

FRANCESCA BOTTURA
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI VERONA

Between Baroque and the *High Renaissance*

Two Theoretical Concepts in the Thought of Max Dvořák

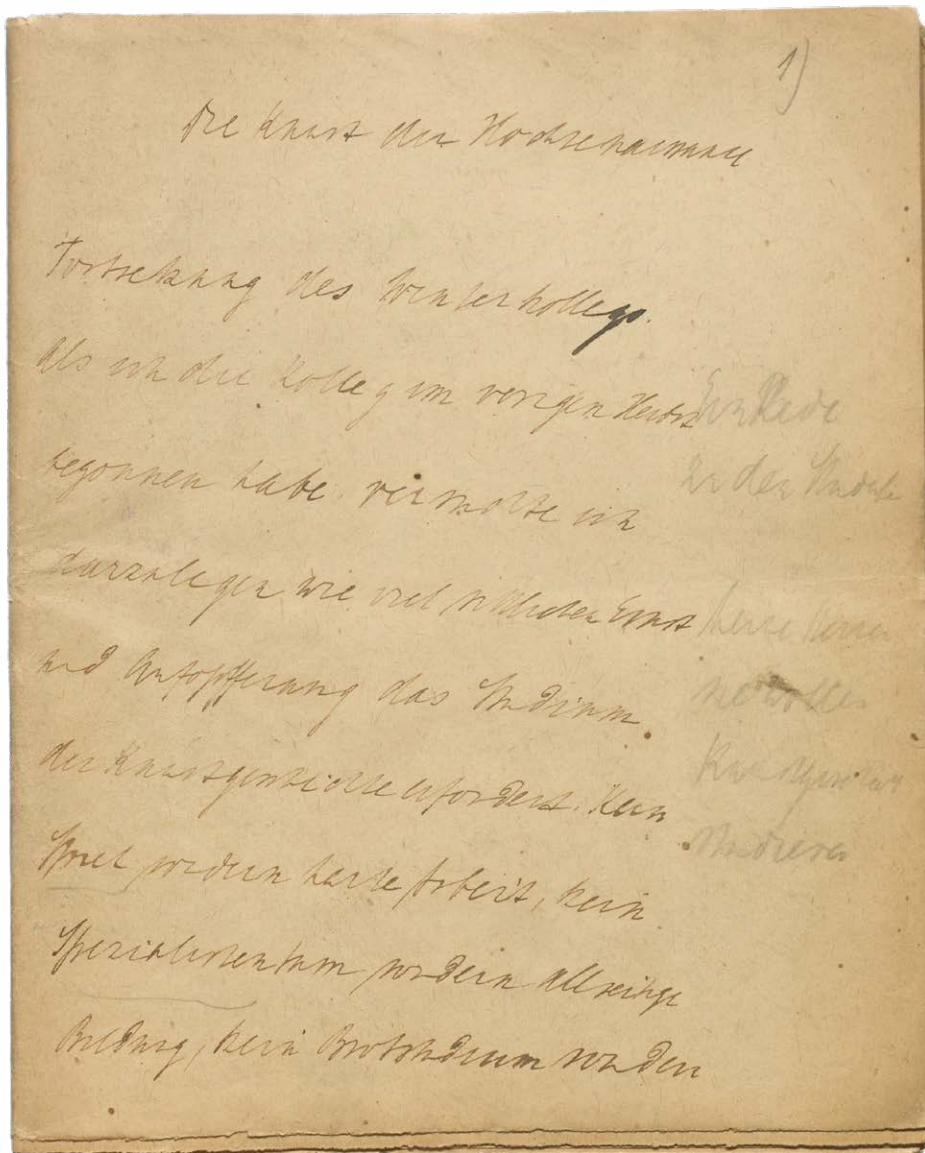
This study aims to shed light on the ways Max Dvořák intended the terms ‘High Renaissance’ (*Hochrenaissance*) and ‘Baroque’, discussing how, albeit introducing the distinction between the first and the second half of the 16th century, the two terms were almost synonyms in the scholarly interpretation of Modern art. This analysis will be conducted through a particular type of source: the notes from the lectures Dvořák held at the University of Vienna from 1902 to 1921, thus filling a historiographical gap caused by the dearth of publications on the subject — the only relevant one being the posthumous volumes edited by Dvořák’s pupils, incidentally based as well on notes for university courses. Considering the manuscript material — now held at the *Institut für Kunstgeschichte* of the University of Vienna — derived from the courses held throughout Dvořák’s teaching career, it will be shown how his historiographical theory revolves around continuity and cultural history, rather than abrupt turns and stylistic differentiations.

The term ‘High Renaissance’, or ‘*Hochrenaissance*’, can be found for the first time in the *Cicerone* by Jacob Burckhardt,¹ referring to the architecture of the first quarter of the 16th century. However, there is much more than a chronological periodization behind the use of this term in art history. The Swiss scholar claimed that art, after the end of the 15th century, was able to reach the ‘*highest form of life*’.² This was possible due to the attainment of a perfection in the imitation of the antique, which in turn was surpassed by the intrinsic strength of late 15th century art matured in the experiences of the century just ended, crowning the full potential of artistic beauty. The ‘High’ in ‘High Renaissance’ implies therefore the precise point reached by Renaissance culture on a scale culminating in absolute beauty. A privileged

position assigned to it by aesthetic principles rooted in the writings by Johann Joachim Winckelmann,³ ‘*who provided a model for the organization of Greek art into four distinct period styles — the archaic, the high, the beautiful, and the imitative — that was to provide a critical vocabulary and a way of looking that was to be hugely influential*’.⁴ The schema originated by this historiographical organization of progression to the apex and followed by decline — in combination with the view expressed by Giovanni Pietro Bellori,⁵ who saw Raphael as the last great artist before the decay — subsequently influenced further interpretation. Jean-Baptiste Seroux d’Agincourt,⁶ Luigi Lanzi,⁷ and Carl von Rumohr,⁸ while differing in personal preferences, generally concurred in placing Raphael’s art at the pinnacle of stylistic evolution. As pointed out by Jill Burke, ‘*by the early nineteenth century, the periodization of the High Renaissance as a culmination of the development of art that was to be followed by a sharp decline was well established in art historical narratives*’. This had ‘*far-reaching consequences, not least because of its effect on acquisition and display practices in public museums*’.⁹ Therefore, this idea was shaping the view not only of scholars but also of the public eye, contributing to the general taste.

The ‘high style’ (*der hohe Stil*) attributed by Winckelmann to artists like Phidias, Polyklet, and Scopas, later became in Franz Kugler’s *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* the aggregating term that included all the styles, developments, and practices which converged at the beginning of the 16th century in a ‘*high degree of perfection*’.¹⁰ In the text by the German author, two pieces are added to the aesthetics of Renaissance perfection, namely the transience of the culminating experience, ‘*scarcely more than one-quarter of a century!*’,¹¹ and the eternal, imperishable, nature of this exalted state of

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1 / Dvořák's notes to his university lectures *Die Kunst der Hochrenaissance*, winter semester 1919/1920

Archiv des Instituts für Kunstgeschichte, Universität Wien, estate Dvořák
Photo: Francesca Bottura

human culture. Kugler described the beginning of the 16th century as the 'most flourishing period of modern Art',¹² making it the pinnacle of art before the Baroque-decay. This perspective permeates the interpretation of Kugler's student, Burckhardt, and eventually of the latter's student, Heinrich Wölfflin.¹³ He saw a 'completion' in the 'High Renaissance, notably in the work of Raphael',¹⁴ and from the climax, the path leads directly into the Baroque period. This line of classicism, originating with Winckelmann, continued through Burckhardt, Kugler, and Wölfflin, shaping the German-speaking cultural milieu.

Max Dvořák rejected these traditional positions in the introductory lines on the High Renaissance in his lecture notes published in 1928 in the second volume of *Geschichte der italienischen Kunst im Zeitalter der Renaissance*,¹⁵ devoted to the 16th century. Touching briefly on the state of the art, he described the concept of the culmination of the Renaissance in the first half of

the 16th century as a result of a dogmatic aesthetic more than of insightful historical analysis. If we investigate the reasons that led the scholar to turn down the historiographical dogmatism that animated the idea of a High Renaissance as the pinnacle of perfection in art, we soon realize that he gave importance to this term only in the aforementioned publication. It is well known that the two volumes on Renaissance art, together with *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte* from 1924, have heavily contributed to shaping the perception of Dvořák's legacy; all three volumes were edited by his students Johannes Wilde and Karl M. Swoboda after his death. Swoboda and Wilde likely took into account the significance of the term while choosing the titles of the volumes as they organized the material, which originated from Dvořák's notes for lectures at the University of Vienna. The course on the High Renaissance published in 1928 was introduced in the winter semester of 1919–1920, prompting inquiry into Dvořák's earlier teaching on 16th-century Italian art [1].

‘Excess, wildness, abandonment of the rules’: The High Renaissance, Baroque, or Just a Result of Dogmatic Aesthetic?

Dvořák arrived in Vienna in 1895, and became *Privatdozent* in 1902. His early death in 1921 resulted in a teaching career of only about twenty years. During this period, the scholar held 79 courses in art history, six of them on Italian art of the 16th century, though — as aforementioned — only one explicitly dedicated to *Hochrenaissance*.

By looking at Dvořák’s entire teaching activity at the University of Vienna,¹⁶ we can observe how, during the first years as a *Privatdozent*, he was mainly concerned with the general history of painting in the Modern age and repertoires or ‘*Kunsthistorische Übungen*’. As he became Professor, Dvořák began to hold the main courses on art history, cyclically alternating *Vorlesungen* on Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque art. This pattern had presumably educational purposes, reflecting a division that art history as a discipline had made at least since the 19th century. We can identify three complete cycles in the teaching activity of Dvořák, which follow the aforementioned chronological pattern ‘Medieval-Renaissance-Baroque’ art. The first one was delivered between the years 1910 and 1913.¹⁷ During the war years, a shift can be observed in the titles. However, the chronological partition is still respected: “The History of Western Painting in the Middle Ages” (1913–1914), “The History of Italian Painting and Sculpture in the 14th and 15th Centuries” (1914–1915), “Idealism and Realism in Modern Art” (1915–1916) — revolving around the 15th century, and “On the Relationship of Art in the 17th

and 18th Centuries to the Intellectual Currents of the Time (1916–1917). The last cycle retraces the first one: “The History of Western Painting in the Middle Ages” (1917–1918), “The History of Italian Art in the Age of the Renaissance” (1918–1919), the new “Art of the High Renaissance” (1919–1920), and lastly “The Evolution of Baroque Art” (1920–1921), interrupted by Dvořák’s illness and premature death. From this overview, it appears clear that the partition is more of a chronological organization than a conceptualization. Dvořák alternately uses the wording ‘Baroque’ or ‘High Renaissance’ and when he wanted to conduct a deeper investigation on ideological concepts and cultural reflections, he chose more theoretical titles such as ‘*Idealismus und Realismus*’. Furthermore, when looking broadly at the topics discussed in the lectures, we see that the same artists and movements are addressed in reference to ‘Baroque art’, ‘Modern art’, or ‘*Hochrenaissance*’. Therefore, we find that e.g., the lectures on the Italian painter Correggio are included in Baroque art as well as in the High Renaissance, and the same happens with Michelangelo, Titian, and Raphael. I will focus more on Correggio later, but from this arbitrary distinction, we can start to see how ‘*Hochrenaissance*’ defined more a chronologically determined period than a theoretical concept, and how it was intertwined with Baroque art [2].

Turning to the content of Dvořák’s lectures,¹⁸ we find insightful notes on the concepts of interest, especially in the introductions the scholar offered to his students at the beginning of every course. The material from the lectures is diverse. The first type to be generated consists of a handwritten draft, usually between about six hundred and one thousand sheets, written by Dvořák in the



2 / Correggio, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1526–1530

Cathedral of Parma, Parma

Reproduction: Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der italienischen Kunst im Zeitalter der Renaissance*, edd. Karl Maria Swoboda – Johannes Wilde, 1928

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months before the lectures. These preparatory notes are the most significant, regarding the historical and critical reflection contained in the pages: the author devoted the greatest preparation to them, tracing an oral discourse rich in theoretical considerations. In some sporadic cases, a trace of a preliminary phase can be found, presenting brief and schematic notes or even keywords on the topic. However, Dvořák did not slavishly follow his notes when lecturing. Gustav Glück, director of the *Gemäldegalerie* in Vienna outlined Dvořák's 'habit of literally writing down every single presentation, every lecture at the university word for word, and then, regardless of this, speaking completely from memory and without a glance at his notes'.¹⁹ Therefore, besides the preparatory manuscripts, we should consider what Dvořák said during his courses. This is possible by reading notes from students who attended the lectures which luckily have been preserved. The archive of the *IKG* retains nine courses held by Dvořák and transcribed by his student Karola Bielohlawek, ranging from 1911 to 1921.²⁰ Other notes taken by future art historian Antonio Morassi, covering the period between 1912 and 1916, are now kept in the archive of the *Biblioteca di Area Umanistica* of the Ca' Foscari University in Venice.²¹

From this material we can make some observations. Firstly, we must note that Dvořák rejected sharp chronological divisions as well as strict definitions.²² He did not give his students a precise and comprehensive description; he rather underlined characterizing aspects, possible lines of continuity, or noticeable innovations. Overall, Dvořák wanted to show the evolution of art through the centuries, always in close correlation with the evolution of culture and ideas. In an uninterrupted line of artistic development, as Dvořák intended art history to be by the inheritance of Riegl, a new direction can be significant to understanding the changes in the 'Kulturleben'. This new direction is found by the scholar in *Hochrenaissance* as well as in Baroque, and not in the 15th century-Renaissance: 'If we look at things not on the basis of cultural-historical considerations but directly at the artistic development as it has taken place since antiquity, we find that the Renaissance, compared to the last phase of the Gothic period, certainly represents an indicative progress, but in no way the setting of new goals, so that the development progresses continuously without upheavals, without the emergence of completely new conditions, without a fundamental change in the tasks of art, so that we are justified in assuming a new stage in the millennial development, but not in constructing the emergence of a completely new world, a completely new art, from which the preceding periods were to be called Proto-Renaissance and the following ones Post-Renaissance and Baroque. And if we continue to follow this millennial development of artistic problems, we find that in the first quarter of the XVI century a completely new phase in this development begins, where the old task of art is given a new content, a new meaning, the same meaning that was the driving force behind the development of art in the following Baroque centuries, so that one is justified

in counting this change, whose most influential pioneer was Michelangelo, as the new style.'²³

The development undertaken by style during the High Renaissance and Baroque was not still; art was rather engaged in the search for new solutions to ancient artistic problems.²⁴ What enhanced this mobility was the simultaneous existence of different developments, compared to the uniformity of 15th-century art, making the High Renaissance and Baroque the 'result of various currents and transformations'. In addition, this multiplicity makes the characteristics of 'excess, wildness, abandonment of the rules',²⁵ applicable only for specific directions within the framework of art from the 16th to the 18th century and not for the High Renaissance or Baroque as a whole.²⁶ Some other movements within the 16th century are characterized by proportion and regulation that could be seen as typical Renaissance elements. For Dvořák those attributes were more the consequence of a dogmatic aesthetic, especially in Burckhardt's concept of the Renaissance as well as his sharp demarcations between cultural periods; for the High Renaissance and Baroque, as well as any other period, unambiguous criteria of evaluation are improper, given that more than styles those are 'Geistströmungen' (development of thought), like the Gothic-period: 'Definitions only made sense as long as art history had been classified according to fixed stylistic concepts. However, Gothic art did not mean a stylistic scheme but a rich and varied development, which applies to Baroque art to a far greater extent. Depending on the different definitions, the beginning of Baroque art has also been exposed in different ways — at the beginning of the Cinquecento, with the last works of Michelangelo, with the epigones of Michelangelo, etc. All this is irrelevant if we observe the continuous context in which there are no actual peripeties, no beginning of style, only a gradual transformation, which led to a completely new conception of art in all its fields during the 16th century.'²⁷

The art of the 16th century is therefore not defined by style-matters; rather, it represents a 'development moving in a state of stream.'²⁸ 'There is no precise chronological delimitation of Baroque art nor a more exhaustive definition. It essentially comprises the art of the 17th and 18th centuries, but its development reaches further back without it being possible to make a sharp cut anywhere between its origin and the preceding art. Likewise, it is not sharply delineated at the top but passes in a broad stream into new artistic endeavours in different areas, not simultaneously and in different ways. Moreover, in this process, there are, in turn, different currents and turning points both in its general course and in individual countries and regions. But it is precisely these turning points and differences that we must keep in mind if we want to gain an overall picture of what Baroque art was, not a stylistic formula, but the result of a certain spiritual orientation, just as all Medieval art was the result of a certain spiritual orientation.'²⁹

Furthermore, for Dvořák currents and transformations meant greater geographical extension outside Italian territories, taking on significance for the entire Western cultural life, in opposition to Renaissance

art, defined by a national-based character. Another characteristic of the High Renaissance and the Baroque found by the scholar was the extraordinary ability to combine artistic practice with theoretical reflection. The artistic theoretical texts developed throughout the 16th century demonstrated a new perspective on the past, especially on classical antiquity, gradually interpreted as a source of inspiration for the present creations, as a source of new solutions for eternal artistic problems. Antique art, therefore, was seen as a mirror for the art of the present. Theories began to articulate this relation and to investigate antiquity as a whole phenomenon, and not like in the 15th century, as individual elements to combine in new, creative ways. The perspective of classical art as paradigmatic for the artistic progression marked the origin of a Classicist theory. This initially meant a preference for determinate periods from single movements, until Winckelmann turned it into a general historical theory of apex and decadence. The exacerbation of this perspective by 19th-century culture eventually led to the adverse consideration from which Baroque art suffered. The historiographical perception underwent a simplification and a popularization that led to the persuasion that historical periods could be divided into 'good' and 'bad', as if art proceeded to reach a golden age and then declined, and the decline was to be of the most recent period, namely Baroque. This poor judgment was — according to Dvořák — then nobilitated by the literature of Burckhardt and others, leaving Baroque art out of scientific interest. This condition started to change at the end of the 19th century.³⁰

Thus, what appears to distance the High Renaissance and the Baroque is their fortunes in the public and academic taste. As Dvořák lamented still in 1909–1910, 'until recently, Baroque art was despised'³¹ — being considered a 'second-order art' in contrast to the High Renaissance, which, as noted above, also presumes in its title a judgment of value. This interpretation of Baroque art would be re-evaluated during the 20th century due in part to the contributions of scholars of the Vienna School, particularly Riegl and Dvořák.³² Dvořák appears very aware of the process in the making when, in 1912–1913, he stated that the historical prejudice that was making it 'necessary to take up the cudgels for it, because it was banned as an art of decay' is no longer a threat for Baroque, which on the contrary is now invested by 'a one-sided adoration.'³³ Perception and historical interpretation are two main aspects in every analysis given by the scholar; he devoted much time to explaining these elements, and maybe his interest in Baroque art was stimulated by this alternate fortune, making the art of the 16th century primarily valuable for the work of its artists' foreshadowing of future developments.

Correggio's Ways to Paint 'a portion of the universe' and the Beginning of Idealismus

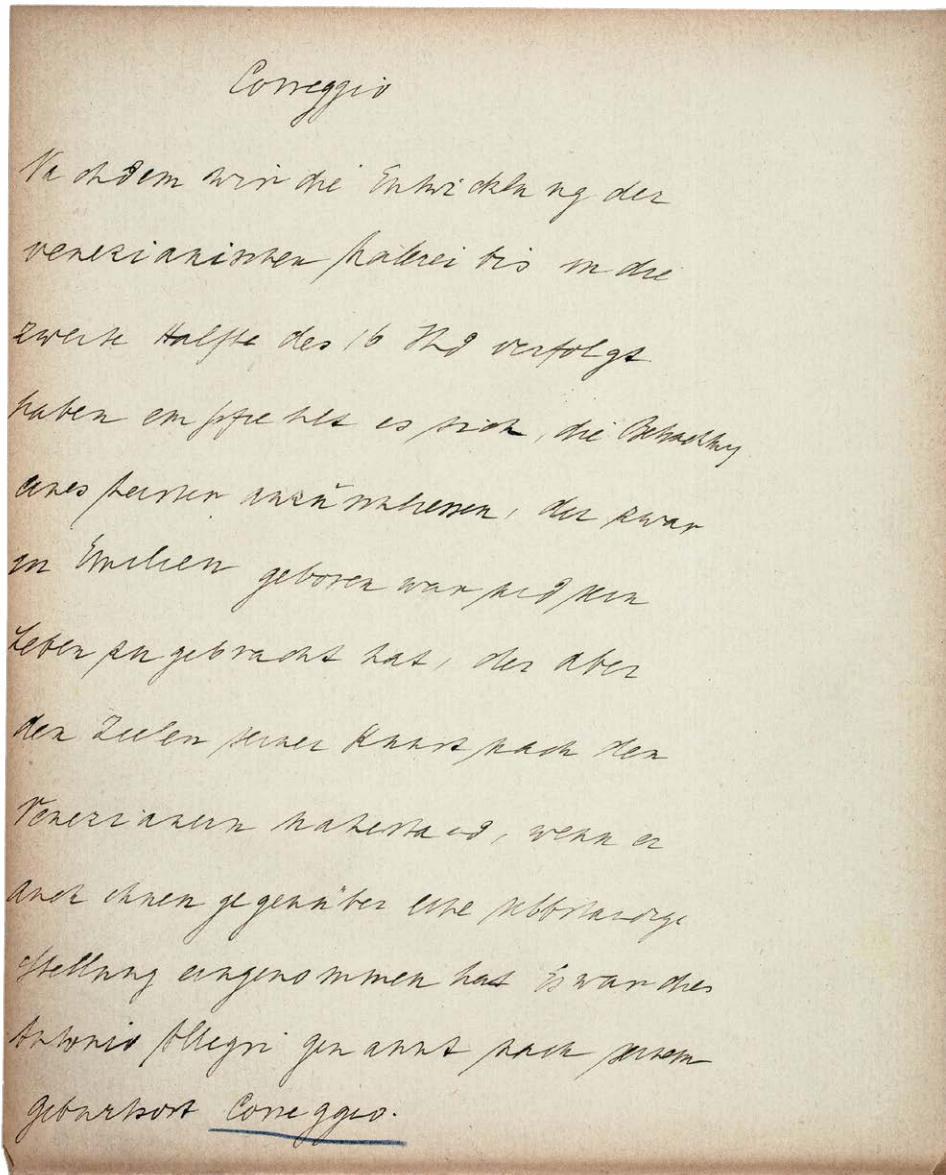
Antonio Allegri da Correggio is an artist of the kind mentioned above;³⁴ in Dvořák's lectures, the Italian

painter embodies the innovation that took place between Renaissance and Baroque art. Correggio represents an insightful way to determine a 'Weltanschauung' as he, according to Dvořák, condensed the artistic achievements of both Rome and Venice; or in other words, Correggio connected the way of composing the figures of Michelangelo and using the colour of Titian. This made him less determined by local schools like Raphael, Michelangelo, and Titian — and more a sign of the general 'individualization of artistic creation' (*Individualisierung des Kunstschaffens*) prominent in the second half of the 16th century [3].

The painter became for Dvořák a model for Baroque art, intertwining with this period so tightly that, in some cases, Correggio is in Dvořák's notes denoted as a 'Barockmaler'. This aspect is especially evident in the cupola paintings in Parma (*Vision of St. John the Evangelist at Patmos* in S. Giovanni Evangelista, 1520–1524 and *The Assumption of the Virgin* in the Cathedral, 1522–1530). These paintings — in which the figures of the saints and other biblical protagonists occupy a swirling space of clouds in concentric circles — are treated by Correggio in such a way as to give the viewer the impression that the illusive space is really inhabited by the depicted figures. The sensation of depth, and of characters that seem to actually inhabit the space, was something already experimented with by Michelozzo da Forlì and Andrea Mantegna, but these were just 'attempts'; what Correggio accomplished was the representation of a 'transcendental appearance [...] and it is this transcendental, visionary character that art everywhere begins to take on in contrast to the Quattrocento.'³⁵ As early as 1909–1910, Dvořák started to define a line of transcendence in the evolution of 'geistiges Leben' (life of ideas), a line that connects the Baroque with 'visionary early Christianity' and continues hidden during the Renaissance age. In this way, the scholar precluded to a distinction between *Idealismus* and *Naturalismus* (or *Realismus*) to analyse Gothic art,³⁶ and Modern art in general. 'Every historical problem can be considered from two points of view, that of the immediate cause and that of the world-historical genetic context. The immediate cause [of the 16th century transcendental tendency] was certainly a reaction against the religious rationalism of the 15th century. But if we look for the more general causes, we are led to the broad progress in the understanding of life and nature, which led beyond the perception of material causes and phenomena to a deeper understanding of spiritual powers and which no longer saw in the appearance of the divine persons an anthropomorphic embodiment alone, but also an embodiment of higher powers, an embodiment of the idea of superhuman processes, in which, as in all other areas, this spiritual life now began to wonder where it had left off with the Middle Ages, only to soon move far beyond antiquity. This change was naturally bound to exert an unfaithful influence on art.'³⁷

What we see in the *Camera degli Sposi* by Mantegna (or *Camera Picta*, 1465–1474, in the Palazzo Ducale, Mantua) is an elusive piece of architecture that

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3 / Dvořák's notes to his university lectures *Geschichte der italienischen Barockkunst*, winter semester 1909/1910

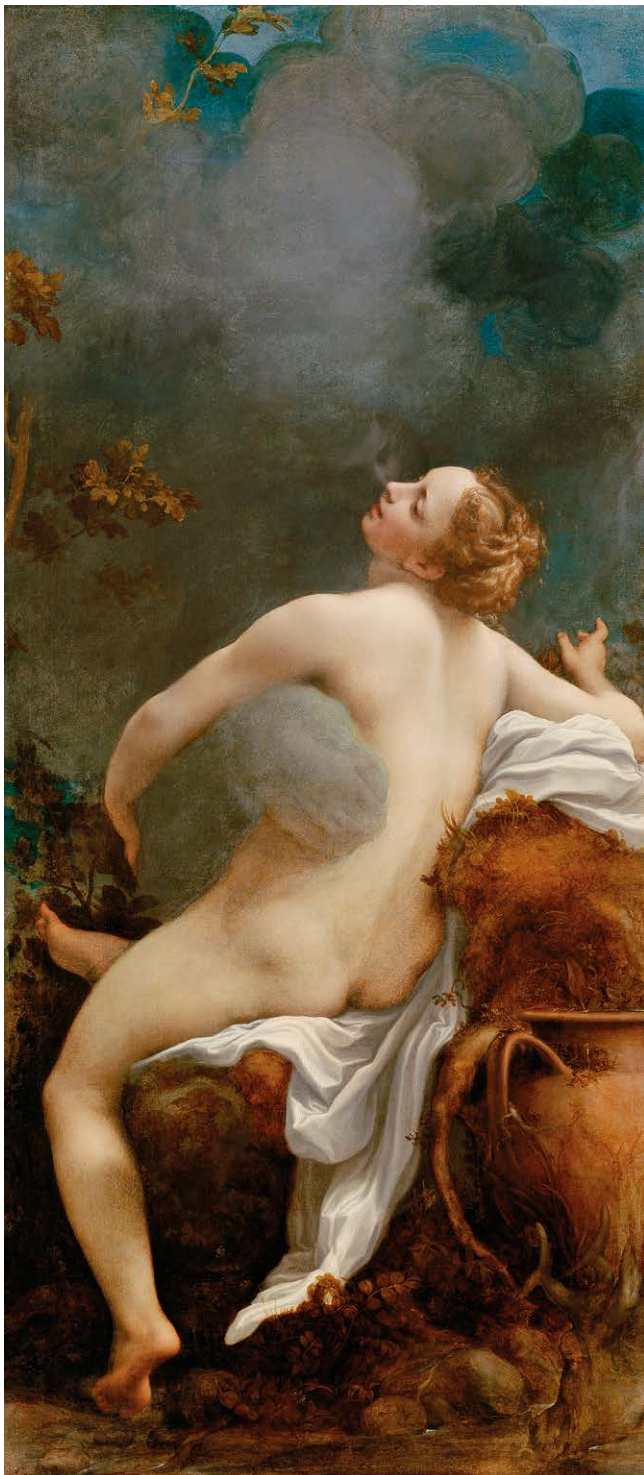
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Photo: Francesca Bottura

appears real thanks to the use of perspective rules and the 'Naturwiedergabe' (reproduction of nature) of Quattrocento-art. Around a well whose bottom is occupied by the observer, a definitive number of human figures, putti and a peacock are arranged; beneath a blue sky with few clouds. Despite the breakthrough in perspective, the imagined space remains enclosed in what is visible and its protagonists, although painted, appear real, earthly. On the other hand, what Correggio painted on his ceilings was not a real space, but rather an ideal one, 'a space without borders, a portion of the universe'.³⁸ The illusion of space is given by the representation of movement, the ability to use light for atmosphere, and an indefinite pictorial rendering as the forms move away from the viewer, which results in a deep connection between painting and architecture that would become crucial for Baroque art. A connection that furthermore broke the rules of composition valued from

antiquity to Renaissance, resulting in a 'new architecture that reckons with sections of the universe.'³⁹ The aspiration towards non-earthly figures can also be traced in the altarpieces, such as *The Holy Night* (or *Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1528–1530), where the reality of the scene, derived from Venetian tradition, has been broken by an otherworldly light emanating from the Child. And even more noticeable in both the late *The Day* (or *Madonna and Child with St. Jerome and Mary Magdalen*, 1526–1528) and the *Madonna della Scodella* (1528–1530). In the first, the everyday space of the stable in Bethlehem has given way to a landscape backdrop interrupted by a red cloth drape that, in the manner of the Venetians, separates the scene from reality, giving it a theatrical appearance. In the other, the sacred family, intent in what almost appears like a choreography of gestures, is no longer accompanied by shepherds, but only by angels enveloped in clouds. In those paintings, we can also find the

religious trance, a product of the Counter-Reformation movement significant for religious art up to the 19th century. Therefore, for Dvořák, Correggio and the artists of the *Hochrenaissance* embodied a renovation in art for a new way of studying nature, aimed less at deepening the individual forms than at grasping the entire form. 'This might seem strange, for the whole great change in style on which the new art was based consisted in overcoming *Quattrocento-Realism*, but the study of nature that we are

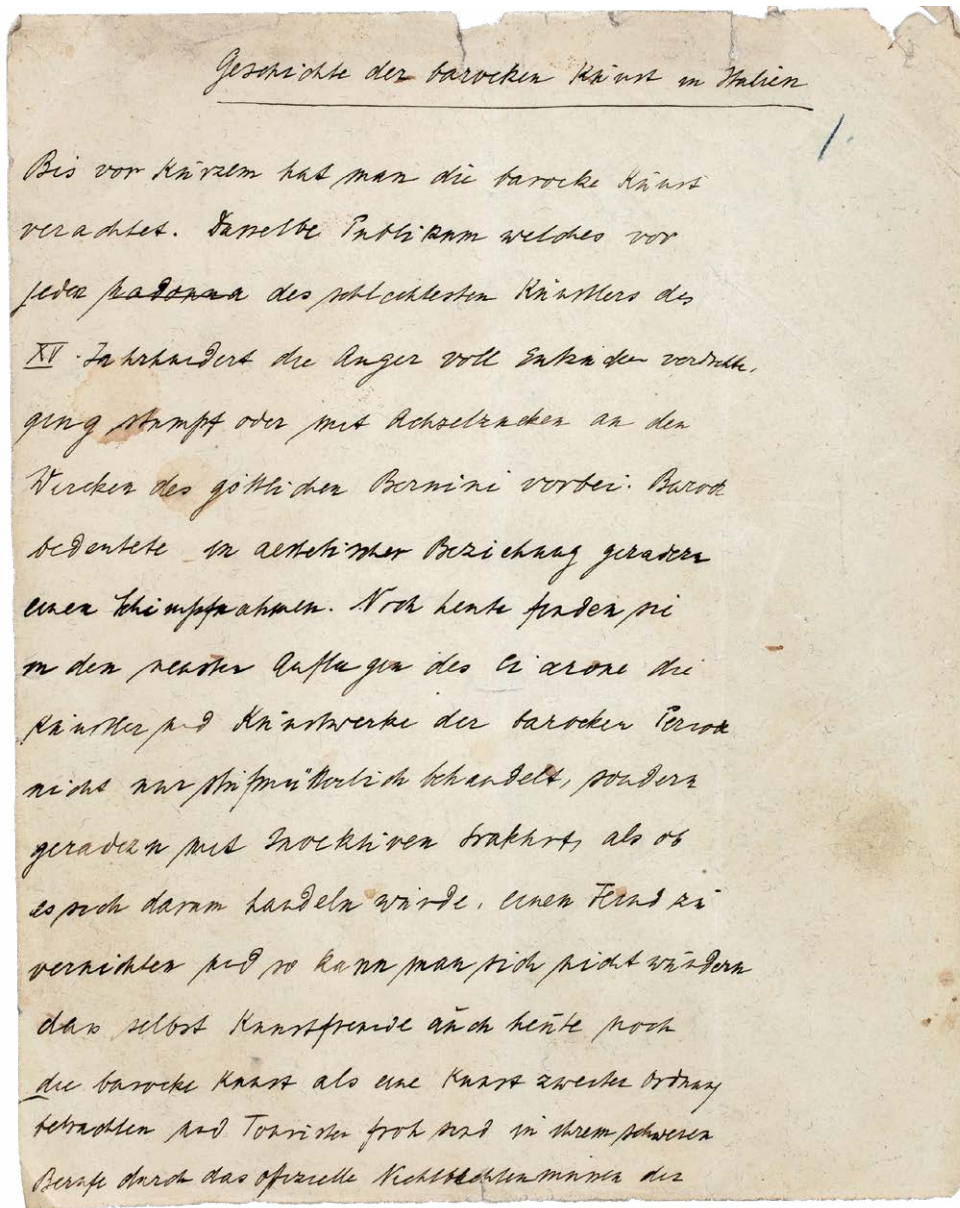


now dealing with was of a different kind. The conditions changed. A new way of studying, seeing, and depicting nature was created. One could say that art was given new eyes and new hands, and people began to make extensive use of this everywhere in the second half of the 16th century.'⁴⁰

Correggio thus ended up embodying the idealist turn of the 16th century, finding a great impetus in the religiosity of the Counter-Reformation, but going beyond its spirituality and extending the otherworldly atmosphere to profane scenes, such as *Jupiter and Io* [4]. The achievements of Correggio's painting in the rendering of *chiaroscuro* space were the reasons that prompted Dvořák's pupil Antonio Morassi to say that 'Correggio's creatures still live in this ideal atmosphere'.⁴¹

The transformation from *Naturalismus* to *Idealismus* can be observed in the comparison proposed by Dvořák during his *Vorlesungen* on Baroque art between the different uses of *chiaroscuro* by Correggio and Leonardo.⁴² In these lectures, the scholar opens a brief *excursus* on the history of *chiaroscuro* painting, from its origins in the Netherlands to the Venetians. A significant moment within this evolution is represented precisely by Leonardo's art. The 15th-century painter utilizes light and shadow to isolate and emphasize plastic forms in compositions. The result achieved is a 'relief effect' that increases the appearances of figures 'working them out of the deep shadows'.⁴³ This is done by darkening the shadows so that, as a result, the parts in light are highlighted more prominently. Leonardo's purpose therefore focuses on a naturalistic rendering of forms, showing the 15th century *Naturalism*. On the contrary, Correggio applies *chiaroscuro* to his painting not with the intention to emphasize the sculptural forms by gradually blending light and shadow, but to depict atmospheric motion. In Correggio's paintings 'white is modelled in white'⁴⁴ and shadows are used to immerse the figures in an almost transcendental spirit. While Titian and other Venetian painters applied *chiaroscuro* adhering to certain real limits, Correggio went beyond atmospheric realism by sacrificing reality to the general principle and creating an idealistic, transcendental space. For Correggio the use of a delicate, silvery grey tone in shadows has a proper task: the dissolution of forms and reality. The colour gives the figures an ethereal veil, dissolves them from their reality, immersing them in a clear, delicate, artistic light. Although they are not painted blurrily, they appear to us as such,⁴⁵ because they are immersed in gloom. The pursuit of otherworldly feel was already clear in the lighting of *The Holy Night*. In the Viennese painting, on the other hand, the beautiful *Io* is completely enraptured by the silver cloud reminiscent of the swirling clouds painted in the cupolas.

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5 / The first page of Dvořák's notes to his university lectures *Geschichte der italienischen Barockkunst*, winter semester 1909/1910

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Photo: Francesca Bottura

Dvořák underlines the enhancement of emotions as a crucial element in understanding Correggio's art. In doing so, he is going beyond Wölfflin's formal definition without giving it up but complementing the analysis with a broader view. As Hans Aurenhammer suggested,⁴⁶ when Wölfflin's *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* came out in 1915, Dvořák was interested in the development of Naturalism and Idealism, and no longer occupied with stylistic issues. However, even more than that, what had ceased to interest him was a history made by distinctions, of clear paradigm shifts, and of style. Therefore, the High Renaissance became more than a *Stilbegriff* (style-based concept); it developed into the indicator of a renovated impulse in modern art, in which artists like Titian, Tintoretto, Rembrandt, Velázquez, Tiepolo, and Fragonard fought for the same artistic goals. The Baroque no longer connoted a synonym for decay and wildness; instead, it

embodied a stage of development in the history of human creativity, ultimately of modern art and culture.⁴⁷

Conclusion

'The academic tradition was declared dead, and thousands of hands wrote new theories on the walls of the rooms where art history was taught according to the principles of absolute aesthetics.'⁴⁸ [5] Some of those 'hands' belonged, among others, to Franz Wickhoff, Alois Riegl, and Max Dvořák. These scholars have shown the uninterrupted line in art history, refusing the ideas of progress from height to decay and of the golden age, rejecting the 'absolute aesthetic' for antique art, as well as for modern art. In his later writings, Dvořák departed even more from the analysis of style, distancing himself from the formalism still applied by Riegl, turning instead to the repeating phases of the

'geistiges Leben' and the struggle of an artist, or of humanity as a whole. This is particularly evident in the lectures on the High Renaissance, given the specific nature of its 'Weltanschauung'.

The scholar stated that there is no systematics nor regularity in art history, rather 'an uninterrupted living becoming in inexhaustible possibilities'.⁴⁹ Ultimately, in Dvořák's historical vision, Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, and Correggio could only be Baroque, just as the *Hochrenaissance* could only express Baroque values, as they represented a far deeper and more diverse current of thought than the Renaissance, which was merely a matter of style. The works of those artists were too much an expression of Idealism not to be Baroque.

With a new perspective on the *Hochrenaissance* and its closeness to Baroque instead of the Renaissance, Dvořák thus accomplished much more than an original partition of art history. He abandoned the 'doctrinal aesthetic' linked to 'classical historiography',⁵⁰ which was formed in the 16th century and was for a long time connected to the idea of 'antiquity as a paradigm',⁵¹ making the Baroque a 'second-order art'.⁵² What seemed to characterize the Baroque in the tradition of 'old books'⁵³ were exaggeration and license; however, 'these characteristics apply at most to the immediate successors of the masters of the so-called High Renaissance and also to these masters of the High Renaissance themselves'.⁵⁴

NOTES

1 Jacob Burckhardt, *Der Cicerone: eine Anleitung zum Genuss der Kunstwerke Italiens*, Basel 1860.

2 Jacob Burckhardt, *The Cicerone: Or an Art Guide to Painting in Italy for the Use of Travellers*, London 1873, p. 107.

3 See Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, Dresden 1764.

4 Jill Burke, 'Inventing the High Renaissance, from Winckelmann to Wikipedia: An Introductory Essay', in *Rethinking the High Renaissance: The Culture of the Visual Arts in Early Sixteenth-Century Rome*, Farnham 2012, p. 8.

5 Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Le vite de' pittori, scultori et architetti moderni*, Rome 1672.

6 Jean-Baptiste Seroux d'Agincourt, *Histoire de l'art par les monumens depuis sa décadence au IV siècle jusqu'à sa renouvellement au XVI*, Paris 1823.

7 Luigi Lanzi, *Storia pittorica della Italia*, Bassano 1795–1796.

8 Carl Von Rumohr, *Italianische Forschungen*, Berlin 1827–1831.

9 Burke (note 4), p. 10.

10 Franz Kugler, *Handbook of Painting: The Italian Schools*, London 1855, p. 145.

11 Ibidem, p. 271.

12 Ibidem.

13 Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barock: Eine Untersuchung über Wesen und Entstehung des Barockstils in Italien*, München 1888. — Idem, *Die Klassische Kunst: eine Einführung in die italienische Renaissance*, München 1899.

14 Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, New York 1966, p. 30.

15 Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der italienischen Kunst im Zeitalter der Renaissance. Akademische Vorlesungen. Zweiter Band: Das 16. Jahrhundert*, Munich 1928, p. 4.

16 The following observations derive from the source represented by the *Öffentliche Vorlesungen an der k. k. Universität zu Wien* for the years between 1902 and 1921, published by the University of Vienna as a helpful handbook for students attending the lectures. From now on, to maintain fluency, reference made to courses will be based on this material without citing directly the edition.

17 Some of the same pattern is also traceable previously, with courses on Medieval art held in winter semester of 1906–1907 and on Italian Baroque in the winter semester of 1909–1910; between 1907–1908 and

1908–1909, Renaissance art was likely covered by the two courses of Franz Wickhoff on the *History of Italian Art*.

18 Dvořák's notes are kept in the Archive of the Institut für Kunstgeschichte (further as IKG) at the University of Vienna.

19 Gustav Glück, 'Aus Max Dvořák Nachlass', *Neues Wiener Tageblatt*, 1924, 5. 2., pp. 3–4, here p. 3: 'Er hatte in seiner ungeheuren Gewissenhaftigkeit die seltene, für ihn selbst recht mühsame, ja aufreibende Gewohnheit, jeden ein zelnen Vortrag, jede Vorlesung an der Universität Wort getreu zu Papier zu bringen, und dann, unabhängig davon, ganz auswendig und ohne einen Blick in seine Aufzeichnungen, zu sprechen.'

20 Archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 19.

21 University Ca' Foscari of Venice, Biblioteca di Area Umanistica, Fondo Morassi, CONS B RIS-A 00358, RIS-B 00017, RIS-B 00018, RIS-B 00019, RIS-B 00031.

22 Max Dvořák, *Entwicklung der Barockkunst, 1920–1921*, archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 8, folder 1, p. 5: 'Eine genaue scharfe zeitliche Abgrenzung der Barockkunst gibt es ebensowenig als eine erschöpfende Definition.'

23 Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der italienischen Barockkunst 1909–1910*, archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 3, folder 3: pp. 38–40: 'Wenn wir die Dinge nicht auf Grund von kulturhistorischen Erwägungen sondern unmittelbar die künstlerische Entwicklung betrachten wie sie sich seit der Antike vollzogen hat, fanden wir dass die Renaissance der letzten Phase der Gothik gegenüber wohl einen angehenden Fortschritt, doch keinesfalls das Einschlagen neuer Ziele bedeutet, so dass die Entwicklung kontinuierlich ohne Umwälzungen, ohne Entstehung ganz neuer Verhältnisse, ohne prinzipielle Änderung der Aufgaben der Kunst fortschrittet, so dass wir wohl berechtigt einen neuen Abschnitt in der tausendjährigen Entwicklung anzunehmen, doch nicht die Entstehung einer ganz neuen Welt, einer ganz neuen Kunst zu konstruieren, von der aus die Vorangehenden Perioden als Protorenaissance und die folgenden als Nachrenaissance und Barock zu bezeichnen waren, und wenn wir dieser tausendjährige Entwicklung der künstlerischen Probleme weiter verfolgen, so finden wir, dass in den ersten Viertel des XVI. Jahrhundert eine ganz neue Phase in dieser Entwicklung beginnt, wo den alten Aufgabe der Kunst ein neuer Inhalt, eine neue Bedeutung gegeben wird, dieselbe Bedeutung die den treibende Kunst der Entwicklung der Kunst in den folgende barocken Jahrhunderten gewesen ist, so dass man wohl die Berechtigung hat, von dieser Wandlung an, deren einflussreichster Bahnbrecher Michelangelo gewesen ist, den neuen Stil zu rechnen.'

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24 Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der venezianischen Malerei des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 1905, archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 1, folder 7, p. 17: 'Doch eines will ich versuchen, nämlich den stilistischen Entwicklung dieser Zeit zu folgen um zu beweisen, dass die Kunst sein den XVI. Jahrhundert keinesfalls stillgestanden ist, sondern sich auf den alten Grundlage in neuen Aufgaben, zu neuen Losungen in einer steigenden Gradation entwickelte.'

25 Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der venetianische Malerei (Geschichte der barocken Kunst in Italien)*, 1905–1906, archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 2, folder 3, p. 26: 'die Maßlosigkeit, die Verwilderung, das Aufgeben der Regeln'; also in Dvořák (note 24), p. 34.

26 Dvořák (note 24), pp. 35–36: 'Nach diese Richtung hin gibt es kein durchlaufenden Kriterium der barocken Kunst; es gibt Perioden darin, wo sie sich bemüht einfach und schlicht zu wirken, maßvoll in Formen und Linien, dann wiederum wo sie das Gewaltige gewaltig ausdrücken will und so unterliegt es keinem Zweifel, dass die aufgezählten Kriterien höchstens für einen Abschnitt der barocken Kunst bezeichnend sind, keinesfalls aber für die barocke Kunst überhaupt.'

27 Max Dvořák, *Geschichte der italienischen Barockkunst, 1912–1913*, archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 4, folder 3, pp. 10–12: 'Solche Definitionen hatten nur einen Sinn, so lange man die Geschichte der Kunst nach festen Stilbegriffen eingeteilt hatte, doch wäre die Gothische Kunst nicht etwa ein Stilschema bedeutet, sondern eine reiche Mannigfaltig wechselnde Entwicklung, wo gilt das noch in einem weit größerem Masse von der Barockkunst. Je nach dem verschiedenen Definitionen hat man auch den Anfang der barocken Kunst verschiedenartig ausgesetzt — zu Beginn des Cinquecento, mit den letzten Werken Michelangelos, mit den Epigonen Michelangelo usw. das alles ist gegenstandslos, wenn wir den fortlaufenden Zusammenhang beobachten bei dem es keine eigentlichen Peripetien gibt, keinen Stilanfang, sondern eine allmähliche Wandlung, die freilich im Verlaufe des 16. Jahrhundert zu einer ganz neuen Auffassung der Kunst auf allen ihren Gebiete führte.'

28 Max Dvořák, *Die Geschichte der italienischen Barockkunst, 1912–1913* (Typoskript) Kryptonachlass Bielohlawek, archive IKG, estate Dvořák, box 19, folder 10, p. 1: '[...], weil die Barockkunst keine Stilbegriff ist, sondern eine im Fluss begriffene Entwicklung.'

29 Dvořák (note 22), pp. 5–8: 'Eine genaue scharfe zeitliche Abgrenzung der Barockkunst gibst es ebenso wenig als eine erschöpfte Definition. Sie umfasst im Wesentlichen die Kunst des 17. und 18. Jahrhundert, doch ihre Entwicklung reicht weiter zurück ohne, dass es möglich wäre irgendwo zwischen ihrem Ursprung und der vorangehende Kunst einen scharfen Einschnitt zu machen und ebenso ist sie auch hoch oben nicht scharf abgegrenzt, sondern geht im breiten Strome in verschiedenen Gebieten nicht gleichzeitig und in verschiedener Weise in neue Kunstbestrebungen über. Und in diesem Ablauf gibst es wiederum verschiedene Strömungen und Wendepunkte sowohl in seinem Allgemeinen Verlaufe als auch in einzelnen Landen und Gebiete. Gerade solche Wendepunkte und Verschiedenheiten müssen wir uns aber vor den Augen halten, wenn wir eine Gesamtbild dessen was die Barockkunst war gewinnen wollen, nicht eine Stilformel, sondern dass Ergebnis einer bestimmten Geistigen Orientierung, wie die ganze mittelalterliche Kunst das Ergebnis einer bestimmten Geistesrichtung war.'

30 For the Austrian and especially Viennese reconsideration of Baroque art, the key role beside Riegl and Dvořák played Albert Ilg. In 1880, he published the pamphlet *Die Zukunft des Barockstils, Eine Kunststepistel* under the pseudonym Bernini der Jüngere. See Andreas Kreul, 'Zwischen Pathos und Neuordnung. Die Fischer von Erlach-Monographien von Albert Ilg', in Friedrich Polleroß (ed.), *Fischer von Erlach und die Wiener Barocktradition*, Vienna 1995, pp. 389–403.

31 Dvořák (note 23), p. 1: 'Bis vor kurzem hat man die barock Kunst verachtet.'

32 For the period reception and change in the opinion about the Baroque in the 20th century, see, Werner Weisbach, 'Barock als Stilphänomen', *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* II, 1924, pp. 225–256. See also, Otto Kurz, 'Barocco: storia di una parola', *Lettere italiane* XXII, 1960, pp. 414–444. — Luciano Anceschi, *L'idea del barocco. Studie su un problema estetico*, Bologna 1984. — Werner Telesko, 'Barocke Kunst und Rhetorik. Beobachtungen zu einem methodischen Schwerpunkt der jüngeren Kunstwissenschaft anhand einiger Neuerscheinungen', *Frühneuzeit-Info* X, 1999, pp. 294–301.

33 Dvořák (note 27), pp. 1–2: 'Als ich eine Vorlesung über die barocke Kunst zum erstemal las, war es notwendig noch eine Lanze für sie zu brechen, denn sie wurde mit Bann belegt als eine Verfallskunst, wobei zwei Gründe mitgewirkt haben: einmal die natürliche man mochte beinahe geschichtsmässige Abneigung gegen die unmittelbar der Gegenwart vorangehende, durch die Kunst der Gegenwart überwundert Kunstperiode, dann aber die Winckelmannsche Theorie der aufsteigenden und sinkenden Linie der Kunst, eine Theorie, die ja zu aller letzt nichts anderes war, als der literarische Niederschlag jener Abneigung. Heute hat es im Gegenteil den Ausschein als ob eine einseitige Adoration der barocken Kunst, zu Magistern anderer Perioden im Anzuge wäre wenigsten in kunsthistorischen Kreisen.'

34 By the time Dvořák came to take an interest in him, a critical fortune dating back to Vasari had been consolidated on the Central Italian painter. While 'grazia' and colourism had been the central features of Vasari's appreciation of Correggio's paintings, the early 19th century rediscovery by Stendhal and the Romantics had focused more on the biographical aspects: on inner torment and human doubts. The 19th century also saw the beginning of a moralistic aversion to Correggio's works; partly counterbalanced by the first attempts at modern monographic treatment. Specifically, Julius Meyer, *Correggio*, Leipzig 1871. An effective summary of both the fortunes and the criticism concerning Correggio from the 16th to the 19th century has been conducted in Massimo Mussini, *Correggio tradotto*, Milano 1995. I myself dealt with the perception of the painter in the German context in particular, identifying a common language between Dvořák, Wölfflin and Riegl, but also Josef Strzygowski. See Francesca Bottura, 'Grazia, "tremore d'aria" e chiaroscuro. Correggio Barockmaler nella critica di Max Dvořák', *Taccuini d'arte* XV, 2023, pp. 57–71.

35 Dvořák (note 23), p. 648: 'Und diesen Charakter des transzendentalen, des visionären beginnt überall die Kunst im Gegensatz zum Quattrocento anzunehmen.'

36 See Max Dvořák, *Idealismus und Naturalismus in der gotischen Skulptur und Malerei*, München and Berlin 1918.

37 Dvořák (note 23), pp. 655–657: 'Man kann jedes geschichtliche Problem von zwei Gesichtspunkte aus betrachten, dem der unmittelbarer Ursache und dem des weltgeschichtlichen genetischen Zusammenhanges. Der unmittelbare Ursache war gewiss eine Reaktion gegen den religiösen Rationalismus des 15. Jahrhundert. Sucht man aber nach den allgemeineren Ursachen, so wird man auf die allgemeine Fortschritte im Verstehen des Lebens und der Natur geleitet, die über die Wahrnehmung der Materieller Ursachen und Erscheinungen zu einer tieferen Verständnis für die spirituellen Mächte führte und die einen in der Erscheinung der göttlichen Personen nicht mehr eine anthropomorphe Verkörperung allein, sondern auch eine Verkörperung höherer Gewalten, eine Verkörperung der Vorstellung von übermenschlichen Vorgängen suchen musste, worin wie auf aller anderen Gebiete dies geistige Leben nun dort einwanderte, wo es mit dem Mittelalter abgebrochen wurde, um freilich bald

weit über die Antike hinauszukommen. Diese Wandlung musste natürlich auf die Kunst einer ungetreuer Einfluss ausüben.'

38 Dvořák (note 22), p. 120: 'Es ist ein Raum, der keine Grenzen hat, Ausschnitt aus dem Weltall.'

39 Ibidem, pp. 120–121: 'Doch nicht nur die dekorative Malerei, sondern was noch bedeutsamer ist, die Architektur wurde dadurch aus ihrer früheren materiellen Isolierung in ein neues Verhältnis zu allgemeinen wahren Werten gebracht, wodurch die alte Art der architektonische Komposition, ein Gesetz, das die ganze Antike und Renaissance beherrschte, durchbrochen wurden und Voraussetzungen für die neue Architektur geschaffen wurden, die mit Ausschnitten aus dem Weltraum rechnet.'

40 Ibidem, pp. 129–130: '[Es] konnte sonderbar erscheinen, [dass] die ganze große Stilwandlung auf der die neue Kunst beruht, bestand in Überwindung des Quattrocento Realismus, doch das Naturstudium, um das es sich jetzt handelt, war anderer Art. Die Voraussetzungen änderten sich. Es ist eine neue Art geschaffen worden, die Natur zu studieren, zu sehen und darzustellen. Man konnte sagen, die Kunst bekam neue Augen und neue Hände und man hat begonnen, überall in der 2. Hälfte des 16. Jahrhundert davon ausgiebig Gebrauch zu machen.'

41 Antonio Morassi, 'La fortuna del Correggio', in *Manifestazioni parmensi nel IV centenario della morte del Correggio*, Parma 1934, p. 106: 'In questa atmosfera ideale vivono tuttora le creature del Correggio.'

42 As made evident in the transcription curated by Sabrina Buehl in this issue — Leonardo's art plays a pivotal role in the general evolution of art thought by Dvořák. The artist becomes illustrative for a precise *Weltanschauung*, for the artistic and cultural context that preceded the innovations brought by Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, and Correggio. This delicate transition, identified in the shift between the 15th and 16th centuries or between the Renaissance and High Renaissance corresponds in Dvořák's historiographical treatment to the evolution between *Naturalismus* and *Idealismus*.

43 Dvořák (note 28), p. 124: 'Bei Lionardo war sie Mittel, die plastischen Formen deutlich dem Beschauer zum Bewusstsein zu bringen, sie herauszuarbeiten aus den tiefen Schatten, durch allmähliche Rundung der plastischen Werte wiederzugeben.'

44 Ibidem: 'Es wird weiß in weiß modelliert.'

45 As noted by Antonio Morassi, *Max Dvořák Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der italienischen Barockkunst*, in Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia, Biblioteca Area Umanistica, CONS B RISA 00358, pp. 1–52.

46 Hans Aurenhammer, 'Formalist Dissent: Why Did the Vienna School Ignore Wölfflin's Principles?', in Evonne Levy — Tristan Weddigen (eds), *The Global Reception of Heinrich Wölfflin's Principles of Art History*, New Haven and London 2020, pp. 47–68.

47 Something similar can be said for Mannerism. Dvořák introduced the concept of Manierismus in his lectures. The scholar intended the term as 'an art whose practitioners have transformed the legacy of the masters of the High Renaissance into a manner', or *maniera* — Dvořák

(note 15), p. 118: 'eine Kunst, deren Träger das Vermächtnis der Meister der Hochrenaissance in eine Manier verwandelt haben'. Its characteristics, nonetheless, were very similar to the ones which determined the negative interpretation of baroque art: 'exaggerations, indiscipline and arbitrariness of the strict laws of the Renaissance' (Ibidem, 119: 'Übertreibungen vorwarf, Disziplinlosigkeit und Willkür der strengen Gesetzmäßigkeit der Renaissance'). Furthermore, as happened with the Hochrenaissance, the artists of the Manierismus were as well counted into Baroque depending on the lecture. For example in the publication of 1928, Giulio Romano is listed as a Manierist, but in the lectures of 1912–13 he appears as a Baroque artist. Mannerism in Dvořák's view represents an intermediate stage between Hochrenaissance and Baroque, but ultimately, it strengthens the "Idealismus-turn" of the modern era which began with Michelangelo. Mannerist-artists used forms from past masters to convey subjective ideas the same way Hochrenaissance-artists used classical Antiquity or Caravaggio used Naturalistic types.

48 Dvořák (note 23), pp. 19–20: 'Die glänzendste Periode der modernen Kunst und Niemand wer Auge und Herz für die Kunst hatte zweifelte an der Berechtigung dieser Künstler die für dieselben Ziele kämpfte wie einst Tizian und Tintoretto, Rembrandt und Velasquez, Tiepolo und Fragonard. Auch in der Architektur hat man der akademische Tradition den Kampf erklärt und so schrieben tausende Hände ein neue Thekel auf die Wände der Lebstuben, in welcher die Kunstgeschichte nach den Prinzipien der absoluten Ästhetik gelehrt wurde.'

49 Max Dvořák, *Die Kunst der Hochrenaissance, 1919–1920*, archive IKG, estate Dvořák box 8, folder 4, pp. 16–17: 'Und ähnlich ist es auch mit der Kunst. In den letzten Imponderablen ihres geschichtliche Weiden und ihrer Bedenkung für die Menschen gibt es kein gleichmassiges Entwicklungsprinzip, keine Systematik, keine der nämlich der Einsicht erschließbare Gesetzmäßigkeit und Norm, sondern ein ununterbrochenen lebendiges Werden in unerschöpflichen Möglichkeiten [...].'

50 Dvořák (note 23), p. 2.

51 Ibidem, p. 13: '[Es entsteht eine kunsttheoretische Literatur] die Bewusst die antike Kunst als ein Paradigma allen anderen Kunstbestrebungen gegenüber verteidigte und die von da an bis auf der heutige Tag immer wieder neue Vertreter enthielt, im XVI. und XVII. Jahrhundert am stärksten in Italien und Frankreich, im XVIII. und XIX. Jahrhundert im England und Deutschland gewesen ist und die sich in ihren verschiedenen Phasen dadurch unterschiedet, dass man je nach dem verschiedenen Zeitgeschmacke die antike Kunst im verschiedener Licht sah.'

52 Ibidem, p. 1: 'selbst Kunstfremde auch heute noch die barocke Kunst als eine Kunst zweiter Ordnung betrachten.'

53 Dvořák (note 25), p. 26.

54 Ibidem, p. 27: '[...] diese Merkmale höchstens für die unmittelbaren Nachfolger der Meister der sogenannte Hochrenaissance gelten und — auch für diese Meister der Hochrenaissance selbst.'