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Stil in der rudiolfinischen Kunst
Kunst

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JAN BIALOSTOCKI

It was already 14 years ago that the Triumph of Mannerism was celebrated in 1955 at the splendid exhibition in the Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam. It seemed then that the XVIIth century has been finally decoded and that the reading of the Cinquecento as a period dominated by Mannerism was a definitive one. How far away are we today from such an optimism. The maximalistic conception of Mannerism, which since that time has been popularized in dozens of books and articles for the general public, has been abandoned by the specialists. Almost immediately after the Amsterdam exhibition sceptical opinions could have been heard and six years later at the International Congress of the History of art in New York there was a triumph of minimalism in the conception of Mannerism. Introducing the section devoted to the study of Mannerism Ernst Gombrich pointed out the literary sources of the concept of that style, inherited as it was from the ancient quarrels about the style of rhetorics. In the most important reports of Craig Hugh Smyth and John Shearman new approach was presented, namely the stress was put on the concept of *maniera*, from which resulted the destruction of the maximalistic concept of Mannerism. The article by Freedberg (in the *Art Bulletin* for 1965) and the excellent book by Shearman (published in Spring 1967 in the new Penguin series) have added new contributions to the discussion on Mannerism, bringing decisive modifications in the minimalistic sense, against such maximalistic conceptions as those of Würtenberger and Hauser.

The controversy is going on against the background of an increasing popularity of the idea of Mannerism in the other fields of humanistic research. It was especially the most celebrated book by Curtius and the two paperback volumes of vulgarization by his pupil, the journalist Hocke, which have contributed to transplant the idea of Mannerism into the field of literary history. Literary historians have deprived this idea of any historical content and transformed it into a concept of a specific mode of expression, found in artists and works of all times from antiquity to modern period.

Representatives of the maximalistic view conceived Mannerism as a large historical concept like those of the Renaissance or the Baroque. There were even claims voiced that Mannerism was the first really international style since the gothic style, as it was the first in modern times to encompass the whole of the continent. „Une chose est certaine“ — Charles Sterling wrote in his excellent introduction to the catalogue of the Amsterdam exhibition — „c'était un style original et complet, non une transition entre le classicisme et le baroque. Il était nécessaire à son temps, il devint rapidement international, il a eu une vie longue et dure — une bonne centaine d'années, de 1520 à 1630 ou 1640 environ — pendant laquelle il a connu un académisme et des réveils ou des survivances...“

Würtenberger, on the other hand, has characterized that style in the following way: „Die Kunst des Manierismus ist in der Gesamterscheinung ihres Betriebes eine der geordnetsten und deshalb faszinierendsten Konzeptionen der Weltgestaltung, welche die Kunstgeschichte jemals aufzuweisen hatte. Da verblissen die Einwendungen, die von einer fragmentarischen, rein ästhetisch-formalistischen, zu engen Sicht vorgebracht werden, ohne in der Beurteilung zu berücksichtigen, was die eigentlichen, die größeren und umfassenderen Ziele dieser Kunst waren und in welch höherem Sinn, zu welchen übergeordneten Zwecken die oft formelhaft erscheinenden Mittel eingesetzt wurden“.

Some of the scholars studying Mannerism found its features already in Antiquity, as well as in periods posterior to the XVIth century, namely in contemporary art. Some authors conceived Mannerism as a necessary stage following the classical one, some others (first of all historians of literature) considered Mannerism as an attitude opposed to Classicism and more or less identical with the Baroque and even close to the attitude typical for some trends of contemporary art. Illustrations of mannerist works of art,

which received wide publicity in art books of the last decade, like sculptures of Bomarzo, frescoes of Palazzo del Te, paintings by Spranger or Heintz had a specific appeal to the contemporary beholder through their unexpected similarity to some tendencies of the XXth century art. The shocking, the startling, the phantastic, the erotic, — a vision of the world beyond natural laws, a magic, sometimes cruel and psychopatic vision, all those qualities have been discovered in the XVIth century art, looked upon from the point of view of the main interests of the XXth.

The art historians, however, have hesitated to follow this track. One can easily see that an unrealistic, irrational, phantastic element can be discovered in many other periods of the development of art, if one wants to discover it. And thus an expressionistic and surrealistic interpretation of Mannerism was dismissed in favour of another, which seems to be more historically founded. Studies of Shearman, Smyth and Freedberg are focused on the basic idea of Italian art in the middle of the XVIth century, that of *maniera*, and on artists who followed that ideal. In this way the concept of Mannerism has been delimited much more precisely. It went the way which was typical for the development of stylistic concepts. Born from a derogatory description like Gothic or Baroque, Mannerism has become a concept of historical stylistic classification; it has become a name of a specific artistic form corresponding to a historical period: an epoch of Mannerism was recognized. But later the concept has been parceled out after it appeared that the period includes artistic phenomena incompatible with the main idea of style. A thorough analysis has dismembered the Mannerism, and the XVIth century became again a complex and complicated period.

If we limit the scope of the concept of Mannerism to that of the *maniera*, our image of the style is fairly well characterized. The important book written by John Shearman was intended to describe Mannerism understood as an art of the *maniera*. For Shearman it is an art, which, far from being anti-classical (as proposed by Walter Friedländer forty years ago), "is born of the rich experience of classical form, harmony and gravitas that is the High Renaissance"; it is an art artificial in its essence, an art for connoisseurs.

If we want now to look at the artistic scene outside of Italy and to find out what should we call international manneristic style, we should first of all accept as representatives of that style all those Northern European artists, who followed the Italian ideals of *maniera*. Some of them did so because they stayed in Italy, like Hendrik Goltzius or Adriaen de Vries, others — because they followed the Italians working close to them, like the French architects and sculptors, still others — because they fell under the spell of the *maniera* style diffused as it was through prints and small bronze and terracotta copies of sculpture. Thanks to the fact that the artists working in Italy in the *maniera* style used to publish their works in engravings much more than the representatives of the other Italian trends of the XVIth century, the influence of the *maniera* style in the North was — as pointed out by Shearman — especially strong. Shearman says even that the Triumph of *maniera* in Northern Europe was complete, whereas it was not so in Italy.

„Mannerism was essentially an Italian style“ — I quote Shearman — „and wherever it appears outside Italy it represents the adoption of Italian standards. Its spread throughout the North was, in fact, one aspect and result of the Italian cultural domination of Europe, that dates from the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII of France (1494).“ „One preliminary difficulty“ — Shearman continues — „arises from the almost total absence, north of the Alps, of anything equivalent to the High Renaissance — that moment which in Italy finally made Gothic not only the object of derision but also a dead language (dead in the sense that any subsequent case is a revival) . . .“ „Now it so happens that some characteristics of Gothic especially of Late-Gothic — align themselves easily with those of Mannerism: tendencies towards grace, complexity, preciousness and so on. And a very confusing situation arose when the late-Gothic style was superficially overlaid by Italian Renaissance influences, as in the case of the painters known as „Antwerp Mannerists“ or, in architecture, in the dormers, turrets and chimneys of the Château de Chambord. It is only when, as in some instances at Chambord, the motifs are specifically Mannerist, and executed with a certain necessary panache, that this kind of work should be given the title; oddity by itself is not a qualification.“

In this quotation Shearman's opinion is clearly described. But his book, being excellent as far as Italian problems are concerned, was not intended as a solution of the whole complex question of the Northern art of the XVIth century. We, on the other hand, are interested just in that problem. If we are justified in calling „international Mannerism“ the paintings of Goltzius, Wittewael, Bloemaert and

2 Spranger, the sculptures of Adriaen de Vries, Goujon and Gerhard, the architecture of Philibert de l'Orme and Jacques du Cerceau the Elder, how should we call everything else produced in the North between say 1550 and 1620? It is no more Gothic and we agree that there was really no High Renaissance North of the Alps, except for buildings, which, although built on the spot, can be considered as imported, like the Cracow Sigismund chapel, or the Prague Belyvedere. Thus if the art in Northern Europe between 1550 and 1620 is no more Gothic and it is not a Renaissance what is it?

The period of international decorative style which developed in Northern Europe from the Lowlands through Germany, Scandinavia, partly also Bohemia and Poland was called by Hedicke „das Zeitalter des Dekorativen“. Forsman in his remarkable book *Stüle und Ornament* has proposed to consider this style not as a „nordische Renaissance“, as it was done sometimes, but as a Northern Mannerism. In an article, published several years ago the present author tried to analyse the Polish art of that period. Neither in Forsman's material nor in the Polish works which I have analyzed any real connections with the *maniera* style can be seen. In several interesting and picturesque works of Polish art of that time I have found qualities which are opposite to those typical for Italian Mannerism. I labelled the style of such works of art „vernacular“. They are naive and direct in contrast to the refinement and sophistication of Mannerism; they are simple and sometimes even awkward as opposed to the virtuosity and „terribilità“ of Mannerism; they are free and spontaneous, narrative and coarse as against the Mannerist self-control and complexity; they are rather popular or connected with the middle class, than courtly, as is most Mannerist art. As concerns such works of art I was in agreement (avant la lettre) with Shearman's opinion: „oddity by itself is not a qualification.“

But even in this form of art some rule can be discovered; there appear some specific features which recur in specific situations. When visiting Latin America two years ago I was struck by similarities between this „vernacular“ style of Central and Eastern Europe and the Colonial art of Mexico and Peru. I could find a similar lack of interest for space-composition, an enthusiasm for ornament, a lack of functionality, a disruption of links between form and content, a neglect of classical rules and norms, an inclination to borrow from phantastic architectural models in Serlio's books. But if these features in Central and Eastern Europe appear between 1550 and 1620, they are present in Peru and Mexico much later, even in the first half of the XVIIIth century. The astonishing composition of Las Vizzinas in Mexico City, as well as the splendid flourishing of the *estipite* style show sometimes quite strong similarities to the principles or to the elements of Mannerism. Recent interesting studies published in the Boletín del Centro de Investigaciones Historicas y Esteticas de la Universidad Central de Venezuela in Caracas help to understand the mechanism of that style. Article by Santiago Sebastián, by José de Mesa and Teresa Gisbert show how the elements of Italian, original Mannerism were transformed in Spain and taken over in America, often from Model-books. George Kubler, an excellent scholar in Latin American art studies has drawn attention to Adolf Goldschmidt's penetrating short study of 1937, in which the German scholar introduced the concept of the „disintegration of form“ — *Formenspaltung*. This process occurs when forms created to express a certain content are taken over in another milieu where the acquaintance with the original content is lost and the actual meaning and function of form are no more understandable. Kubler described phenomena of provincial transformation of art forms which sometimes may result in structures superficially looking similar to highly sophisticated compositions. And indeed we think that those Latin American phenomena, as well as our „vernacular“ art, only superficially recall Mannerism. And we can again adopt a formula from Shearman: „Most of the hybrid forms are better conceived as an awkward vernacular classicism.“

Having excluded this quite large field of provincial art, we still remain with what Forsman labelled Northern Mannerism and which, we think, is so called with some justification. In my already quoted article I have also pointed out several such works, or features in works of Polish art of the late XVIth and early XVIIth centuries which I have considered as different from Italian but still I have qualified them as Mannerist. It may be useful to recall what Nikolaus Pevsner wrote long time ago:

„. . . when it comes to the Elizabethan style in England and to its parallels and examples in the Netherlands and Germany, are we still justified in speaking of Mannerism? Wollaton or Hardwick or Hatfield obviously are not Renaissance. Nor are they English Baroque, if St. Paul's and Blenheim are Baroque. Strapwork ornament, in its lifelessness, intricacy and stiff preciousness, is typically Mannerist. But the buoyancy and the sturdy strength of Elizabethan buildings are wholly absent in Italy, and wholly in harmony with the age of Drake and Raleigh. However, one should not expect criteria of style

always to be applicable to different countries without national modifications. French Romanticism is different from English Romanticism and from German. Yet all of them are romantic. Similarly Wren is Baroque, but English Baroque, and the perpendicular style is Late Gothic, but English Late Gothic. May be we shall have to learn the same lesson in the case of Mannerism if we wish for a full understanding of Elizabethan architecture."

If we consider buildings and their plastic and painted decoration as we find them between 1450 and 1620 in the Netherlandish towns, in Hanscatic centers, in Scandinavia, like Kronborg, Rosenberg and Frøderiksborg castles, in Germany, Bohemia and Poland, we often meet works of art born for quite subtle and sophisticated taste, executed with the excellent craftsmanship and conceived with intricate and symbolic programs, parading some emblematic conceit.

If we adopt Shearman's definition of Mannerism as an artificial, artful style, are we not close to it when considering such works? Are not the fantastic *Kunstschränke*, the incredible ivory structures of interpenetrating cubes, polyhedrons and spheres manifestation of an art created for connoisseurs and done in order to show supreme craftsmanship, manifestations which have no other scope than to show the skill of the artists?

Are not rooms, like that at Rosenberg, where walls from the floor to the ceiling are recovered with Flemish landscapes, specific Mannerist creations, in which art and nature interpenetrate? And all this with only very little of Italian elements, and almost nothing of those forms which were conceived by artists connected with the *maniera* trend. This style of Northern Mannerism, developed in the *Saulenbücher*, studied so thoroughly by Forsman, was based mainly on the Mannerist interpretation of Vitruvian column-theory and on the most irrational of the Renaissance motifs -- on the grotesque.

I propose then to discern two international Mannerisms: the first one was mainly Italian, or mainly of Italian origin; it was practised by artists following the ideal of *maniera*, and it found expression mainly in painting and sculpture and in the form of the human nude figure. The second one was Northern, although its roots are to be found also in Italian architecture and ornamental models. It appeared mainly in the decorative arts, since even architecture was conceived mostly in terms of decoration. Both of them were highly artificial, refined and sophisticated, and in spite of considerable difference in formal aspects, I think they may continue to be called by the same name.

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DVOJÍ PODOBA MEZINÁRODNÍHO MANÝRISMU: ITALSKÁ A SEVERSKÁ

Autor nejprve shrnul vývoj názorů na manýrismus od velké amsterdamské výstavy roku 1955. Maximalistická koncepce Württenbergerova, Hauserova a Sterlingova, opírající se zčásti o studie Curtiovy, byla brzy opuštěna. Maximalisté přenesli pojem manýrismu do literární historie - tam byl téměř zcela zblaven historického obsahu a považován pouze za specifický způsob uměleckého výrazu, s nímž se čas od času setkáváme od antiky po dnešek. Obrát v pojetí manýrismu přinesl Mezinárodní kongres dějin umění v New Yorku roku 1961, především zásluhou vystoupení Gombrichova a příspěvku Smythova a Shearmanova. Jejich přístup k problému lze označit jako minimalistický. Vycházejí z definice florentské *manieri*, základní ideje italského umění kolem poloviny 16. stol. Polemický názor na manýrismus rozvinul Freedberg ve stati pro *Art Bulletin* (1965) a Shearman v samostatné knize (1967). Charakterizují manýrismus jako umělecký projev nikoliv antiklasický (jak soudil Walter Friedländer), nýbrž naopak - jak sám soudím - jako vyrůstající z hlubokého poznání klasické formy, její harmonie i gravitas, totiž z vrcholné renesance. Je to umění svou podstatou artistní, umění pro znalce.

Shearmanova práce se však soustřeďuje na problematiku italskou. Bialostockého však zajímá především postavení západního umění 16. stol. Jestliže k mezinárodnímu manýrismu pravem řadíme malby Goltziovy, Wittewalovy, Bloemartovy a Sprangerovy, sochařská díla Adriana de Vriesse, Goujona a Gerharda i stavby del'Ormovy a Jakuba de Cereau st., jak pak označíte ostatní uměleckou produkci na sever od Alp zhruba v období 1550-1620? Než se už mluví o gotice, avšak shodně zjišťujeme, že za Alpami nebylo ani skutečné vrcholné renesance s výjimkou několika importovaných architektů typu krakovské Žikmundovy kaple nebo pražského Větráku.

Období mezinárodního dekorativního stylu, který se rozvinul na severu Evropy od Nizozemí, přes Skandinávie a Německo až do Čech a do Polska, označuje Hedicke jako věk dekorativismu. Forsman ve své pozoruhodné práci

Säule und Ornament navrhuje namísto tradiční „nordické renesance“ termín „severský manýrismus“. Před několika lety analyzoval autor příspěvku polské umění tohoto rozporného období. Podobně jako Forsman ani on nenalezal ve svém materiálu souvislosti s italskou *maniera*. V polských památkách se naopak setkává s principy, jež jsou s vlastnostmi italského manýrismu v přímém rozporu. Označil tedy sloh takových děl jako „domácí“ (vernacular); jejich navíva je v protikladu s kvalitami italského manýrismu, s jejich artistní vynalézavostí a rafinovaností. Srovnáváme-li je s manýristickou zdrženlivostí a komplexností, zjišťujeme, že jsou stylově zcela neodvážné a spontánní, hrubé a narativní. Sociologicky patří spíše střední třídě než-li lidovým vrstvám a vůbec ne dvorskému prostředí. V souvislosti s nimi lze opakovat Shearmanův soud, že podivnost sama o sobě není ještě kvalifikací.

Avšak i v této kategorii umění lze stanovit několik specifických rysů, jež se za obouhých podmínek vždy znovu objevují. Během své nedávné cesty po jižní Americe si Bialostockí povšiml četných shod mezi tamějším koloniálním uměním 17. a první poloviny 18. stol. a středoevropským resp. východoevropským památkami let 1550-1620. Připomíná, že obdobný proces disintegrace formy nastává vždy, jakmile se forma vytvořená k vyjádření určitého obsahu přenesla do jiného prostředí, jemuž je původní obsah cizí, funkce a skutečný význam formy nepochopitelné.

V závěru se připojuje k názoru Forsmanovu o existenci severského manýrismu. Lze tedy podle Bialostockého rozlišovat dvojí mezinárodní manýrismus: 1. italský je řídil ideálem italského původu, vytvořený umělci, kteří se řídili ideálem *manieri*. Uplatnil se zejména v malířství a sochařství, nejvýznamnějším tématem je mu lidské tělo; 2. severský, jehož základ tkví rovněž v italské architektuře a ornamentálních systémech (grotesk). Zaslal hlavně umění dekorativní a také architekturu. Stylobou typu je artistní a vyspekulovaný a ačkoliv mezi nimi sledujeme značné rozdíly ve formálních přístupech, označujeme je týmž názvem.