

# FUSELI HENRY

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS  
OF HENRY FUSELI,  
VOLUME 2 (OF 3)

**Henry Fuseli**  
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The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli, Volume 2 (of 3):*

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# Henry Fuseli

## The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli, Volume 2 (of 3)

### INTRODUCTION

It cannot be considered as superfluous or assuming to present the reader of the following lectures with a succinct characteristic sketch of the principal technic instruction, ancient and modern, which we possess: I say, a sketch, for an elaborate and methodical survey, or a plan well digested and strictly followed, would demand a volume. These observations, less written for the man of letters and cultivated taste, than for the student who wishes to inform himself of the history and progress of his art, are to direct him to the sources from which my principles are deduced, to enable him, by comparing my authors with myself, to judge how far the theory which I deliver, may be depended on as genuine, or ought to be rejected as erroneous or false.

The works, or fragments of works, which we possess, are either purely elementary, critically historical, biographic, or mixed up of all three. On the books purely elementary, the van of which is led by Lionardo da Vinci and Albert Durer, and the rear by Gherard Lairesse, as the principles which they detail

must be supposed to be already in the student's possession, or are occasionally interwoven with the topics of the Lectures, I shall not expatiate, but immediately proceed to the historically critical writers; who consist of all the ancients yet remaining, Pausanias excepted.

We may thank Destiny that, in the general wreck of ancient art, a sufficient number of entire and mutilated monuments have escaped the savage rage of barbarous conquest, and the still more savage hand of superstition, not only to prove that the principles which we deliver, formed the body of ancient art, but to furnish us with their standard of style. For if we had nothing to rely on to prove its existence than the historic and critical information left us, such is the chaos of assertion and contradiction, such the chronologic confusion, and dissonance of dates, that nothing short of a miracle could guide us through the labyrinth, and the whole would assume a fabulous aspect. Add to this the occupation and character of the writers, none of them a professional man. For the rules of Parrhasius, the volumes of Pamphilus, Apelles, Metrodorus, all irrecoverably lost, we must rely on the hasty compilations of a warrior, or the incidental remarks of an orator, Pliny and Quintilian. Pliny, authoritative in his verdicts, a Roman in decision, was rather desirous of knowing much, than of knowing well; the other, though, as appears, a man of exquisite taste, was too much occupied by his own art to allow ours more than a rapid glance. In Pliny, it is necessary, and for an artist not very difficult, to distinguish when he speaks

from himself and when he delivers an extract, however short; whenever he does the first, he is seldom able to separate the kernel from the husk; he is credulous, irrelevant, ludicrous. The Jupiter of Phidias, the Doryphorus of Polycletus, the Aphrodite of Praxiteles, the Demos of Parrhasius, the Venus of Apelles, provoke his admiration in no greater degree than the cord drawn over the horns and muzzle of the bull in the group of Amphion, Zetus, and Antiope; the spires and windings of the serpents in that of the Laocoon, the effect of the foam from the sponge of Protogenes, the partridge in his Jalysus, the grapes that imposed on the birds, and the curtain which deceived Zeuxis. Such is Pliny when he speaks from himself, or perhaps from the hints of some Dilettante; but when he delivers an extract, his information is not only essential and important, but expressed by the most appropriate words. Such is his account of the glazing-method of Apelles, in which, as Reynolds has observed, he speaks the language of an artist; such is what he says of the manner in which Protogenes embodied his colours, though it may require the practice of an artist to penetrate his meaning. No sculptor could describe better in many words than he does in one, the manœuvre by which Nicias gave the decided line of correctness to the models of Praxiteles; the word *circumlitio*, shaping, rounding the moist clay with the finger, is evidently a term of art. Thus when he describes the method of Pausias, who, in painting a sacrifice, foreshortened the bull and threw his shade on part of the surrounding crowd, he throws before us the depths of the

scenery and its forcible chiaroscuro; nor is he less happy, at least in my opinion, when he translates the deep aphorism by which Eupompus directed Lysippus to recur to Nature, and to animate the rigid form with the air of life.

In his dates he seldom errs, and sometimes adjusts or corrects the errors of Greek chronology, though not with equal attention; for whilst he exposes the impropriety of ascribing to Polycletus a statue of Hephestion, the friend of Alexander, who lived a century after him, he thinks it worth his while to repeat that Eryinna, the contemporary of Sappho, who lived nearly as many years before him, celebrated in her poems a work of his friend and fellow-scholar Myron of Eleutheræ. His text is at the same time so deplorably mutilated that it often equally defies conjecture and interpretation. Still, from what is genuine it must be confessed that he condenses in a few chapters the contents of volumes, and fills the whole atmosphere of art. Whatever he tells, whether the most puerile legend, or the best attested fact, he tells with dignity.

Of Quintilian, whose information is all relative to style, the tenth chapter of the twelfth book, a passage on Expression in the eleventh, and scattered fragments of observations analogous to the process of his own art, is all that we possess; but what he says, though comparatively small in bulk with what we have of Pliny, leaves us to wish for more. His review of the revolutions of style in painting, from Polygnotus to Apelles, and in sculpture from Phidias to Lysippus, is succinct and rapid; but though so rapid

and succinct, every word is poised by characteristic precision, and can only be the result of long and judicious inquiry, and perhaps even minute examination. His theory and taste savour neither of the antiquary nor the mere Dilettante; he neither dwells on the infancy of art with doating fondness, nor melts its essential and solid principles in the crucibles of merely curious or voluptuous execution.

Still less in volume, and still less intentional are the short but important observations on the principals of art and the epochs of style, scattered over nearly all the works of Cicero, but chiefly his Orator and Rhetoric Institutions. Some of his introductions to these books might furnish the classic scenery of Poussin with figures; and though he seems to have had little native taste for painting and sculpture, and even less than he had taste for poetry, he had a conception of nature; and, with his usual acumen, comparing the principles of one art with those of another, frequently scattered useful hints, or made pertinent observations. For many of these he might probably be indebted to Hortensius, with whom, though his rival in eloquence, he lived on terms of familiarity, and who was a man of declared taste and one of the first collectors of the time.

Pausanias, the Cappadocian, was certainly no critic, and his credulity is at least equal to his curiosity; he is often little more than a nomenclator, and the indiscriminate chronicler of legitimate tradition and legendary trash; but the minute and scrupulous diligence with which he examined what fell under his

own eye, amply makes up for what he may want of method or of judgment. His description of the pictures of Polygnotus at Delphi, and of the Jupiter of Phidias at Olympia, are perhaps superior to all that might have been given by men of more assuming powers, mines of information, and inestimable legacies to our arts.

The Heroics of the elder, and the Eicones, or Picture Galleries of the elder and younger Philostratus, though perhaps not expressly written for the artist, and rather to amuse than to instruct, cannot be sufficiently consulted by the epic or dramatic artist. The Heroics furnish the standard of form and habits for the Grecian and Troic warriors, from Protesilaus to Paris and Euphorbus; and he who wishes to acquaint himself with the limits the ancients prescribed to invention, and the latitude they allowed to expression, will find no better guide than an attentive survey of the subjects displayed in their galleries.

Such are the most prominent features of ancient criticism, and those which we wish the artist to be familiar with; the innumerable hints, maxims, anecdotes, descriptions, scattered over Lucian, Aelian, Athenæus, Achilles, Tattius, Tatian, Pollux, and many more, may be consulted to advantage by the man of taste and letters, and probably may be neglected without much loss by the student.

Of modern writers on art, Vasari leads the van; theorist, artist, critic, and biographer in one. The history of modern art owes no doubt much to Vasari; he leads us from its cradle, to its

maturity, with the anxious diligence of a nurse, but he likewise has her derelictions; for more loquacious than ample, and less discriminating styles than eager to accumulate descriptions, he is at an early period exhausted by the superlatives lavished on inferior claims, and forced into frigid rhapsodies and astrologic nonsense to do justice to the greater. He swears by the divinity of M. Agnolo. He tells us himself that he copied every figure of the Capella Sistina and the Stanze of Raffaello; yet his memory was either so treacherous,<sup>1</sup> or his rapidity in writing so inconsiderate, that his account of both is a mere heap of errors and unpardonable confusion; and one might almost fancy that he had never entered the Vatican. Of Correggio he leaves us less informed than of Apelles. Even Bottari, the learned editor of his work, his countryman and advocate against the complaints of Agostino Carracci and Federigo Zuccherò, though ever ready to fight his battles, is at a loss to account for his mistakes. He has been called the Herodotus of our art, and if the main simplicity of his narrative, and the desire of heaping anecdote on anecdote, entitle him in some degree to that appellation, we ought not to forget, that the information of every day adds something to the authenticity of the Greek historian, whilst every day furnishes matter to question the credibility of the Tuscan.

What we find not in Vasari it is useless to search for amid

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<sup>1</sup> There will be an opportunity to notice that incredible dereliction of reminiscence which prompted him to transfer what he had rightly ascribed to Giorgione, in the Florentine edition, 1550, to the elder Palma in the subsequent ones. See Lecture on Chiaroscuro.

the rubbish of his contemporaries or followers, from Condivi to Ridolfi, and on to Malvasia, whose criticism on the style of Lodovico Carracci and his pupils in the cloisters of St. Michele in Bosco, near Bologna, amount to little more than a sonorous rhapsody of ill applied or empty metaphors and extravagant praise; till the appearance of Lanzi, who in his 'Storia Pittorica della Italia,' has availed himself of all the information existing in his time, has corrected most of those who wrote before him, and though perhaps not possessed of great discriminative powers, has accumulated more instructive anecdotes, rescued more deserving names from oblivion, and opened a wider prospect of art than all his predecessors.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> It ought not, however, to be disguised, that the history of art, deviating from its real object, has been swelled to a diffuse catalogue of individuals, who, being the nurslings of different schools, or picking something from the real establishers of art, have done little more than repeat or mimic rather than imitate, at second hand, what their masters or predecessors had found in nature, discriminated and applied to art in obedience to its dictates. Without depreciating the merits of that multitude who strenuously passed life in following others, it must be pronounced a task below history to allow them more than a transitory glance; neither novelty nor selection and combination of scattered materials, are entitled to serious attention from him who only investigates the real progress of art, if novelty is proved to have added nothing essential to the system, and selection to have only diluted energy, and by a popular amalgama to have been content with captivating the vulgar. Novelty, without enlarging the circle of fancy, may delight, but is nearer allied to whim than to invention; and an Eclectic system without equality of parts, as it originated in want of comprehension, totters on the brink of mediocrity, sinks art, or splits it into crafts decorated with the specious name of schools, whose members, authorized by prescript, emboldened by dexterity of hand, encouraged by ignorance, or heading a cabal, subsist on mere repetition, with few more legitimate claims to the honours of history than a rhapsodist to those of the poem which he recites.

The French critics composed a complete system of rules. Du Fresnoy spent his life in composing and revising general aphorisms in Latin classic verse; some on granted, some on disputable, some on false principles. Though Horace was his model, neither the Poet's language nor method have been imitated by him. From Du Fresnoy himself, we learn not what is essential, what accidental, what superinduced, in style; from his text none ever rose practically wiser than he sat down to study it: if he be useful, he owes his usefulness to the penetration of his English commentator; the notes of Reynolds, treasures of practical observation, place him among those whom we may read with profit. What can be learnt from precept, founded on prescriptive authority, more than on the verdicts of nature, is displayed in the volumes of De Piles and Felibien; a system, as it has been followed by the former students of their academy, and sent out with the successful combatants for the premium to their academic establishment at Rome, to have its efficiency proved by the contemplation of Italian style and execution. The timorous candidates for fame, knowing its rules to be the only road to success at their return, whatever be their individual bent of character, implicitly adopt them, and the consequence is, as may be supposed, that technical equality, which borders on mediocrity. After an exulting and eager survey of the wonders the place exhibits, they all undergo a similar course of study. Six months are allotted to the Vatican, and in equal portions divided between the Fierté of M. Agnolo, and the more correct graces

of Raffaello; the next six months are in equal intervals devoted to the academic powers of Annibale Carracci, and the purity of the antique.

About the middle of the last century the German critics, established at Rome, began to claim the exclusive privilege of teaching the art, and to form a complete system of antique style. The verdicts of Mengs and Winkelmann became the oracles of Antiquaries, Dilettanti, and artists from the Pyrenees to the utmost North of Europe, have been detailed, and are not without their influence here. Winkelmann was the parasite of the fragments that fell from the conversation or the tablets of Mengs, a deep scholar, and better fitted to comment a classic than to give lessons on art and style, he reasoned himself into frigid reveries and Platonic dreams on beauty. As far as the taste or the instructions of his tutor directed him, he is right, whenever they are, and between his own learning and the tuition of the other, his history of art delivers a specious system and a prodigious number of useful observations. He has not, however, in his regulation of epochs, discriminated styles, and masters, with the precision, attention, and acumen, which from the advantages of his situation and habits might have been expected; and disappoints us as often by meagreness, neglect, and confusion, as he offends by laboured and inflated rhapsodies on the most celebrated monuments of art. To him Germany owes the shackles of her artists, and the narrow limits of their aim; from him they have learnt to substitute the means for the end, and by a hopeless chace after what they

call beauty, to lose what alone can make beauty interesting, expression and mind. The works of Mengs himself are no doubt full of the most useful information, deep observation, and often consummate criticism. He has traced and distinguished the principles of the moderns from those of the ancients; and in his comparative view of the design, colour, composition, and expression of Raffaello, Correggio and Tiziano, with luminous perspicuity and deep precision, pointed out the prerogative or inferiority of each. As an artist he is an instance of what perseverance, study, experience and encouragement can achieve to supply the place of genius.

Of English critics, whose writings preceded the present century, whether we consider solidity of theory or practical usefulness, the last is undoubtedly the first. To compare Reynolds with his predecessors would equally disgrace our judgment and impeach our gratitude. His volumes can never be consulted without profit, and should never be quitted by the student's hand, but to embody by exercise the precepts he gives and the means he points out.

# FIRST LECTURE

## ANCIENT ART

*Ταυτα μεν οὖν πλαστων και γραφειων και ποιητων παιδες ἐργασονται. ὁ δε πασιν ἐπανθει τουτοις, ἡ χαρις, μαλλον δε ἀπασαι ἄμα, ὅποσαι χαριτες, και ὅποσοι ἐρωτες περίχορευοντες. τις ἂν μμησασθαι δυναίτο;*  
*ΛΟΥΚΙΑΝΟΥ Σαμ. εἰκονες.*

## ARGUMENT

Introduction. Greece the legitimate parent of the Art. – Summary of the local and political causes. Conjectures on the mechanic process of the Art. Period of preparation – Polygnotus – essential style – Apollodorus – characteristic style. Period of establishment – Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Timanthes. Period of refinement – Eupompus Apelles, Aristides, Euphranor.

## FIRST LECTURE

The difficulties of the task prescribed to me, if they do not preponderate are at least equal to the honour of the situation. If, to discourse on any topic with truth, precision, and clearness, before a mixed or fortuitous audience, before men neither initiated in the subject, nor rendered minutely attentive by expectation, be no easy task, how much more arduous must it be to speak systematically on an art, before a select assembly, composed of *Professors* whose life has been divided between theory and practice, of *Critics* whose taste has been refined by contemplation and comparison, and of *Students*, who, bent on the same pursuit, look for the best and always most compendious method of mastering the principles, to arrive at its emoluments and honours. Your lecturer is to instruct *them* in the principles of 'composition; to form their taste for design and colouring; to strengthen their judgment; to point out to them the beauties and imperfections of celebrated works of art; and the particular excellencies and defects of great masters; and finally, to lead them into the readiest and most efficacious paths of study.<sup>3</sup> If, Gentlemen, these directions presuppose in the student a sufficient stock of elementary knowledge, an expertness in the rudiments, not mere wishes but a peremptory

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<sup>3</sup> Abstract of the Laws of the Royal Academy, article *Professors*; page 21.

will of improvement, and judgment with docility; how much more do they imply in the person selected to address them – knowledge founded on theory, substantiated and matured by practice, a mass of select and well digested materials, perspicuity of method and command of words, imagination to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in, presence of mind, and that resolution, the result of conscious vigour, which, in daring to correct errors, cannot be easily discountenanced. – As conditions like these would discourage abilities far superior to mine, my hopes of approbation, moderate as they are, must in a great measure depend on that indulgence which may grant to my will what it would refuse to my powers.

Before I proceed to the history of Style itself, it seems to be necessary that we should agree about the terms which denote its object and perpetually recur in treating of it; that my vocabulary of technic expression should not clash with the dictionary of my audience; mine is nearly that of your late president. I shall confine myself at present to a few of the most important; the words nature, beauty, grace, taste, copy, imitation, genius, talent. Thus, by *nature* I understand the general and permanent principles of visible objects, not disfigured by accident, or distempered by disease, not modified by fashion or local habits. Nature is a collective idea, and, though its essence exist in each individual of the species, can never in its perfection inhabit a single object. On *beauty* I do not mean to perplex you or myself with abstract ideas, and the romantic reveries of platonic philosophy, or to

inquire whether it be the result of a simple or complex principle. As a local idea, beauty is a despotic princess, and subject to the anarchies of despotism, enthroned to-day, dethroned to-morrow. The beauty we acknowledge is that harmonious whole of the human frame, that unison of parts to one end, which enchants us; the result of the standard set by the great masters of our art, the ancients, and confirmed by the submissive verdict of modern imitation. By *grace* I mean that artless balance of motion and repose sprung from character, founded on propriety, which neither falls short of the demands nor overleaps the modesty of nature. Applied to execution, it means that dexterous power which hides the means by which it was attained, the difficulties it has conquered. When we say *taste*, we mean not crudely the knowledge of what is right in art: taste estimates the degrees of excellence, and by comparison proceeds from justness to refinement. Our language, or rather those who use it, generally confound, when speaking of the art, *copy* with *imitation*, though essentially different in operation and meaning. Precision of eye and obedience of hand are the requisites of the former, without the least pretence to choice, what to select, what to reject; whilst choice directed by judgment or taste constitutes the essence of imitation, and alone can raise the most dexterous copyist to the noble rank of an artist. The imitation of the ancients was, *essential, characteristic, ideal*. The first cleared nature of accident, defect, excrescence; the second found the stamen which connects character with the central form; the third

raised the whole and the parts to the highest degree of unison. Of *genius* I shall speak with reserve, for no word has been more indiscriminately confounded; by genius I mean that power which enlarges the circle of human knowledge, which discovers new materials of nature, or combines the known with novelty, whilst *talent* arranges, cultivates, polishes the discoveries of genius.

Guided by these preliminaries we now approach that happy coast, where, from an arbitrary hieroglyph, the palliative of ignorance, from a tool of despotism, or a ponderous monument of eternal sleep, art emerged into life, motion, and liberty; where situation, climate, national character, religion, manners and government conspired to raise it on that permanent basis, which after the ruins of the fabric itself, still subsists and bids defiance to the ravages of time; as uniform in the principle as various in its applications, the art of the Greeks possessed in itself and propagated, like its chief object Man, the germs of immortality.

I shall not detail here the reasons and the coincidence of fortunate circumstances which raised the Greeks to be the arbiters of form.<sup>4</sup> The standard they erected, the cannon they framed, fell not from Heaven: but as they fancied themselves of divine origin, and *Religion* was the first mover of their art, it followed that they should endeavour to invest their authors with

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<sup>4</sup> This has been done in a superior manner by J. G. Herder, in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der geschichte der Menschheit*, Vol. iii. Book 13; a work translated under the title of *Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man*, 4to.

the most perfect form; and as Man possesses that exclusively, they were led to a complete and intellectual study of its elements and constitution; this, with their *climate*, which allowed that form to grow, and to show itself to the greatest advantage; with their *civil* and *political* institutions, which established and encouraged exercises and manners best calculated to develop its powers; and above all that simplicity of their end, that uniformity of pursuit which in all its derivations retraced the great principle from which it sprang, and like a central stamen drew it out into one immense connected web of congenial imitation; these, I say, are the reasons why the Greeks carried the art to a height which no subsequent time or race has been able to rival or even to approach.

Great as these advantages were, it is not to be supposed that Nature deviated from her gradual progress in the development of human faculties, in favour of the Greeks. Greek Art had her infancy, but the Graces rocked the cradle, and Love taught her to speak. If ever legend deserved our belief, the amorous tale of the Corinthian maid, who traced the shade of her departing lover by the secret lamp, appeals to our sympathy, to grant it; and leads us at the same time to some observations on the first mechanical essays of Painting, and that *linear method* which, though passed nearly unnoticed by *Winkelmann*, seems to have continued as the basis of execution, even when the instrument for which it was chiefly adapted had long been laid aside.

The etymology of the word used by the Greeks to express

*Painting* being the same with that which they employ for *Writing*, makes the similarity of tool, materials, method, almost certain. The tool was a style or pen of wood or metal; the materials a board, or a levigated plane of wood, metal, stone, or some prepared compound; the method, letters or lines.

The first essays of the art were *Skiagrams*, simple outlines of a shade, similar to those which have been introduced to vulgar use by the students and parasites of Physiognomy, under the name of Silhouettes; without any other addition of character or feature but what the profile of the object, thus delineated could afford.

The next step of the art was the *Monogram*, outlines of figures without light or shade, but with some addition of the parts within the outline, and from that to the *Monochrom*, or paintings of a single colour on a plane or tablet, primed with white, and then covered with what they called punic wax, first amalgamated with a tough resinous pigment, generally of a red, sometimes dark brown, or black colour. *In*, or rather *through* this thin inky ground, the outlines were traced with a firm but pliant style, which they called *Cestrum*; if the traced line happened to be incorrect or wrong, it was gently effaced with the finger or with a sponge, and easily replaced by a fresh one. When the whole design was settled, and no farther alteration intended, it was suffered to dry, was covered, to make it permanent, with a brown encaustic varnish, the lights were worked over again, and rendered more brilliant with a point still more delicate, according to the gradual advance from mere outlines to some indications,

and at last to masses of light and shade, and from those to the superinduction of different colours, or the invention of the *Polychrom*, which by the addition of the *pencil* to the style, raised the mezzotinto or stained drawing to a legitimate picture, and at length produced that vaunted *harmony*, the magic scale of Grecian colour.<sup>5</sup>

If this conjecture, for it is not more, on the process of linear painting, formed on the evidence and comparison of passages always unconnected, and frequently contradictory, be founded in fact, the rapturous astonishment at the supposed momentaneous production of the Herculean dancers and the figures on the earthen vases of the ancients, will cease; or rather, we shall no longer suffer ourselves to be deluded by palpable impossibility of execution: on a ground of levigated lime or on potters ware, no velocity or certainty attainable by human hands can conduct a full pencil with that degree of evenness equal from beginning to end with which we see those figures executed, or if it could, would ever be able to fix the line on the glassy surface without its flowing: to make the appearances we see, possible, we must have recourse to the linear process that has been described, and transfer our admiration, to the perseverance, the correctness of principle, the elegance of taste that conducted the artist's hand, without presuming to arm it with contradictory powers: the figures he drew and we admire, are not the magic produce

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<sup>5</sup> This account is founded on the conjectures of Mr. *Riem*, in his Treatise on *die Malerey der Alten*, or the *Painting of the Ancients*, 4to. Berlin, 1787

of a winged pencil, they are the result of gradual improvement, exquisitely finished *monochroms*.

How long the pencil continued only to assist, when it began to engross and when it at last entirely supplanted the cestrum, cannot in the perplexity of accidental report be ascertained. Apollodorus in the 93d Olymp. and Zeuxis in the 94th, are said to have used it with freedom and with power. The battle of the Lapithæ and the Centaurs, which according to Pausanias, Parrhasius painted on the shield of the Minerva of Phidias, to be chased by Mys, could be nothing but a monochrom, and was probably designed with the cestrum, as an instrument of greater accuracy.<sup>6</sup> Apelles and Protogenes, nearly a century afterwards, drew their contested lines with the pencil; and that alone, as delicacy and evanescent subtlety were the characteristic of those lines, may give an idea of their mechanic excellence. And yet in their time the *diagraphic* process,<sup>7</sup> which is the very

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<sup>6</sup> Pausanias Attic. c. xxviii. The word used by Pausanias *καταγραψαι*, shows that the figures of Parrhasius were intended for a Bassorelievo. They were in profile. This is the sense of the word *Catagrapha* in Pliny, xxxv. c. 8, he translates it "obliquas imagines."

<sup>7</sup> By the authority chiefly of Pamphilus the master of Apelles, who taught at Sicyon. 'Hujus auctoritate,' says Pliny, xxxv. 10, 'effectum est Sicyone primum, deinde et in tota Græcia, ut pueri ingenui ante omnia *diagraphicen*, hoc est, picturam in buxo, docerentur,' &c. *Harduin*, contrary to the common editions, reads indeed, and by the authority, he says, of all the MSS. *graphicen*, which he translates: ars 'delineandi,' desseigner, but he has not proved that *graphice* means not more than design; and if he had, what was it that Pamphilus taught? he was not the inventor of what he had been taught himself. He established or rather renewed a particular method of drawing, which contained the rudiments, and facilitated the method of painting.

same with the *linear* one we have described, made a part of liberal education. And Pausias of Sicyon, the contemporary of Apelles, and perhaps the greatest master of composition amongst the ancients, when employed to repair the decayed pictures of Polygnotus at Thespiæ, was adjudged by general opinion to have egregiously failed in the attempt, because he had substituted the pencil to the cestrum, and entered a contest of superiority with weapons not his own.

Here it might seem in its place to say something on the Encaustic method used by the ancients; were it not a subject by ambiguity of expression and conjectural dispute so involved in obscurity that a true account of its process must be despaired of: the most probable idea we can form of it is, that it bore some resemblance to our oil-painting, and that the name was adopted to denote the use of materials, inflammable or prepared by fire, the supposed durability of which, whether applied hot or cold, authorised the terms ἐνεκάνυσε and *inussit*.

The first great name of that epoch of the preparatory period when facts appear to overbalance conjecture, is that of Polygnotus of Thasos, who painted the poecile at Athens, and the lesche or public hall at Delphi. Of these works, but chiefly of the two large pictures at Delphi, which represented scenes subsequent to the eversion of Troy, and Ulysses consulting the spirit of Tiresias in Hades, Pausanias<sup>8</sup> gives a minute and circumstantial detail; by which we are led to surmise, that what

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<sup>8</sup> Pausan. Phocica, c. xxv. seq.

is now called composition was totally wanting in them as a whole: for he begins his description at one end of the picture, and finishes it at the opposite extremity, a senseless method if we suppose that a central group, or a principal figure to which the rest were in a certain degree subordinate, attracted the eye; it appears as plain that they had no perspective, the series of figures on the second or middle ground being described as placed above those on the foreground, and the figures in the distance above the whole: the honest method too which the painter chose of annexing to many of his figures, their names in writing, savours much of the infancy of painting. – We should however be cautious to impute solely to ignorance or imbecility, what might rest on the firm base of permanent principle. The genius of Polygnotus was more than that of any other artist before or after, Phidias perhaps alone excepted, a public genius, his works monumental works, and these very pictures the votive offerings of the Gnidians. The art at that summit, when exerting its powers to record the feats, consecrate the acts, perpetuate the rites, propagate the religion, or to disseminate the peculiar doctrines of a nation, heedless of the rules prescribed to inferior excellence and humbler pursuits, returns to its elements, leaps strict possibility, combines remote causes with present effects, connects local distance and unites separate moments. – Simplicity, parallelism, apposition, take place of variety, contrast, and composition. – Such was the Lesche painted by Polygnotus; and if we consider the variety

of powers that distinguished many of the parts, we must incline to ascribe the primitive arrangement of the whole rather to the artist's choice and lofty simplicity, than want of comprehension: nature had endowed him with that rectitude of taste which in the individuum discovers the stamen of the genus, hence his style of design was essential with glimpses of *grandeur*<sup>9</sup> and ideal beauty. Polygnotus, says Aristotle, *improves* the model. His invention reached the conception of undescribed being, in the dæmon Eurynomus; filled the chasm of description in Theseus and Pirithous, in Ariadne and Phædra; and improved its terrors in the spectre of Tityus; whilst colour to assist it, became in his hand an organ of expression; such was the prophetic glow which still *crimsoned* the cheeks of his Cassandra in the time of Lucian.<sup>10</sup> The improvements in painting which Pliny ascribes to him, of

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<sup>9</sup> This I take to be the sense of Μεγεθος here, which distinguished him, according to Ælian, Var. Hist. iv. 3, from Dionysius of Colophon. The word Τελειοις in the same passage: και ἐν τοις τελειοις εἰργαζετο τα ἄθλα, I translate: *he aimed at, he sought his praise in the representation of essential proportion*; which leads to ideal beauty. The κρειττους, χειρους, ὁμοιους; or the βελτιονας ἢ καθ' ἡμας, ἢ και τοιουτους, ἢ χειρονας, of Aristotle, Poetic. c. 2, by which he distinguishes Polygnotus, Dionysius, Pausan, confirms the sense given to the passage of Ælian.

<sup>10</sup> Παρειῶν το ἐνερευθεσ, ὅταν την Κασσανδραν ἐν τη λεσχη ἐποίησε τοις Δελφοις. Lucian: εἰκονες. This, and what Pausanias tells of the colour of Eurynomus in the same picture, together with the coloured draperies mentioned by Pliny; makes it evident, that the 'simplex color' ascribed by Quintilian to Polygnotus and Aglaophon, implies less a single colour, as some have supposed, than that simplicity always attendant on the infancy of painting, which leaves every colour unmixed and crudely by itself. Indeed the *Poecile* (ἡ ποικιλη στοα) which obtained its name from his pictures, is alone a sufficient proof of variety of colours.

having dressed the heads of his females in variegated veils and *bandeaux*, and robed them in lucid drapery, of having gently opened the lips, given a glimpse of the teeth, and lessened the former monotony of face, such improvements, I say, were surely the most trifling part of a power to which the age of Apelles and that of Quintilian paid equal homage: nor can it add much to our esteem for him, to be told by Pliny that there existed, in the portico of Pompey, a picture of his with the figure of a warrior in an attitude so ambiguous as to make it a question whether he were ascending or descending. Such a figure could only be the offspring of mental or technic imbecility, even if it resembled the celebrated one of a Diomedes carrying off the palladium with one and holding a sword in the other hand, on the intaglio inscribed, I think, with the name of Dioscorides.

With this simplicity of manner and materials the art seems to have proceeded from Polygnotus, Aglaophon, Phidias, Panæus, Colotes, and Evenor, the father of Parrhasius, during a period of more or less disputed Olympiads, to the appearance of Apollodorus the Athenian, who applied the essential principles of Polygnotus to the delineation of the species, by investigating the leading forms that discriminate the various classes of human qualities and passions. The acuteness of his taste led him to discover that as all men were connected by one general form, so they were separated each by some predominant power, which fixed character and bound them to a class: that in proportion as this specific power partook of individual peculiarities, the farther

it was removed from a share in that harmonious system which constitutes nature, and consists in a due balance of all its parts; thence he drew his line of imitation, and personified the central form of the class, to which his object belonged; and to which the rest of its qualities administered without being absorbed. agility was not suffered to destroy firmness, solidity, or weight; nor strength and weight agility; elegance did not degenerate to effeminacy, or grandeur swell to hugeness; such were his principles of style: his expression extended them to the mind, if we may judge from the two subjects mentioned by Pliny, in which he seems to have personified the characters of devotion and impiety; *that*, in the adoring figure of a priest, perhaps of Chryses, expanding his gratitude at the shrine of the God whose arrows avenged his wrongs and restored his daughter: and *this*, in the figure of Ajax wrecked, and from the sea-swept rock hurling defiance unto the murky sky. As neither of these subjects can present themselves to a painter's mind without a contrast of the most awful and terrific tones of colour, magic of light and shade, and unlimited command over the tools of art, we may with Pliny and with Plutarch consider Apollodorus as the first assertor of the pencil's honours, as the first colourist of his age, and the man who opened the gates of art which the Heracleot Zeuxis entered.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Hic primus species exprimere instituit, Pliny xxxv. 36, as *species* in the sense Harduin takes it, 'oris et habitus venustas,' cannot be refused to Polygnotus, and the artists immediately preceding Apollodorus, it must mean here the subdivisions of generic form; the classes. At this period we may with probability fix the invention of

From the essential style of Polygnotus and the specific discrimination of Apollodorus, Zeuxis, by comparison of what belonged to the genus and what to the class, framed at last that ideal form, which in his opinion, constituted the supreme degree of human beauty, or in other words, embodied possibility, by uniting the various but homogeneous powers scattered among many, in one object, to one end. Such a system, if it originated in genius, was the considerate result of taste refined by the unremitting perseverance with which he observed, consulted, compared, selected the congenial but scattered forms of nature. Our ideas are the offspring of our senses, we are not more able to create the form of a being, we have not seen, without retrospect to one we know, than we are able to create a new sense. He whose fancy has conceived an idea of the most beautiful form must have composed it from actual existence, and he alone can comprehend what one degree of beauty wants to become equal to another, and at last superlative. He who thinks the pretty handsome, will think the handsome a beauty, and fancy he has met an ideal form in a merely handsome one, whilst he who has compared beauty with beauty, will at last improve form upon form to a perfect image;

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local colour, and tone; which, though strictly speaking it be neither the light nor the shade, is regulated by the medium which tinges both. This, Pliny calls 'splendour.' To Apollodorus Plutarch ascribes likewise the invention of tints, the mixtures of colour and the gradations of shade, if I conceive the passage rightly: Ἀπολλοδώροσ ὁ Ζωγράφος Ἀνθρώπων πρώτοσ ἐξευρών φθοραν καὶ ἀποχρωσιν Σκιασ, (Plutarch, Bellone an pace Ath., &c. 346.) This was the element of the ancient Ἀρμωγη, that imperceptible transition, which, without opacity, confusion, or hardness, united local colour, demitint, shade, and reflexes.

this was the method of Zeuxis, and this he learnt from Homer, whose mode of ideal composition, according to Quintilian, he considered as his model. Each individual of Homer forms a class, expresses and is circumscribed by one quality of heroic power; Achilles alone unites their various but congenial energies. The grace of Nireus, the dignity of Agamemnon, the impetuosity of Hector, the magnitude, the steady prowess of the great, the velocity of the lesser Ajax, the perseverance of Ulysses, the intrepidity of Diomedes, are emanations of energy that reunite in one splendid centre fixed in Achilles. This standard of the unison of homogeneous powers exhibited in *successive action* by the poet, the painter, invigorated no doubt by the contemplation of the works of Phidias, transferred to his own art and substantiated by *form*, when he selected the congenial beauties of Croton to compose a perfect female. Like Phidias too, he appears to have been less pathetic than sublime, and even in his female forms more ample and august than elegant or captivating: his principle was epic, and this Aristotle either considered not or did not comprehend, when he refuses him the expression of character in action and feature: Jupiter on his throne encircled by the celestial synod, and Helen, the arbitress of Troy, contained probably the principal elements of his style; but he could trace the mother's agitation in Alcmena, and in Penelope the pangs of wedded love.

On those powers of his invention which Lucian relates in the memoir inscribed with the name of Zeuxis, I shall reserve my observations for a fitter moment. Of his colour we know little,

but it is not unreasonable to suppose that it emulated the beauties and the grandeur of his design; and that he extended light and shade to masses, may be implied from his peculiar method of painting monochroms on a black ground, adding the lights in white.<sup>12</sup>

The correctness of Parrhasius succeeded to the genius of Zeuxis. He circumscribed his ample style, and by subtle examination of outline established that standard of divine and heroic form which raised him to the authority of a legislator from whose decisions there was no appeal. He gave to the divine and heroic character in painting, what Polycletus had given to the human in sculpture, by his Doryphorus, a canon of proportion. Phidias had discovered in the nod of the Homeric Jupiter the characteristic of majesty, *inclination of the head*: this hinted to him a higher elevation of the neck behind, a bolder protrusion of the front, and the increased perpendicular of the profile. To this conception Parrhasius fixed a maximum; that point from which descends the ultimate line of celestial beauty, the angle within which moves what is inferior, beyond which what is portentous. From the head conclude to the proportions of the neck, the limbs, the extremities; from the father to the race of gods; all, the sons of one, Zeus; derived from one source of tradition, Homer; formed by one artist, Phidias: on him measured and decided by Parrhasius. In the simplicity of this principle, adhered to by

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<sup>12</sup> 'Pinxit et monochromata ex albo.' Pliny, xxxv. 9. This Aristotle, Poet. c. 6, calls λευκογραφειν.

the succeeding periods, lies the uninterrupted progress and the unattainable superiority of Grecian art. With this prerogative, which evidently implies a profound as well as general knowledge of the parts, how are we to reconcile the criticism passed on the intermediate parts of his forms as inferior to their outline? or how could Winkelmann, in contradiction with his own principles, explain it, by a want of anatomic knowledge?<sup>13</sup> how is it possible to suppose that he who decided his outline with such intelligence that it appeared ambient, and pronounced the parts that escaped the eye, should have been uninformed of its contents? let us rather suppose that the defect ascribed to the intermediate forms of his bodies, if such a fault there was, consisted in an affectation of smoothness bordering on insipidity, in something effeminately voluptuous, which absorbed their character and the idea of elastic vigour; and this Euphranor seems to have hinted at, when in comparing his own Theseus with that of Parrhasius, he pronounced the Ionian's to have fed on roses, his own on flesh:<sup>14</sup> emasculate softness was not, in his opinion, the proper companion of the contour, or flowery freshness of colour an adequate substitute for the sterner tints of heroic form.

None of the ancients seem to have united or wished

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<sup>13</sup> In lineis extremis palmam adeptus – minor tamen videtur, sibi comparatus, in mediis corporibus exprimentis. Pliny, xxxv. 10. Here we find the inferiority of the middle parts merely relative to himself. Compared with himself, Parrhasius was not all equal.

<sup>14</sup> Theseus, in quo dixit, eundem apud Parrhasium rosa pastum esse, suum vero carne. Plin. xxxv. 11.

to combine as man and artist, more qualities seemingly incompatible than Parrhasius. – The volubility and ostentatious insolence of an Asiatic with Athenian simplicity and urbanity of manners; punctilious correctness with blandishments of handling and luxurious colour, and with sublime and pathetic conception, a fancy libidiously sportive.<sup>15</sup> If he was not the inventor, he surely was the greatest master of allegory, supposing that he really embodied by signs universally comprehended that image of the Athenian ΔΗΜΟΣ or people, which was to combine and to express at once its contradictory qualities. Perhaps he traced the jarring branches to their source, the aboriginal moral principle of the Athenian character, which he made intuitive. This supposition alone can shed a dawn of possibility on what else appears impossible. We know that the personification of the Athenian Δημος was an object of sculpture, and that its images by Lyson and Leochares<sup>16</sup> were publicly set up; but there is no

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<sup>15</sup> The epithet which he gave to himself of Ἀβροδιαίτος, the delicate, the elegant, and the epigram he is said to have composed on himself, are known: See Athenæus, l. xii. He wore, says Ælian, Var. Hist. ix. 11. a purple robe and a golden garland; he bore a staff wound round with tendrils of gold, and his sandals were tied to his feet and ankles with golden straps. Of his easy simplicity we may judge from his dialogue with Socrates in Xenophon; ἀπομνημονευατων, l. iii. Of his libidinous fancy, besides what Pliny says, from his Archigallus, and the Meleager and Atalanta mentioned by Suetonius in Tiberio, c. 44.

<sup>16</sup> In the portico of the Piræus by Leochares; in the hall of the Five-hundred, by Lyson; in the back portico of the Ceramicus there was a picture of Theseus, of Democracy and the Demos, by Euphranor. Pausan. Attic. i. 3. Aristolaus, according to Pliny, was a painter, 'è severissimis.'

clue to decide whether they preceded or followed the conceit of Parrhasius. It was repeated by Aristolaus, the son of Pausias.

The decided forms of Parrhasius, Timanthes the Cythnian, his competitor for fame, attempted to inspire with mind and to animate with passions. No picture of antiquity is more celebrated than his immolation of Iphigenia in Aulis, painted, as Quintilian informs us, in contest with Colotes of Teos, a painter and sculptor from the school of Phidias; crowned with victory at its rival exhibition, and since, the theme of unlimited praise from the orators and historians of antiquity, though the solidity or justice of their praise relatively to our art, has been questioned by modern criticism. On this subject, which not only contains the gradations of affection from the most remote to the closest link of humanity, but appears to me to offer the fairest specimen of the limits which the theory of the ancients had prescribed to the expression of pathos, I think it my duty the more circumstantially to expatiate, as the censure passed on the method of Timanthes, has been sanctioned by the highest authority in matters of art, that of your late President, in his eighth discourse at the delivery of the academic prize for the best picture painted from this very subject.

How did Timanthes treat it? Iphigenia, the victim ordained by the oracle to be offered for the success of the Greek expedition against Troy, was represented standing ready for immolation at the altar, the priest, the instruments of death at her side; and around her, an assembly of the most important agents

or witnesses of the terrible solemnity, from Ulysses, who had disengaged her from the embraces of her mother at Mycenæ, to her nearest male relations, her uncle Menelaus, and her own father, Agamemnon. Timanthes, say Pliny and Quintilian with surprising similarity of phrase, when, in gradation he had consumed every image of grief within the reach of art, from the unhappy priest, to the deeper grief of Ulysses, and from that to the pangs of kindred sympathy in Menelaus, unable to express *with dignity* the father's woe, threw a veil, or if you will, a mantle over his face. – This mantle, the pivot of objection, indiscriminately borrowed, as might easily be supposed, by all the concurrents for the prize, gave rise to the following series of criticisms:

"Before I conclude, I cannot avoid making one observation on the pictures now before us. I have observed, that every candidate has copied the celebrated invention of Timanthes in hiding the face of Agamemnon in his mantle; indeed such lavish encomiums have been bestowed on this thought, and that too by men of the highest character in critical knowledge, – Cicero, Quintilian, Valerius Maximus, and Pliny, – and have been since re-echoed by almost every modern that has written on the Arts, that your adopting it can neither be wondered at, nor blamed. It appears now to be so much connected with the subject, that the spectator would perhaps be disappointed in not finding united in the picture what he always united in his mind, and considered as indispensably belonging to the subject. But it may be observed,

that those who praise this circumstance were not painters. They use it as an illustration only of their own art; it served their purpose, and it was certainly not their business to enter into the objections that lie against it in another Art. I fear *we* have but very scanty means of exciting those powers over the imagination, which make so very considerable and refined a part of poetry. It is a doubt with me, whether we should even make the attempt. The chief, if not the only occasion which the painter has for this artifice, is, when the subject is improper to be more fully represented, either for the sake of decency, or to avoid what would be disagreeable to be seen; and this is not to raise or increase the passions, which is the reason that is given for this practice, but on the contrary to diminish their effect.

"Mr. Falconet has observed, in a note on this passage in his translation of Pliny, that the circumstance of covering the face of Agamemnon was probably not in consequence of any fine imagination of the painter, – which he considers as a discovery of the critics, – but merely copied from the description of the sacrifice, as it is found in Euripides.

"The words from which the picture is supposed to be taken, are these: *Agamemnon saw Iphigenia advance towards the fatal altar; he groaned, he turned aside his head, he shed tears, and covered his face with his robe.*

"Falconet does not at all acquiesce in the praise that is bestowed on Timanthes; not only because it is not his invention, but because he thinks meanly of this trick of concealing, except

in instances of blood, where the objects would be too horrible to be seen; but, says he, 'in an afflicted Father, in a King, in Agamemnon, you, who are a painter, conceal from me the most interesting circumstance, and then put me off with sophistry and a veil. You are (he adds) a feeble painter, without resources. you do not know even those of your Art. I care not what veil it is, whether closed hands, arms raised, or any other action that conceals from me the countenance of the Hero. You think of veiling Agamemnon; you have unveiled your own ignorance.'

"To what Falconet has said, we may add, that supposing this method of leaving the expression of grief to the imagination, to be, as it was thought to be, the invention of the painter, and that it deserves all the praise that has been given it, still it is a trick that will serve but once; whoever does it a second time, will not only want novelty, but be justly suspected of using artifice to evade difficulties.

"If difficulties overcome make a great part of the merit of Art, difficulties evaded can deserve but little commendation."

To this string of animadversions, I subjoin with diffidence the following observations:

The subject of Timanthes was the immolation of Iphigenia; Iphigenia was the principal figure, and her form, her resignation, or her anguish the painter's principal task; the figure of Agamemnon, however important, is merely accessory, and no more necessary to make the subject a completely tragic one, than that of Clytemnestra the mother, no more than that of Priam, to

impress us with sympathy at the death of Polyxena. It is therefore a misnomer of the French critic, to call Agamemnon 'the hero' of the subject.

Neither the French nor the English critic appears to me to have comprehended the real motive of Timanthes, as contained in the words, '*decere, pro dignitate, and digne,*' in the passages of Tully, Quintilian, and Pliny;<sup>17</sup> they ascribe to impotence what was the forbearance of judgment; Timanthes felt like a father:

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<sup>17</sup> Cicero *Oratore*, 73. seq. – In alioque ponatur, aliudque totum sit, utrum *decere* an *oportere* dicas; *oportere* enim, perfectionem declarat officii, quo et semper utendum est, et omnibus: *decere*, quasi aptum esse, consentaneumque tempori et personæ; quod cum in factis sæpissime, tum in dictis valet, in vultu denique, et gestu, et incessu. Contraque item *dedecere*. Quod si poeta fugit, ut maximum vitium, qui peccat, etiam, cum probam orationem affingit improbo, stultove sapientis: si denique pictor ille vidit, cum immolanda Iphigenia tristis Calchas esset, mæstior Ulysses, mæreret Menelaus, obvolvendum caput Agamemnonis esse, quoniam summum illum luctum penicillo, non posset imitari: si denique histrio, quid deceat quærit: quid faciendum oratori putemus? M. F. Quintilianus, l. ii. c. 14. – Operienda sunt quædam, sive ostendi non debent, sive exprimi *pro dignitate* non possunt: ut fecit Timanthes, ut opinor, Cithnius, in ea tabula qua Coloten Tejum vicit. Nam cum in Iphigeniæ immolatione pinxisset tristem Calchantem, tristiorem Ulysses, addidisset Menelao quem summum poterat ars efficere mærorem, consumptis affectibus, non reperiens quo *dignè* modo Patris vultum possit exprimere, velavit ejus caput, et sui cuique animo dedit æstimandum. It is evident to the slightest consideration, that both Cicero and Quintilian lose sight of their premises, and contradict themselves in the motive they ascribe to Timanthes. Their want of acquaintance with the nature of plastic expression made them imagine the face of Agamemnon beyond the power of the artist. They were not aware that by making him waste expression on inferior actors at the expence of a principal one, they call him an improvident spendthrift and not a wise œconomist. From Valerius Maximus, who calls the subject '*Luctuosum immolatæ Iphigeniæ sacrificium*' instead of *immolandæ*, little can be expected to the purpose. Pliny, with the *dignè* of Quintilian has the same confusion of motive.

he did not hide the face of Agamemnon, because it was beyond the power of his art, not because it was beyond the *possibility*, but because it was beyond the *dignity* of expression, because the inspiring feature of paternal affection at that moment, and the action which of necessity must have accompanied it, would either have destroyed the grandeur of the character and the solemnity of the scene, or subjected the painter with the majority of his judges to the imputation of insensibility. He must either have represented him in tears, or convulsed at the flash of the raised dagger, forgetting the chief in the father, or shown him absorbed by despair, and in that state of stupefaction, which levels all features and deadens expression; he might indeed have chosen a fourth mode, he might have exhibited him fainting and palsied in the arms of his attendants, and by this confusion of male and female character, merited the applause of every theatre at Paris. But Timanthes had too true a sense of nature to expose a father's feelings or to tear a passion to rags; nor had the Greeks yet learnt of Rome to steel the face. If he made Agamemnon bear his calamity as a man, he made him also feel it as a man. It became the leader of Greece to sanction the ceremony with his presence, it did not become the father to see his daughter beneath the dagger's point: the same nature that threw a real mantle over the face of Timoleon, when he assisted at the punishment of his brother, taught Timanthes to throw an imaginary one over the face of Agamemnon; neither height nor depth, *propriety* of expression was his aim.

The critic grants that the expedient of Timanthes may be allowed in 'instances of blood,' the supported aspect of which would change a scene of commiseration and terror into one of abomination and horror, which ought for ever to be excluded from the province of art, of poetry as well as painting: and would not the face of Agamemnon, uncovered, have had this effect? was not the scene he must have witnessed a scene of blood? and whose blood was to be shed? that of his own daughter – and what daughter? young, beautiful, helpless, innocent, resigned, – the very idea of resignation in such a victim, must either have acted irresistibly to procure her relief, or thrown a veil over a father's face. A man who is determined to sport wit at the expence of heart alone could call such an expedient ridiculous – 'as ridiculous,' Mr. Falconet continues, 'as a poet would be, who in a pathetic situation, instead of satisfying my expectation, to rid himself of the business, should say, that the sentiments of his hero are so far above whatever can be said on the occasion, that he shall say nothing.' And has not Homer, though he does not tell us this, acted upon a similar principle? has he not, when Ulysses addresses Ajax in Hades, in the most pathetic and conciliatory manner, instead of furnishing him with an answer, made him remain in indignant silence during the address, then turn his step and stalk away? has not the universal voice of genuine criticism with Longinus told us, and if it had not, would not Nature's own voice tell us, that that silence was characteristic, that it precluded, included, and soaring above all answer, consigned Ulysses for

ever to a sense of inferiority? Nor is it necessary to render such criticism contemptible to mention the silence of Dido in Virgil, or the Niobe of Æschylus, who was introduced veiled, and continued mute during her presence on the stage.

But in hiding Agamemnon's face, Timanthes loses the honour of invention, as he is merely the imitator of Euripides, who did it before him?<sup>18</sup> I am not prepared with chronologic proofs to decide whether Euripides or Timanthes, who were contemporaries, about the period of the Peloponnesian war, fell first on this expedient; though the silence of Pliny and Quintilian on that head, seems to be in favour of the painter, neither of whom could be ignorant of the celebrated drama of Euripides, and would not willingly have suffered the honour of this master-stroke of an art they were so much better acquainted with than painting, to be transferred to another from its real author, had the poet's claim been prior: nor shall I urge that the picture of Timanthes was crowned with victory by those who were in daily habits of assisting at the dramas of Euripides, without having their verdict impeached by Colotes or his friends, who would not have failed to avail themselves of so flagrant a proof of inferiority

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<sup>18</sup> It is observed by an ingenious Critic, that in the tragedy of Euripides, the procession is described, and upon Iphigenia's looking back on her father, he groans, and hides his face to conceal his tears; whilst the picture gives the moment that precedes the sacrifice, and the hiding has a different object and arises from another impression.— ὡς δ' εσειδεν Αγαμεμνων αναξ ἐπι σφαγας στειχουσαν εις ἄλσος κορην ἀνεστεναξε. Καμπαλιν στρεψας κατα Δακρυα προηγεν. ὀμματων πεπλον προθεις.

as the want of invention, in the work of his rival: – I shall only ask, what is invention? if it be the combination of the most important moment of a fact with the most varied effects of the reigning passion on the characters introduced – the invention of Timanthes consisted in showing, by the gradation of that passion in the faces of the assistant mourners, the *reason why that of the principal one, was hid*. This he performed, and this the poet, whether prior or subsequent, did not and could not do, but left it with a silent appeal to our own mind and fancy.

In presuming to differ on the propriety of this mode of expression in the picture of Timanthes from the respectable authority I have quoted, I am far from a wish to invalidate the equally pertinent and acute remarks made on the danger of its imitation, though I am decidedly of opinion that it is strictly within the limits of our art. If it be a 'trick,' it is certainly one that 'has served more than once.' We find it adopted to express the grief of a beautiful female figure on a basso-relievo formerly in the palace Valle at Rome, and preserved in the Admiranda of S. Bartoli; it is used, though with his own originality, by Michael Angelo in the figure of Abijam, to mark unutterable woe; Raphael, to show that he thought it the best possible mode of expressing remorse and the deepest sense of repentance, borrowed it in the expulsion from Paradise, without any alteration, from Masaccio; and like him, turned Adam out with both his hands before his face. And how has he represented Moses at the burning bush, to express the astonished awe of

human in the visible presence of divine nature? by a double repetition of the same expedient; once in the ceiling of a Stanza, and again in the loggia of the Vatican, with both his hands before his face, or rather with his face immersed in his hands. As we cannot suspect in the master of expression the unworthy motive of making use of this mode merely to avoid a difficulty, or to denote the insupportable splendour of the vision, which was so far from being the case, that, according to the sacred record, Moses stepped out of his way to examine the ineffectual blaze: we must conclude that Nature herself dictated to him this method as superior to all he could express by features; and that he recognized the same dictate in Masaccio, who can no more be supposed to have been acquainted with the precedent of Timanthes, than Shakspeare with that of Euripides, when he made Macduff draw his hat over his face.

Masaccio and Raphael proceeded on the principle, Gherard Lairesse copied only the image of Timanthes, and has perhaps incurred by it the charge of what Longinus calls *parenthyrsos*, in the ill-timed application of supreme pathos, to an inadequate call. Agamemnon is introduced covering his face with his mantle, at the death of Polyxena, the captive daughter of Priam, sacrificed to the manes of Achilles, her betrothed lover, treacherously slain in the midst of the nuptial ceremony, by her brother Paris. The death of Polyxena, whose charms had been productive of the greatest disaster that could befall the Grecian army, could not perhaps provoke in its leader emotions similar to those which he

felt at that of his own daughter: it must however be owned that the figure of the chief is equally dignified and pathetic; and that, by the introduction of the spectre of Achilles at the immolation of the damsel to his manes, the artist's fancy has in some degree atoned for the want of discrimination in the professor.

Such were the artists, who, according to the most corresponding data, formed the style of that second period, which fixed the end and established the limits of art, on whose firm basis arose the luxuriant fabric of the third or the period of refinement, which added grace and polish to the forms it could not surpass; amenity or truth to the tones it could not invigorate; magic and imperceptible transition to the abrupt division of masses; gave depth and roundness to composition; at the breast of Nature herself caught the passions as they rose, and familiarized expression: The period of Apelles, Protogenes, Aristides, Euphranor, Pausias, the pupils of Pamphilus and his master Eupompus, whose authority obtained what had not been granted to his great predecessor and countryman Polycletus, the new establishment of the school of Sicyon.<sup>19</sup>

The leading principle of Eupompus may be traced in the advice which he gave to Lysippus (as preserved by Pliny), whom, when consulted on a standard of imitation, he directed to the contemplation of human variety in the multitude of the characters that were passing by, with the axiom, 'that Nature herself was to be imitated, not an artist.' Excellence, said

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<sup>19</sup> Pliny, l. xxxv. c. 18.

Eupompus, is thy aim, such excellence as that of Phidias and Polycletus; but it is not obtained by the servile imitation of works, however perfect, without mounting to the principle which raised them to that height; that principle apply to thy purpose, there fix thy aim. He who, with the same freedom of access to Nature as another man, contents himself to approach her only through his medium, has resigned his birth-right and originality together; his master's manner will be his style. If Phidias and Polycletus have discovered the substance and established the permanent principle of the human frame, they have not exhausted the variety of human appearances and human character; if they have abstracted the forms of majesty and those of beauty, Nature, compared with their works, will point out a grace that has been left for thee; if they have pre-occupied man as he *is*, be thine to give him that air with which he actually *appears*.<sup>20</sup>

Such was the advice of Eupompus: less lofty, less ambitious than what the departed epoch of genius would have dictated, but better suited to the times, and better to his pupil's mind. When the spirit of liberty forsook the public, grandeur had left the private mind of Greece: subdued by Philip, the gods of Athens and Olympia had migrated to Pella, and Alexander was

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<sup>20</sup> Lysippum Sicyonium – audendi rationem cepisse pictoris Eupompi responso. Eum enim interrogatum, quem sequeretur antecedentium, dixisse demonstrata hominum multitudine, naturam ipsam imitandam esse, non artificem. Non habet Latinum nomen symmetria, quam diligentissime custodivit, nova intactaque ratione quadratas veterum staturas permutando: Vulgoque dicebat, ab illis factos, quales essent, homines: à se, quales viderentur esse. Plin. xxxiv. 8.

become the representative of Jupiter; still those who had lost the substance fondled the shadow of liberty; rhetoric mimicked the thunders of oratory, sophistry and metaphysic debate that philosophy, which had guided life, and the grand taste that had dictated to art the monumental style, invested gods with human form and raised individuals to heroes, began to give way to refinements in appreciating the degrees of elegance or of resemblance in imitation: the advice of Eupompus however, far from implying the abolition of the old system, recalled his pupil to the examen of the great principle on which it had established its excellence, and to the resources which its inexhaustible variety offered for new combinations.

That Lysippus considered it in that light, his devotion to the Doryphorus of Polycletus, known even to Tully, sufficiently proved. That figure which comprised the pure proportions of juvenile vigour, furnished the readiest application for those additional refinements of variety, character, and fleshy charms, that made the base of his invention: its symmetry directing his researches amid the insidious play of accidental charms, and the claims of inherent grace, never suffered imitation to deviate into incorrectness; whilst its squareness and elemental beauty melted in more familiar forms on the eye, and from an object of cold admiration became the glowing one of sympathy. Such was probably the method formed by Lysippus on the advice of Eupompus, more perplexed than explained by the superficial extract and the rapid phrase of Pliny.

From the statuary's we may form our idea of the painter's method. The doctrine of Eupompus was adopted by Pamphilus the Amphipolitan, the most scientific artist of his time, and by him communicated to Apelles of Cos, or as Lucian will have it, of Ephesus,<sup>21</sup> his pupil; in whom, if we believe tradition, Nature exhibited, *once*, a specimen what her union with education and circumstances could produce. The name of Apelles in Pliny is the synonyme of unrivalled and unattainable excellence, but the enumeration of his works points out the modification which we ought to apply to that superiority; it neither comprises exclusive sublimity of invention, the most acute discrimination of character, the widest sphere of comprehension, the most judicious and best balanced composition, nor the deepest pathos of expression: his great prerogative consisted more in the unison than in the extent of his powers; he knew better what he could do, what ought to be done, at what point he could arrive, and what lay beyond his reach, than any other artist. Grace of conception and refinement of taste were his elements, and went hand in hand with grace of execution and taste in finish; powerful and seldom possessed singly, irresistible when united: that he built both on the firm basis of the former system, not on its subversion, his well-known contest of lines with Protogenes, not a legendary tale, but a well-attested fact, irrefragably proves: what those lines were, drawn with nearly miraculous subtlety in

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<sup>21</sup> Μαλλον δε Ἀπελλης ὁ Ἐφεσιος παλαι ταυτην προὔλαβε την εἰκονα· Και γαρ αὐ και οὔτος διαβληθεις προς Πτολεμειον —Λουκιανού περι του μ. ρ. Π. Τ. Δ.

different colours, one upon the other or rather within each other, it would be equally unavailing and useless to inquire; but the corollaries we may deduce from the contest, are obviously these, that the schools of Greece recognized all one elemental principle: that acuteness and fidelity of eye and obedience of hand form precision; precision, proportion; proportion, beauty: that it is the 'little more or less,' imperceptible to vulgar eyes, which constitutes grace and establishes the superiority of one artist over another: that the knowledge of the degrees of things, or taste, presupposes a perfect knowledge of the things themselves: that colour, grace, and taste are ornaments not substitutes of form, expression and character, and when they usurp that title, degenerate into splendid faults.

Such were the principles on which Apelles formed his Venus, or rather the personification of Female Grace, the wonder of art, the despair of artists: whose outline baffled every attempt at emendation, whilst imitation shrunk from the purity, the force, the brilliancy, the evanescent gradations of her tints.<sup>22</sup>

The refinements of the art were by Aristides of Thebes applied to the mind. The passions which tradition had organized for Timanthes, Aristides caught as they rose from the breast or escaped from the lips of Nature herself; his volume was man, his scene society: he drew the subtle discriminations of mind in every stage of life, the whispers, the simple cry of

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<sup>22</sup> Apelles was probably the inventor of what artists call *glazing*. See Reynolds on Du Fresnoy, note 37. vol. iii.

passion and its most complex accents. Such, as history informs us, was the suppliant whose voice you seemed to hear, such his sick man's half-extinguished eye and labouring breast, such Byblis expiring in the pangs of love, and above all, the half-slain mother shuddering lest the eager babe should suck the blood from her palsied nipple. This picture was probably at Thebes when Alexander sacked that town; what his feelings were when he saw it, we may guess from his sending it to Pella. Its expression, poised between the anguish of maternal affection and the pangs of death, gives to commiseration an image, which neither the infant piteously caressing his slain mother in the group of Epigonus,<sup>23</sup> nor the absorbed feature of the Niobe, nor the struggle of the Laocoon, excites. Timanthes had marked the limits that discriminate terror from the excess of horror; Aristides drew the line that separates it from disgust. His subject is one of those that touch the ambiguous line of a squeamish sense. – Taste and smell, as sources of tragic emotion, and in consequence of their power, commanding gesture, seem scarcely admissible in art or on the theatre, because their extremes are nearer allied to disgust, and loathsome or risible ideas, than to terror. The prophetic trance of Cassandra, who scents the prepared murder of Agamemnon at the threshold of the ominous hall; the desperate moan of Macbeth's queen on seeing the visionary spot still uneffaced infect her hand, – are images snatched from the lap of terror, – but soon would cease to be

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<sup>23</sup> In matri interfectæ infante miserabiliter blandiente. Plin. l. xxxiv. c. 9.

so, were the artist or the actress to enforce the dreadful hint with indiscreet expression or gesture. This, completely understood by Aristides, was as completely missed by his imitators, Raphael<sup>24</sup> in the *Morbetto*, and Poussin in his plague of the Philistines. In the group of Aristides, our sympathy is immediately interested by the mother, still alive, though mortally wounded, helpless, beautiful, and forgetting herself in the anguish for her child, whose situation still suffers hope to mingle with our fears; he is only approaching the nipple of the mother. In the group of Raphael, the mother dead of the plague, herself an object of apathy, becomes one of disgust, by the action of the man, who bending over her, at his utmost reach of arm, with one hand removes the child from the breast, whilst the other, applied to his nostrils, bars the effluvia of death. Our feelings alienated from the mother, come too late even for the child, who, by his languor, already betrays the mortal symptoms of the poison he imbibed at the parent corpse. It is curious to observe the permutation of ideas which takes place, as imitation is removed from the sources of nature: Poussin, not content with adopting the group of Raphael, once more repeats the loathsome attitude in the same scene; he forgot, in his eagerness to render the idea of contagion still more intuitive, that he was averting our feelings with ideas of disgust.

The refinements of expression were carried still farther by the disciple of Aristides, Euphranor the Isthmian, who excelled

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<sup>24</sup> A design of Raphael, representing the lues of the Trojans in Creta, known by the print of Marc Antonio Raymondi.

equally as painter and statuary, if we may form our judgment from the Theseus he opposed to that of Parrhasius, and the bronze figure of Alexander Paris, in whom, says Pliny,<sup>25</sup> the umpire of the goddesses, the lover of Helen, and yet the murder of Achilles might be traced. This account, which is evidently a quotation of Pliny's, and not the assumed verdict of a connoisseur, has been translated with an emphasis it does not admit of, to prove that an attempt to express different qualities or passions at once in the same object, must naturally tend to obliterate the effect of each. 'Pliny,' says our critic, 'observes, that in a statue of Paris by Euphranor, you might discover at the same time three different characters: the dignity of a judge of the goddesses, the lover of Helen, and the conqueror of Achilles. A statue in which you endeavour to unite stately dignity, youthful elegance, and stern valour, must surely possess none of these to any eminent degree.' The paraphrase, it is first to be observed, lends itself the mixtures to Pliny it disapproves of; we look in vain for the coalition of 'stately dignity, stern valour, and youthful elegance,' in the Paris *he* describes: the murderer of Achilles was not his conqueror. But may not dignity, elegance, and valour, or any other not irreconcilable qualities, be visible at once in a figure without destroying the primary feature of its character, or impairing its expression? Let us appeal to the Apollo. Is

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<sup>25</sup> Reynolds' Disc. V. vol. i. p. 120. Euphranoris Alexander Paris est: in quo laudatur quod omnia simul intelligantur, judex dearum, amator Helenæ, et tamen Achillis interfector. Plin. l. xxxiv. 8.

he not a figure of character and expression, and does he not possess all three in a supreme degree? Will it imply mediocrity of conception or confusion of character, if we were to say that his countenance, attitude, and form combines divine majesty, enchanting grace, and lofty indignation? Yet not all three, one ideal whole irradiated the mind of the artist who conceived the divine semblance. He gave, no doubt, the preference of expression to the action in which the god is engaged, or rather, from the accomplishment of which he recedes with lofty and contemptuous ease. – This was the first impression which he meant to make upon us: but what contemplation stops here? what hinders us when we consider the beauty of these features, the harmony of these forms, to find in them the abstract of all his other qualities, to roam over the whole history of his achievements? we see him enter the celestial synod, and all the gods rise at his august appearance;<sup>26</sup> we see him sweep the plain after Daphne; precede Hector with the ægis and disperse the Greeks; strike Patroclus with his palm and decide his destiny. – And is the figure frigid because its great idea is inexhaustible? might we not say the same of the infant Hercules of Zeuxis or of Reynolds? Did not the idea of the man inspire the hand that framed the mighty child? his magnitude, his crushing grasp, his energy of will, are only the germ, the prelude of the power that rid the earth of monsters, and which our mind pursues. Such was no doubt the Paris of Euphranor: he made his character so pregnant,

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<sup>26</sup> See the Hymn (ascribed to Homer) on Apollo.

that those who knew his history might trace in it the origin of all his future feats, though first impressed by the expression allotted to the predominant quality and moment. The acute inspector, the elegant umpire of female form receiving the contested pledge with a dignified pause, or with enamoured eagerness presenting it to the arbitress of his destiny, was probably the predominant idea of the figure; whilst the deserter of Oenone, the seducer of Helen, the subtle archer, that future murderer of Achilles, lurked under the insidious eyebrow, and in the penetrating glance of beauty's chosen minion. Such appeared to me the character and expression of the sitting Paris in the voluptuous Phrygian dress, formerly in the cortile of the palace Altheims, at Rome. A figure nearly colossal, which many of you may remember, and a faint idea of whom may be gathered from the print among those in the collection published of the Museum Clementinum. A work, in my opinion, of the highest style and worthy of Euphranor, though I shall not venture to call it a repetition in marble of his bronze.

From these observations on the collateral and unsolicited beauties which must branch out from the primary expression of every great idea, it will not, I hope, be suspected, that I mean to invalidate the necessity of its unity, or to be the advocate of pedantic subdivision. All such division diminishes, all such mixtures impair the simplicity and clearness of expression: in the group of the Laocoon, the frigid ecstasies of German criticism have discovered pity like a vapour swimming on the father's eyes; he is seen to suppress in the groan for his children the shriek for

himself, – his nostrils are drawn upward to express indignation at unworthy sufferings, whilst he is said at the same time to implore celestial help. To these are added the winged effects of the serpent-poison, the writhings of the body, the spasms of the extremities: to the miraculous organization of such expression, Agesander, the sculptor of the Laocoon, was too wise to lay claim. His figure is a class, it characterizes every beauty of virility verging on age; the prince, the priest, the father are visible, but, absorbed in the man, serve only to dignify the victim of *one* great expression; though poised by the artist, for us to apply the compass to the face of the Laocoon, is to measure the wave fluctuating in the storm: this tempestuous front, this contracted nose, the immersion of these eyes, and above all, that long-drawn mouth, are separate and united, seats of convulsion, features of nature struggling within the jaws of death.

# SECOND LECTURE

## ART OF THE MODERNS

ὍΤΙΝΕΣ ἮΓΕΜΟΝΕΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΙΡΑΝΟΙ ΗΣΑΝ.  
ΠΛΗΘΥΝ Δ' ΟΥΚ ΑΝ ΕΓΩ ΜΥΘΗΣΟΜΑΙ ΟΥΔ'  
ΟΝΟΜΗΝΩ  
ΟΥΔ' ΕΙ ΜΟΙ ΔΕΚΑ ΜΕΝ ΓΛΩΣΣΑΙ, ΔΕΚΑ ΔΕ  
ΣΤΟΜΑΤ' ΕΙΕΝ,  
ΦΩΝΗ Δ' ΑΡΡΗΚΤΟΣ.  
*Homer. Iliad. B. 487.*

### ARGUMENT

Introduction – different direction of the art. Preparative style – Masaccio – Lionardo da Vinci. Style of establishment – Michael Angelo, Raphael, Titiano, Correggio. Style of refinement, and depravation. Schools – of Tuscany, Rome, Venice, Lombardy. The Eclectic school – Machinists. The German school – Albert Durer. The Flemish school – Rubens. The Dutch school – Rembrant. Observations on art in Switzerland. The French school.

## SECOND LECTURE

In the preceding discourse I have endeavoured to impress you with the general features of ancient art in its different periods of preparation, establishment and refinement. We are now arrived at the epoch of its restoration in the fifteenth century of our æra, when religion and wealth rousing emulation, reproduced its powers, but gave to their exertion a very different direction. The reigning church found itself indeed under the necessity of giving more splendour to the temples and mansions destined to receive its votaries, of subduing their senses with the charm of appropriate images and the exhibition of events and actions, which might stimulate their zeal and inflame their hearts: but the sacred mysteries of Divine Being, the method adopted by Revelation, the duties its doctrine imposed, the virtues it demanded from its followers, faith, resignation, humility, sufferings, substituted a medium of art as much inferior to the resources of Paganism in a physical sense as incomparably superior in a spiritual one. Those public customs, that perhaps as much tended to spread the infections of vice as they facilitated the means of art, were no more; the heroism of the Christian and his beauty were internal, and powerful or exquisite forms allied him no longer exclusively to his God. The chief repertory of the artist, the sacred records, furnished indeed a sublime cosmogony, scenes of patriarchal simplicity and a poetic race, which left

nothing to regret in the loss of heathen mythology; but the stem of the nation whose history is its exclusive theme, if it abounded in characters and powers fit for the exhibition of passions, did not teem with forms sufficiently exalted to inform the artist and elevate the art. Ingredients of a baser cast mingled their alloy with the materials of grandeur and of beauty. Monastic legend and the rubric of martyrology claimed more than a legitimate share from the labours of the pencil and the chisel, made nudity the exclusive property of emaciated hermits or decrepit age, and if the breast of manhood was allowed to bare its vigour, or beauty to expand her bosom, the antidotes of terror and of horror were ready at their side to check the apprehended infection of their charms. When we add to this the heterogeneous stock on which the reviving system of arts was grafted, a race indeed inhabiting a genial climate, but itself the fæces of barbarity, the remnants of Gothic adventurers, humanised only by the cross, mouldering amid the ruins of the temples they had demolished, the battered fragments of the images their rage had crushed, – when we add this, I say, we shall less wonder at the languor of modern art in its rise and progress, than be astonished at the vigour by which it adapted and raised materials partly so unfit and defective, partly so contaminated, to the magnificent system which we are to contemplate.

Sculpture had already produced respectable specimens of its reviving powers in the basso-relievos of Lorenzo Ghiberti, some

works of Donato, and the Christ of Filippo Brunelleschi,<sup>27</sup> when the first symptoms of imitation appeared in the frescoes of Tommaso da St. Giovanni, commonly called Masaccio, from the total neglect of his appearance and person.<sup>28</sup> Masaccio first conceived that parts are to constitute a whole; that composition ought to have a centre; expression, truth; and execution, unity: his line deserves attention, though his subjects led him not to investigation of form, and the shortness of his life forbade his extending those elements which Raphael, nearly a century afterward, carried to perfection – it is sufficiently glorious for him to have been more than once copied by that great master of expression, and in some degree to have been the herald of his style: Masaccio lives more in the figure of Paul preaching on the areopáguſ, of the celebrated cartoon in our possession, and in the borrowed figure of Adam expelled from paradise in the loggia of the Vatican, than in his own mutilated or retouched remains.

The essays of Masaccio in imitation and expression, Andrea Mantegna<sup>29</sup> attempted to unite with form; led by the

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<sup>27</sup> See the account of this in Vasari; vita di P. Brunelleschi, tom. ii. 114. It is of wood, and still exists in the chapel of the family Gondi, in the church of S. Maria Novella. I know that near a century before Donato, Giotto is said to have worked in marble two basso-relievoes on the campanile of the cathedral of Florence; they probably excel the style of his pictures as much as the bronze works executed by Andrea Pisani, from his designs, at the door of the Battisterio.

<sup>28</sup> Masaccio da S. Giovanni di Valdarno born in 1402, is said to have died in 1443. He was the pupil of Masolino da Panicale.

<sup>29</sup> Andrea Mantegna died at Mantoua, 1505. A monument erected to his memory in 1517, by his sons, gave rise to the mistake of dating his death from that period.

contemplation of the antique, fragments of which he ambitiously scattered over his works: though a Lombard, and born prior to the discovery of the best ancient statues, he seems to have been acquainted with a variety of characters, from forms that remind us of the Apollo, Mercury or Meleager, down to the fauns and satyrs: but his taste was too crude, his fancy too grotesque, and his comprehension too weak to advert from the parts that remained to the whole that inspired them: hence in his figures of dignity or beauty we see not only the meagre forms of common models, but even their defects tacked to ideal Torsos; and his fauns and satyrs, instead of native luxuriance of growth and the sportive appendages of mixed being, are decorated with heraldic excrescences and arabesque absurdity. His triumphs are known to you all; they are a copious inventory of classic lumber, swept together with more industry than taste, but full of valuable materials. Of expression he was not ignorant: his burial of Christ furnished Raphael with the composition, and some of the features and attitudes in his picture on the same subject in the palace of the Borgheses, – the figure of St. John, however, left out by Raphael, proves that Mantegna sometimes mistook grimace for the highest degree of grief. His oil-pictures exhibit little more than the elaborate anguish of missal-painting; his frescoes, destroyed at the construction of the Clementine museum, had freshness, freedom, and imitation.

To Luca Signorelli, of Cortona,<sup>30</sup> nature more than atoned

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<sup>30</sup> Luca Signorelli died at Cortona 1521, aged 82.

for the want of those advantages which the study of the antique had offered to Andrea Mantegna. He seems to have been the first who contemplated with a discriminating eye his object, saw what was accident and what essential; balanced light and shade, and decided the motion of his figures. He foreshortened with equal boldness and intelligence, and thence it is, probably, that Vasari fancies to have discovered in the last judgment of Michael Angelo traces of imitation from the Lunetta, painted by Luca, in the church of the Madonna, at Orvieto; but the powers which animated him there, and before at Arezzo, are no longer visible in the Gothic medley with which he filled two compartments in the chapel of Sixtus IV. at Rome.

Such was the dawn of modern art, when Lionardo da Vinci<sup>31</sup> broke forth with a splendour which distanced former excellence: made up of all the elements that constitute the essence of genius, favoured by education and circumstances, all ear, all eye, all grasp; painter, poet, sculptor, anatomist, architect, engineer, chemist, machinist, musician, man of science, and sometimes empiric,<sup>32</sup> he laid hold of every beauty in the enchanted circle,

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<sup>31</sup> Lionardo da Vinci is said to have died in 1517, aged 75, at Paris.

<sup>32</sup> The flying birds of paste, the lions filled with lilies, the lizards with dragons' wings, horned and silvered over, savour equally of the boy and the quack. It is singular enough that there exists not the smallest hint of Lorenzo de Medici having employed or noticed a man of such powers and such early celebrity; the legend which makes him go to Rome with Juliano de Medici at the access of Leo X., to accept employment in the Vatican, whether sufficiently authentic or not, furnishes a characteristic trait of the man. The Pope passing through the room allotted for the pictures, and instead of designs and cartoons, finding nothing but an apparatus of distillery, of oils and

but without exclusive attachment to one, dismissed in her turn each. Fitter to scatter hints than to teach by example, he wasted life, insatiate, in experiment. To a capacity which at once penetrated the principle and real aim of the art, he joined an inequality of fancy that at one moment lent him wings for the pursuit of beauty, and the next, flung him on the ground to crawl after deformity: we owe him chiaroscuro with all its magic, we owe him caricature with all its incongruities. His notions of the most elaborate finish and his want of perseverance were at least equal: – want of perseverance alone could make him abandon his cartoon destined for the great council-chamber at Florence, of which the celebrated contest of horsemen was but one group; for to him who could organize that composition, Michael Angelo himself ought rather to have been an object of emulation than of fear: and that he was able to organize it, we may be certain from the remaining imperfect sketch in the 'Etruria Pittrice;' but still more from the admirable print of it by Edelinck, after a drawing of Rubens, who was Lionardo's great admirer, and has said much to impress us with the beauties of his Last Supper in the refectory of the Dominicans at Milano, the only one of his great works which he carried to ultimate finish, through all its parts, from

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varnishes, exclaimed, *Oimè, costui non è per far nulla, da che comincia a pensare alla fine innanzi il principio dell' opera!* From an admirable sonnet of Lionardo, preserved by Lomazzo, he appears to have been sensible of the inconstancy of his own temper, and full of wishes, at least, to correct it. Much has been said of the honour he received by expiring in the arms of Francis I. It was indeed an honour, by which destiny in some degree atoned to that monarch for his future disaster at Pavia.

the head of Christ to the least important one: it perished soon after him, and we can estimate the loss only from the copies that survive.

Bartolomeo della Porta, or di S. Marco, the last master of this period,<sup>33</sup> first gave gradation to colour, form, and masses to drapery, and a grave dignity, till then unknown, to execution. If he were not endowed with the versatility and comprehension of Lionardo, his principles were less mixed with base matter and less apt to mislead him. As a member of a religious order, he confined himself to subjects and characters of piety; but the few nudities which he allowed himself to exhibit, show sufficient intelligence and still more style: he foreshortened with truth and boldness, and whenever the figure did admit of it, made his drapery the vehicle of the limb it invests. He was the true master of Raphael, whom his tuition weaned from the meanness of Pietro Perugino, and prepared for the mighty style of Michael Angelo Buonarotti.

Sublimity of conception, grandeur of form, and breadth of manner are the elements of Michael Angelo's style.<sup>34</sup> By these principles he selected or rejected the objects of imitation. As painter, as sculptor, as architect, he attempted, and above any other man succeeded, to unite magnificence of plan and endless variety of subordinate parts with the utmost simplicity and

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<sup>33</sup> Frà Bartolomeo died at Florence 1517, at the age of 48.

<sup>34</sup> Michael Angelo Buonarotti, born at Castel-Caprese in 1474, died at Rome 1564, aged 90.

breadth. His line is uniformly grand: character and beauty were admitted only as far as they could be made subservient to grandeur. The child, the female, meanness, deformity, were by him indiscriminately stamped with grandeur. A beggar rose from his hand the patriarch of poverty; the hump of his dwarf is impressed with dignity; his women are moulds of generation; his infants teem with the man; his men are a race of giants. This is the 'terribil via' hinted at by Agostino Carracci, though perhaps as little understood by the Bolognese as by the blindest of his Tuscan adorers, with Vasari at their head. To give the appearance of perfect ease to the most perplexing difficulty, was the exclusive power of Michael Angelo. He is the inventor of epic painting, in that sublime circle of the Sistine chapel which exhibits the origin, the progress, and the final dispensations of theocracy. He has personified motion in the groups of the cartoon of Pisa; embodied sentiment on the monuments of St. Lorenzo, unravelled the features of meditation in the Prophets and Sibyls of the Sistine chapel; and in the Last Judgement, with every attitude that varies the human body, traced the master-trait of every passion that sways the human heart. Though as sculptor, he expressed the character of flesh more perfectly than all who went before or came after him, yet he never submitted to copy an individual; Julio the second only excepted, and in him he represented the reigning passion rather than the man.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Like Silanion – 'Apollodorum fecit, fictorem et ipsum, sed inter cunctos diligentissimum artis et inimicum sui iudicem, crebro perfecta signa frangentem, dum

In painting he contented himself with a negative colour, and as the painter of mankind, rejected all meretricious ornament.<sup>36</sup> The fabric of St. Peter, scattered into infinity of jarring parts by Bramante and his successors, he concentrated; suspended the cupola, and to the most complex gave the air of the most simple of edifices. Such, take him all in all, was M. Angelo, the salt of art: sometimes he no doubt had his moments of dereliction, deviated into manner, or perplexed the grandeur of his forms with futile and ostentatious anatomy: both met with armies of copyists; and it has been his fate to have been censured for their folly.

The inspiration of Michael Angelo was followed by the milder genius of Raphael Sanzio,<sup>37</sup> the father of dramatic painting;

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satiare cupiditatem nequit artis, et ideo insanum cognominatum. Hoc in eo expressit, nec hominem ex ære fecit sed Iracundiam.' Plin. l. xxxiv. 7.

<sup>36</sup> When M. Angelo pronounced oil-painting to be *Arte da donna e da huomini agiati e infingardi*, a maxim to which the fierce Venetian manner has given an air of paradox, he spoke relatively to fresco: it was a lash on the short-sighted insolence of Sebastian del Piombo, who wanted to persuade Paul III. to have the Last Judgement painted in oil. That he had a sense for the beauties of oil-colour, its glow, its juice, its richness, its pulp, the praises which he lavished on Titiano, whom he called the only painter, and his patronage of Frà Sebastian himself, evidently prove. When young, M. Angelo attempted oil-painting with success; the picture painted for Angelo Doni is an instance, and probably the only entire work of the kind that remains. The Lazarus, in the picture destined for the cathedral at Narbonne, rejects the claim of every other hand. The Leda, the cartoon of which, formerly in the palace of the Vecchiotti at Florence, is now in the possession of W. Lock, Esq. was painted in distemper (a tempera); all small or large oil-pictures shown as his, are copies from his designs or cartoons, by Marcello Venusti, Giacompo da Pontormo, Battista Franco, and Sebastian of Venice.

<sup>37</sup> Raphael Sanzio, of Urbino, died at Rome 1520, at the age of 37.

the painter of humanity; less elevated, less vigorous, but more insinuating, more pressing on our hearts, the warm master of our sympathies. What effect of human connexion, what feature of the mind, from the gentlest emotion to the most fervid burst of passion, has been left unobserved, has not received a characteristic stamp from that examiner of man? M. Angelo came to nature, nature came to Raphael – he transmitted her features like a lucid glass, unstained, unmodified. We stand with awe before M. Angelo, and tremble at the height to which he elevates us – we embrace Raphael, and follow him wherever he leads us. Energy, with propriety of character and modest grace, poise his line and determine his correctness. Perfect human beauty he has not represented; no face of Raphael's is perfectly beautiful; no figure of his, in the abstract, possesses the proportions that could raise it to a standard of imitation: form to him was only a vehicle of character or pathos, and to those he adapted it in a mode and with a truth which leaves all attempts at emendation hopeless. His invention connects the utmost stretch of possibility with the most plausible degree of probability, in a manner that equally surprises our fancy, persuades our judgment, and affects our heart. His composition always hastens to the most necessary point as its centre, and from that disseminates, to that leads back as rays, all secondary ones. Group, form, and contrast are subordinate to the event, and common-place ever excluded. His expression, in strict unison with and decided by character, whether calm, animated, agitated, convulsed, or absorbed by

the inspiring passion, unmixed and pure, never contradicts its cause, equally remote from tameness and grimace: the moment of his choice never suffers the action to stagnate or to expire; it is the moment of transition; the crisis big with the past and pregnant with the future. – If, separately taken, the line of Raphael has been excelled in correctness, elegance, and energy; his colour far surpassed in tone, and truth, and harmony; his masses in roundness, and his chiaroscuro in effect – considered as instruments of pathos, they have never been equalled; and in composition, invention, expression, and the power of telling a story, he has never been approached.

Whilst the superior principles of the art were receiving the homage of Tuscany and Rome, the inferior but more alluring charm of colour began to spread its fascination at Venice, from the pallet of Giorgione da Castel Franco<sup>38</sup>, and irresistibly entranced every eye that approached the magic of Titiano Vecelli of Cador.<sup>39</sup> To no colourist before or after him, did Nature unveil herself with that dignified familiarity in which she appeared to Titiano. His organ, universal and equally fit for all her exhibitions, rendered her simplest to her most compound appearances with equal purity and truth. He penetrated the essence and the general principle of the substances before him,

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<sup>38</sup> Giorgio Barbarelli, from his size and beauty called Giorgione, was born at Castel Franco, in the territory of Venice, 1478, and died at Venice, 1511.

<sup>39</sup> Titiano Vecelli, or, as the Venetians call him, Tiziàn, born at Cador in the Friulose, died at Venice, 1576, aged 99.

and on these established his theory of colour. He invented that breadth of local tint which no imitation has attained; and first expressed the negative nature of shade: his are the charms of glazing, and the mystery of reflexes, by which he detached, rounded, connected, or enriched his objects. His harmony is less indebted to the force of light and shade, or the artifices of contrast, than to a due balance of colour, equally remote from monotony and spots. His backgrounds seem to be dictated by nature. Landscape, whether it be considered as the transcript of a spot, or the rich combination of congenial objects, or as the scene of a phænomenon, dates its origin from him: he is the father of portrait-painting, of resemblance with form, character with dignity, and costume with subordination.

Another charm was yet wanting to complete the round of art – harmony: it appeared with Antonio Læti,<sup>40</sup> called Correggio, whose works it attended like an enchanted spirit. The harmony and the grace of Correggio are proverbial: the medium which by breadth of gradation unites two opposite principles, the coalition of light and darkness by imperceptible transition, are the element of his style. – This inspires his figures with grace, to this their grace is subordinate: the most appropriate, the most elegant

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<sup>40</sup> The birth and life of Antonio Allegri, or, as he called himself, Læti, surnamed Correggio, is more involved in obscurity than the life of Apelles. Whether he was born in 1490 or 1494 is not ascertained; the time of his death in 1534 is more certain. The best account of him has undoubtedly been given by A. R. Mengs in his *Memorie concernenti la vita e le opere di Antonio Allegri denominato il Correggio*. Vol. ii. of his works, published by the Spaniard D. G. Niccola d'Azara.

attitudes were adopted, rejected, perhaps sacrificed to the most awkward ones, in compliance with this imperious principle: parts vanished, were absorbed, or emerged in obedience to it. This unison of a whole, predominates over all that remains of him, from the vastness of his cupolas to the smallest of his oil-pictures. – The harmony of Correggio, though assisted by exquisite hues, was entirely independent of colour: his great organ was chiaroscuro in its most extensive sense; compared with the expanse in which he floats, the effects of Lionardo da Vinci are little more than the dying ray of evening, and the concentrated flash of Giorgione discordant abruptness. The bland central light of a globe, imperceptibly gliding through lucid demitints into rich reflected shades, composes the spell of Correggio, and affects us with the soft emotions of a delicious dream.

Such was the ingenuity that prepared, and such the genius that raised to its height the fabric of modern art. Before we proceed to the next epoch, let us make an observation.

Form not your judgment of an artist from the exceptions which his conduct may furnish, from the exertions of accidental vigour, some deviations into other walks, or some unpremeditated flights of fancy, but from the predominant rule of his system, the general principle of his works. The line and style of Titian's design, sometimes expand themselves like those of Michael Angelo. His Abraham prevented from sacrificing Isaac; his David adoring over the giant-trunk of Goliath; the Friar escaping from the murderer of his companion in the forest, equal

in loftiness of conception and style of design, their mighty tone of colour and daring execution: the heads and groups of Raphael's frescoes and portraits sometimes glow and palpitate with the tints of Titian, or coalesce in masses of harmony, and undulate with graces superior to those of Correggio; who in his turn once reached the highest summit of invention, when he embodied silence and personified the mysteries of love in the voluptuous group of Jupiter and Io; and again exceeded all competition of expression in the divine features of his Ecce-Homo. But these sudden irradiations, these flashes of power are only exceptions from their wonted principles; pathos and character own Raphael for their master, colour remains the domain of Titian, and harmony the sovereign mistress of Correggio.

The resemblance which marked the two first periods of ancient and modern art vanishes altogether as we extend our view to the consideration of the third, or that of refinement, and the origin of schools. The pre-eminence of ancient art, as we have observed, was less the result of superior powers, than of simplicity of aim and uniformity of pursuit. The Helladic and the Ionian schools appear to have concurred in directing their instruction to the grand principles of form and expression: this was the stamen which they drew out into one immense connected web. The talents that succeeded genius, applied and directed their industry and polish to decorate the established system, the refinements of taste, grace, sentiment, colour, adorned beauty, grandeur, and expression. The Tuscan, the Roman, the Venetian,

and the Lombard schools, whether from incapacity, want of education, of adequate or dignified encouragement, meanness of conception, or all these together, separated, and in a short time substituted the medium for the end. Michael Angelo lived to see the electric shock which his design and style had given to art, propagated by the Tuscan and Venetian schools, as the ostentatious vehicle of puny conceits and emblematic quibbles, or the palliative of empty pomp and degraded luxuriance of colour. He had been copied but was not imitated by Andrea Vannucchi, surnamed Del Sarto, who in his series of pictures on the life of John the Baptist, in preference adopted the meager style of Albert Durer. The artist who appears to have penetrated deepest to his mind, was Pelegrino Tibaldi, of Bologna;<sup>41</sup> celebrated as the painter of the frescoes in the academic institute of that city, and as the architect of the Escorial under Philip II. The compositions, groups, and single figures of the institute exhibit a singular mixture of extraordinary vigour and puerile imbecility of conception, of character and caricature, of style and manner. Polypheme groping at the mouth of his cave for Ulysses, and Æolus granting him favourable winds, are striking instances of both: than the Cyclops, Michael Angelo himself never conceived a form of savage energy, with attitude and limbs more in unison; whilst the god of winds is degraded to a scanty and ludicrous semblance of Thersites, and Ulysses with his companions travestied by the semi-barbarous look and

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<sup>41</sup> Pelegrino Tibaldi died at Milano in 1592, aged 70.

costume of the age of Constantine or Attila; the manner of Michael Angelo is the style of Pelegrino Tibaldi; from him Golzius, Hemskerk, and Spranger borrowed the compendium of the Tuscan's peculiarities. With this mighty talent, however, Michael Angelo seems not to have been acquainted, but by that unaccountable weakness incident to the greatest powers, and the severe remembrancer of their vanity, he became the superintendant and assistant tutor of the Venetian Sebastiano<sup>42</sup>, and of Daniel Ricciarelli, of Volterra<sup>43</sup>; the first of whom, with an exquisite eye for individual, had no sense for ideal colour, whilst the other rendered great diligence and much anatomical erudition, useless by meagerness of line and sterility of ideas: how far Michael Angelo succeeded in initiating either in his principles, the far-famed pictures of the resuscitation of Lazarus, by the first, once in the cathedral of Narbonne, and since inspected by us all at the Lyceum here,<sup>44</sup> and the fresco of the descent from the cross, in the church of La Trinità del Monte, at Rome, by the second, sufficiently evince: pictures which combine the most heterogeneous principles. The group of Lazarus in Sebastian del Piombo's and that of the women, with the figure of Christ, in Daniel Ricciarelli's, not only breathe

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<sup>42</sup> Sebastiano, afterwards called Del Piombo from the office of the papal signet, died at Rome in 1547, aged 62.

<sup>43</sup> Daniel Ricciarelli, of Volterra, died in 1566, aged 57.

<sup>44</sup> Now the first ornament of the exquisite collection of J. J. Angerstein, Esq. – Since purchased for the National Gallery. – Editor.

the sublime conception that inspired, but the master-hand that shaped them: offsprings of Michael Angelo himself, models of expression, style, and breadth, they cast on all the rest an air of inferiority, and only serve to prove the incongruity of partnership between unequal powers; this inferiority however is respectable, when compared with the depravations of Michael Angelo's style by the remainder of the Tuscan school, especially those of Giorgio Vasari,<sup>45</sup> the most superficial artist and the most abandoned mannerist of his time, but the most acute observer of men and the most dextrous flatterer of princes. He overwhelmed the palaces of the Medici and of the popes, the convents and churches of Italy, with a deluge of mediocrity, commended by rapidity and shameless 'bravura' of hand: he alone did more work than all the artists of Tuscany together, and to him may be truly applied, what he had the insolence to say of Tintoretto, that he turned the art into a boy's toy.

Whilst Michael Angelo was doomed to lament the perversion of his style, death prevented Raphael from witnessing the gradual decay of his. The exuberant fertility of Julio Pippi called Romano,<sup>46</sup> and the less extensive but classic taste of Polydoro da Caravagio deserted indeed the standard of their master, but with a dignity and magnitude of compass which command respect. It is less from his tutored works in the Vatican, than from the colossal conceptions, the pathetic or sublime allegories, and

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<sup>45</sup> Giorgio Vasari, of Arezzo, died in 1584, aged 68.

<sup>46</sup> Julio Pippi, called Romano, died at Mantoua in 1546, aged 54.

the voluptuous reveries which enchant the palace del T, near Mantoua, that we must form our estimate of Julio's powers; they were of a size to challenge all competition, had he united purity of taste and delicacy of mind with energy and loftiness of thought; as they are, they resemble a mighty stream, sometimes flowing in a full and limpid vein, but oftener turbid with rubbish. He has left specimens of composition from the most sublime to the most extravagant; to a primeval simplicity of conception in his mythologic subjects, which transports us to the golden age of Hesiod, he joined a rage for the grotesque; to uncommon powers of expression a decided attachment to deformity and grimace, and to the warmest and most genial imagery the most ungenial colour.

With nearly equal, but still more mixed fertility, Francesco Primaticcio<sup>47</sup> propagated the style and the conceptions of his master Julio on the Gallic side of the Alps, and with the assistance of Nicolo, commonly called Dell' Abbate after him, filled the palaces of Francis I. with mythologic and allegoric works, in frescoes of an energy and depth of tone till then unknown. Theirs was the cyclus of pictures from the *Odyssea* of Homer at Fontainbleau, a mine of classic and picturesque materials: they are destroyed, and we may estimate their loss, even through the disguise of the mannered and feeble etchings of Theodore Van Tulden.

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<sup>47</sup> Francesco Primaticcio, made Abbé de St. Martin de Troyes, by Francis, I., died in France 1570, aged 80.

The compact style of Polydoro,<sup>48</sup> formed on the antique, such as it is exhibited in the best series of the Roman military bassrelievoes, is more monumental, than imitative or characteristic. But the virility of his taste, the impassioned motion of his groups, the simplicity, breadth, and never excelled elegance and probability of his drapery, with the forcible chiaroscuro of his compositions, make us regret the narrowness of the walk to which he confined his powers.

No painter ever painted his own mind so forcibly as Michael Angelo Amerigi, surnamed Il Caravaggi.<sup>49</sup> To none nature ever set limits with a more decided hand. Darkness gave him light; into his melancholy cell light stole only with a pale reluctant ray, or broke on it, as flashes on a stormy night. The most vulgar forms he recommended by ideal light and shade, and a tremendous breadth of manner.

The aim and style of the Roman school deserve little further notice here, till the appearance of Nicolas Poussin<sup>50</sup> a Frenchman, but grafted on the Roman stock. Bred under Quintin Varin, a French painter of mediocrity, he found on his arrival in Italy that he had more to unlearn than to follow of his master's principles, renounced the national character, and not only with the utmost ardour adopted, but suffered himself to be wholly

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<sup>48</sup> Polydoro Caldara da Caravaggio was assassinated at Messina in 1543, aged 51.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Angelo Amerigi, surnamed Il Caravaggi, knight of Malta, died 1609, aged 40.

<sup>50</sup> Nicolas Poussin, of Andely, died at Rome 1665, aged 71.

absorbed by the antique. Such was his attachment to the ancients, that it may be said he less imitated their spirit than copied their relics and painted sculpture; the costume, the mythology, the rites of antiquity were his element; his scenery, his landscape, are pure classic ground. He has left specimens to show that he was sometimes sublime, and often in the highest degree pathetic, but history in the strictest sense was his property, and in that he ought to be followed. His agents only appear, to tell the fact; they are subordinate to the story. Sometimes he attempted to tell a story that cannot be told: of his historic dignity the celebrated series of Sacraments; of his sublimity, the vision he gave to Coriolanus; of his pathetic power, the infant Pyrrhus; and of the vain attempt to tell by figures what words alone can tell, the testament of Eudamidas, are striking instances. His eye, though impressed with the tint, and breadth, and imitation of Titiano, seldom inspired him to charm with colour; crudity and patches frequently deform his effects. He is unequal in his style of design; sometimes his comprehension fails him; he supplies, like Pietro Testa, ideal heads and torsos with limbs and extremities transcribed from the model. Whether from choice or want of power he has seldom executed his conceptions on a larger scale than that which bears his name, and which has perhaps as much contributed to make him the darling of this country, as his merit.

The wildness of Salvator Rosa<sup>51</sup> opposes a powerful contrast to the classic regularity of Poussin. Terrific and grand in his

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<sup>51</sup> Salvator Rosa, surnamed Salvatoriello, died at Rome 1673, aged 59.

conceptions of inanimate nature, he was reduced to attempts of hiding by boldness of hand, his inability of exhibiting her impassioned, or in the dignity of character: his line is vulgar: his magic visions, less founded on principles of terror than on mythologic trash and caprice, are to the probable combinations of nature, what the paroxysms of a fever are to the flights of vigorous fancy. Though so much extolled and so ambitiously imitated, his banditti are a medley made up of starveling models, shreds and bits of armour from his lumber-room, brushed into notice by a daring pencil. Salvator was a satyrist and a critic, but the rod which he had the insolence to lift against the nudities of Michael Angelo, and the anachronism of Raphael, would have been better employed in chastising his own misconceptions.

The principle of Titiano, less pure in itself and less decided in its object of imitation, did not suffer so much from its more or less appropriate application by his successors, as the former two. Colour once in a very high degree attained, disdains subordination and engrosses the whole. Mutual similarity attracts, body tends to body, as mind to mind, and he who has once gained supreme dominion over the eye, will hardly resign it to court the more coy approbation of mind, of a few opposed to nearly all. Add to this the character of the place and the nature of the encouragement held out to the Venetian artists. Venice was the centre of commerce, the repository of the riches of the globe, the splendid toy-shop of the time: its chief inhabitants princely merchants, or a patrician race elevated to rank by accumulations

from trade, or naval prowess; the bulk of the people, mechanics or artisans, administering the means, and in their turn fed by the produce of luxury. Of such a system, what could the art be more than the parasite? Religion itself had exchanged its gravity for the allurements of ear and eye, and even sanctity disgusted, unless arrayed by the gorgeous hand of fashion. – Such was, such will always be the birth-place and the theatre of colour: and hence it is more matter of wonder that the first and greatest colourists should so long have foreborne to overstep the modesty of nature in the use of that alluring medium, than that they yielded by degrees to its golden solicitations.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Of the portraits which Raphael in fresco scattered over the compositions of the Vatican, we shall find an opportunity to speak. But in oil the real style of portrait began at Venice with Giorgione, flourished in Sebastian del Piombo, and was carried to perfection by Titiano, who filled the masses of the first without entangling himself in the minute details of the second. Tintoretto, Bassan, and Paolo of Verona, followed the principle of Titiano. After these, it migrated from Italy to reside with the Spaniard Diego Velasquez; from whom Rubens and Vandyck attempted to transplant it to Flanders, France, and England, with unequal success. France seized less on the delicacy than on the affectation of Vandyck, and soon turned the art of representing men and women into a mere remembrancer of fashions and airs. England had possessed Holbein, but it was reserved for the German Lely, and his successor Kneller, to lay the foundation of a manner, which, by pretending to unite portrait with history, gave a retrograde direction for near a century to both. A mob of shepherds and shepherdesses in flowing wigs and dressed curls, ruffled Endymions, humble Junos, withered Hebes, surly Allegroes, and smirking Pensierosas, usurped the place of truth, propriety and character. Even the lamented powers of the greatest painter whom this country and perhaps our age produced, long vainly struggled, and scarcely in the eve of life succeeded to emancipate us from this dastard taste.

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