The Language of Art History

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I. Dialogue Declined

A WEIRD THING about the last ten years has been quite how many art historians have been beating their breasts about the "theoretical inadequacies" of the activity, and *New Literary History* has admirably registered that thudding, with a more representative spread of opinion than any of the art historians' own journals I see. To take three types: Kurt W. Forster,[1] who represents a line found in a rather fuller and sharper form in the journal *Kritische Berichte,* deplores our formalism, our assimilation of art history to the history of ideas, our breathless affirmativeness about the works we study, our concentration on high art at the expense of genres like the film and the poster, our lack of self-awareness about our own preconceptions and their social roots, our failure to develop a genuine social-historical approach: "The only means of gaining an adequate grasp of old artifacts lies in the dual critique of the ideology which sustained their production and use, and of the current cultural interests that have turned works of art into a highly privileged class of consumer and didactic goods." James S. Ackerman,[2] by contrast, sees the root of our trouble in a hybrid philosophical base: "Without knowing it, my colleagues have grounded their method in the tradition of nineteenth-century positivism conceived to justify scientific empiricism." But then we have absurdly taken into this an unconscious value system inherited from the Neoplatonic idealism of the Renaissance. No wonder, then, if we are torn between form and content, the social and the aesthetic, history and criticism. What we need to do is to "replace the present irrational collage of traditions that constitute our basic value premises with consciously articulated principles that correspond to what we actually believe." We should evaluate art, and in the light of something called "the concept of humane values," preliminarily described. David Rosand[3] offers moderate recommendations in a line running immediately from an influential article by Leo Steinberg called "Objectivity and the Shrinking Self,"[4] which worries about us compromising our individual selves in the attempt to see other men's or periods' works from

their point of view. Quite apart from the danger of doing our Selves harm, a pretension to historical objectivity is liable to shrivel the faculty through which worthwhile perception of art happens. "Until [Rosand says] art historians recognize their responsibilities as critics our inquiry into the art of the past will remain incomplete and that art will be only partially accessible to us."

I had better admit at once that I cannot get along with this sort of thing and have no intention of joining the discussion. For one thing, I have not much confidence in conclusions drawn from serial generalization at the level I and most art historians seem equipped to practice it: one may as well be blunt about that. Then, I do not at all like the tone of the debate, which seems oddly hortatory and peremptory: I dislike being admonished. On the other hand, what I do like is there being a manifold plurality of differing art histories, and when some art historians start telling other art historians what to do, and particularly what they are to be interested in, my instinct is to scuttle away and existentially measure a plinth or reattribute a statuette. It seems to me there must be some misunderstanding among art historians about what "theory" is.

Then again, the discussion makes me wonder whether we are not being too grand, disablingly so. By origin we are rather lightweight people. The literary critic has ancient roots in the lecture room and in the commentary and disputation that were the lecture room's genres: that sets him his own problems, I would guess, but it is imposing in its way. We do not have this background nor this sort of long-established cultural function, but we do have a good natural vulgar streak. In every group of travelers, every bunch of tourists in a bus, there is at least one man who insists on pointing out to the others the beauty or interest of the things they encounter, *even though the others can see the things, too:* we are that man, I am afraid, *au fond.* Of course, other roles have attached themselves to this basic one, augmenting the man in the bus—the rhetorical describer, the paid cicerone, the friends discussing objects in a portfolio or cabinet, a little of the antiquary collector and archaeologist, even a touch of the historian, and some others, too—but the sum is modest and still socially ambiguous as to role. The academicizing-up of the activity is a quite recent thing, and it is a pity if it goes to our heads. In particular it is a great pity if it leads us to confuse subjects with syllabi: I suspect that because we are nowadays offering ourselves as a liberal education in the lecture rooms, we are tempted to strike untenably grandiose attitudes and then bleat if the subject does not comfortably prop us up. For myself, I would prefer to remain the augmented man in the bus who—if he can stop talking long enough to have a reflective moment—must wonder first at his

own nerve in verbalizing at other people about objects they can already see. I do worry about that.

And this is really the main reason for my not being able to enter the current dialogue: the problems that are apparently tormenting my colleagues do not seem to be the problems I meet. The issues I most worry about in art history—a term I use interchangeably with art criticism—fall into two main groups. One group is connected with the pretty gratuitous act of matching language with the visual interest of works of art; that is our staple. The other group is connected with how one can and cannot state relationships between the character of works of art and their historical circumstances, but I shall hardly get around to these here. In fact, the remarks in the issue of *New Literary History* devoted to "Literary and Art History" that chimed most closely with my interests came not from the art historians but from John Passmore's Commentary.[5] One of the things he said was: "it is very difficult to say a great deal about a painting, except by talking about its relationships to something else, whether to other paintings, other arts, contemporary social movements, contemporary beliefs, or contemporary ideas," and what follows starts from an attempt to gloss the first part of this from the practical level.

II. Limitations of the Lexicon

The specific interest of the visual arts is visual, I take it, and one of the art historian's specific faculties is to find words to indicate the character of shapes, colors, and organizations of them. But these words are not so much descriptive as demonstrative—I am not sure how firmly we have grasped the implications of this. Unlike a travel writer or the man who writes about exhibitions in a newspaper, we are not primarily concerned to evoke the visual character of something never seen by our audience. The work of art we discourse on is to some extent present or available, if only in reproduction or in the memory or even more marginally as a visualization derived from knowledge of other objects of the same class, and though the form of our language may be informative—"there is a flow of movement from the left towards the center"—its action is likely to be a sort of verbal pointing. What distinguishes it from manual pointing is mainly that along with direction ("left to center") goes a category of visual interest ("flow of movement"). We are proposing that our audience compare the one with the other.

It is this that goes some way towards extenuating the terrible crudeness of our language. If I apply half-a-dozen simple terms of

visual interest (a phrase I am not going to define) to the pencil I am writing with—"long," "thin," "shiny," "green," "of hexagonal section," "with one conical end"—that is a quite inadequate description: to someone who did not have experience of pencils it would not carry an accurate image, and equally to someone who did have such experience some of the terms would be otiose. But if my purpose is not to describe but rather to indicate (a) to someone who has seen it (b) such kinds of visual interest as I am finding in it just now, then the half-dozen terms do cover about a third of what I have to offer. My blunt words (e.g. "green") are sharpened for me because what I have done is to instigate, or offer to instigate, a guided act of inspection of the particular object by the hearer, and he knows really that that was my intention. Neither of us expects him to think, if he does elect to follow my prompting, "Oh, not red then": rather, he will elaborate and refine my category "green" for himself. Of course the matter is more complicated than this, but the immediate point is that the art historian's use of language invites the receiver to supply a degree of precision to broad categories by a reciprocal reference between the word and the available object. It is ostensive.

But my pencil is an untypically simple object, which is why I could cover so much of its visual interest with so few words. If I try to do the same even to my typewriter ("square," "mat," "gray," and so on), I get less far: the words cover less of what I find interesting in it. If I try to do it with a painting or a sculpture, I will hardly get anywhere at all: direct descriptive terms can cover very little of the interest one wishes to indicate. I can use them—it is not vacuous to point to Michelangelo's *Moses* as "square"—but the fit between sense and reference is now becoming very loose, and I can only use them by assuming that my hearer will interpret them in a sophisticated and specialized way: he must supply a great deal in the way of mental comparison with other works of art, of experience of the previous use of such words in art criticism,[6] and of general interpretative tact. The words have become things of a rather different kind.

Indeed, if one is not careful, the lack of the right, or adequately determinate, word reduces one to someone just making a schwärmerisch noise; it becomes quite unclear why one should be taking it on oneself to address other people about the picture at all. A thing the practice of art criticism quickly teaches one is that the European languages discriminate very finely in some areas (e.g., underlying Euclidean form) and very coarsely in others (e.g., seen surface texture): this has its own fascination as an object of study, but it also sets a practical problem because there is a limit to how much one can enlarge the lexicon by coining and borrowing. It is not so much that one

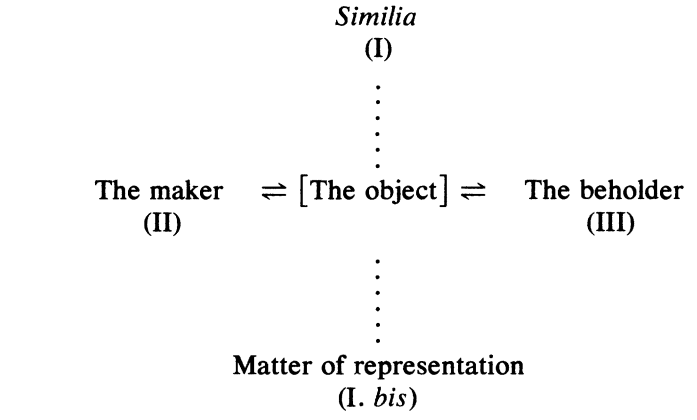
wants to avoid generating academic gobbledygook as that novel coinages and loanwords are cultural orphans, not properly part of the collective framework of our thinking. Thus, I would very much like to have genuine access to the Nigerian Yoruba critical term *dídón,*[7] which indicates a degree of smooth but not glossy luminosity in the surfaces of sculpture, closely related to the contrast of these with sharp shadows and edges: it would cover much of an interest I find important in some German wood carvings I study. But *dídón* is a fragment of a complex of Yoruba critical concepts and takes its rich meaning from just this set of relations. Even for my private exploratory purposes I cannot possess it except in a crude and shallow, a dissociated way: to go in for such inkhornisms heavily in public would be intolerable and sapping. Besides, such energy as I and my hearers can spare for entering into alien critical concepts a little I like to save for the critical concepts of the culture I am studying: I feel entitled to a few of these, for reasons I shall not be discussing here.

III. Three Kinds of Indirectness

But in fact most art-critical language is not of such direct descriptive background as "green" or "square"; rather, it is variously oblique or tropical. And while there seems nothing to be said for working out any very crisp or general classification of the types of indirect art-critical words, it will suit my purpose here to group them in three rough divisions or moods.

(I) Some words seem to point to a kind of visual interest by making a comparison of some sort, often by metaphor: "rhythmic," "fugal," "dovetailing," "a forest of verticals," "striplike"—these words used of a picture work comparatively. Among them I will also include words like "square" in the extended use involved in calling Michelangelo's *Moses* "square": thus, "Apollo and two of the Muses . . . forming a broad triangle." And a special class of comparative words (I. *bis,* let us say) refer to representational works of art as if the things or persons represented were actual: "agitated" figures or "calm" or "spirited" figures. (II) Some words characterize the work of art in terms of the action or agent that would have produced them: "tentative," "calculated," "sensitive," "elaborate," "difficult," "skilled," this or that "treatment" or "development" or "virtuosity." (III) Some words characterize a work of art by describing its action on the beholder or his reaction to it: "imposing," "unexpected," "striking," "disturbing," "unpleasant," this or that "effect," "a feeling of crowding." One could refer loosely to these moods as (I) comparative or metaphorical, (II)

causal or inferential, and (III) subject or ego words, and might visualize them in a field like this:



But of course they are all projections of the subject, the speaking beholder, as we all know perfectly well. Equally they are nearly all in a weak sense metaphorical, though some of the metaphors are more educated than others.

There is much that could be said in a softening way about this, if I did not want to keep the types broad. Clearly a history of use will loosen the relation of a word to its original basis: "monumental," say, is a moribund metaphor that has left monuments some way behind, and it would be foolish to make a thing of "interesting" being an ego-word. Clearly, too, many words partake of more than one type: "dry," for instance, can be used in comparative, I. *bis,* causal (*secco* rather than *fresco* handling), and subjective ways, sometimes equivocally, and is a tricky word all round. It is also clear that roughly the same general area can often be pointed to with different types of words: say, (I) stormy, (I. *bis*) excited, (II) excited, (III) exciting. (The example, by the way, alerts us to the verbal affinity between I. *bis* and II, which has much to do with our vulnerability to the "physiognomic fallacy"[8] or Winckelmann syndrome.) Above all, there is the point that in any piece of actual art criticism all this is going on on several tiers. My examples were mainly single words, but sentences are framed within one type or another, and paragraphs and books are weighted overall towards one or another: I am happy to classify with my classes at any of these levels. All the examples in the last paragraph were taken from Heinrich Wölfflin's account in *Classic Art* of Raphael's Camera della Segnatura. If anyone looks at those pages he will find, I think, that their character is determined by an overall dominance of

types I. *bis* and II. Within this general character all the kinds of language I have mentioned, including what I have rather simply called "direct" language ("round," "large in proportion," "surrounded," "profile"), are in play. It is the pattern of this hierarchy that gives the individual critic a physiognomy. It is a trait of Wölfflin's, for instance, that within a sentence of Type III, reporting an impression, there is often a Type II word as core: he tends to have an impression of a cause, honest man. I am not sensitive, I should say here, to the suggestion that the differences in words are purely formal and that somewhere between sense and reference their origins are sloughed off, words becoming denatured from their class once they are presented within continuous discourse. When reading art criticism, I do not find this to be so. On the contrary, I am pleasurably conscious of the constantly veering orientations in the good critic's dance towards a sufficiently determinate demonstrative act. But what does strike me is that his need to string his words into discourse raises a problem of another kind, which I have not space to discuss but wish at least to state.

IV. The Problem of Linearity: Words about Words and Words about Shapes

The art-critical lexicon is normally assembled into consecutive language of some sort. (Notionally, I suppose, one could assemble single categories of visual interest, presyntactical ejaculations, in a nonsequential, galactic pattern on the page, but this would be affected.) This raises problems that I can best accent here by pointing to the contrast with literary criticism. Literary criticism is words about words where art criticism, as has often been pointed out, is words about shapes. Many differences—the dissimilarities between art criticism and literary criticism seem much more interesting than the similarities—follow from this, but the one I want to point to now comes out of the shape of language, its dependence on syntagmatic muscle, the fact that words have to be assembled in a linear progression.

A piece of literature, being language, is itself a linear affair led from here to there, or from now to later. A poem or story has a beginning and an end and an authentic sequence in between. We may perceive many nonlinear patterns underlying either a sentence or the whole, antithetical syntax or narrative symmetries; there are also likely to be many retracing moments of rereading and referring back. But the linear progress of the text is comprehended in these excursions and

withstands them. If a critic's account of *Wuthering Heights* or *Sarrasine* involves him in pointing to bits of it out of order, this is all right because the directional movement of the book is strong enough for his activity not to be misunderstood. He is emerging here and there from the stream, walking back along the bank, and getting in again to float alertly down a particular stretch once more. When the literary critic does engage with a particular stretch of a text, his language can pace its language, each linearly progressive. It is irritating that my point is weakened here by the failure of many literary critics to make athletic use of their advantage, no fault of mine, but the possibility is there and is used in the literary criticism I most envy from over the fence—to offer a hostage, Empson on Donne's "A Valediction of Weeping." And in any case I think the point is not so much that the literary critic can work in parallel with his text as that the text and our reception of it have a robust syntagmatic progression of their own which the linear sequence of an exposition cannot greatly harm. The language of the descriptive critic can run with, run away and back, run round the firmly progressing language of the text, like an active dog on a walk with a man.

A picture on the other hand, or our perception of it, has no such inherent progression to withstand the sequence of language applied to it. An extended description of a painting is committed by the structure of language to be a progressive violation of the pattern of perceiving a painting. We do not see linearly. We perceive a picture by a sequence of scanning, but within the first second or so of this scanning we have an impression of the whole—that it is a Mother and Child sitting in a hall, say, or a sort of geometricized guitar on a table. What follows is the sharpening of detail, noting of relationships, perception of orders, and so on. And though the sequence of our scanning is influenced as to pattern by both general scanning habits and particular cues in the picture, it is not comparable in regularity and control with progress through a piece of language. One consequence of this is that no consecutive piece of verbal ostension, linear language, can match the pace and gait of seeing a picture as it can match the pace of a text: the read text is majestically progressive, the perception of a picture a rapid irregular darting about and around on a field. There are various ways of meeting the problem. One can work the ostensiveness of one's language hard, so as to draw the hearer sufficiently into his own active act of perception for his attention to shift away from one's own. One can also shun expository sequences that look like representations of perceiving, e.g., descriptions, in favor of ones that assimilate themselves to thinking. The history of art history offers many other techniques, too.

V. Inferential Criticism

I think I have been making three kinds of suggestion: first, that the art-critical lexicon is strongly ostensive; second, that art-critical language is largely and variously oblique, and at more than one level; third, that the linear form of our discourse is curiously at odds with the form of its object, whether this is considered to be the work of art itself or our experience of it. These seem to me basic facts of art-critical life, and one would like to come to some sort of constructive terms with them. Four hundred years of terribly good and very diverse European art criticism certainly suggest that there are ways of doing so. It seems characteristic of the best art critics that they have developed their own ways of meeting the basic absurdity of verbalizing about pictures: they have embraced its ostensive and oblique character positively, as it were, as well as bouncing their discourse out of the pseudodescriptive register that carries the worst linear threat. I repeat that they have done this in many different ways; about all Vasari and Baudelaire have in common is conspicuous success. This really seems something to insist on in the present climate of discussion: the linguistic facts of our life may be general and pressing, preliminary conditions one may well want to take account of in working out a way of doing whatever it is one wants to do, but they do not direct us to one kind of art history.

For instance, I am anxious not to suggest that there is a simple affinity between the orientation of a critic's overt interest and the orientation of a mood of language—between, say, those of us who like occupying ourselves with the circumstances in which works of art are made, on the one hand, and inferential language on the other. What worries me about much criticism that offers itself as social-historical analysis of art, including several of the people praised by Kurt Forster, is precisely an un-self-aware Type III quality at the lowest verbal level marshaled at a higher level in large a priori Type II patterns—soft impressions sloshing about in hard causal schedules. For contrast one can read the early books of Adrian Stokes[9] for *local* inferential muscle, however subject-assertive the total manner and effect. But, for reasons that are only partly verbal, it is particularly the role of inferential language I am curious about, and if I had not already used up most of the five thousand words I was asked to write, it is this I would now be going on to discuss, the strengths I think it confers and the problems I am sure it sets. I have enough words left to assert one of the strengths, as a sort of summary throwing down of a gage.

Words inferential as to cause are the main vehicle of demonstrative precision in art criticism. They are active in two distinct senses. Where

ego-words are formally and often substantially passive, reporting something done by the work of art to the speaker as patient, causal words deal in inferred actions and agents. At the same time they involve the speaker in the activity of inferring and the hearer in the activity of reconstructing and assessing the pattern of implication. For my taste, I will say, all this activity is cheerful and absolutely more wholesome than a lot of comparing of impressions, however humane or unshrunken, but the real point is that it seems to yield adequately determinate and properly stimulating ostensive words. One of the details my description of the pencil on p. 456 omitted was the sort of scalloped edge of the green paint at the point where it meets the conical end. If I wanted to, I could register this quite sharply and economically by inferring cause—the blade of a sharpener revolving circularly at an angle of 15° to a hexagonal cylinder. I do not think I could register it with ego language at all: my Self is too uncertain a quality to my hearers for its reaction to a scalloped edge to register the scalloped edge or its visual interest—unless its share is indeed to infer the revolving blade. In a more complex way the same is true of art criticism, where a mature inferential vocabulary in full play can have formidable demonstrative precision and punch. The eighteenth-century critic Shen Tsung-hsien[10]—to dramatize the matter with something exotic—gives a glimpse of the resources classical Chinese criticism had for inferential characterization of the painter's brush marks: among much else he distinguishes between wrist-dominant and finger-dominant strokes; between dead and live strokes, in the sense that there is variation of power within the single live stroke; between dragged marks and slippery marks, splashed-ink ones and broken-ink ones, between the marks of a straight brush and those of a slanting one, between cutting strokes and led strokes; he can speak of an individual brushstroke having a center or core and opening and closing phases, and he could wonder how far the closing phase of a stroke carries the suggestion of further development; he could even characterize a brush mark by the noise the stroke would have made, as a "sousing" noise. Of course, there are reasons for the activeness of this language: both Shen Tsung-hsien and his readers were themselves active users of the calligraphic brush so that there was a firm background of reference in everyone's experience. But still it is enviable language: to find anything comparable in Europe, one must go to things like Delacroix's occasional remarks in his journals on the technique of Rubens—remarks addressed by a painter to a painter. We cannot compete with it in this area, but there are other areas of inference we can work towards, including—to twist John Passmore's remark a little—"relationships. . . to other paintings, other arts, con-

temporary social movements, contemporary beliefs, or contemporary ideas."

VI. Issues

I wanted to get this far because it may suggest more clearly why the dialogue declined at the start is one I cannot engage with, a matter of embarrassment obviously. I have been suggesting that making inferences—as well as making comparisons and talking about oneself—is an inherent part of art-critical demonstration, and in the last paragraph I pointed to one of the reasons why I consider that language inferential about cause is very important to art criticism. Now this means, for one thing, that I cannot naturally address the dialogue's typical issue of History and Criticism. If one values what I have been calling inferential criticism, critical "tact" and historical "grasp" appear as very much the same thing. Inferring causes I take to entail being historical: equally one cannot conceive of either history or inference being accurate without critical acuteness. Clearly history and criticism are different inflections of attention—inquiry as against judgment, then as against now, how as against what, and so on—but I have no purpose in drawing a line between them, and without a purpose it is hard to know where the line is to be drawn. I accept that others may have such a purpose.

For another thing, it means that I am insensitive to the admonishments of the humane-value and unshrunken-Self people. Inferential criticism entails the imaginative reconstruction of causes, particularly voluntary causes or intentions within situations. It is repetitively pointed out and is clearly true that we cannot fully reconstruct and interiorize the habits of thought and language of a past culture: there is no possibility of recreating the cultural component in the medium of, say, a sixteenth-century artist's intention or beholder's perception because we cannot make ourselves into sixteenth-century men, even if we wanted to, not least because we cannot shed our own cultural habits and values. This seems so obvious, it is hard to understand why it is still stated so often and with such an air of discovery. But to see it as an argument against *exerting oneself towards* reconstructing an old artist's intention and its medium[11]—"the foredoomed effort of positivists to interpret past art 'in its own terms'" (Ackerman), I suppose—seems odd. One might as well dissuade a man from training to run by pointing out that he will never run his distance in no time at all. Just as we all ambulate, we all infer causes and intentions: it is a disposition much too deep and diffused in us to be excised, as our

language (one has been insisting) declares. What we are going to do anyway, one could say, we really are entitled to enjoy trying to do as well as we can, while well aware we cannot do it completely. Then, to make the cognate objection that by seeking "objectivity"—and sensitive critical inference does demand that we *seek* something like this—we are starving the Self, somehow denying it full humane expansion or perhaps making it cognitively deraciné, seems to me to involve a quite dispiriting notion of Self, something too fragile or weak to indulge freely and deliberately its curiosity about the How and Why of what and whom it meets: I cannot persuade myself my Self is that frail. Inferential criticism, one could say, is *active* self-assertion. By this sort of remark I do not think to dispose of the positive practice of self-elaborating critics, which is one natural move from the linguistic base I have been trying to sketch, but simply to declare that if they want to warn me off my cause-elaborating interests, they need a rather different sort of argument. As it stands, the issue seems to me a nonissue.

Though I have been making rather an elaborate point of having no vocation or status for urging people to courses, some things do interest me more than other things. For reasons I have been impolitely open about, I do not think art historians have been at their interesting best recently when talking method. If historians or literary critics or anthropologists asked me where the best methodological action is to be found in English-language art history nowadays—they never do ask me that: they ask where the good art history is—I would have to point to two areas: on the one hand such implicitly reflective practitioners of actual art history as David Summers,[12] to name one among several, and on the other hand such writers of authentic aesthetics as Richard Wollheim. In the last ten years I have not enjoyed the ground in between. Yet clearly art historians must think and talk about what they do, and here my taste is very much for people disposed to discuss quite modestly the specific problems of art criticism, in detail and on the technical level. I have referred to two kinds of such problems—what happens when one matches words or historical circumstances with the visual interest of works of art—but there are others ripe for airing: the notoriously heterogeneous range of relationships we lump together under the heading of artistic influence, or the general tyranny of art history's diachronic thrust (there is a limited but real case for sometimes writing art history backwards), or our muddled notion of the medium, and more. I do not mean we should look at nothing but ourselves: I am almost as aware as the methodological men that we can learn from other historical disciplines, literary criticism, or anthropology, or indeed from the philosophy of history, but

it would be good to get art history's peculiarity just clear enough to know roughly what sort of activity one is projecting the lessons learned from them in or on to.

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NOTES

1 "Critical History of Art, or Transfiguration of Values?" *New Literary History,* 3 (Spring 1972), 459–70.

2 "Toward a New Social Theory of Art," *New Literary History,* 4 (Winter 1973), 315–30.

3 "Art History and Criticism: The Past as Present," *New Literary History,* 5 (Spring 1974), 435–45.

4 *Daedalus,* 98 (Summer 1969), 824–36.

5 "History of Art and History of Literature: A Commentary," *New Literary History,* 3 (Spring 1972), 575–87.

6 "Square" has a rather splendid history, in fact; its use in Greek and Latin art criticism has been investigated in an almost overingenious but exhilarating paper by Silvio Ferri, "Nuovi contributi esegetici al 'Canone' della scultura greca," *Rivista del R. Istituto d'Archaeologia e Storia dell'Arte,* 7 (1940), 117–39.

7 For *dídón* and its context, Robert Farris Thompson, "Yoruba Artistic Criticism," in *The Traditional Artist in African Societies,* ed. Warren L. d'Azevedo (Bloomington, Ind., 1973), esp. pp. 37–42.

8 For which, E. H. Gombrich, "Art and Scholarship," in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse* (London, 1963), p. 108, coining the term; and also "On Physiognomic Perception," *ibid.,* p. 51.

9 Particularly *The Quattro Cento* (London, 1932) and *Stones of Rimini* (London, 1934). The remarkable comparison between carving and modeling "conception" in the latter is included in the Pelican edition of *The Image in Form: Selected Writings of Adrian Stokes,* ed. Richard Wollheim (London, 1972), pp. 147–83. The kind of quality I have in mind is, from an account of Donatello's *Dead Christ with Angels* in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Wollheim, p. 168): "To Donatello, changes of surface *meant* little more than light and shade, chiaroscuro, the *instruments* of *plastic organization.* The bottom of the angels' robes is gouged and undercut *so as to provide* a contrast to the open planes of Christ's nude torso. The layers of the stone are *treated* wholesale. Though some of the cutting is beautiful in itself, the relief betrays a *wilful, preconceived,* manner of *approach.* In brief the composition is not so much *founded upon* the interrelationship of adjoining surfaces, as upon the broader *principles* of chiaroscuro" (my italics).

10 There are translated excerpts—all I know of the author—in Osvald Siren, *The Chinese on the Art of Painting* (Peking, 1936), pp. 224–33, and Lin Yutang, *The Chinese Theory of Art* (London, 1967), pp. 169–219.

11 An analogous stance is better and more fully described, as "actor-oriented," by Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973), pp. 13–16.

12 Two of whose articles are brilliantly sustained examples of inferential criticism: "*Maniera* and Movement: The *Figura Serpentinata,*" *The Art Quarterly,* 35 (1972), 269–301; and "*Figure come fratelli:* A Transformation of Symmetry in Renaissance Painting," *The Art Quarterly,* n.s., 1, No. 1 (1977), 59–88.