holbein and in the peasant scenes of Dürer.

Another underlying component which fits the anticlassical category of the Cinquecento is illustrated by Battisti in the imagery of the fable, that is to say, the treatment of magic in literature as well as the visual arts, with its zoomorphic forms, mythological monstrosities, grotesque vision, and scenographical eccentricities. The imagery of the fable is a conscious apparatus within the cadre of anti-Renaissance and it is not merely an identifiable phenomenon in the most apparent popular forms of a Bosch or a Breughel. The medieval tradition of the fantastic is already present in the entire Cinquecento in the school of Raphael with its erratic decorations. The imagery of the demonic dream is particularly accentuated in literature. But whereas the treatment of magic forms in the Middle Ages is strictly a cosmological phenomenon in that it reflects the dynamics of good and evil, the element of magic in the Cinquecento is the product of a new vision. In aretino's Orazia (1545), for example, one may recognize a pre-Shakespearian force assuming proportions of profound psychological insight:

> Vidi nel suol dei nostri tetti altieri
> tre foci accese di fulgenti lumi:
> ma quella che sedea tra l'altre in mezzo
> d'eterno fuoco nella guisa ardea,
> che ardon le lampe ai simulacri intorno,
> e standosi così ecco all'incontro
> tre rabbiosi apparir venti condensi
> con volto arriao e nero e con le chiome
> dinanzi al fronte scompigliate ed aspre,
> pregne di sdegno, di fortezza e d'ira,
> dalle cui bocche perigliose usciva
> stridente orror di furibondo suono,
> e mentre lo spettacolo tremendo
> tira e se gli occhi di turbe e non poche,
> ecco che un soffio del lor fiato ispengne
> due di quelle mirabili lucerne...
> Due n'estinse, ed in cenere converse
> e poco dopo fe' sparir la terza,
> come l'altre spariro...[29]

The importance of the magic imagery is that it not only provides a new iconography but that it also generates a critical dimension which is in direct contrast to the erudite forms of the Humanist culture.

> L'influenza sull'arte della vasta e complessa imagerie antirinascimentale, che solo in parte e troppo rapidamente, siamo riusciti a delimitare, poté operare in modi assai diversi: sulle arti, anzitutto, consentendo un'altra interpretazione, per lo più, magica ed opposta a quella letteraria ed erudita, di una serie di opere, aventi ad un tempo per il loro schema o per la loro iconografia, una radice sia culta che popolare.[30]

Battisti's analysis leans considerably on Max Dvořák's Geistesgeschichte method of criticism, for he knows too well that without it the notion of Mannerism would be rather imprecise. Of course, there is always the risk of extending one's self too far. Thus, while an Aretino may find greater affinity with the theory of Mannerism in the visual arts

it does not follow that the work of Donne encounters a similar fate.

Finally, for the conclusion of our discussion, I have chosen the Hungarian literary critic, Tibor Klaniczay, to close the period of Mannerism as an anti-classical notion. We have already seen that Klaniczay's Marxist background echoes, in part, Arnold Hauser, in that he brings the idea of Mannerism within the dynamics of the Renaissance crisis. However, whereas Hauser locates Mannerism within the framework of a transitional stage leading to the Baroque, Klancizay sees a specific origin of Mannerism, and Mannerism and Baroque are viewed as two diverse moments of the Renaissance crisis. Moreover, in the absence of Humanistic values, Mannerism remains loyal to its realm of dissociation which can only resolve itself in terms of the philosophical contemplation of the Neo-Stoic philosophy. The Baroque movement, on the other hand, having rejected the Epicurian premises of Renaissance philosophy refuses the Mannerist labyrinth of the unknown, the nothingness of man dramatized by the Neo-Stoics, and submits itself to a religious view of the world. Perhaps, the most important contribution made by Klaniczay lies in his attempt to study the anti-classical notion of Mannerism within the opposing stream of Platonism and Stoicism which characterizes the phenomenon of Mannerism in the Cinquecento.

In addition to the proposed philosophical interpretation of Mannerism, this Hungarian critic has the merit of providing a morphology of Mannerism on a wider European scale. "C'est un style à part," states Klaniczay insisting on the autonomy of Mannerism,

> c'est-à dire un système spécifique d'éléments de contenu dt de forme, ainsi que l'expression d'une mentalité historiquement et socialement définie. La présence du maniérisme ne se limite pas à l'lune ou l'autre des branches artistiques, ni à tel ou tel pays, mais peut être démontrée... tout autant en architecture, en sculpture, en peinture, en literature et musique que dans tous les pays où la Renaissance s'est implantée.[31]

The concept of the Reinaissance crisis, as provided by Klancizay, bears a sociological imprint in that political, economical, and intellectual factors are analyzed. Thus, the Renaissance is identified with social stability and economic prosperity whereas the epoch of Mannerism is juxtaposed within the realm of the failures of Renaissance ideals.[32] On the level of intellectual crisis, for example, a sociological view is attained by examining the ars memoriae of Giulio Camillo. This Mannerist professor, according to Klancizay, dramatizes the situation of the Humanist in his thirst for knowledge. "Pour surmonter les difficultés," writes Klancizay, "la crise du savoir humaniste s'offraient, en dernière possibilité, diverses panacées intellectuelles: l'ars memoriae... la science de la mémoire artificielle et permet, à l'aide de différents procédés mnémotecniques d'enmagasiner, dans le cerveau humaine, des masses de connaissance toujours plus grandes..."[33]

On the artistic level, the Renaissance crisis with its devastating consequences brings about a total revolution. The humanistic premises were ultimately inadequate for the Mannerist artist. The harmonious ideal of the Humanist world which originated with classical antiquity -- a world far simpler than the complex Cinquecento world -- proved to be incongruous for the reality of the Cinquecento artist. A more obvious

reason for the affirmation of the new sensibility may be provided by the fact that the Renaissance artists had exhausted the forms of harmonious expression, and that consequently the following generations of the various Pontormos, Tassos, Rossos, Parmigianinos, and so on, had to affirm their own individuality by exploring new modes of composition. There is genuine modification taking place in the creative process which alters the classical forms of expression. Thus, in painting there operates an optical transformation which reflects the psychological fragility of the Mannerist artist. In literature as well as in painting, erotic posture and sadistic themes are pervasive. Even the Platonic conception of love undergoes a radical transformation. "En tout cela," writes Klaniczay,

> le maniérisme est opposé au culte de l'amour platonique de la Renaissance, à l'adoration de la Femme chez les poètes pétrarquisants. En tant que facteurs de haute importance de l'harmonie à l'époque de la Renaissance, la femme e l'amour se voient totalement dévalués. C'est pourquoi on recherche dans ce domaine, le bizarre, le raffiné, le pervers. Mais l'érotisme poussé à l'excès n'est qu'une des faces de la situation. Parallèlement, on est temoin de la naissance d'un sentiment de dégoût, d'écoeurement.[34]

Likewise the topos of the locus amoenus is denuded of its idyllic quality. Whereas vestigial structures are preserved, in that the pastoral elements are restored, the locus amoenus[35] acquires tragic overtones. Such is, in essence, the dramatic situation of Tasso's Aminta. The labyrinth of the Mannerist acquires a symbolic dimension,

that of a world void of its logical purpose.[36] The experimental posture which is so intrinsic to Mannerism constitutes, in effect, a profound leap transcending the temporal cadre of the Renaissance. "L'asthéticisme raffiné," suggests Klaniczay,

> si caractéristique du maniérisme a tout autant été une tentative de fuite devant cette crise que la névrose de plus en plus fréquente. Il y a eu, de tout temps, des excentriques, des psychopathes, mais si, à une époque donnée, ils prolifèrent particulièrement surtout dans les milieux de l'élite intellectuelle, cela est la suite à de profonds motifs historiques.[37]

More will be said of Klancizay's view of Mannerism particularly with respect to Neo-Stoic philosophy as the basis of Mannerist thought.

In conclusion, it may be fair to state that the concept of Mannerism as an anti-classical idea is a valid one and it is very much alive. Unquestionably, Mannerism as an anti-classical category implies an inherent risk, namely: that of extending the term undescriminately. The notion of anti-classical can very easily be substituted for the schematic criteria of Romantic versus Classical. In other words, the term anti-classical can be rather generic and it can vanish within the critical structures established by Curtius. Nonetheless, it has been amply demonstrated that it is precisely this generic quality of Mannerism as an anti-classical notion that enables one to widen the scope of Renaissance studies. The Mannerist experience cannot be confined to a specific discipline, i.e., the visual arts, nor can it be ascribed to a specific chronological period, i.e., the

Cinquecento. The overall tendency of the bulk of criticism, examined so far, seems to point toward a pluralistic approach.

Footnotes

1. Hiram Haydn, The Counter-Renaissance, (New York: Scribner, 1950), p. xi.

2. H. Haydn, p. XIII.

3. H. Haydn, p. 160.

4. H. Haydn, p. 462.

5. H. Haydn, p. 468.

6. H. Haydn, p. 471.

7. Aristotle,"The Poetics,"in Allan H. Gilbert, Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden, (Detroit: Wayne State Univ., 1962) pp. 72-73.

8. Jacopo Mazzoni, "A Discourse in Defense of the Comedy of Dante," Allan H. Gilbert, ed., Literary Criticism: Plato to Dryden, (Detroit: Wayne State, 1962) p. 371.

9. W. Friedlaender, Op. Cit., p. 6

10. W. Friedlaender, p. 7.

11. A. Hauser, Mannerism, Op. Cit., p. 7.

12. A. Hauser, p. 12.

13. A. Hauser, pp. 24-5.

14. A. Hauser, p. 29.

15. A. Hauser, p. 49

16. T. Klaniczay, Op. Cit., p. 282.

17. A. Hauser, Mannerism, Op. Cit., p. 96.

18. T. Klaniczay, Op. Cit., p. 285.

19. A. Hauser, Social History of Art, Op. Cit., p. 182.

20. E. R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, Op. Cit., pp. 394-5.

21. E. R. Curtius, p. 14.

22. E. R. Curtius, p. 15.

23. Luisa Becherucci, "Mannerism," Op., Cit., p. 449.

24. Helmut Hatzfeld, Estudios sobre el Barroco, (Madrid, 1964), p. 204, as quoted in Davy A. Craozza, "For a Definition of Mannerism: The Hatzfeldian Thesis," in Colloquia Germanica: Internationale Zietschrift für germanische Sprach-und Literaturwissenschaft, Vol. I, (Louisville: Univ. Kentucky, 1967), p. 67.

25. Eugenio Battisti, L'Antirinascimento, (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1962), p. 47.

26. Cited in E. Battisti, pp. 306-7.

27. Desiderius Erasmus, "Colloquia: Alia, Militaria" in Opera Omnia: Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami, eds. L.-E. Halkin, et al, (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1972), p. 154.

28. E. Battisit, p. 310.

29. E. Battisti,"La Fiaba nel Rinascimento," in Amedeo Quondam, ed., Problemi del manierismo, (Napoli: Guida, 1975), p. 240.

30. E. Battistim pp. 242-43.

31. T. Klaniczay, Op. Cit., p. 269.

32. On the other hand, Roberto Lopez in his studies on the Renaissance economy contends that far from experiencing economic and political stability, the Italian Renaissance witnessed a rather gloomy economic period. Furthermore, this economic historian compares the Italian Renaissance to a woman who, despite her exceptional beauty, lived more than one hundred years at the expense of spiritual dissolution. Thus her youth which takes place between 1455 and 1494 offers "little opportunity for civic virtue and political dedication." (p. 20). So, too, her maturity (1494-1527), and her decline (1527-1559) were characterized in an ominous degree of uncertainty. Writes Lopez: "It certainly would be imprudent to see in every work of art a direct reference to a precise historical event; as the political and economic picture became heavier, more tangled and somber, so did the manner of most artists..." (p. 54). Robert S. Lopez, The Three Ages of the Italian Renaissance, (Charlottesville: Univ. Pr. Virginia, 1970).

33. T. Klancizay, p. 277. See also Yates, Frances A. The Art of Memory. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966. Frances Yates has studied Giulio Camillo's theater which is crowded with a slew of sophisticated images intended to facilitate the process of human recollection. Writes Yates: "The Theatre is a system of memory places,...it performs the office of a classical memory system for orators by conserving for us the things words, and arts which we confide to it." (p. 144).

34. T. Klaniczay, p. 280.

35. It is important to note that the topos of the locus amoenus with its tragic overtones has always been an intrinsic element of the classical tradition. I shall quote here part of Virgil's Tenth Eclogue wherein Gallus is lamenting man's state of helplessness before the implacable forces of Amor:

> "... iam mihi per rupes videor lucosque
> sonantes
> ire, libet Partho torquere Cydonia cornu
> spicula- tamquam haec sit nostri medicina
> furoris,
> aut deus ille malis hominum mitescere discat!
> iam neque Hamadryades rursus neque carmina
> nobis
> ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite silvae.
> Non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,
> nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus
> Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosae,
> nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,
> Aethiopum versemus oves sub sidere Cancri
> omnia vincit Amor: et cedamus Amori."

P. Vergili Maronis, Bucolica et Georgica, ed. T.E. Page. (London: Macmillan), 1926, p. 26.

36. The allusion is intended of course to Hocke's book Die Welt als Labyrinth.

37. T. Klaniczay, p. 281.

Part II

Chapter 3 - Mannerism as the Formulation and Vital Evolution of a New Stylistic Expression

It is generally agreed that up to the time of Raphael's death one had a precise notion of what constituted good art, and that such a perception was to be understood within the boundaries of classical decorum. Should a work of art deviate from the correct purpose, the harmonious whole, it would then categorically be confined to an anti-classical realm. This is more or less the case with the history of Mannerism criticism. The implicit formulation of a new stylistic expression in Mannerist art, and its vital impact upon the evolution of modern art, quite frequently went unnoticed. The transgression of the values of studia humanitatis together with the codification of a new system of form and vision in both the paintings of a Pontormo as in the poetry of a Tasso is very often attributed to the work of artistes maudits. Amidst the network of the negative reception of Mannerist art there is the common imputation of a lack of social commitment. Yet, it is rarely mentioned that the Mannerist work of art requires a personal interpretation; that the poetic message is intended to reflect upon the relativism, and finality of man's state in a purposeless universe. Such a critical approach seeking to rehabilitate the notion of

Mannerism on the formalist level was initiated by Max Dvořák who also felt that the intrinsic force of the Mannerist movement went far beyond the mere transitional phase towards the Baroque as proposed by Heinrich Wölflin.

Dvořák is certainly the first critic to have perceived that a structural change was operative in the early part of the Cinquecento. The so-called anti-classical revolt against plastic forms of the High Renaissance, glorifying instead Gothic expression with its mystic religious intensity, is envisioned by Dvořák as a profound renovation of the cultural apparatus of Western man. There is a fundamental transformation in the basic understanding of the relationship between the phenomenological perception, i.e. the cognitive reality, and the subjective intuition, i.e. the world of the imagination. In other words, the notion of Mannerism ceases to be a negative phenomenon. The dynamics of Mannerism are ascribed for the first time to opposite forces. The exhaustion of classical forms and the awakening of spiritual forms are seen essentially as the triumph of Christian values over the pagan heritage.[1] The work of the older Michelangelo is greatly admired by Dvořák, for it transcends appearance in favor of the infinite expression of the imaginative power. Likewise, Tintoretto belongs to the individualistischen Subjektivismus for having abandoned the objective representation of reality. In literature, Tasso, Rabelais, Shakespeare, and Cervantes are glorified as the greatest poets of Mannerism. But Dvořák's ultimate aim is to show that the overwhelming expressionism of El Greco is

synonymous with the triumph of the powerful imagination and the spiritual force in Mannerism.[2]

Dvořák's critical approach might be seen as man's ontological nakedness observed in a meaningless existence. Dvořák's conception of art as the unfolding process of the history of the human spirit brings into relief a wide range of artistic giants whose individual struggle really acquires a universal dimension, a true testimony of the human condition. In other words, Dvořák sets forth a historical conception of subjectivism that is highly pronounced in the Cinquecento, and yields, at the same time, new structural forms. It is a question of transformation of the Renaissance, states Dvořák, based upon the realization of vital forms, in direct contrast to the classical world, and the eruption of a new spirit:

> Auf dem Gebiete der Kunst hat man diese Periode, die keine abgeschlossene Periode ist, sondern eine Bewegung, deren Anfänge bis zum Beginn des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts reichen, und deren Wirkungen nie aufgehört haben, in der unglücklichsten Weise als die des Manierismus bezeichnet, weil die naturalistisch orientierten Kunsthistoriker an ihr nur so viel beobachteten, dass die Mehrzahl der Künstler darauf verzichtet hat, selbständig aus der Natur zu schöpfen und sich, ähnlich der Kunst nach dem Zusammenbruche der Antike, mit überlieferten Formen und deren Umwertung begnügten.[3]

The limitation of this critical orientation may be explained by the fact that Dvořák identifies the stylistic transformation in Mannerism as embodied in the creative process of a few individuals. This objection can be flatly dispelled because quite often in the history of the human spirit, it is the vision of the individual that

furnishes the paradigmatic material to leap into new horizons.

Dvořák interprets Mannerism as a spiritual movement that replaces the materialism of the Renaissance. "Der reine Idealist," writes Dvořák,

> und ein solcher reiner Idealist war auch Greco, und seine Kunst der Höhepunkt einer allgemeinen europäischen künstlerischen Bewegung, deren Ziel darin bestand, den Materialismus der Renaissance durch eine spiritualistische Orientierung des menschlichen Geistes zu ersetzen.[4]

Dvořák produces a wide range of names, in literature as well as the figurative arts, that manifest this new spiritual trend: Shakespeare is qualified as "der grosse Dichter des Manierismus." Continues Dvořák:

> Die Stoffe erweitern sich nach allen Seiten hin, dem Bedürfnisse der Künstler entsprechend, Aufmerksamkeit zu erwechen, d. h. die Originalität und Subjektivität ihrer Stellung zur Umwelt zu betonen...Die einer war realistisch und induktiv und geht davon aus, durch die Betrachtung der Lebenszustände und der sie beherrschenden allgemeinen und individuellen psychischen Voraussetzungen dieses Ziel zu erreichen. Es ist dies die Richtung, die Rabelais und Bruegel, Callot, Shakespeare, Grimmelshausen gemeinsam ist und die in den folgenden Jahrhunderten immer mehr das Übergewicht bekam...[5]

Finally, this poetischen Realismus is identified as the basis of the new Weltanschauung which will find its ultimate expression in the art of Romanticism, and Surrealism. These realistic qualities are embodied in Bruegel who is seen by Dvořák as:

> auf dem Gebiete der Malerei der erste grosse bahnbrechende Vertreter jener dem natürlichen Leben zugewandten realistichen Orientierung der Kunst, die zu den konstitutiven Faktoren der europäischen Kunst im siebzehnten Jahrhundert zu zählen ist, im neunzehnten

> Jahrhundert die allgemeine Fuhrung besass und ihren Gipfelpunkt erreichte, um im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert fast mit einem Schlage in dieser Fuhrung durch eine heterogen verschiedene abgelost zu werden. Im hochsten Grade lehrreich ist es aber, dass ihr Ursprung in der geistigen Bewegung des Manierismus zu suchen ist.[6]

Dvořák's conception of Mannerism is unquestionably broad and original. The critical patterns of the visual arts, as well as the history of the spirit, i.e., Geistesgeschichte, are extended for the first time to the literary world. The results of this approach are interesting but certainly not exempt from ambiguities. Thus, the notion that Mannerism constitutes the basis for Romanticism and Modern Art insofar as its stylistic theories stress Subjectivism, may indeed be a reason for great concern. The metaphor of the spiritual versus the material in Mannerism may virtually destroy the chances for an adequate conception of Mannerism. This supple quality of Mannerism is not different from Curtius' for the history of the human spirit is plagued by excessive materialism at one time, and inundated by religious yearning at another. Now, if the definition of Mannerism can be postulated at different intervals in the history of the human spirit, it follows that it may do very little to elucidate the existing boundaries of literary criticism. It would be far better to accept the present lines of demarcation rather than to alter its meaning for the sake of creating new terms. This is essentially what Jacques Bousquet has done.

In his book, Mannerism: The Painting and Style of the Late Renaissance, Jacques Bousquet has elaborated Dvořák's premises to their ultimate consequences. The view that Mannerism is an authentic paradigm for the creative posture of European art is brilliantly exemplified by this critic. On the other hand, the formula of individualistischen Subjektivismus is overused and, in the long run, it becomes, in my opinion, diluted. The analogy of Mannerism to Cubism in Modern Art, though very interesting, is one example of this abuse. Hence, the linear transformation in the visual arts, together with the vogue of the serpentine form, and the elongation of bodily shapes, in the works of Dürer, Ehrard Schön, Parmigianino, Bronzino, Pontormo, El Greco, and the school of Fontainebleau, are proposed as a harbinger of Cubism.[7]

The acromegalic depiction of bodily forms, the experiment of new attitudes in the human figure, on the other hand, is not merely a continuation of Dvořák's assertion of the transformation in the Art of the Cinquecento. Indeed, Bousquet goes so far as to postulate the transformation of content as well as style. However, the methodology based on Geistesgeschichte leads the French critic to equate every artistic experiment of the period in question with the phenomenon of Mannerism. "The literature of the epoch," asserts Bousquet,

> is also permeated with Mannerist tendencies... The period stretching from the close of the fifteenth century to the mid-seventeenth century is characterized by a series of literary movements which accentuate style. The late rhétoriqueurs, the Pléiade group and Les Précieux in France, Marinismo in Italy, culteranismo and conceptismo in Spain, euphuism and concettism in England, Sinnspiel and Schwulst in Germany, were all

> movements which cultivated verbal acrobatics. Rare words, metaphors, circumlocutions, inversions, antitheses, assonances, unusual rhythms were in favor, and in general a greater interest was shown in the manner of expression than in the idea expressed.[8]

This time span would make most of the Renaissance and most of the Baroque "mannerist." The term covers so much it begins to lose its meaning.

Like his predecessors from the school of Vienna, Bousquet links the revolution of style in Mannerism to man's ontological assertion of despair generated by Angst. The psychological and spiritual depravation experienced by the sixteenth century artist is ultimately resolved in the thematology of evasion. The Mannerist artist is confronted with an absurd existence generated by a gamut of considerations: the Sack of Rome in an event of great magnitude which symbolizes the erosion of humanistic values and what the Renaissance stood for. "Mannerism," writes Bousquet, "would thus constitute a phenomenon of evasion. Refinement, subtlety, pastoral idylls, chivalry, eroticism, and occultism were just so many compensations for the disappointments of real life..."[9]

Unlike many of his predecessors, however, Bousquet asserts the social preoccupation of Mannerism. The emphatic aesthetic reiteration, quite frequently overwhelming functional considerations, the Sisyphus-like struggle to transcend the historical boundaries, and the fragmentation of the Humanist posture of de omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis, ought not deceive us into believing that Mannerism has an evasive orientation. Indeed, the Mannerist epoch, as seen by

Bousquet, produced an abundance of social thinkers. From the execution of Giordano Bruno, and Lucilio Vanini in Italy, to the freethinking activity of Théophile de Viau, and Cyrano de Bergérac, in France, from Thomas Munser's peasant revolt in Germany to Tommaso Campanella's ill-fated uprising in Calabria, there emerges an entire chapter on the evolution of socialism. There is a depiction of man's social inequity and the prise de conscience leading to the intention to ameliorate and to emancipate the human lot on the basis of economic restructure. "This revolutionary agitation in the sixteenth century," writes Bousquet, "is sufficent evidence that the Mannerist era was not,...an era of evasion. It was in fact also an era of faith in the future of humanity....Mannerism is not a simple phenomenon, it is idealism, but it is also naturalism; it is evasion, but it is also joy of life and hope in the future."[10] Hence, Mannerism as an avant-garde notion is not confined to the aristocratic circles of the Palazzo del Tè, or Fontainebleau, nor is it embodied within the refinement of grace and elegance heralded in the Cortigiano, and the Galateo. The role of the rising bourgeoisie, and particularly the indelible imprint made by proletarian elite, are equally accentuated by Bousquet:

> During the sixteenth century, there existed a small number of cultured members of the working class who played a more important role in the development of art than may be imagined... The most original religious movement of the sixteenth century, Anabaptism, was conceived among the urban proletariat, and its prophets and leaders were workers...Salviati,

> the son of a weaver...Girogione and Pieter Bruegel the Elder all belonged to the peasant families...We may well conjecture that the work of these artists reflects, to some extent, the environment from which they emerged.[11]

I am not suggesting, by any means, that Salviati, Giorgione and Bruegel were Anabaptists. Anabaptist art and literature were confined to the limits of that religious experience and did not represent a school of thought capable of great influence. What is implied, however, is that Mannerism as an art movement comprises the proletarian element just as the Anabaptist group, comparatively speaking, did.[12]

In the end, Bousquet's interpretation of Mannerism does not furnish a specific stylistic formula of what constitutes Mannerism. One finds in his study the misleading assertion that Mannerism is a manisfestation of individualistischen Subjektivismus, of philosophical and spiritual crisis, of revolt against the objective world view of Classicism. Bousquet states: "If we are to call the painters of the Florentine school of about 1520, such as Parmigianino, Pontormo and Rosso Mannerists, is it not logical to give the name Mannerist to all the European painters, who from...1520 to about 1620, developed the "same manners."[13] In fact, all artistic theories that emphasize the subjective and the spiritual element may fit the

description of Mannerism:

> All the elements of Romantic art and of Contemporary art are already embodied in Mannerism.... Equally, it is not difficult to see that the Mannerism of 1520's was a direct continuation...of the era of disquiet and change which followed the Middle Ages. The undulating lines of early fifteenth century sculpture, the extravagances of the so-called Manueline architectural style in Portugal, the expressionism of Matthias Grunewald and H. Bosch, the surrealist precision of Roger van der Weyden and Hugo van der Goes, Signorelli's gaunt, angular male nudes, Botticelli's elegant delicacy, Mantegna's tricks of perspective.... What are all these if not Mannerism before its time.[14]

A similar posture on the ambivalent nature of Mannerism and its metaphor of crisis is maintained in Wylie Sypher's book Four Stages of Renaissance Style. Sypher is concerned with the stylistic transformation taking place between 1400 and 1700, and the analogy of literary style as it relates itself to the visual arts, "...whether the changing styles of this period do not appear in literature as well as in the fine arts, and whether the techniques of renaissance architecture, painting, and sculpture do not correspond, by analogy, to the techniques used in certain poems, dramas, and epics."[15] It appears that form in art corresponds to the notion of metaphor in literature, and the manner in which literary forms are arranged. Now, according to Sypher, the transformation of style which represents a somewhat more authentic historical revelation of the human spirit is identified with the dynamics of crisis that can only be assimilated by the artistic sensitivity which in turn marshals its evidence in the final expression of the artifact. "Every art technique," observes Sypher,

> has a social context. As society changes, techniques change, along with the media of the arts and the

> modes of recording experience. So a style becomes an index to the structure of the contemporary consciousness and to the prevailing attitude toward experience in the contemporary world.... Because the artist is unusually sensitive to the changing cultural temper, frequently he shifts his techniques before social changes become historically apparent.[16]

If the analysis of style is contingent upon such qualities as colors, lines, depth, and so forth, it follows that the analysis of the literary metaphor, syntax, morphology, and so on, ought to yield an adequate understanding of the cultural transformation. In other words, it appears that the critical patterns of the visual arts not only correlate to the literary form but they seem to reveal as well a significant change in the schematic Gestalt of a particular cultural period. "Our proposal," asserts Sypher,

> is to outline the changing configurations of the worlds revealed, and created, by the changing styles of art from the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries; and because a style serves as a syntax of consciousness, many of the definitions of style in the visual and plastic arts should have certain uses in analysing the structure of literary experience erected by the word.[17]

The stylistic analysis provided by Sypher is essentially Wölfflinian, i.e., the critical tools are borrowed directly from the Principles of Art History. Sypher leans heavily on Wölfflin, whose criteria he transfers to literature with disputable consequences.

Thus, the skepticism of Montaigne, which Sypher scrutinizes brilliantly as a reflection of the "disturbed balance" of the epoch in question, is juxtaposed with the ambiguity of archi-

tectural function in Michelangelo. "Montaigne," observes Sypher,

> moves freely over the whole philosophic terrain between passion and detachment. The senses, he knows, are full of uncertainty and cannot guarantee any truth; ...we must live amid appearances; ...there is, Montaigne placidly continues, no permanent existence, either of our being or that of the objects...the unresolved tensions and contradictions in mannerist art appear early in Michelangelo's designs for the Laurentian Library anteroom and the Medici Chapel...the logic of the structure does not coincide with the structural elements.[18]

Similarly, the dislocation of the coherent form in John Donne is correlated to Parmigianino's elusive configuration. "Parmigianino," writes Sypher,

> operates from within, seeming to turn his attention upon an interior image, a disegno interno, rather than an outer reality. Because Parmigianino's relation to the world is subjective, his figures are lengthened by nervous, elegant serpentine lines or into ovals or slim rectangles. In these delicate, rather morbid-looking figures normal proportions break down...the emotional implications are incongruous with the logic of the composition; that is, the iconography does not correspond to the psychology... More important in connection with Donne and the Jacobean drama, there is no logical focus for the composition, and the psychological relation between the figures is left suspended...[19]

One needs not to elaborate further in order to perceive that Sypher's typological study, which predicates concrete and formalistic relationships in art and literature upon anti-classical premises, attempts to create a unifying concept of Mannerism with rather generalizing results. Moreover, this anti-classical

notion of Mannerism is extremely simplistic predicating the transformation of style in art and literature upon certain estbalished historical signs. The final implication is that the Protestant movement, and the Sack of Rome register catalytic reactions on the scale of the History of Style. "For the renaissance artist," writes Sypher,

> beauty was exact proportion, clear outline, stable relations...then a spasm broke open this goodly pattern.... A typical renaissance structure in poetry is Sydney's sonnet Heart Exchange with its clear units, its harmonious and complicated parallels...then, by contrast, there is the loose, devious, zigzag development of the spasmodic mannerist poem To His Coy Mistress by Andrew Marvell...[20]

A completely different approach to the question of literary Mannerism is offered by Riccardo Scrivano. In his book, Il Manierismo nella letteratura del Cinquecento, Scrivano studies literary theory as well as the dominant art theories of the Cinquecento in order to derive a more authentic notion of Mannerism. Examining the concept of maniera in Vasari, for instance, Scrivano insists that the Vasarian notion is neither a category of art nor is it a schematic tendency. The very notion of maniera, asserts Srivano, reflects the distinct originality of the artist in the realm of the stylistic and human personality. In Vasari's Vite there ought to emerge that peculiar sensitivity which characterizes the subjective quality of Mannerism. "In questa dimensione," writes Scrivano,

> è necessario disporre e sentire il concetto fondamentale che è proprio dell'intuizione vasariana della sua storia e dei suoi artisti:

> cioé il concetto di maniera. Esso non è per lui una categoria, in nessun senso: per lui ogni artista ha una sua maniera, per poco che ci sia di veramente artistico ed originale in lui.... Essa è l'ingegno stesso di un artista che si esprime in arte....[21]

The idea of maniera is essentially an inimitable expression of an artist; it cannot be duplicated for it reflects the disegno interno. Hence, the maniera in Brunelleschi is identified in his sense of ecstasy generated in the architectural structures, or the sense of life as a dramatic conviction in Michelangelo.[22] In this particular orientation, Scrivano's notion of Mannerism acquires a different dimension from that given by other critics. As such, Mannerism cannot be localized within the ultimate development of the High Renaissance phenomenon, nor can it acquire a global meaning. The concept of Mannerism indisputably posses a multi-faceted quality for it is the product of individual expression: "Il manierismo vasariano...è un atteggiamento culturale e umano che reca individuati, vari e numerosi i suoi prodotti. Manierismo è solo il termine per definire in una formula una esperienza culturale, artistica, e umana che non comporta una valutazione restrittiva."[23]

In this sense, then, the explanation of the waning of the High Renaissance as giving rise to the Mannerist era as a pre-Baroque phenomenon, is insufficient for the complex personality of a Tasso. Nor is the tendency to place the latter's poetry in a pre-Romantic dimension highly justified.

The fact of the matter is that the second half of the Cinquecento witnesses a substantial shift in the development of the human spirit in the artistic domain which in turn becomes impregnated with a profound moral significance. There is an autonomous and lofty transformation affecting the posture and the taste of literary expression; a modern critical sense which manifests itself in its confrontation with the poetic tradition. The authenticity of Mannerism, writes Scrivano, may be reflected in the new scientific outlook provided by Galileo:

> Una serie di prove dell'autonomia storica, sempre relativa, e definita sempre rispetto a pieno Rinascimento e a barocco, è offerta dalla posizione non secentesca e non piu rinascimentale del Tasso, dalle polemiche intorno alle arti e ai generi letterari, dal contrasto tra aristotelismo, non più scolasticizzante o almeno non sempre, e platonismo, che se appare intriso di ficinianesimo, e prevalentemente umanizzante e storicizzante, dalle nuove posizioni scientifiche che si catalizzeranno poi nella figura del Galilei.[24]

The most significant product of this transformation lies, naturally, in Tasso, who achieves a great revolution in his language. Indeed, the whole Mannerist era, says Scrivano, may be defined by the name of Tasso; the poet of the Gierusalemme who does not represent a precise ideal. On the contrary, he symbolizes the embodiment of a disturbed unity:

> Il profilo di quest'età, che può essere fissata tra il decennio '40-'50 e 1'85...si definisce soprattutto nel nome del Tasso: ma basta scorrere le polemiche che intorno al suo poema si scatenarono per osservare come egli non impersoni ideali precisi e totali di quest'età, e ciò perché essa non ha ideali precisi e totali.[25]

In summary, Scrivano's study of the rhythmic sensitivity of the artist as well as of structural modes in the poetic theory of the Cinquecento constitutes a valid approach toward the study of Mannerism. The rigorous separation between literature and the visual arts imposed by Scrivano should not detract from his genuine amplification of the transformation of taste as conceived, for instance, in Francesco Patrizi's illustration of Petrarch's theory of composition in the Dialogo dell'Historia.[26]

Perhaps the most original approach to the question of Mannerism as the formulation of a new stylistic expression is furnished by the American art scholar, Sydney Joseph Freedberg. Although Freedberg's notion of the maniera is conceived as a category of style in the visual arts, and his study is strictly devoted to the painting of the Cinquecento, the transfer, however, to the literary domain can and should be made. Freedberg provides a profound examination of the "rhetoric" of the figure in painting; artificial poses and gestures in the painting of the maniera create a rhythmic pattern that is concealed beneath the posture of the mask. That is, the Mannerist form reflects the artist's "conscious artifice" whose elusive reality produces the inevitable frustration when attempting to penetrate it.[27]

The "mannered" quality, or the pejorative idea of a decomposition of the classical form in the art of the maniera

appears to have been resolved. Freedberg contends that the synthetic force of the Mannerist form reflecting a representation of an abstracted reality is essentially the inevitable consequence of the history of sixteenth century style. In addition to embodying the leitmotiv of an individual artist, maniera also defines style in an absolute sense: the qualitativeattainment of grace and utmost sophistication. The great masters of color, during the High Renaissance, asserts Freedberg, achieved the ultimate perfection in style in the so-called maniera moderna. Now, it follows, that subsequent artistic expression did not feel compelled to reject existing patterns of creation but simply studied and recycled the tradition; the results are an affected disposition--the bella maniera. Hence, the situation of the Mannerist artist is of necessity one of extreme sophistication: the manifestation of simple objective reality is not its mode. "Referring to his models," writes Freedberg,

> within the classical style, for more than to nature, the Maniera painter is fabricating one art out of the material of another...And to be concerned, as the Maniera painter is, with the classical model chiefly as a treasury of ideal forms is to become, exactly, formalistic; purely aesthetic values and intellectualizing ones, will dominate a picture...what such a picture records are appearances shaped in the mind, not determined by outward experience....[28]

Paradoxically, the transmutation of the classical form consists

consists in the recapitulation of the ontological mode of the classical legacy.

"Oppressed with its own genealogy, antiquarian, and even pendantically learned," continues Freedberg, "the Maniera was prone...to the habit of quotation.... Usually, it consists in borrowing a form to be the vehicle of a meaning very different from that which is carried in the original...."[29]

In his book, Painting in Italy: 1500-1600, which is a more detailed study of the point in question, Freedberg reiterates his previous position on the Mannerist's dependence upon the classical vocabulary. Thus, in Leonardo Da Vinci, whose work represents the inception of the rhetorical transformation, the reorganization of the experience of nature is not contained in an oversweeping process; rather it is a gradual and subtle sublimation. In his Adoration of the Magi, Leonardo demonstrates that the phenomenological representation of reality and the psychological configuration must be equally stated in the image, the harmony of which bears that artificial posture assessed so negatively by anti-Mannerist critics. "In painting," writes Freedberg, quoting also from Da Vinci's Trattato,

> it is not sufficient to describe the physical phenomena alone: A good painter has two chief objects to paint, man and the intention of his soul.... It is through the substance that spiritual life must be communicated; and this life must be expressed in a concordant vital motion of the body.... And, with arbitrary license: where natural vitality is lacking, create an artificial one....[30]

A further impetus in the direction of the alteration of the classical cadre is furnished by Michelangelo's incomplete design of the Cascina project where the significance of form over the subject itself is sufficiently demonstrated. His dependence upon the classical text, however, is never quite diminished. "Michelangelo," states Freedberg,

> was disposed from the beginning towards a retrospective and at the same time classicizing attitude toward style... Michelangelo's scene (Cascina) betrays a persistent link with Quattrocento modes of thought...and elements of style.... Unlike Leonardo, for Michelangelo the subject battle held no ideal or essential sense; what he found in it was a pretext for an exercize in dealing with anatomy in action. Painting or not, he confronted his narrative with a sculptor's mind and in sculptor's terms.[31]

Michelangelo's influence upon the first generation of Mannerist artists was overwhelming to the point that for a very long time the critical notion was established that considered the Mannerist experiment a sheer cerebral playfulness, a hollow imitation of Michelangelo's forms. This view has been gravely challenged. That Michelangelo, together with Leonardo and Raphael, will always symbolize an intrinsic force for the first formulation of the Mannerist style, around 1520, is indisputable. It is also undeniable, however, that the Mannerist experiment undertaken by Pontormo, Rosso, and Parmigianino, respectively, constitutes the first authentic blow against the classical mode of thought.

To say that these Florentine Mannerists worked within an anti-classical frame of mind, attempting to modify the

harmonious criteria achieved with the absolute conquest of style in Quattrocento painting is really insufficient. Indeed, the early Mannerists strove to transfigure the very essence of the forma mentis, to revolutionize the conventional attitude to such notions as harmony, taste, form and content. Professor Freedberg sets the year 1518 as the inception of the radical transformation of the classical world-view. It is the year during which Pontormo, in his work S. Michele Visdomini, attains a remarkable innovation of style. "It is a structure of kinetic fragments," writes Freedberg, in analyzing the altar piece,

> held together in a precarious equilibrium. In this kinetic scheme there is no longer the classical effect of an equation between energy and substance...the result violates the normal visual experience of nature.... Emotion in the altar transcends the boundaries imposed by classicism on the actors...the Visdomini altar established a threshold for research into multiple new possibilities of style beyond the limits of classicism...[32]

The fragmentation of the classical vocabulary is one of many aspects characterizing Pontormo's aesthetic originality. His arduous process of maturation, dominated by a lugubrious personality reflecting itself in such notorious compositions as Vertumnus and Pomona, The Road to Calvary, and culminating with the Deposition, witnesses a restructuring of pose and gesture: the artist himself becomes an essential actor, or to put it in Montaigne's context, the artist can state: "je suis moi-même la matière de mon livre."

The formulation and the elaboration of the new rhetoric in Mannerist painting, according to Freedberg, is to be described as a gradual evolution which may be understood in several phases. Thus, the rejection of the classical auctoritas, the licentia poetarum, undertaken by the paintings of Pontormo and Rosso, which repudiates the conventional norm as an essential prerequisite for poetic majesty, is known as the Early Maniera. In many ways, however, Rosso's work represents a somewhat more radical statement of the post-Renaissance era. The most daring effect brought about by Giovanni Battista di Jacopo, better known as il Rosso, lies in the elusive image. The classical canon of the distinct and clear line has been warped, suggesting the substance rather than dictating it. "...Rosso had given his large design the character of an abstracting scheme," observes Freedberg, "...the figures have the look of apparitions, caricatured and substanceless, with a probing angularity of shapes.... The persons of the drama seem possessed automata."[33]

In a subsequent phase of the Maniera painting, the most prominent artistic personality is Giulio Romano whose persistent alteration of the classical world-view is outlined in the technique of the decoration. In his Palazzo del Tè the prolixity of the ornatus device assumes a mimetic realization of architectural function. "...at times within the decorations of the Tè," writes Freedberg, "an anticlimax of unreason is

achieved by pushing logic necessarily to its limits. The conclusion of reason in absurdity is fully conscious. Throughout the decoration there is a strain...of wilful, even sadistic, humour...the prime emotions by which Giulio is moved are too complex...but their main channel of expression is the first... demonstration of the concettismo that was to be one among the hallmarks of literary...Mannerism."[34]

The final phase of the Maniera is characterized by extreme sophistication. Parmigianino's sublimation of the phenomenal realm into an aura of synthetic expression, together with his inimitable gracefulness of the image, embody the "stylish style" of the High Maniera. The elliptic syntax persistently represented by the Mannerist artist betrays the disjunction of the temporal vision; the ugly realization of an irretrievable harmony; the despair of the multitude whose deplorable condition revolves around the human limitation. "Excessively sophisticated, the best high Maniera painters seem poignantly aware that there is no longer any virtue in a simple statement; indeed it is a circumstance of their contemporary history...that there are no longer any simple certitudes to state. Each facet of experience may contain not just an ambiguity but... an ambivalence."[35]

Freedberg's approach to the question of Mannerism represents an indisputable turning point. It is a new orientation which attempts, for the first time, to penetrate

the intimate connection between the linguistic transformation in literature and the experimental configuration in the visual arts. Unfortunately, for those students whose interest in Mannerism is only secondary, the question of the rhetorical transformation in Mannerism is never quite fully articulated; on the other hand, the concept of an anticlassical reaction is unintentionally affirmed. Indeed, it is characteristic of Freedberg that he describes the transformation as "a dissent from classicism," thus adding to the confusion.

Perhaps, the most positive study on Mannerism is given by Georg Weise. Georg Weise has spent a great deal of his scholarly efforts on restoring the proper concept of Mannerism in Literature and the visual arts. The methodology employed by Weise is, in essence, derived from Wölfflin's Stilsgeschichte, namely, a detailed classification of all the stylistic elements that underline the total cadre of the Mannerist posture. Unlike other Wölfflinian critical offshoots that have obfuscated the notion of Mannerism mostly because they have capitalized on the anti-classical and degenerative quality of Mannerism, quite often with extreme consequences, Weise's study of Mannerism, on the other hand, while affirming the originality of the maniera style, emphasizes its coexistence with Late-gothic and classical forms.

One important aspect of this approach is that its formalistic analysis never becomes generic nor is it confined

to speculative observations. The reason for this is that Weise's method presupposes concrete formal elements. Thus, in a manner which recalls Wölfflin himself, Weise brings into focus particular features of the human configuration and utilizes these forms to observe the stylistic transformation of the Renaissance. Most important, the Gothic stream of thought, with its peculiar forms which merge with the rational artistic representations of the Quattrocento, from Donatello to Botticelli, seems to exist analogously in literature, particularly with Boiardo, and Lorenzo il Magnifico.[36] What Weise attempts to achieve by this is essentially a transposition; that is, rewriting the history of Mannerist criticism by borrowing the terms governing the visual arts and projecting them into the field of literature. "Il Manierismo nella sfera letteraria come in quella artistica," writes Weise,

> rimane legato a una tradizione di aulica raffinatezza e preziosità derivante dal Medioevo e in stretti rapporti con le diverse manifestazioni di una 'rinascita' dell'elemento cavalleresco constatabile verso la metà del Cinquecento...Arte e letteratura rispecchiano un secolo come il Cinquecento, che ricerca in ogni cosa la peregrinità e la grazia, che tutto affina e illegiadrisce, che rifuggendo istintivamente da quanto è semplice, primitivo, ingenuo, fa della vita un'arte, per non dire un artificio....[37]

There exists in the Cinquecento, according to Weise, an intimate connection between the tendency to abstract the configuration in art and the synthetic metaphor in literature.

Moreover, the analogy is extended in terms of Late Gothic elements which intertwine increasingly with the classical composition. The reason for the Chivalric Romance revival and its sporadic outbursts during the course of the Renaissance however, are never quite spelled out by Weise and one is likely to conceive it strictly in terms of ornate rhetorical manifestations. A more critical understanding lies, in my opinion, in an anthropological frame of reference. The Black Death[38] of the fourteenth century which struck indiscriminately at innocent men, women, and children, thus reducing dramatically the population of Asia and Europe, must have had a horrifying effect upon the power of the creative personality. Hence, the implacable stride forward of the rational revolution which was initiated with Giotto in the art of painting, and propagated by Petrarch, in literature, suddenly, was reversed. Obviously, therefore, the development of Classicism in the Renaissance cannot be construed in terms of rectilinear projection,but rather as one in which the reappearance of Gothic forms is always present. Weise is correct in postulating the gradual reelaboration of Gothic style in both, the visual arts and in the literary sphere, the culmination of which is represented by El Greco on the one hand and Tasso on the other.

The most penetrating analysis of this stylistic transformation, in terms of the human configuration, is provided by

the art of Pontormo who, according to Weise is not exactly anticlassical, but rather a seer who warped the conventional mode of the aesthetic experience.

> Chez les répresentants de la réaction anticlassique, déjà, et notamment chez Pontormo, on peut noter, une certaine résurgence des éléments gothiques... on rencontre ces reviviscences dans les corps sveltes et anguleux, dans les movements contournés... alliée a un esprit d'inquiétitude qui s'oppose à la sérénité harmonieuse et optimiste de la période classique précédente.[39]

The presence of Gothic elements in the phenomenon of Mannerism in the Cinquecento which dislocates the concept of linear perspective and spatial harmony is not only dramatized by Pontormo's "espressività, angosciosa e tormentata, dei colori discordanti e privi di sensualità serena ed armoniosa, la rinuncia della concretezza spaziale ed alla staticità equilibrata tipiche della pittura classica."[40] The reappearance of the Gothic vision of man with its emphasis on the ogival configuration, and its agonizing expression becomes a pervasive element in the art of the first Mannerist generation, particularly in Rosso, and Parmigianino.

This Gothic quality which determines the Mannerist form may be identified essentially in the following four components: the ascetic posture, the vertical gesture, the chivalric grace, and the rhythmic exaltation of the irrational. This tendency, which, according to Weise, makes its appearance in the Late Quattrocento, is indispensable for the formulation of the Mannerist style, and the transformation of the classical

tradition. Among the principal motives, furnished by Weise, that come to form the Mannerist style, there is the specific example of the mannered representation of the hands, the arms, and the busts, producing an effect of total angular form. Another stylistic transformation mentioned by Weise lies in the twisted configuration of the Madonna and Child presented by the Mannerist, dominated by the so-called serpentine curve as in Michelangelo's sculptures. That is to say, the Madonna and Child never look at each other, both are turned in opposite directions.

A similar contrapposto effect may be found in Cinquecento poetry, particularly in the Délie of Maurice Scève:

> L'ardent désir du haut bien désiré
> Qui aspirait à cette fin heureuse,
> A de l'ardeur si grand feu attiré,
> Que le corps vif est ja poussière ombreuse:
> Et de ma vie, en ce point malheureuse,
> Pour vouloir toute à son bien condescendre,
> Et de mon être, ainsi réduit en cendre,
> Ne m'est resté que ces deux signes-ci:
> L'oeil larmoyant pour piteuse te rendre,
> La bouche ouverte à demander merci. (82)[41]

The use of the ellipse or what appears to be the absence of a logical connection between the first and the third verses brings into relief the antithetical quality of the poet's construction. The isolation of the second verse, on the other hand, illustrates the psychological drama of the poet in pure platonic terms, namely: the soul (Essence) imprisoned by the body (Matter).

In terms of providing an ideological definition of Mannerism, Weise warns against global conceptualizations for the spirit of contradiction is the principal mechanism which governs Mannerism. Citing Wurtemberger, the German critic who represents a radical interpretation of Dvořák's exaltation of spiritual subjectivism, in his book Der Manierismus: Der europäische Stil des sechzehnten Jahrhunderts, Weise is eager to point out the peculiar position of Mannerism as a style: "Der Manierismus ist nicht ein so umfassender, allgemein und überall anwendbarer Stil...wie es bei der Gothik, bei der Renaissance und beim Barock...."[42] Nor is it adequate to base the premises of Mannerism upon the metaphor of anticlassical position. In what he calls the dual concept of Renaissance, Weise illustrates that the style of the Maniera is intrinsically connected to the crisis of the Middle Ages; that is to say the crisis originating as a result of the confrontation between the culture of classical antiquity and Christianity. In what appears to shed new light on the interpretation of the Renaissance itself, thus demolishing the Burckardtian misconception of "dark ages" as a phenomenon preceding the classical revival the Renaissance originates not out of the restitution of classical antiquity but rather out of the crisis of the Middle Ages. "Il moto rinascimentale, insomma, non nacque dagli studia humanitatis," writes Eugenio Garin, who is cited by Weise to support his contention,

> affermatisi come demolitori del Medioevo ed instauratori del Rinascimento, ma dal senso stesso della vita e dalla cultura di un Medioevo in crisi.... Si tratta dunque, secondo il Garin, di un movimento iniziatosi gia nel Medioevo e influenzato da una visione nuova dei classici, suggeritori non solo di senso critico e di ridestata mondanità, ma interpretati sempre di più all'insegna di un ideale etico di perfezione e dignità sovrumane.[43]

Now, if this assumption is correct, it follows that the Mannerist style is intimately connected with the naturalistic stream of thought embodied by Machiavelli on the one hand, and the classical idealistic vision of man embodied by Petrarch, on the other. From the Roman de la Rose to Corneille's heroic ideal, the two currents are said to be interacting with one another. Consequently, it would be unwise to try to interpret the art of the Maniera within a unified perimeter. "Il Rinascimento," writes Weise,

> e la sua efficacia spirituale non si lasciano racchiudere in una formula unica ed esclusiva. Mi sembra difettosa l'idea che un fenomeno storico, svoltosi nel tempo e in contatto continuo con la totalità delle manifestazioni europee, possa spiegarsi come realizzazione di un solo principio fondamentale... Il Rinascimento come epoca storica continuatasi dal Trecento al Cinquecento fanno parte in ogni caso due forze contrastanti, di cui ciascuna separatamente ha fornito il connotato predominante a una delle due definizioni, la naturalistica e la classica, opposte in antitesi difficilmente conciliabile.[44]

Footnotes

1. Georg Weise, "Le Maniérisme: Histoire d'un terme," Op. Cit., p. 116.

2. G. Weise, p. 116.

3. Max Dvořák, Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte: Studien zur Abendländischen Kunstentwicklung, (München: R. Piper, 1924), p. 270.

4. M. Dvořák, p. 275.

5. M. Dvořák, p. 271.

6. M. Dvořák, p. 257.

7. Jacques Bousquet, Mannerism, Op. Cit., p. 27.

8. J. Bousquet, p. 31.

9. J. Bousquet, p. 55.

10. J. Bousquet, p. 60.

11. J. Bousquet, p. 66.

12. See Horst, Irwin B. "The Anabaptists in English Literature," in Mennonite Quarterly Review. vo. XXIX (1955), pp. 232-39. See, too, the more comprehensive study by Bender, Mary Eleanor. "The Sixteenth Century Anabaptists in Literature," in The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision. Scottdale, 1957, pp. 275-290.

13. J. Bousquet, p. 28.

14. J. Bousquet, pp. 31-32.

15. Wylie Sypher, Four Stages of Renaissance Style, Op. Cit., p. 5.

16. W. Sypher, pp. 14-15.

17. W. Sypher, p. 17.

18. W. Sypher, pp. 121-24.

19. W. Sypher, pp. 110-12.

20. W. Sypher, pp. 117-18.

21. Riccardo Scrivano, Il Manierismo nella letteratura del Cinqucento, (Padova: Liviana, 1959), pp. 44-45.

22. R. Scrivano, p. 45.

23. R. Scrivano, p. 47.

24. R. Scrivano, "Il Problema storico e critico del secondo Cinquecento," in A. Quondam ed., Problemi del Manierismo, Op. Cit., p. 269.

25. R. Scrivano, p. 271.

26. The Dialogo dell'Historia is Francesco Patrizi's first major work written at the age of 31. Although more elaborate systems on Rhetoric and Poetics will be presented 22 years later, it is apparent at the introduction of this Dialogo, published in 1560, that Patrizi's concern with history reflects an assiduous preoccupation with the manner in which the form may express the content in eloquent terms. Writes Patrizi: "Noi vi diamo, candidi lettori, dieci dialoghi ...Ne' quali sono disputate e risolute tutte le cose apparteneti all'historia e allo scriverla e all'osservarla. Cosa veramente molto giovevole a tutte le sorti degli huomini, ma molto più a coloro che sono nati per governare altrui. La quale è stata fin hora da pochissimi scrittori e manchevolmente trattata. Per tanto averete voi negli stessi Dialoghi non picciol saggio di ciò, che dal medesimo Patritio...si possa sperare, in così alta sua impresa di tutta l'eloquenza. La quale sarà non solamente per gli oratori...ma per tutti i parlatori, e i scrittori. Né più per via delle osservanze dei tre soli generi, ma per via di scienza e delle cagioni, e de'principi primi del parlare. Il che già più di duemila anni largamente accennato da Platone, non è però stato tanto ardito d'imprendere. Francesco Patrizi, Della Historia: Diece Dialoghi, (Venetia: Andrea Arrivabene, 1560), p. 1.

27. Sydney Joseph Freedberg, "Observations on the Painting of the Maniera," Op. Cit., p. 187.

28. S. J. Freedberg, pp. 188-89.

29. S. J. Freedberg, p. 191.

30. S. J. Freedberg, Painting in Italy: 1500-1600, (Baltimore: Penguin, 1970), pp. 7-8.

31. S. J. Freedberg, pp. 15-19.

32. S. J. Freedberg, p. 119.

33. S. J. Freedberg, pp. 127-28.

34. S. J. Freedberg, p. 166.

35. S. J. Freedberg, pp. 287-88.

36. In what ways are Boiardo and Lorenzo il Magnifico Gothic? The affirmation of studia humanitatis in the Quattrocento implies also an indissoluble link to the belief in social emancipation. There exists a well established faith, an undisputed optimism, that the human lot and its institutions can be corrected by means of rehabilitating and pursuing the concept of studia humanitatis. If this definition, however general it may be, suffices to indicate the tone of Quattrocento ideals, it follows that the poetic personalities of Boiardo and Lorenzo il Magnifico cannot be labeled as humanistic. In his Amorum Libri, for instance, Boiardo's lyric yields a frequent leitmotif of melancholy. The landscape in Boiardo's poetry reflects the poet's lamentation of a disillusioned heart; nature appears corruptible: "Fior scoloriti e palide viole, che si suavemente il vento move, vostra madona dove è gita? e dove è gito il sol che aluminar vi sôle? ... Ahi lasso! ove è fugito, ove ene il tempo fugitivo andato? Nel qual sopra ogni amante fui beato?..." Boiardo, "Amorum Libri," in L. Russo, I Classici italiani, Vol. I. Op. Cit., pp. 993-995. So, too, in the celebrated poem "Trionfo di Bacco e Arianna," Lorenzo conveys a sense of fatalism because "of tomorrow there is no certainty."

37. Georg Weise, "Manierismo e letteratura: il gusto delle antitesi astratte e delle metafore concettose nella lirica italiana e francese del Rinascimento," Rivista di letterature moderne e comparate, Vol. 13, fas. 1-2, giugno, (Firenze, Sansoni, 1960), pp. 50-1.

38. See Philip Ziegler, The Black Death, (New York: John Day, 1969), on the Black Death itself. See also Millard Meiss' study with respect to Sienese art: Painting in Florence and Siena After the Black Death; Op. Cit. Philip Ziegler points out that the effects of the Black Death on the church and man's mind have been rather significant. Writes Ziegler: "...Any history of the Black Death which ignored its impact on the minds of its victims would be notably incomplete... No one can live through a catastrophe so devastating and so inexplicable without retaining forever the scars of his experience." (p. 259) With respect to religion, Ziegler writes: "The Black Death did not cause the Reformation...but did it not cause a state of mind in which doctrines were more easily doubted and in which the

Reformation was more immediately possible?" (p. 270). In his study, Millard Meiss shows that a substantial period of time following the Black Death was pervaded by a deep sense of pessimism so dissimilar to the humanistic value of the unlimited vision in man. Writes Meiss: "On first consideration the secular literature of the third quarter of the fourtëenth century seems to disclose a different state of mind than the painting. ...Among the numerous poems on death and the gruesome decay of the flesh, one by Antonio Pucci, like several paintings, directly descriptive of the plague. But this period is most memorable for the composition of the Decameron, which was often directed at the Church....Tuscan painters and sculptors of this period were conspicuously indifferent to ancient art .... No painting of the time exhibits an organic conception of the figure, a spatial movement and a contrapposto so reminescent of ancient art .... Not until the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century do such connections with ancient art reappear. Between the two historical moments the painters of the third quarter, or even second half, of the fourteenth century were attracted rather by the Byzantine and Romanesque art of the Duecento, by Simone Martini and northern Gothic styles related to him." (pp. 157-58.)

39. G. Weise, "Le Maniérisme: histoire d'un terme," Op. Cit., p. 117.

40. G. Weise, Il Manierismo: bilancio critico, Op. Cit., p. 17.

41. Maurice Scève, Oeuvres poétique complètes, ed. établie par Hans Staub, introd. par Georges Poulet, (Paris: Union Générale d'éditions, 1971), vol. II, p. 82.

42. G. Weise, p. 139.

43. G. Weise, "Il Duplice concetto di rinascimento," in A. Quondam. ed., Problemi del manierismo, Op. Cit., pp. 207-8.

44. G. Weise, p. 207.

PART II

Chapter 4 - Mannerism as the Expression of a Self-Sufficient Aesthetic Quality

So far, I have examined two preponderant schools of thought: namely, Mannerism seen as an anticlassical notion and the art of the Maniera as an autonomous style. Also, I have tried to present to the student of Mannerism the available options in an historical and dialectic frame of reference. Obviously, the present study is by no means intended to be exhaustive. This second part in particular, in its modest way, wishes to make accessible to the reader a spectrum embodying the various components of the criticism of Mannerism. Before one can proceed to reconsider the theory of Mannerism, it is essential to examine the controversy. After all, one ought to remember that it is not uncommon to examine a good number of recently published literary manuals and to discover, much to one's dismay, that the term Mannerism has been excluded. Be that as it may, at this point of my observation, however, there appears to emerge a fairly consistent view of what Mannerism, as a critical term, ought to represent. Thus, the late Gothic style in art, for example, is an intrinsic part of Mannerism and intimately connected with the courtly world view of abstracted reality. In literature, likewise, the stylistic transformation of the classical form which had attained its ultimate realization with the art of Brunelleschi in archi-

tecture, Masaccio in painting, Donatello in sculpture, provides a similar analogy with the rhetorical innovation going on in literature of the Cinquecento. I hope to clarify these points in greater detail in part three and four of the present study. In the meantime, another dimension of Mannerism ought to be considered, namely, that body of criticism which looks at the notion of Mannerism as perfectly capable of standing on its own terms, that is to say, that notion of Mannerism which sees it as possessing an aesthetic entity and which seems to suggest, avant la lettre, the symbolist's credo of Art for Art's Sake.

The individual responsible for having generated this approach is none other than Giorgio Vasari himself. From its inception to its denouement, Vasari's Vite is a continuous glorification of Renaissance art in terms of its attainments of grace, refinement, and beauty as opposed to the "uncouth gothic manner." Moreover, when examined in contrast to Cellini's writings on the sculptor's and the goldsmith's art, or Benedetto Varchi's Lezioni, Vasari's Vite appears to be one of the most influential documents on the theory of art in the Cinquecento. Through his observations on individual artists, it is possible to form a conception of Vasari's theory of art, and consequently, to acquire a closer perspective on how the sixteenth century saw art.

Among the various notions that are accentuated in Vasari's Vite which formed his own criteria for the criticism of Art, there appears the idea of art as an imitation of nature. The imitation of nature in Vasari, however, is a very ambiguous

concept. It seems to be governed by a dual conception, namely, realistic and transcendental. Thus, in the first part of the Vite, what makes Giotto the most important restorer of classical antiquity is that his figures are closer to nature. The achievement of spatial relationshp which makes Giotto one of the innovators of Western Art, par excellence, is seen by Vasari as a realistic revolution in contrast to the confused composition of the Byzantine maniera.

> "...(Giotto) acquistò grandissima fama," writes Vasari, referring to Giotto's completion of Cimabue's frescoes in Assisi, "...E nel vero si vede in quell 'opera gran varietà non solamente nei gesti et attitudini di ciascuna figura, ma nella composizione ancora di tutte le storie, senzaché fa bellissimo vedere la diversità degl' abiti di que' tempi e certe imitazioni et osservazioni delle cose della natura. E fra l'altre è bellissima una storia dove uno asetato, nel quale si vede vivo il desiderio dell' acque, bee stando chinato in terra a una fonte con grandissimo e veramente meraviglioso affetto, intantoché par quasi una persona viva che bea... E perché, oltre quello che avera Giotto da natura, fu studiosissimo et ando sempre nuove cose pensando e della natura cavando, merito d'esser chiamato discepolo della natura e non d'altri."[1]

The view of nature which is intimately associated with an abstract conception of reality, on the other hand, gradually imposes itself in Vasari's Vite, as early as the Quattrocento artists. The firm belief that artistic expression may transcend the limitations of nature is affirmed with greater conviction in the frequent use of the following juxtapositions: "raffinatezza-angolarità," "armonioso-

confuso," "grazia-rozza," "bello-confuso," "maniera gotica-maniera antica," "maniera bizantina-maniera graziosa," "maniera rozza-maniera classica." If we consider, for example, Vasari's judgement of Ghiberti's art we find that these criteria are not simply an intrinsic mechanism of his system but also the unfolding process of his own conception of maniera. One may recall that Ghiberti was competing against some of the most gifted artists in Florence for the commission of the doors of the Baptistery.

> "E venuto il tempo che si aveva a vedere a paragone," writes Vasari, referring to the final selection of the contest, "fu la sua e le altre di quei maestri finite del tutto e date a qiudizio dell' Arte di' Mercatanti... In quella di Jacopo dalla Quercia erano le figure buone, ma non avevano finezza, sebbene erano fatte con disgno e diligenza. L'opera di Francesco di Vandabrina aveva buone teste ed era ben rinetta, ma era nel componimento confusa. Quella di Simon da Colle era un bel getto..., ma non aveva molto, disegno. Il saggio di Niccolò di Arezzo, che era fatto con buona pratica, aveva le figure tozze ed era mal rinetto. Solo quella storia che per saggio fece Lorenzo...era in tutte le parti perfettissima: aveva tutta l'opera disengno, ed era benissimo composta; le figure di quella maniera erano svelte e fatta con grazia..."[2]

Likewise, Vasari's description of each compartment of Ghiberti's work implies approbation of the latter's artfulness rather than his closeness to nature as a phenomenal reality: "...Nel primo quadro è l'Annunziazione di Nostra Donna; dove egli finse nell'at-

titudine di essa Vergine uno spavento ed un subito timore, storcendosi con grazia per la venuta dell' Angelo."[3] It should be noted here that Ghiberti's figure does not express an action "true to life" as was the case with Giotto's work. On the contrary, the image of terror is projected in aura of "grace."

To imitate within the realm of nature according to Vasari, means, in essence, to operate with an abstract vision of the universe. Likewise, the degree of perfection attained by such a process is irreducible. The basis of Vasari's theory of art ultimately lies in the notion of la grazia, assuming proportions of extreme refinement. The model, if you will, from which the artist derives his representation of this world is, in essence, the cerebral playfulness of his other-worldliness. "La grazia," writes Anthony Blunt, in his book, Artistic Theory in Italy, "...with Vasari, takes on a quite new function, it is distinguished from beauty, and even contrasted with it... Beauty is a rational quality dependent on rules, whereas grace is an undefinable quality dependent on judgement and therefore on the eye."[4] The notion of la grazia, as Vasari sees it, ought to be understood within the context of sprezzatura which is a conscious effort to appear spontaneous. "Any trace of laboriousness," continues Blunt, "any evidence that the artist has sweated over his work will destroy the grace of a painting and give to it what in Vasari's judgement is the fatal quality of dryness."[5] That the concept of art in Vasari ought to be

disassociated from a faithful imitation of nature, appears to be indisputable. Nor is the concept of imitation, on the other hand, resolved within a Neo-platonic dialectic, namely, that nature is a true expression of the world of the ideal. Representation of nature, in Vasari, appears to be confined to the area of self-expression. The maniera of the artist modifies or transforms the materials of the sensory world, possibly violating truth to nature. There appears to be a radical transmutation of the classical epistemology--that is, the way in which the artist perceives the sensible world. Just as the perception in the mind changes, so too, must the metaphor change. The classical artist of the Quattrocento prided himself on the metaphor of the "shining light" dissipating the "Dark Ages." The Mannerist artist, on the other hand, forges his image on the metaphor of bravura--that is, striving for the unreachable in a world that has become a labyrinth. This is essentially what brought many critics to look upon Mannerism as an expression of absolute aesthetic proportions. In other words, the whole Mannerist production, whether in the fine arts or the literary expression, is considered in the absence of stylistic principles. Such is the posture which characterizes John Shearman's research on Mannerism.

Shearman makes a concession to Curtius' theory of Mannerism as a preciosity of style recurring in every cycle of Europeran literature: "For self-conscious stylization is the common

denominator of all Mannerist works of art."[6] Nonetheless, it is precisely with the advent of Cinquecento artistic expression that Shearman sees the origin of "true Mannerism," existing in strict connection to other sister arts, music and literature. As to the cause and effect of the cyclic appearance of this irregular form, insofar as it deviates from the classical notion of composition, Shearman sees it strictly in terms of the development of style completely divorced from political and economical considerations. The aesthetic preoccupation of Mannerism, argues Shearman, is an intrinsic element of the Aristotelian idea of reasoned ornamentation. To the eyes of Vasari's generation, however, the decoration attained by the High Renaissance artists appeared as incomplete -- not quite unfolding the realization of classical taste. Ironically, Mannerist art, insists Shearman, expressed itself within the canons of classical decorum. "The proximity of this preceding period must have made the artist conscious, as Vasari was," writes Shearman,

> that the fifteenth century was still subclassical in its plainness and lack of elegance, and that the High Renaissance presented a swing towards a good style; they could not see, as we tend to see now, that the High Renaissance was the moment of equilibrium, in the Aristotelian sense, between clarity and fitness to purpose on the one hand and embellishment by elegance and graces of ornament on the other. They could reasonably see Mannerism as a continuation of a refining process begun in the High Renaissance, and they had little incentive to notice that the swing had gone byond the mean.[7]

To Shearman, then, Mannerism as a stylistic phenomenon appears as the most valid axiom, and it is on the basis of evolution of style rather than cultural history, according to this critic, that criticism of Mannerism ought to be based. There are of course other explanations that help to justify Shearmn's contention that the art of the Maniera is not an anti-classical expression but rather an extension of High Renaissance ideals. Among them, there is to be found a new conception of the work of art, based on what could be called the gallery mentality. That is to say, the rising of a new connoissuer with an unsatiable urge to possess "a Michelangelo" for no other reason than the desire to exhibit. "The idea in these cases," argues Shearman, "...must have led to two results in the mind of the artist, both central to Mannerism: the concept of the work of art as an enduring virtuoso performance (something stupendous) and the concept of the absolute work of art."[8]

The difference between John Shearman and other art critics who have endeavored to formulate an adequate theory of Mannerism embracing the fine arts as well as literature is considerable. We may recall the deceptive premise of Wylie Sypher's Four Stages of Renaissance Style or Jacques Bousquet's faux pas in his futile attempt to accomodate the Mannerists' definition to all aspects of European culture as long as it manifests the acromegalic metaphor in form and in content. In view of this tendency to over-generalize, one is moved to a standing ovation in appreciation of Shearman's

effort to establish order in an already nebulous area. Thus, Mannerism in the Cinquecento is clear and distinct from other Mannerisms in Western art. Moreover, Cinquecento Mannerism is not a mere recurrent phenomenon rather it is born out of the exploring vision of a Leonardo and a Raphael -- specifically between the year 1480 and 1520. With Leonardo's experiment in the visual arts, the attitude of the Mannerist artist is forged. "In the Leda," writes Shearman,

> he [Leonardo] established a new canon of the female nude, which was a renewed classicism emulating but not imitating the formal qualities of the antique and exceeding it in sensuousness. In the Mona Lisa he established a new and more ambitious concept of portraiture: to describe not only the exterior qualities of the subject but also the inner qualities of mind. In the Battle of Anghiari...he raised history to an undreamed-of level of energy and violence. In the lost Angel of the Annunciation, he experimented with a new relationship between work of art and spectator....[9]

Similarly, the attainment of grace, elegance and poise as well as the conquest of difficulty in composition is paralleled by the phenomenon of Bembismo in literature. "What we witness in these works by Michelangelo and Raphael," writes Shearman,

> is, in effect, the formation of a new visual language.... Using the analogy in a more historical sense, what happens in the figurative arts is akin to Bembismo in literature -- its elegancies and intricacies, its disinvolvement from passion, and its tendencies towards abstractions from reality and towards classicism arise from an obsession with the problem of perfecting style.[10]

The notion of Mannerism in Shearman is never divorced from the classical tradition; it is always understood as a logical

extnesion of High Renaissance premises, "in the spirit of virtuoso performance." In the case of the figura serpentinata, however, Shearman insists on its classical origin, for in Horace as well as in Quintilian, it is shown that this rhetorical device is greatly desired as a vital element of the whole composition. The figura serpentinata or the flame-like form in the visual arts is paralleled by the contrapposto form in literature. "It is often expedient, and occasionally becoming," says Shearman citing Quintilian himself,

> to make some modification in the time-honoured order (in rhetoric). We see the same thing in pictures and statues. Dress, expression and attitude are frequently varied. The body when held up-right has but little grace, for the face looks straight forward, the arms hang by the side, the feet are joined and the whole figure is stiff from top to toes.... Where can we find a more extreme elaborate attitude than that of the Discobolos of Myron? ...A similar expression of grace and charm is produced by rhetorical figures, whether they be figures of thought or figures of speech....[11]

Regardless of the intensity in which the stylistic transmutation operates in Manneristic Art, one thing remains immutable; for Shearman it is never a question of historical introspection, but rather of an aesthetic essence independent of its manifesting modes. In other words, the treatment of a particular figure of a specific genre or the transformation of the artist's vocabulary is never conceived only in terms of the spirit of time and place.

Hence, the vogue of the pastoral genre as with Tasso's Aminta or as with Giovanni Battista Guarini's Pastor fido is

viewed invariably as a continuation of the classical heritage. That the pastoral is essentially a form of escape that enables the artist to reconcile his fragmented vision of a topsy-turvy world is considered inadequate by Shearman as an explanation of the origin of this genre. To Shearman, the appearance of the pastoral is simply an aesthetic contemplation. "In part, the pastorale," concludes Shearman, "is the result of a process (so characteristic of Mannerism) of consciously raising both these to the level of art where tragedy already stood.... The new-art-form, however, also had its roots elsewhere--in already re-established bucolic verse-forms.... This particular Mannerist abstraction was, very revealing, due largely to an overdose of Aristotle."[12]

Any interpretation in the direction of Geistesgeschichte is rejected a priori by Shearman. Whatever ambiguity there is it must be explained in terms of the self-assured Mannerist personality rather than ascribing it to the tensions of the sociologically uprooted Mannerist mind. The so-called alienated artist experiencing anguish in a displaced universe is simply a fabrication of the twentieth century critic, according to Shearman. Mannerism, argues Shearman, ought to be studied strictly in terms of the sixteenth-century mind.

> The assumption, once made, that Mannerism was a phenomenon that can be explained by modern terms of reference -- our prejudices and problems -- leads in extreme cases to the assertion that in Mannerism is the beginning of Modern Art. This deduction is perfectly

> logical, and its obvious silliness should be traced back to the premise on which it is based.... Where ever possible a work of art should be interpreted by throwing it back into the nest of ideas in which it was born....[13]

Shearman's preoccupation with the stylization of Mannerism certainly tends to overlook the historical method. He wants to capture the past as it really was indpendent of present bias with respect to methods of analysis. As an art historian, however, Shearman fails to see that he is necessarily committed, a priori, in his value judgements to some sort of critical posture. Consequently, his affirmation that Mannerist art should be rigidly scrutinized in terms of sixteenth-century man, specifically in Vasari's terms, will not suffice.

Mannerism as a fundamental aestheticism, aristocratic and hermetic in character, is similarly formulated in Aldo Scaglione's study: "Cinquecento Mannerism, and the Uses of Petrarch." Scaglione sees the legitimacy of comparing literature and the fine arts but prefers, instead, to place the notion of Mannerism in a distinct literary setting. Besides the analogy of aesthetic contemplation in the figurative arts which negates temporal premises and therefore elusive worldly preoccupations, literary Mannerism, Scaglione believes, is perfectly capable of withstanding the test of its own autonomy. In fact, the idea of Mannerism in literature is founded before, contrary to established assumption, the experimental attitude of the Florentine school of painting in the Early Cinquecento. The Mannerist historical frame of reference, as Scaglione views it, may be extended from Boiardo's

abstracted heroes to Ariosto's paradoxic worldly structure and to Tasso's expression of conceits. What does this mean in terms of Mannerism as an aesthetic entity?

Shearman's approach, you may recall, is basically anti-historical insofar as the cause-and-effect phenomenon is reduced to the "Art-for-Art's Sake" mentality. That is to say, the execution of style becomes more important than the object itself. The accidental rather than the essential categories or, if you will, the bella figura rather than the substance, is articulated in the Mannerist production. Within this frame of reference neither the execution of the style in question nor the historian are really complelled to justify the existence of an historiographical conception. Stylistic transformations, then, are simply construed in terms of logical necessities evolving from the classical tradition itself.

In Scaglione's analysis of the inherent aestheticism of Mannerism, on the other hand, specific cultural trends can be historically identified. Thus, the convoluted imageries and the morphology of wit are linked to Petrarchism; the elliptical vision of this-worldliness implying contemplation of pure form may be attributed to Marsilio Ficino's Neo-platonism; refined and elegant projections are reminiscent of Late Gothic expression.

An important distinction implied in Scaglione's study of Mannerism is that the concept of aestheticism in Mannerist expression is not based on the late nineteenth century idea of beauty denuded of moral judgement. Scaglione's assumption

about the bravura phenomenon in Mannerist art is that it is rationally asserted. Hence, Ariosto's construction of an elusive universe displaced dramatically from time and space does not only represent the cerebral playfulness of a whimsical creative personality. In the Orlando Furioso there emerges an underlying tragic message, namely, that of the humanist mind grown weary of a world dominated by man's thought. "The Italian wars," writes Scaglione,

> the incipient religious crisis, and the crumbling of the liberal political hopes under the onslaught of the new despotisms were causing second thoughts on the validity of the humanistic hopes as to man's perfectibility and nobility. Ariosto was mirroring such trobuled conditions through the distorted psyches and the individualistic, nay egotistic drifting of the knights into webs of insoluble conflicts. It is particularly this achievement which places him alongside some masters of Mannerist art. The reader is artistically provoked by Rodomonte's horrid enormities just as is the spectator by the falling giants in Giulio Romano's Palazzo del Te or, in a different way, by the monsters of Bomarzo--so unnatural and yet so human.[14]

The dissolution of studia humanitatis, then may not necessarily be reduced to an evasion of extreme intoxication in stylistic contemplation. "More specifically still," continues Scaglione,

> Mannerism is a fundamental aestheticism which, short of art for art's sake, seeks refuge into an aristocratic, hermetically sealed, introspective world of refinement, away from a troubled and disappointing external world....[15]

In Scaglione's terms, the Mannerist experience may be understood in a somewhat heterogeneous concept: Petrarchism, Neo-platonism, Late Flamboyant Gothic. Now, among the

Cinquecento lyric poets there are Galeazzo di Tarsia, Gaspara Stampa, Angelo di Costanzo, and Giovanni Della Casa, who are individualized by Scaglione as part of a paradigma in which in the ultimate evolution of the conceit takes place. "... that of Casa (Mannerism)," writes Scaglione,

> consisted of rejecting the established literature of the models in order to find new ways, without, however, resorting to a new direct look on reality and life but taking refuge in a new literariness of metaphysical, abstract forms, which transcend the poverty of reality and supply a higher sense of our existence. The portraits of the real world come out distorted, like the exasperated metaphors of locks burning on a burning face, like the disturbingly and madly revolutionary self-portrait of Parmigianino in front of a convex mirror.[16]

Della Casa develops the Petrarchian metaphor to the highest degree breaking with traditional modalities with regards to logical functions. "Casa's strong visual metaphors," writes Scaglione, "strike the imagination beyond the logical justification of their conventional meaning just as do the sublimely, violently unfunctional 'indoor' windows and hanging piers of Michelangelo's vestibule to the Laurentian Library...."[17] Moreover, Della Casa constitutes the most important aspect of the uses of Petrarch as a Mannerist. The evolution of Petrarchism in this direction leads to the "painterly" quality of poetry.

Docere, movere, and delectare -- to teach, to move, and to please -- were the ultimate aims in the eloquence of Cicero. The Baroque, it has been suggested, seeks to move the beholder, to steer his inner passions, by means of the ornatus projected

toward the grandiloquent quality. The classical orator of the Roman Golden Age as well as the humanist of the Renaissance sought to convey a didactic message. Mannerist eloquence, on the other hand, resided in the realm of the pleasurable through aesthetic affinities. Such a tendency may be discerned in the interesting study by Samuel Y. Edgerton, Jr. Edgerton presents another dimension of the concept of Mannerism as an aesthetic entity. In his study of "Maniera and the Mannaia: Decorum and Decapitation in the Sixteenth Century," Edgerton examines the institution of public execution by establishing a remarkable correspondence between form and content, the manner in which the condemned man's final tribulation is turned into a stylized performance. "Public execution," writes Edgerton, "reached its apogee of artful performance during the Sixteenth Century."[18] The executions of Anne Boleyn, Mary Queen of Scots, and a great number of other victims of political and religious fanaticism were conducted in the spirit of pure style to render gracious and even beautiful one of the most brutal practices and psychologically debilitating experiences. "Death, even by capital punishment," observes Edgerton, "had not the finality it has today...the tendency... to insist on high style in matters of violence is almost as characteristic of mannerist painting and sculpture as it is of capital punishment... the articulate witness of...capital punishment seemed to be more concerned with how the condemned went to his death than why he was sentenced in the first place."[19] The propensity here, as with John Shearman, is to examine the problme of Mannerism strictly in terms of the sixteenth century mind. The public executions and their relation

to the figurative arts, the attitude toward capital punishment attaining glamorous proportions, and the intimate link between violence and style are viewed as expressions of Mannerism, as an aesthetic entity.

In conclusion, the criticism of Mannerism founded on the premises of *aesthetica* falls short of its goal. It has legitimately argued the historicity of Mannerism in the sixteenth century, within the cadre of Renaissance dynamics, thus opposing Curtius' theory on the plurality of Mannerisms in Western artistic expression. On the other hand, the very view of the art of the Maniera as an important aesthetic transition between the Renaissance and the Baroque is insufficient to account for the experimentation with media and the transformation of metaphor taking place during the post-Michelangelo era. A remarkable parallel might be drawn with respect to our own age. The doomsday-mentality, assuming proportions of considerable seriousness among reputable scientists, insofar as solar radiation, unprecedented diseases, and so forth are concerned, thus bringing about the possible extinction of the human race, this doomsday posture, hovering over twentieth-century man as a constant reminder of the fragility and the finality of *homo mundi*, bears a striking resemblance to the obsessed psyche of the Mannerist mind. Just as there is reason to believe that twentieth-century man nourishes no preconceived notion about *being* and *non-being* so too, the sixteenth-century man, particularly the Mannerist artist, experiences Giordano Bruno's *indifferenza della natura*. What can be said of the cultural

relativism in Montaigne's Essays? Consider the theme of the tempus fugit in Ronsard's poetry. What about Maurice Scève's elliptic verses? Shall we say that the language of Tasso is simply a logical extension of Petrarchian modules? Obviously, the Mannerist expression cannot be dismissed as a cerebral exercise in aestheticism. Beyond his gesture of apparent stylization the Mannerist artist, is in his own way, committed in a world that is radically changing and experiencing tragic displacement.

Footnotes

1. Giorgio Vasari, Le Vite, ed R. Bettarini, pp. 100-1. I have taken the liberty of underlining some phrases to indicate Vasari's meaning of nature in Giotto.

2. Giorgio Vasari, Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architetti, II, (Firenze: Salani, 1963), pp. 234-35.

3. Giorgio Vasari, p. 236.

4. Anthony Blunt, Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450-1600, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), p. 93.

5. A. Blunt, p. 95.

6. John Shearman, Op. Cit., p. 35.

7. J. Shearman, p. 42.

8. J. Shearman, p. 44.

9. J. Shearman, p. 49.

10. J. Shearman, pp. 60-61.

11. J. Shearman, p. 84.

12. J. Shearman, p. 91.

13. J. Shearman, p. 136.

14. Aldo Scaglione, "Cinquecento Mannerism and the Uses of Petrarch," Op. Cit., pp. 125-26.

15. A. Scaglione, pp. 127-28.

16. A. Scaglione, pp. 132-33.

17. A. Scaglione, p. 132.

18. Samuel Y. Edgerton, Jr., "Maniera and the Mannaia: Decorum and Decapitation in the Sixteenth Century," The Meaning of Mannerism, ed. by F. W. Robinson and S. G. Nichols, Jr., (Univ. Pr.: New England, 1972), p. 67.

19. S. Edgerton, p. 68.

Part II

Chapter 5 - Mannerism as the Reflection of "Ut pictura poesis."

In his Ars Poetica, Horace has attempted to equate poetry with painting in function as well as importance. Hence, the celebrated expression Ut pictura poesis, as is painting so is poetry, has never ceased to be the subject of heated debate. What is the relevance of this notion -- Ut pictura poesis -- with respect to the concept of Mannerism? I have already delineated to a certain degree Wylie Sypher's generalized rapprochement between art and literature. Although the legitimacy of literary Mannerism has been amply supported by having established a one-to-one correspondence between the acromegalic module in the figurative arts and the morphology of paradox in the written expression, it has been suggested that Sypher's approach is rather over-generalized. The Wolfflinian categories of architectural Baroque, you may recall, are easily transferred to literary analysis. Moreover, there are serious lacunae in Sypher's definition of Mannerism creating erroneous consequences rather than elucidating the problem. Thus, the atectonic or the so-called "malerisch" quality in Mannerist style--"the logic of the structure does not coincide with the structural elements"[1]--may be applied in any given literary period, leading to inevitable confusion. On the other hand, John Shearman has argued successfully for affinities between painting and literature without necessarily warping the chronological time-period of

Mannerism. Thus, Bembismo is seen as a phenomenon which can be analyzed together with Mannerism on the level of art,[2] without necessarily deviating from the Renaissance period. The overwhelming stress in Shearman's Ut pictura poesis, however, is to view Mannerism as a protracted experiment in style rather than reflective content.

In view of these considerations which include also criticism in the tradition of Curtius positing the autonomy of literary criticism, one may wonder where the legitimacy of comparing art and literature lies. On the other hand, a retrospective analysis of Aristotle's Poetics will unravel whatever misconception might be associated with the notion of Ut pictura poesis. Indeed, Aristotle is the first literary critic to have postulated the intrinsic similarity of structure between poetry and art. Concerning the problem of imitation, Aristotle places the Fine Arts together with epic poetry, tragedy, comedy,dithyrambic poetry, and most music under the general classification of imitative arts. although these elements differ from each other with respect to the media of expression embodied by the arts, Aristotle sees imitation in poetry as the basis for mankind's initial expressive manifestation of intellectual activity. The concept of mimesis is not reduced to a mere phenomenological representation of reality, but rather as an attempt to understand it as an imitation of the ideal, the universal. "In general," observes Aristotle,

> there seem to have been two causes for the origin of poetry, each of them natural. For imitation is natural to men from childhood and in this they differ from the other animals, because man is very imitative and obtains his first knowledge by means of imitation, and then everybody takes pleasure in imitation. An indication of this is found in experience. For we look with delight on pictures that accurately represent things that in themselves are painful for us to behold.... But if it happens that a man has not seen the original, he will get pleasure not from the imitation but from the skillful execution or the color or some similar cause...."[3]

Aristotle's observation, insofar as our immediate subject is concerned, is crucial for it embodies, I think, the fundamental germ for the Romantic-expressive theory of poetry which sees poetic imitation independent of rational thought. It is this poetry, existing on the pre-civilized level, which will be studied by Tasso, Vico, and culminate with Wordsworth. A literary criticism based on the simple effort of stylization of form is consequently operating within a phenomenological dimension, that is to say, examining things the way they appear to the senses rather than reason. Moreover, the paragon of the arts in Renaissance poetics constitutes a natural assumption among artists of this period.

The Horatian idea of Ut pictura poesis, independent of its implied meaning, has had considerable influence upon generations of artists. This formula for analyzing painting and other arts became a commonplace in the sixteenth century. Thus, Ariosto, Tasso, Spenser, and Shakespeare have been called descriptive poets. "Painter and critic, Reynolds instanced Michelangelo as the prime witness to the poetical part of our art of painting.... Thus

a poetical or highly imaginative painter could be compared with the painting poets."[4]

One of the first Italian critics to grapple with the notion of Ut pictura poesis while examining the problem of literary Mannerism was Ferruccio Ulivi. In his books, Il Manierismo del Tasso e altri studi (1966), and Poesia come pittura (1969), Ulivi begins with the premise of Panofsky's idea and Mario Praz's Mnemosyne, namely, that the structural components of the figurative arts bear a remarkable affinity with the pattern and posture of the literary counterpart.[5] In studying Tasso's Discorsi del poema eroico, Ulivi points out how Tintoretto's treatment of the chiaroscuro is reflected in the ornate language of the Liberata. The concept of imitation as a reflection of an illustrious, great and perfect action is indissolubly linked to the marvelous, and based on ornate quality.[6] Just as the painter must look beyond the visual model of the sensible world, so, too, the imitator of an historical action must interpret it not as it was but as it should have been. "Nella Liberata," writes Ulivi alluding to the expressive affinity between Tasso and Tintoretto,

> la visione del mondo è coerente in ogni parte, e il poeta non cerca capziosi diversivi...ma trae gli effetti da un'attenzione unanime alla vita ne registra turbamenti.... Ogni aspetto e motivo viene insomma reintegrato nella poetica.... In tal senso il Tasso è davvero vicino al Tintoretto; gli è vicino anche per quel gusto d'un grandioso esteriore dove s'infiltra l'inquietudine della coscienza.[7]

"Reintegrato nella poetica," implies that the poet forges his reality through a process of abstraction.

The most extensive treatment of literary Mannerism that attempts to explore the notion of Ut pictura poesis is the exhaustive volume of Gustav René Hocke's Die Welt als Labyrinth, "The World as Labyrinth." A former student of Ernst Robert Curtius, Hocke adopted the system of Toposforschung and carried it to the ultimate consequences, examining the various ramifications of the Mannerist topoi in Western Literature.

The so-called Mannerist time-period, in addition to being a constant in Western artistic manifestation, is amplified by Hocke. Thus that Mannerist tendency which finds its most articulate expression in the post-Renaissance ambience is located between 1520 and 1650, precisely from the death of Raphael to the "Vision" of Pascal. The Early Maniera identified in Pontormo's art is also to be found in literature, musick, philosophy and religion as an avant-garde and subjective phenomenon. The principal figures enumerated by Hocke within the Mannerist spectrum of the fine arts are as follows: Parmigianino, Rosso Fiorentino, Bronzino, the older Michelangelo, Tintoretto, Arcimboldi, El Greco and Monsù. The literary aesthetic development, on the other hand, comprises the following: Castiglione, Góngora, Marino, the "middle" Shakespeare, Donne, Crashaw, and the entire tradition of préciosité in French literature.[8] This is not all. Gracián, Tesauro and

Federico Zuccari appear as the most important Mannerist theoreticians whose work has formulated the Mannerist expression into the first authentic platform for the theory of Modern Art. Indeed, subsequent stylistic transformations are really the extension, the vital ramification, of Mannerist form camouflaged under the auspices of "Concettismo, Cultismo, Conceptualism, Euphuism, Gongorism, Marinism, or Preciosity."[9] Moreover, the term anti-classical which denotes, in part, the concept of style governing the phenomenon of Mannerism, is insufficient. Subjectivism is a more accurate descriptive term for Mannerism constitutes also a rebirth of antiquity, a return of the so-called convulsive vision of the world. The artistic and poetic manifestation of the most important Mannerist epochs in Western Art, comprise, according to Hocke: the Alexandrian (approximately from 350-150 B.C.), the so-called Siver Age in Rome (approximately from 14-138 A.D.), the Late Middle Ages, the articulate Mannerist epoch from 1520 to 1650, the Romantic Age from 1800 to 1830, and the modern epoch from 1880 to 1950."[10] Obviously, such an elusive notion of Mannerism may, in the long run, prove to be inconclusive. Rather than elucidating the problem, such a Mannerist aesthetic system accomodates any artistic and poetic expression which bears the imprint of rebellion, withdrawal from life, indictment of the world, anguished existence, deformation, expressionism, surrealism and "abstractism."[11] Mannerism does not limit itself

to those -ism concepts, according to Hocke, it is a totalitarian notion that embraces also the demonic and magic morphology of all Estern poetic systems, a necessary means allowing the exploration of the unknown. In this sense, Mannerism and Classicism are identical insofar as they constitute the implacable search for the idea. "Er ist in einer spezifischen und durchaus problematischen Weise ein Medium für Absolutes," writes Hocke,

> ein Mittle zur Lichtung des Seins, wie die Klassik es auf ihre Weise ist. Die Klassik will das Verborgene des Mysteriums in der Verständlichen, nur sublimierten Natur zur Darstellung, der Manierismus will das Verborgene in einer emblematischen, in der Idee Bringen... Der Klassiker stellt Gott in seiner Essenz, der Manierist Gott in seiner Existenz dar. Wenn es zwei ästhetische Erscheinungsweisen des Absoluten gibt, so hängen sie beide vom Absoluten ab, in beiden wirkt das Absolute.[12]

Also, with respect to the figurative arts, literary Mannerism operates on identical premises. By juxtaposing the value of art and literature, then, Hocke repudiates the author of European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, who had endeavored to establish the autonomy of literary Mannerism, the scientific criteria of investigation independent of art theory. This is an important point, insofar as our discussion of Ut pictura poesis is concerned, for quite frequently, Hocke is dismissed as a mere disciple of Curtius even by so scrupulous a critic as Georg Weise.

The metaphor of the mirror as an optical view of the world is intelligently explored by Hocke from its Platonic

origin to the labyrinthine dimension acquired with Leonardo's system. With the waning of the Renaissance, the metaphor of the mirror assumes Manneristic proportions of hallucination, as the motif of anguish (Angst) and death in the Cinquecento.[13] The mirror becomes a symbol of problematic existence. It reflects an abstract labyrinth of numerous possibilities whereby no single truth exists, but rather truths infinite in number with a relativistic raison d'être. Perhaps the most influential metaphor of the mirror has been created by Parmigianino's self-portrait, by means of the convex-mirror. The perspective of distortion introduced by Parmigianino constitutes not only a new modular posture in artistic composition, it represents too a one-to-one correspondence with the perspective yielded by the Concetto in literature; in other words, with the universalized tragic human condition portrayed by the artist's own image, there is the inception of what Hocke calls the manieristischen Menschentypus, embodying the witty and melancholic traits of a dandy.

But this system of artificial signs is not entirely a novelty in Western Art. Mannerism, being a constant, offers endless examples, in all artistic tendencies, in the posture of artifice. To be sure, one is likely to encounter a progressive transmutation of the Mannerist style, ranging from the pointed and witty metaphor to the expressiv deformierend, surreal and abstrakt of the twentieth century.[14]

Consequently, just as literary Concettismo has borrowed the rhetorical figures from the Latin literature of the Middle Ages, so, too, Mannerism in the visual arts, says Hocke, has absorbed something from the Gothic tradition. In this sense, then, the notion of Ut picture poesis in Mannerism is emphatically gratuitous. Indeed, the perspective of illusion intrinsically associated with Parmigianino's deformation of the classical form, is promptly juxtaposed to Marion's celebrated conceit: "E del poeta il fin la meraviglia,/Chi non sa far stupir vada allastriglia," the implication being that the ultimate goal of poetry lies in the element of the marvelous. Such aqualification constitutes, according to Hocke, sufficient ground for the origin of modern art theory, leading to the aesthetic system of Baudelaire's deciphering the symbolic temple of nature, to the disparate language of Lautréamont, to Rimbaud's magic vision and to the culmination of Breton's Manifeste du Surréalisme.[15]

Although Parmigianino died prematurely at the age of thirty-seven, his significant influence upon subsequent artistic generations is overwhelming. To be sure, Parmigianino has forged what Hocke calls the "hieroglyphic of being," a new vocabulary that enables the artist to decipher the world in a state of suspense. His treatment of light and darkness (chiaroscuro) becomes a factor of energy in his composition. His color content with a tendency for the heavy white, dark green and nuances of yellow create a sharp contrast. His

figures embody a delicate sensitivity while the content communicates a timeless reality, a sense of the marvelous. The overwhelming projection is one of eroticism which manifests itself in the lyric of Marino as well as the concettismo of his Adone, in Góngora's Soledades, in Marlowe's Hero and Leander, and in Shakespeare's Measure for Measure.[16]

In a similar rapprochement between poetry and painting, Rosso's deformation of reality is likewise linked to literary composition. Thus, the bizarre elegance of the automata in Rosso's iconography is compared to the surrealistic use of the mannequin figure.

> ...dieser Mannequin, diese Schaupuppe, lässt uns, ihrer starren Haltung wegen, auch an André Bretons Wort denken: explosiv-starr. Um so erstarrter ist die Puppe, als sie einer gestoppten Bewegung des Schreckens oder Beschwichtigen-Wollens vor dem dramatisch-bewegten Wirbel steht. Manichinos! Welche Rolle spielten sie in Leben des frühen Kokoschka, in der Kunst De Chiricos...in Bildern Oskar Schlemmers? ...Hätte sie Max Ernst nicht in seine Femme 100 têtes hineinkomponieren können? ...man denke an Aretino...."[17]

The humanistic notion of man as the center of the universe, having come to an end, giving way to, instead, the idea of cultural relativism through Giordano Bruno's pantheistic intoxication, the line of demarcation between drama and reality has been radically obliterated. A new metaphor, projecting the world as dream is coined. It is impregnated by what Hocke calls "Ruheloses Wandern in den Wundern der Welt," a

restless wandering in the world of magic. Thus, the dream-like quality which characterizes Nature in Giorgione's composition becomes a dominant topos in the poetic manifestations of the Surrealist. The dream assumes psychoanalytic proportions, as a symbol of deeper reality. There exists, one may infer, an implicit affinity between Apollinaire's oneirocritical posture and Giorgione's dream landscape. There exists, on the other hand, an explicit correspondence between the latter's composition and El Greco's delirious imagination, Henri Rousseau's primitive vision, and André Breton's: "Das Wunderbare (le merveilleux)."[18]

The ultimate, according to Hocke, resides in an ancient configuration, namely, the "Labyrinth-motif" immortalized in the Minoan legend. Its ingenious hero, Daedalus, is conceived as the precursor of Mannerism -- for in his construction of the maze there appears to be an intimate link to abstract thinking. The transformation is likewise implied in the relationship between ornament and style. The rhetorical figures of the labyrinth according to Hocke, are abundant in Western literature and it is said to culminate with James Joyce's Ulysses. In the figurative arts, the parallel is remarkably connected to Parmigianino's topos of the convex mirror which constitutes a pivotal element for the development of Modern Art. The "labyrinth-motif," concludes Hocke, was a truly explosive factor setting in motion the vital forces unfolding the process

of avant-garde art: "Das Labyrinth-Motiv taucht wie derum explosionsartig im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert sowie zwischen 1880 und 1950 auf."[19]

Hocke's contribution to the notion of Mannerism has been minimized considerably on the basis that his definition of ther term is essentially contained within the traditional opposition between Classicism and Romanticism. There is the objection raised by Battisti that Hocke's study is one of typology rather than style. Others have rejected the author of Die Welt als Labyrinth simply because he dwells in generalities, allowing the notion of Mannerism to degenerate into virtually every artistic manifestation. But Hocke's contribution remains significant, placing the study of Mannerism within a rhetorical perspective and, at the same time, linking the term indissolubly to the visual arts.

Footnotes

1. Wylie Sypher, Op. Cit., p. 124.

2. John Shearman, Op. Cit., p. 37.

3. Aristotle, "The Poetics," Allan H. Gilbert, ed. Literary Criticism, Op. Cit., pp. 72-73.

4. Stephen A. Larrabee, "Ut Pictura Poesis," Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. Alex Preminger, enlarged ed., (Princeton: Pr. U.P., 1974), p. 882.

5. See Rensselaer W. Lee, Ut Pictura Poesis, (New York: Norton, 1967). Although in this study he does not deal with the problem of Mannerism, Rensselaer W. Lee does offer a penetrating analysis on the notion of Ut pictura poesis. "Treatises on art and literature," says Lee at the very outset of his discussion concerning the legitimacy of literature and the visual arts, "written between the middle of the sixteenth and middle of the eighteenth century nearly always remark on the close relationship between painting and poetry. The sister arts as they were generally called -- and Lomazzo observes that they arrived at a single birth -- differed, it was acknowledged, in means and manner of expression, but were considered almost identical in fundamental nature, in content, and in purpose." Ibid., p. 3.

6. Ferruccio Ulivi, "Il Manierismo del Tasso," in Problemi del Manierismo, ed. A. Quondam, Op. Cit., p. 386.

7. F. Ulivi, p. 388.

8. Gustav René Hocke, Die Welt als Labyrinth: Manier und Manie in der europäischen Kunst, (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1957), p. 225.

9. G. R. Hocke, p. 225.

10. G. R. Hocke, p. 225.

11. G. R. Hocke, p. 226.

12. G. R. Hocke, p. 226.

13. G. R. Hocke, p. 7.

14. G. R. Hocke, p. 11.

15. G. R. Hocke, p. 15.

16. G. R. Hocke, P. 26.

17. G. R. Hocke, P. 32.

18. G. R. Hocke, p. 39.

19. G. R. Hocke, p. 101.

Part III The Rhetoric of Mannerism

Chapter 1 - The Formalistic entity of Mannerism

The notion of "Civic Humanism" in the study of Renaissance ideas has had an overwhelming impact on the interpretation of Humanism and its ramifications. Hans Baron's well-known thesis on the nature of "Civic Humanism" as a profound philosophical awareness rather than a retrospective analysis of the Classical heritage, until recently, had become an indisputable historiographical hallmark. It was not until a modest article appeared, entitled, "Civic Humanism or Ciceronian Rhetoric,"[1] that Baron's study was seriously undermined, not only is Baron's postulation that Humanist thought is sociologically motivated challenged but the whole conception of structural transformation in terms of thought and configuration acquires a whole new dimension in Renaissance studies. Specifically, Professor Jerrold Seigel, who challenges Baron's thesis *à la lettre*, sees the emerging intellectual patterns of the *Quattrocento* not as reflections of the new bourgeoisie in the Italian city-states but rather as the logical consequence created by Petrarch's restitution of the rhetorical tradition as intrinsic to the program of *studia humanitatis*. This is not the place to discuss Baron's credibility. I simply wish to point out that the rhetorical models in the tradition of Gorgias and Isocrates constitute an intrinsic paradigmatic force in Renaissance

patterns of composition. The art of oratory occupied the most important position during the Golden Age of Greece. Indeed, no man of great influence could fully aspire to the full realization of his powers until he had fully mastered the discipline of rhetoric. There existed, at this time, an indissoluble link between word and action, communication and society. While the sociological ambience may be radically differentiated from that of its Hellenic precedent, insofar as the orator ceases to be a central figure in a society dominated by the medium of print, the Humanist program of education yields more data on the rhetorical tradition than may be presupposed. The purpose of this chapter is to show the indissoluble link that exists between rhetoric and the concept of Mannerism. While recognizing Curtius' point that certain literary traditions have been preserved as mental structures and have been handed down to us from the medieval legacy of Classical Antiquity, it is important to avoid a mechanical delineation of the rhetorical figures. To state, for instance, that Malherbe embodies the annominatio or the positio as rhetorical techniques when consoling Du Perrier on the loss of the latter's daughter is as meaningless as positing that any acromegalic configuration in painting is a distinct feature of the Mannerist composition.

The significance of the recurrence of the so-called constants in the literary tradition, despite their altered

appearance with respect to the original configuration, is that they evoke archetypal patterns of collective consciousness. In an important book on Renaissance rhetoric as an historical dimension, Professor Nancy Struever points out that the development of rhetoric under Gorgias went significantly beyond the mere rational application of structural patterns. "Gorgias's most fundamental contribution to rhetoric," writes Professor Struever,

> is his development of the relationship of the structure of language to the structure of mind.... Thus, Gorgias, rejecting the pretensions of pure reason, holds that only the incantatory power of words can overcome subjectivism.... Through measure in rhythm and sound the artists convey measure or proportion in meaning according to patterns of thought which are primordial...."[2]

It follows, from this brief observation, that our understanding of the rhetoric of Mannerism must not be reduced to a compendium of <u>topoi</u> but rather seen as an intrinsic posture, a transmutation of the humanistic attitude.

Just what was the position of rhetoric in the Renaissance? In what did its method, its program consist? How does it relate itself to the development of Mannerism? The answer to these questions is contingent upon the development of rhetoric itself. In the so-called rhetorical tradition, which extends from Gorgias to Quintilian, from Martianus Capella to Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville, from Alcuin to Thierry of Chartres, from Brunetto Latino to the humanist education of

Vittorino da Feltre, to mention only a few, the structural components have been vividly preserved. The whole history of rhetoric might be characterized as a series of distinctive significance manifesting itself on every level with intervals of secondary importance. But regardless of its outcome, the rhetorical structures have always been readily available. As a technical system of the art of persuasion, as a tradition of functional elements, linguistic and intellectual, rhetoric has always been present in different epochs. Examples of the rehabilitation of rhetoric in the history of Western literature are abundant. Thus, Martianus Capella's De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae as a redistribution of the seven liberal arts with rhetoric occupying the noblest position constitutes one of the most important organizations of learning in the Middle Ages. Likewise John of Salisbury's Metalogicon with emphasis on the vital link between ratio and oratio, the value of an encyclopedic conception thoroughly grounded in grammar, eloquence, and logic, comprises a significant stride forward for the history of rhetoric, in the twelfth century. The pivotal transformation, however, insofar as the question of Mannerism is concerned, is seen to appear towards the end of the Quattrocento when the Petrarchan tradition began to acquire universal overtones.

One of the stylistic elements that emerges from the Petrarchan tradition is the oxymoron. In the Canzoniere

itself one encounters a widespread division of the whole, with respect to the statement, in two or more parts but always in opposition to one another. Thus, the poet sees Laura as la dolce ed acerba mia nemica[3]...la mia cara nemica...la fera bella e mansueta...questa fera angelica, innocente. The dolce-amaro opposition constitutes an overwhelming element in the distribution of rhetorical figures. Thus, Petrarch sings about the fera dolcezza ch'è nel core, and of the dolce amaro lamentar. Similarly, there appears the contentio configuration between pride and humility. Petrarch idealizes Laura as gli atti suoi soavemente alteri e i dolci sdegni alteramente umili.... Qui tutta umile, e qui la vidi altera.

The contrasting ideas in Petrarch's Canzoniere are conspicuous and constitute a major element of style, which has already been explored by literary criticism. What is interesting here, however, is that the form of the antithesis is strongly cultivated by the Petrarchan tradition of the Late Quattrocento. Thus, Leonardo Giustinian praises the benevolent pride of his lady: acti benigni e altieri.[4] Giusto de' Conti reelaborates the conceit based on the contrast hot-cold, when addressing his lady:"O tu, donde arde il core et sempre aghiaccia." He describes himself in similar terms: nella rete di Cupido avolto tremo l'estate, et quando inverna io bollo.[5]

One is greatly tempted to establish a parallel between the traditional use of the antithesis in classical literature and the Mannerist counterpart. Aristotle himself is said to have endorsed antitheton in the Rhetorica as an element of good style, "because contraries are easily understood and even more so when placed side by side, and also because antitheton resembles a syllogism, for it is by putting opposing conclusions side by side that you refute them."[6] In the Rhetorica ad Herennium, too, the use of the contentio appears with remarkable frequency: habet assentatio iucunda principia; eadem exitus amarissimos affert.[7] The antithesis of groups of words is manifested with equal force: inimicis te placabilem, amicis inexorabilem praebes.[8] Likewise, in the Neo-Classical composition of Corneille's Le Cid, the use of the antithesis conveys a similar effect: remplir le bons d'amour, et les méchants d'effroi.[9] One may continue to draw from this storehouse of semantically related structures, but when the most meticulous rapprochement is established, even the most dogmatic scholar of stylistics would have to acknowledge that in the last analysis the form of composition is determined considerably by the context. This phenomenon is particularly present in Mannerism whereby the rhetorical figures, though inherited from the Classical tradition, are shaped by their own events.

In his valuable book, concerning the history of style, Style, Rhetoric and Rhythm, Morris Croll has illustrated

how the Cinquecento represents a turning point for the transformation of Classical style. Although dating the revolution of style somewhat late, around 1575, it is interesting to note that the so-called genus humile, the style emerging in opposition to the classical counterpart, known as schemata verborum, is characterized by Croll, among numberous descriptions, as one of antithesis. Moreover, the genus humile, as the emerging anti-classical style of the Cinquecento, comprises also a unique employment of the metaphor, the so-called "pointed" style, and the embodiment of paradox. It is this style, which finds its most articulate representative in the Neo-Stoic writings of Justus Lipsius, the best fits the mold of a world that has become complex. "Clearness," writes Croll,

> is evidently the first merit of an exposition of objective reality.... But the kind of truth that the Stoics chiefly had in mind was moral and inward. It was a reality not visible to the eye, but veiled from common observation... this kind of reality can never be quite portrayed...because ultimate knowledge of the mystery of truth is never attained. But it is at least possible to depict the effort of the athletic and disciplined mind...the effort of the mind was the characteristic theme of the Stoics, and the object of their rhetorical art.... Clearness is a virtue, then, to which the Stoics pay lip service.... Donne (in his letters), Gracián, Bacon....may easily be distinguished by their cult of significant darkness.[10]

Much of this Late Renaissance transformation in style is understood by Croll as a transitional phase preparing the

ground for the ultimate expression in Baroque art. The question of the periodization of Mannerism and the differentiation between Baroque and the Art of the Maniera has already been discussed. What concerns us here is that a significant fragementation of the schemata verborum -- the classical modes of composition which serve as ornament-- has been observed by Croll; the figurae sententiae, or the genus humile with its emphasis on metaphor, aphorism, antithesis, paradox, and other forms, are seen as operative forms in the course of Cinquecento stylistics.

The transmutation of the classical code is further accentuated by virtue of the fact that the Mannerist author has become alienated from his world. The rhetorical models established by the Petrarchan tradition allow the Mannerist writer to experiment and to search for the diverse. The use of the metaphor in the Mannerist composition reflects what Hauser calls the "fluid self." Objective reality has become incomprehensible and the autonomy of the self has been displaced -- such is the nature of the world seen by the Mannerist artist.[11] The dislocation of the classical rhetorical forms in the literary composition is as dramatic as the fragmentation of the concept of space attained in Mannerist architecture. So, too, the dissociation of the harmony between the internal and the external forms in the visual arts is as eventful as the one achieved in the

written expression. In this sense, then, without confronting the dissimilar criteria that are inherent in art and literature, it is possible to draw certain philosophical considerations on a formal level. The rapprochement between art and literature, specifically, the use of rhetorical structures, ought to yield a common denominator which would allow us to decipher the Mannerist world.

The manifestation of the curve in Post-Renaissance architecture which consists of two antithetical vaults, the juxtaposition of the concave and the convex forms, as with the Palazzo Branconio dell'Aquila designed by Raphael, tends to establish an indisputable parallel with the stylistic antithesis of the literary composition. Thus, the five arch openings on the ground-floor of the Palazzo are contrasted by six massive half-columns creating the illusion of supporting the entire structure which consists of three stories.[12] The second level, known as the piano nobile, achieves an unconventional effect comprising of five dissimilar windows and of six niches alternating convex and concave patterns. The mezzanine level culminates with an unrelated pattern of pediments and stucco ornaments. The total impression is one of instability like Rodomonte's in Orlando Furioso. Each element of the composition moves opposite to the other creating an element of contrapposto reminescent of the figura serpentinata in the sculpture The Rape of the Sabine by Giovanni Bologna. Likewise,

Orlando's lamentation in Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato brings in relief the antithesis: "qual pena è in terra simile alla mia, che ardo d'amore e giaccio in gelosia;"[13] so, too, in his Canzoniere, Boiardo's use of the antithesis is in anticipation of the curve and countercurve pattern in Mannerist architecture: "in forma soave un cor feroce, in abito gentil l'animo atroce."[14] Even in the classical humanistic inspiration of a Poliziano there is an accentuated Petrarchan posture of the contrapposto: "agghiacciai, com'arsi, quando di fiori un nembo vedea rider intorno...."[15] In the language of Jacopo Sannazzaro, too, contrasting ideas are offered: "una nuova Angioletta ai giorni nostri nel viver basso apparve altera e schiva...dolce, amaro, pietoso, irato sdegno, pien di strana ineffabil leggiadria, che in caldo ardor di fredda gelosia mi stringi."[16] This Petrarchan tendency of the concetto is continued in the Late Quattrocento by Serafino dell'Aquila whose influence upon the École de la Pléiade is rather significant: "Io vivo, non so come al mondo viva senz'alma e senza cor e pur son vivo...voi tutta giaccio, et io de foco un vampo...io vivo morto."[17] In the Délie of Maurice Scève one easily encounters the Petrarchan leit-motif in the recurrence of the conceit. Consider the following verses:

> En toi je vis, où que tu sois absente:
> En moi je meurs, où que soie présent.
> Tant loin sois-tu, toujours tu es présente:
> Pour près que soie, encore suis-je absent.
> Et si nature outragée se sent
> De me voir vivre en toi trop plus qu'en moi:
> Le haut pouvoir qui, ouvrant sans émoi,

Infuse l'âme en ce mien corps passible,
Le prévoyant sans son essence en soi,
En toi l'étend, comme en son plus possible. (144)[18]

However, the remarkable similarity with the Petrarchan tradition need not deceive us into saying or thinking that the poetry of Scève is a mere duplication of the Italian concetti. The use of the antithesis in Scève is an indispensable device that gives the poetic expression a dramatizing effect. The poet engages in a process of abstraction; here one is confronted with the classical Platonic duality between body and soul. It is in this attitude that the poetry of Scève acquires intelligibility. "Mien corps passible" in opposition to "Le haut pouvoir" explains the inferior quality of corporeal existence. It is an elusive reality, one which the poet, the Mannerist poet that is, must try to transcend.

In similar terms the duality between matter and spirit is projected in the contrast of color distribution in Raphael's composition of The Dispute of the Holy Sacrament. So, too, the skillful presentation of lines opposing the terrestrial group against the elevated background of the saints, accentuates the clear separation between the world of the appearance and the immutable world of essence. Raphael's preoccupation here, as in Scève's, is not purely formal in nature. It is not simply a question of creating an optical effect, namely, the pattern matter-spirit duality. The spatial dimension is greatly complemented by the great chaos communicated by the actors below

as opposed to the absolute wisdom embodied in the image of the saints above.

The development of classical rhetoric, formal rhetoric, had always been committed to an ideal. Its ultimate goal, insofar as the oratorical perspective is concerned, it may be safe to state, has been intimately connected to a harmonious, objective and conservative expression. The transmutation of Mannerist rhetoric, on the other hand, in its emphasis on achieving a discordant, irregular and modern projection may seem similar to the Asianism of Gorgias. In other words, the rhetoric of Mannerism is not the essence from which objective reality must be persuasively presented; rather it becomes a means from which the subjective realm may be artistically projected. "Der Gegensatz," writes Hocke in his book Manierismus in der Literatur, "von Mimesis und Phantasia wird immer starker."[19] The contrast between the phenomenal reality and the world of the imagination is greatly accentuated. The traditional patterns of rhetorical figures have been intentionally warped so that a relativistic conception of the universe could be projected. Thus, in a world where the metaphysical order of things appears altered and displaced from an absolute principle of being, the word in the context of Mannerist rhetoric assumes labyrinthine proportions. Writes Hocke, "...Sein Symbol (of the Mannerist) ist das Labyrinth. Man findet zur Zeit des römischen und florentinischen Manierismus Buchstaben-und Wort-Labyrinthe...Die Verdeckung

des Funktionswerts von Buchstabe und Wort beginnt beim literarischen Manierismus...."[20] The rhetoric of Mannerisms yields the alchemy of linguistic structures.

Formal Mannerism in its primitive aspect may be reduced to ars combinatoria. Thus, the lipogrammatic element which may omit a particular letter of the alphabet; the pangrammatic figure which may begin as many successive words as possible with the same letter of the alphabet; this peculiar penchant has been amply illustrated in the line of Ennius cited by Ernst Curtius: "O Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti."[21] A substantial part of the Medieval rhetorical tradition and the so-called cabbala goes beyond the literal enumeration of letters. So, too, the tradition established by Isidore of Seville constitutes the first rhetorical experiment in the Middle Ages to have conceived the letters of the alphabet in terms of their visual and mystical value. In the first book of his Etymologiae, Isidore affirms that the letters are signs which reveal the things of the phenomenal world and that they speak without emanating sounds.[22] Such a deciphering link to the function of letters open the way to linguistic experiment. Hence, in a universe demarcated by a neat a dualistic separation, between phenomenological reality and the immanent realm, in a world where the artist is not always likely to express the conception of reality in concrete terms, ambivalence, indecipherability, and finally,

the artist's struggle to coordinate his vision of things, very often lead to the deformation of conventional language. Dante is one of the first medieval poets to embody the Isidorian idea:

> Mostrasi dunque in cinque volte sette
> vocali e consonanti; ed io notai
> le parti sì, come me parver dette.
> Diligite Iustitiam primai
> fur verbo e nome di tutto il dipinto;
> Qui indicatis terram fur sezzai.
> Poscia ne l'emme del vocabol quinto
> Rimasero ordinate; sì che Giove
> pareva argento lì d'oro distinto.
> (Par., XVIII, 88-97)

With respect to the Mannerist Gestalt, the Rabelaisian dislocation of language is perhaps the apotheosis of Renaissance linguistic experiment. Whether in forging neologisms or in embodying popular medieval tradition which Rabelais creates with boundless energy, his significance resides in the posture which he assumes before the power of language. Let us limit ourselves to the design of the divine bottle which Baebuc presents to Panurge:

> O bouteille
> Pleine toute
> De mystères,
> D'une oreille
> Je t'écoute:
> Ne Diffère,
> Et le mot profère
> Auquel pend mon coeur
> En la tant divine liqueur...[23]

This oracle whose search has caused much grief to the explorers of Panurge's team appears rather mystical and therefore incomprehensible. "La bouteille" represents total knowledge, an insurmountable path in which all men ought to attempt to tread

on in order to aspire towards an ampler conception of one's self and of the world in which one lives. Contrary to Panurge's expectations, however, the "divine liqueur" cannot be translated into human terms. This is essentially the dilmema which Gargantua had posed earlier in the prologue when he said that the task of the humanist consisted in deciphering the "substantifique moelle" from the readings of classical antiquity.

A definite indication of the autonomous development of Mannerist rhetoric as opposed to the classical rhetoric is in the desire to strive for an enigmatic statement in which the most disparate elements are united. The concetto is very often constructed in a network of labyrinthine expressions, precisely in a witty and paradoxical way. Consider the intellectual irony in Shakespeare's Julius Caesar in the manner with which Anthony feigns his innocence:

> ...O masters, if I were disposed to stir
> Your hearts and minds mutiny and rage
> I should do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,
> Who, you all know, are honourable men:
> I will not do them wrong; I rather choose
> To wrong the dead, to wrong my self and you,
> Than I will wrong such honourable men.
> But here's a parchment with the seal of Caesar....[24]

Consider, too, the opening statement in Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata:

> Canto l'arme pietose e'l capitano
> che'l gran sepolcro liberò di Cristo.
> Molto egli oprò co'l senno e con la mano,

> molto soffrì nel glorioso acquisto;
> e in van l'Inferno vi s'oppose, e in vano
> s'armò d'Asia e di Libia il popol misto.
> Il Ciel gli diè favore, e sotto ai santi
> segni ridusse i suoi compagni erranti.[25]

The use of Tasso's ottava acquires unprecedented significance: a narrow space within which a panoramic configuration is to be projected. Thus, the poet's vision of the Gerusalemme as well as its action from the beginning to the end is laconically executed. The image of the first ottava is brilliantly connected to the next space creating a movement which ascends to the successive ottave. Throughout the poem, the ambiguity of language, however, is an intrinsic quality of Tasso's ottava. On a macrocosmic level, the ottava is symbolic of the Mannerist view of the world denuded of an absolute principle of certitude in which despair, paradox, alienation, solitude and depersonalization are often the governing norm. Hence, the poet sings about the valiant deeds of "l'arme" by Tancredi and Rinaldo that are at the same time "pietose." Consider the use of the oxymoron figure "arme"-"pietose," the anaphora "molto-vano," the play of the contrapposto "capitano-Christo," "gran capitano," "gran sepolcro," "oprò-soffrì," "pietoso-glorioso," "Inferno-Cielo," "popol-misto-santi," and the frequent inversion of the subject and the verb. The macrostructure in Tasso's ottava with its laconic and disjunctive language is always conceived in relation to the whole composition of the Gerusalemme. Likewise, the rhetorical technique in Tasso

acquires hieroglyphic dimension beyond which the Mannerist world is decipherable. Just as the "compagni erranti," the wandering characters of the Gerusalemme, are reflected in Tasso's psychological exasperation so, too, the metaphor, the syntax and the morphology are an intrinsic expression of the poet's own personal drama.

In conclusion, the rhetoric Mannerism, though stemming from the legacy of classical antiquity, remains in the last analysis a peculiar and synchronic expression of Cinquecento dynamics. This is not the place to illustrate a diachronic development of the rhetoric of Mannerism in sixteenth century Europe. A further study, however, may be pursued: the poetry of Góngora in Spain, Marino in Italy; Ronsard, Agrippa d'Aubigné, Théophile de Viau and Saint-Amant in France; Shakespeare and John Donne in England, etc.... When the latter study has been concluded one may confirm that unlike classical rhetoric, which is utilized and conceived in terms of reference material, the rhetoric of Mannerism, on the other hand, is a highly personalized system of communication. The rhetoric of Mannerism is not simply a storehouse of information nor is it a compendium of linguistic figures waiting to be perused. The Mannerist artist is in many ways a composer who, like the madrigalist of the Cinquecento, varies and repeats the musical phrases, drawn incessantly from the previous tradition, only to depict the psychological peculiarity and the philosophical perception of his age.

Footnotes

1. See Jerrold E. Seigel, "Civic Humanism or Ciceronian Rhetoric?" Past and Present, Vol. 34, July 1966, pp. 3-48.

2. Nancy S. Struever, The Language of History in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism, (Princeton: Pr. U. P., 1970), pp. 12-13.

3. This and all subsequent qutoations of Petrarch's Canzoniere are taken from Georg Weise's study: "Manierismo e letteratura: il gusto delle antitesi astratte e delle metafore concettose nella lirica italiana e francese del rinascimento," Rivista di letterature moderne e comparate, Vol. 13, fasc. 1-2, (giugno 1960), Sansoni, Firenze, pp. 7-8.

4. G. Weise, "Manierismo e letteratura...," p. 10.

5. G. Weise, p. 10.

6. Stephen F. Fogle, "Antithesis," Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics, ed. A. Preminger, et al., (Princeton: Pr. U.P., 1974), p. 40.

7. Heinrich Lausberg, Elementi di retorica, tr. Lea Ritter Santini, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1969), p. 211.

8. H. Lausberg, p. 211.

9. H. Lausberg, p. 211.

10. Morris Croll, Style..., pp. 85-86.

11. Arnold Hauser, Mannerism: The Crisis of the Renaissance, pp. 49-50.

12. J. Shearman, p. 76.

13. Matteo M. Boiardo, L'Orlando innamorato, quoted by G. Weise, "Maniersimo e letteratura," p. 10.

14. Matteo M. Boiardo, Il Canzoniere, quoted by G. Weise, p. 10.

15. Angelo Poliziano, Stanze, quoted by G. Weise, p. 11.

16. Jacopo Sannazaro, Arcadia, quoted by G. Weise, p. 11.

17. Serafino dell'Aquila, quoted by G. Weise, p. 13.

18. Maurice Scève, Op. Cit. p. 108.

19. Gustav René Hocke, Manierismus in der Literatur: Sprach-Alchimie und esoterische Kombinationskunst, (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1959), p. 6.

20. G. R. Hocke, Manierismus, pp. 19-20.

21. E. R. Curtius, p. 283.

22. E. R. Curtius, p. 313.

23. Chappon, Pons, eds. Rabelais, Classique Larousse, Vol. II, (Paris: Larousse, 1936), p. 101.

24. Hardin, Craig, ed., The Complete Works of Shakespeare, "Julius Caesar," Act III, sc. 2, ll. 126-133, (Fair Lawn, N.J.: Foresman, 1961).

25. Marziano Guglielminetti, ed., Tasso: Gerusalemme liberata, Vol. I, (Milano: Garzanti, 1974), p. 4.

Part IV The Proper Meaning of Mannerism

Chapter 1 - The Concept of Mannerism

The purpose of this chapter is an attempt to theorize the proper meaning of Mannerism. In examining the diachronic treatment of the term Mannerism a number of substantial ideas have emerged with respect to what constitutes its proper meaning. Thus, in Part One of the present study, the notion of Mannerism was said to be intimately connected to the Gothic idea of an abstracted universe. The dual meaning of the world, the stark opposition between the temporal and the spiritual realm are instrinsically mirrored in the structural configuration of the artist's artifact. The analogous predicament of the Mannerist artist's disturbing stage of helplessness before the humanistic logical view of the world is anticipated in the convoluted poetic personality of Boiardo's Orlando innamorato at the very height of the rational Quattorcento.

"Ahi paccio Orlando!" So, deplores Boiardo's chivalric hero reflecting upon his inability to control his emotions before the graceful beauty of Angelica. "Come te lasci a voglia trasportare!/ Non vedi tu lo error che te desvia,/e tanto contra a Dio te fa fallare?/... Vedome preso e non mi posso aitare...."[1] So, too, in Lorenzo de' Medici is perceived an underlying tragic sense of life, reminiscent of Lucretius' idea of the ineluctable fate of atoms in constant motion, in his repetition of the verses: "Chi vuol

esser lieto, sia: di doman non c'è certezza."[2]

This Gothic stream of thought insofar as it embodies an anguished view of the temporal existence has been brilliantly examined in Georg Weise's study of Mannerism. The ogival style of Flamboyant Gothic is convincingly juxtaposed with the vertical depth achieved in the Mannerist composition. As fascinating and well-founded as this parallel may seem, the ultimate conclusion is that the Mannersit posture remains an intrinsic expression of Cinquecento history.

With respect to the periodization of Mannerism it was postulated that although Asianism constituted a recurrent trait in the history of Western literature, insofar as its use of metaphor, and its linguistic characterization are concerned, reflects an unbalanced order of the universe as opposed to the rational and concordant basis of the classical world. The localization of Mannerism assumes intelligible proportions when it is examined within the synchronic dynamics of the intellectual history of the Cinquecento. Contrary to Curtius' axiomatic contention that the literary manifestation possesses a high degree of permanent truth over that which is conceived in the fine arts, the heterogeneous quality of Mannerism ought to be respected. To say that the criticism of Mannerism based on a pluralistic method detracts significantly from the "scientific" pillars of literary analysis is insufficient. After all, Lovejoy's lesson in his famous study, The Great Chain

of Being, is still relevant today:

> ...The postulate of such study [the history of ideas] is that the working of a given conception, of an explicit or tacit presupposition, of a type of mental habit, or of a specific thesis or argument, needs, if its nature and its historic role are to be fully understood, to be traced connectedly through all phases of men's reflective life in which those workings manifest themselves, or through as many of them as the historian's resources permit.[3]

The work of art originating from the Mannerist realm embodies an original projection, a mode of being, which marshals its own system identifiable in relationship to the boundaries of time and space of Cinquecento dynamics. Be it Pontormo's Deposition or Scève's Délie that one examines, the apparent movement that will emerge as a result of formalistic and metalinguistic observation will always correspond to what Georges Poulet refers to as the historical "conscious duration" of the artist. "Aussi, à l'époque de la Renaissance," writes Georges Poulet,

> toute la hiérarchie de formes qui, aux yeux des gens du moyen âge, constituait la structure permanente du monde, avait-elle disparu.... Dès lors le caractère de la durée humaine changea profondément. Dieu n'apparaissait plus comme la cause transcendente qui, du dehors, conserve les créatures et leurs durées propres.... Plus de permanences créés, plus de durées étagées, mais du haut jusqu'en bas de l'échelle la présence continue d'une même vertu transformatrice...qui soutenait l'universe, mais qui ne le soutenait que dans son devenir.[4]

It is on the level of conscious experience alone that the Mannerist manifestation is irreducible to the cosmogony of

the post Renaissance period. On this account, it is possible to refute any attempts to extend the Mannerist metaphor of the irrational to other systems of artistic expression. On the other hand, it is the peculiar and distinctive predicament of the Mannerist artist who strives to transcend "historical time" that permits us to equate and to understand the Mannerist configuration in relation to other forms of the creative process insofar as the primordial archetype is retrieved.

The bella maniera emanating from the Mannerist artifact together with its verbal codification reflecting a transcendental quality acquire at the same time an aura of affectedness, of artiness. It is on the level of intrinsic universality that the Mannerist work of art, insofar as it ceases to be perceived within the forces of the temporal cadre, may be confronted with the Symbolist or even the Surrealist experiment. Our first encounter upon reading Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du mal may be characterized as odd and unbalanced. Indeed, when read on the empirical and literal level, Baudelaire's work may be understood as anything but penetrating and revealing. Upon a critical inspection, however, a radical transformation of the language which detaches itself from time, space, and the concept of casuality, are seen as operative elements in the

poetic expression of Baudelaire. Let us consider the well-known sonnet, "Correspondances":

> La nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
> Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;
> L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles
> Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.
>
> Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
> Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
> Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
> Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.
>
> Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,
> Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,
> -Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,
>
> Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,
> Comme l'ambre, le muse, le benjoin et l'encens
> Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.[5]

The conventional vision of the linguistic apparatus, the canons of the Romantic movement, if you will, are somewhat inadequate. Unable to express himself in traditional terms, Baudelaire must create a new aesthetic codification which sees things as symbols endowed with a mystical value and whereby the material and the spiritual world correspond. In an ontological frame of reference, the Baudelarian linguistic system is elusive because it does not define itself in dogmatic terms. "Vaste" and characterized by its "long échos," the new "alphabet" extends itself byond the empirico rational perspective. It is irreducible, therefore, to a system of classification simply because its meaning is derived from the "parfums, les couleurs et les sons" that only poets are able to decipher.

In an important book on the theory of avant-garde art, Renato Poggioli has correctly argued that to equate Concettismo with symbolism would constitute a futile exercise of the mind. The former, says Poggioli, limits itself to the notion of school while the latter is understood in terms of movement. In other words, the maniera moderna is simply seen as "superamento dei classici," as a variant of the classical and even Late Gothic manifestation.[6] Insofar as the work of art, however, reflects the universal aspirations of mankind, embodying the tragic pathos of the human condition, hence a timeless projection of the humanity of all times, a widening of the Mannerist periodization is, I think, conceivable. One of the great masters of comparative study of religions of our time, Mircea Eliade, has indicated in his book Cosmos and History that, just as primitive man conceived events not in terms of their gradual linear unfolding process but rather as a creative repetition of primordial archetypes, so, too, in his artistic vision the artist abolishes the temporality of Time. "...Orientations that tend to reconfer value upon the myth of cyclical periodicity, even the myth of eternal return...disregard not only historicism but even history as such...a revolt against historical time...."[7] Likewise, the artificial quality of the Mannerist expression betrays a deep sense of social commitment, an intense denunciation of a humanist

world grown too simplistic and incongruous. Beneath the mask of the bella maniera a restless search for the absolute being in opposition to the dissolution of sixteenth century life is implied.

The Mannerist artist, it is safe to state, operates within the cadre of an epistemological revolution; the traditional Platonic modes of thought in which an object is conceived always in relation to its universal essence are shattered. Just as the symbolist experiment consisted in establishing a "correspondance" with a multiplicity of essences so, too, the Mannerist experiment consisted in exploring the realm of signs and symbols in a world of contrasts between subject and object.[8] In his Idea, Panofsky, has formulated the philosophical premises for Mannerism through the work of Zuccari indicating that the expression of the bella maniera deviates radically from its permanent humanist counterpart. The idea of Beauty as expressed by the Mannerist artist, according to Panofsky, consists of various degrees, irretrievable by the mere operation of the senses,[9] simply because its very nature lies in the spiritual realm. As such, Beauty is perceived in the mind. The Mannerist aesthetic conception sees the temporal world as a vague representation of reality. The ultimate Idea, the Idea of Beauty, in its multifaceted

state, is accessible to the artist who has been separated from nature but who, at the same time, has been endowed with the gift of illuminating man's paradox between triumph and misery.[10]

The extent of the epistemological revolution operating in the Mannerist thinker is perhaps best understood in the rhetorical investigation. Indeed, no theory of literary Mannerism is complete until it takes into account the verbal codification out of which the Copernican vision of the world has been expressed. Not simply a new metaphor, but a whole gamut of linguistic structures had to be forged by the Mannerist artist in order to express the modalities of an ambivalent existence. As in Baudelaire, the power of language assumes mystical proportions. The dilemma of the Mannerist writer lies in the impossibility of expressing his vision of things in concrete human terms. The Mannerist statement is consequently impregnated with an intrinsic ambivalence. Tasso's ottava is a classical example for it mirrors the disturbing apprehensions of the poet's existence. Thus, in Canto XVI of the Gerusalemme Liberata, the structural composition of each ottava reflects brilliantly the cruel and abrupt denouement of the relationship between Rinaldo and Armida. Most important, the ineluctable fate of the human condition, the irretrievable flow of "historical time" as well as the duality of the world are creatively executed

from one ottava to the next. Let us consider some aspects of Tasso's art.

> Tondo è il ricco edificio, e nel più chiuso
> grembo di lui, ch'è quasi centro al giro,
> un giardin v'ha ch'adorno è sovra l'uso
> di quanti piu famosi unqua fioriro.
> D'intorno inosservabile e confuso
> ordin di loggie i demon fabri ordiro,
> e tra le oblique vie di quel fallace
> ravolgimento impenetrabil giace.[11]

The "ricco edificio" refers to the palace of Armida. It was constructed by a "demon" and its diabolic quality is reflected in the labyrinthine topography of the structure. Like the phenomenological ambiguity experienced by the poet in real life, the external structure of Armida's palace is "D'intorno inosservabile e confuso." The "oblique vie" or the immediate sensible impression of this-wordly experience are impenetrable to the human eye.

> Stimi (sì misto il culto è do'l negletto)
> Sol naturali e gli ornamenti e i siti.
> Di natura arte par, che per diletto
> l'imitatrice sua scherzando imiti.
> L'aura, non ch'altro, è de la maga effetto,
> l'aura che rende gli alberi fioriti:
> co' fiori eterni eterno il frutto dura,
> e mentre spunta l'un, l'altro matura.[12]

The cultivation of the garden appears starkly mixed, between the "culto" and the "negletto." The garden with its "magical effects" anticipates the Baudelairean "temple of nature." The fruits in the garden are of an eternal nature and they are impregnated with indecipherable "ornamenti." Most important, the classical idea of imitation undergoes a significant trans-

mutation in that art is not reduced to a faithful reflection of nature. "L'imitatrice...scherzando" implies an abstracted vision of imitation attaining magical proportions.

In his Discourses on the Heroic Poem, Tasso has explained that the ultimate aim of imitation resides in the representation of Beauty. With respect to an Aristotelian poetic conception, however, Tasso has extended and transformed the role of poetry. Just as logic is said to possess and to demonstrate the scientific modalities of the physical universe, so, too, the "dialectic" nature of poetry is said to unravel the mystery of the unknown. "...the latitude of poetry," writes Tasso,

> is as great as that of logic, and it has three parts subordinate and correspondent with the three superior parts of logic, sometimes demonstrating with philosophers and using the philosopheme, at other times following verisimilitude and making use of the example and the enthymene, as did Homer and Vergil, and at other times, like the sophist, the poet applies himself to the apparently probable, and with equivocation and other sorts of fallacious arguments, which consists of words and things, he captivates his auditors at his pleasure.[13]

The analogy with logic for its "demonstrative" power and the penchant for "equivocation," implies that poetry embodies a very definitive system of rhetoric, not entirely denuded of artificial quality. Indeed, this is precisely the Mannerist situation which purports a synthetic statement on the one hand, while its underlying substance reveals a disturbingly

impersonal and incomprehensible world on the other. The function of the poet is not simply that of an aesthete as has been so often presumed, rather that of a voyant, "a maker of images," who alters the common reality of every day life. "...Not merely the things beneath the earth" writes Tasso, on the poetic representation,

> but also those the intellect can scarcely comprehend...and great too is the diversity of opinions, or rather the contrariety of judgements, the mutations of words, of customs, of laws, of ceremonies, of republics, of kingdoms, of emperors, and as it were of the world itself...to be represented to us as though in another form and under another aspect.[14]

Thus, while appearing to satisfy the critical categories set forth by Aristotle, Tasso and the whole literary tradition of the Cinquecento have gone beyond the notion of imitation of an illustrious action. The form appears to have been permanently overturned. A new literature, the "romanzo" which embodies the necessities of the post-humanist era, has been created. Likewise, the Platonic misconception that the poet is an imitator of images partaking in the world of appearances has been passionately dispelled. The Mannerist poet, as reflected in Tasso's Discourses, has sought to restore "human unity"[15] in a new poetic message. The "dis-cordant-concord" paradoxical equation which befitted the Mannerist world was dramatically unified in Tasso's conception of poetic structure. "Yet for all that, the world, which includes in its bosom

so many so diverse things, is one, one in its form and essence, one the knot with which its parts are joined and bound together in discordant concord...."[16] The organic association between structure and artistic creation has been reaffirmed. The ornamental disposition of the poetic artifact acquires a vital position in the Mannerist composition. Far from being an ephemeral and superfluous use of rules and compendious ordinances, the rhetoric of Mannerism instrinsically permeates the poetic vision.

In the absence of a totalizing concept of Mannerism which would settle once and for all the dispute over what constitutes its proper meaning and even question its usefulness as a critical category in the area of literature, the notion of maniera may, at this point, have become apparent. The very nature of Mannerism implies a pluralistic method. This diversifying approach, however, appears not to have been dictated by arbitrary considerations. The concept of Mannerism in Cinquecento literature is indissolubly linked to the very fabric of post-Renaissance society. Consequently, a critical approach based on Geistesgeschichte which would take into account the analytical relationship between science and literature, philosophy and poetry, art and literature, and so on, constitutes an indispensable posture toward the elucidation of the Mannerist statement. But, the traditional comparative confrontation between two divergent disciplines, between an artist and a poet, aside from illuminating

a literary term may do very little to enhance its specific entitly. Focusing on the rhetoric of Mannerism, on the other hand, may actually unfold, the workshop of the artist reflecting at the same time the innermost visions of the latter's world. The methodic classification of the poet's rhythmic pattern, the confrontation between the figura serpentinata of the artist's configuration and the poet's distribution of the enjambement, and the decoding process of the Mannerist metaphor--his language, his modes--may ultimately lead us to the very essence of Mannerism. Finally, the concept of Mannerism as with all systems of artistic representation must take into account the quality of timelessness characterizing the work of art. "L'art est un anti-destin,"[17] so wrote Andre´ Malraux in his classic book Les Voix du silence. Although man is helpless before his ineluctable temporal dimension, his art lives on. In this frame of reference, too, the concept of Mannerism is to be understood. Insofar as art transcends the boundaries of "historical time" the Mannerist composition may be confronted to such modern movements in art as Surrealism. As such, Mannerism may even be postulated as the foundation of modern art itself, for it is in breaking with the traditional patterns of communication that a newer attitude of looking at things is attempted. The so-called Renaissance is not strictly speaking, a forging of new modalities, a new vision of the world. The Medieval Christian humanistic community had after all, always

experienced the revitalization of classical forms. It is with the post-Humanistic experiment, on the other hand, beginning roughly with Da Vinci in the fine arts and literature with Boiardo's Orlando innamorato that new paradigmatic structures are created.

Footnotes

1. Matteo Maria Boiardo, "Orlando innamorato," in I Classici italiani, ed. Luigi Russo, Vol. I, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1970), p. 1004.

2. Lorenzo de'Medici,"Trionfo di Bacco e Arianna," in I Classici italiani, ed. Luigi Russo, Vol. I, (Firenze: Sansoni, 1970), pp. 1066-1068.

3. Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea, (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 15.

4. Georges Poulet, Études sur le temps humain, (Paris: Plon, 1972), p. 12.

5. Baudelaire, Oeuvres complètes, eds. Y. G. Le Dantec, Claude Pichois, (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), p. 11.

6. Poggioli argues that such manifestations as Metaphysical Poetry and Gongorismo are distinct stylistic elements. "Poesia metafisica e Gongorismo sono manifestazioni parziali e locali di quell'universale manifestazione stilistica che trionfò soprattutto nelle arti figurative, e che gli stessi contemporanei chiamarono con l'epiteto di barocco..." Renato Poggioli, Teoria dell'arte d'avanguardia, (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1962), pp. 233-235.

7. Mircea Eliade, Cosmos and History, trans. Willard R. Trask, (New York: Harper and Row, 1959), p. 153.

8. Erwin Panofsky, "Il Manierismo," Problemi del Manierismo, pp. 109-110.

9. E. Panofsky, p. 108.

10. E. Panofsky, p. 111.

11. Tasso, Gerusalemme liberata, XVI, 1.

12. Tasso, Gerusalemme liberata, XVI, 10.

13. Tasso, "Discourse on the Heroic Poem," Plato to Dryden, ed. Allan H. Gilbert, p. 474.

14. Tasso, "Discourse," p. 471.

15. Lanfranco Caretti, Ariosto e Tasso, (Torino: Einaudi, 1961), p. 77.

16. Tasso, "Discourse," p. 500.

17. André Malraux, "L'Art est un anti-destin," XXe Siècle, eds. A. Lagarde, L. Michard, (Paris: Bordas, 1965), pp. 549-550.

Conclusion

In my observation on Mannerism, it becomes apparent that certain historical phenomena have hardly been examined in connection to the development of Cinquecento literature. Thus, the restraining effects of the Counter-Reformation particularly on the subject matter of painting and the ethical precept imposed upon the literary message remain to be explored. Likewise, the favorable reception given to the philosophy of Stoicism because of its implicit exclusion of dogmatic statements has not yet been fully assessed with respect to what constitutes a philosophy of Mannerism. Nevertheless, a global characterization of Mannerism was never ascribed to the initial premises of this study. It is to be understood, however, that in sympathizing with the Geistesgeschichte approach other components which have hardly been mentioned here, such as the theoretical treatises on the art and literature of the sixteenth century, ought to be considered as vital and intrinsic aspects towards the proper elaboration and formulation of the concept Mannerism.

With respect to the context of the proper conceptualization, the term Mannerism, particularly in the figurative arts, has, hitherto, been relegated to a realm of extravagance and pronounced eccentricity. Less fortunate was the connotation ascribed to literary Mannerism. Thus, in the traditional compendium on the history of Cinquecento literature the

"irregularity" of an Aretino, if not excluded, was almost invariably justified within the general parameters of sixteenth-century literature. It is with considerable reluctance on the part of some critics that literary Mannerism makes its entry into the annals of criticism. When it finally succeeds it is not without controversy that it becomes accepted. The idea that literary Mannerism is a superfluous term merely serving to break up the Baroque period "into several components"[1] is simply a coordinate to the classical way of looking at the problem of Mannerism. But in what, one may ask, does a Cellini's art consist of if not the expression of the art of Maniera: the extraordinary effort to transcend the malady of his own age? I shall consider only one aspect of Cellini's Vita whereby the artist tells us how he came to be inspired for his Perseus. Writes Cellini:

> Fattomi da per me stesso sicurtà di buon animo, et scacciato tutti quei pensieri che di ora mi si rappresentavano innanzi, i quali mi facevano spesso amaramente piangere con el pentirmi della patria mia di Francia, per essere venuto a Firenze, patria mia dolce...con tutto questo io certamente mi promettevo, che, finendo la una cominciata opera del Perseo, che tutti i mia travaglia si doverriano convertire in sommo piacere et glorioso bene.[2]

The artist attains the "highest good" and experiences the "highest pleasure" in the creative activity. The love of art is projected here in its extraordinary form for it allows the artist to dislocate the temporal bonds of "tanto

male," and "travagli."

In a letter to Michelangelo, Aretino writes his impressions of the Tuscan master's Last Judgement. "Il divino Michelagnolo," writes Aretino, "...poiché il mondo ha molti re e un solo Michelagnolo. Gran miracolo che la natura, che non può locare sì alto una cosa che voi non la ritroviate con l'industria, non sappia imprimere nell'opre sue la maestà. Che tiene in se stessa l'immensa potenza del vostro stile e del vostro scarpello..."[3] In the process of imitation, Michelangelo's art goes beyond nature as we conceive it, in its empirical state. Furthermore, the notion of classical continuity, in the eyes of Aretino, is demystified for Michelangelo's vision overshadows his ancient predecessors. This view is implied in the following metaphor. "...Onde chi vede voi [Michelangelo]," continues Aretino, "non si cura di non aver visto Fidia, Apelle e Vitruvio, i cui spirti furon l'ombra del vostro spirto."[4]

Aretino's totalizing assessment of Michelangelo's art lies in the following remarks:

> ...ma io sento che con il Fine dell'universo, che al presente dipingete, pensate di superare il Principio del Mondo che già dipingeste; acciocché le vostre pitture, vinte dalle pitture istesse, vi diano il trionfo di voi medesimo. Or chi non ispaventerebbe, nel torre il pennello, il terribile soggetto? Io veggo in mezzo delle turbe l'Anticristo con una sembianza solo pensata da voi. Veggo lo spavento nella fronte dei viventi, veggo i cenni che di spegnersi fa il sole, la luna e le stelle; veggo quasi esalar lo spirito al fuoco, all'aria, alla terra e

> all'acqua; veggo là in disparte la Natura esterrefatta, sterilmente raccolta nella sua età decrepita; veggo il Tempo, asciutto e tremante, che per esser giunto al suo termine, siede sopra un tronco secco...veggo la Vita e la Morte oppresse da spaventosa confusione ...seder Cristo, cinto ci splendori e di terrori; veggo rifulgergli la faccia e, scintillando fiamme di lume giocando e terribile, empie i bennati di allegrezza e i malnati di paura...veggo i ministri dell'abisso i quali con orrido aspetto, con gloria dei Martiri e dei Santi, schernischono Cesare e gli Alessandri, che altro è l'aver vinto se stesso che il mondo. Veggo la Fama con le sue corone e con le sue palme sotto ai piedi, gittata la fra le ruote de' suoi carri, in ultimo veggo uscir dalla bocca del Figliuol di Dio la gran sentenza: io la veggo in forma di due strali, uno di salute e l'altro di dannazione...veggo i lumi del paradiso e le fornaci dell'abisso...[5]

What are these lamentations if not the profound expression of an epoch enmeshed between action and impotency, ambivalence and paradox. "The imprint of fear" on the faces of the "living ones" illustrates the very "fear" of the age. Moreover, Aretino universalizes Michelangelo's impression for it is the "fear" of all ages before the last judgement. The image of the "dying sun, moon, and stars" conveys the sense of unknown brought about by the Copernican revolution. It is the hopeless feeling which witnesses the "spirit vanishing into the fire, air, earth and water." What about Nature? Is it not conceived in Mannerist terms: "sterile and decrepit." Likewise, "Time," temporal time that is, has ceased to be its harmonious self; it has been irretreviably dislocated. The very essence of Christ is projected within a realm of paradox:

between splendor and terror, giocando and terrible. The unltimate sentence embodies contrast between "salvation and damnation." Is it not the symbolic tension experienced in the Mannerist world?

What is Tasso's profound sense of alienation expressed in lyrical terms in his Canzone al fiume Metauro if not the vision of displacement reflecting the malaise of Cinquecento life:

> O del grand'Apennino
> figlio picciolo sì, ma glorioso
> e di nome più chiaro assai che d'onde,
> fugace peregrino...[6]

The term "fugace peregrino" illustrates the poet's sense of terror before the inevitable flight of time. It is a life without an ultimate purpose, "wandering" and "fleeing."

Perhaps, in his universal vision of the nothingness of man, it is not without irony that Tasso should have chosen the image of the river. The poet is a tragic element, a "figlio picciolo" in relation to the flux of nature--"grand' appenino"-- and this thought reverberates with profound indignation in our own age.

> Mi tengo a quest'albero mutilato
> abbandonato in questa dolina
> che ha il languore
> di un circo
> prima e dopo lo spettacolo
> e guardo
> il passaggio quieto
> delle nuvole sulla luna...
> L'Isonzo scorrendo
> mi levigava
> come un suo sasso...[7]

Ungaretti, too, deplores the human condition reduced to a "mutilated" state like a "mangled tree," lying helpless in the contemplation of a "circus" atmosphere. The image of the "rushing" river "polishing" the artist "as one of its stones," conveys the deep tragic sense of life.

The image of the flowing river in poetry boasts a long tradition and it is closely related to classical theme of the carpe diem. But the image is not commonplace, however, for the vocabulary while indisputably related to the tradition, is an intrinsic element of the poet's own poetic aesthetics. Thus, insofar as the timelessness of literature is conceived, all systems of periodization are strictly the products of arbitrary considerations. Such is the predicament of Mannerism. To the degree that the elucidation of the text, per se, is summoned, the Mannerist composition must be analyzed within the perspective of Cinquecento dynamics. On the other hand, insofar as the work of art transcends the temporal dimension, the Mannerist expression belongs to all periods. Perhaps, this is what Baudelaire meant when he said that art, in the last analysis, is a perennial illumination:

> ...Ces malédictions, ces blasphèmes, ces plaintes,
> ces extases, ces cris, ces pleurs, ces Te Deum,
> Sont un écho redit par mille labyrinthes;
> C'est pour les coeurs mortels un divin opium!
>
> C'est un cri répété par mille sentinelles,
> un ordre renvoyé par mille porte-voix;
> C'est un phare allume sur mille citadelles,
> Un appel de chassers perdus dans les grands
> bois!

Car c'est vraiment, Seigneur, le meilleur témoignage
Que nous puissions donner de notre dignité
Que cet ardent sanglot qui roule d'âge en âge
Et vient mourir au bord de votre éternité![8]

Footnotes

1. René Wellek, Concepts of Criticism, pp. 125-126.

2. Benvenuto Cellini, "Vita," in Antologia della letteratura italiana, vol. II, ed. Attilio Momigliano, (Milano: Principato, 1964), p. 271.

3. Pietro Aretino, "Le Lettere," in Antologia della letteratura intaliana, pp. 280-81.

4. P. Aretino, p. 281.

5. P. Aretino, pp. 281-82.

6. See Luigi Russo, ed., I Classici italiani, pp. 604-606.

7. Giuseppe Ungaretti, "I Fiumi," in Contemporary Italian Poetry, ed. Carlo L. Golino, (Los Angeles: University California, 1962), pp. 114-118.

8. Baudelaire, "Les Phares," Oevres complètes, pp. 12-14.

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