

the latter directs the attention of students to unnoticed features of older styles. But the study of works of other times also influences modern concepts through discovery of aesthetic variants unknown in our own art. As in criticism, so in historical research, the problem of distinguishing or relating two styles discloses unsuspected, subtle characteristics and suggests new concepts of form. The postulate of continuity in culture – a kind of inertia in the physical sense – leads to a search for common features in successive styles that are ordinarily contrasted as opposite poles of form; the resemblances will sometimes be found not so much in obvious aspects as in fairly hidden ones – the line patterns of Renaissance compositions recall features of the older Gothic style, and in contemporary abstract art one observes form relationships like those of Impressionist painting.

The refinement of style analysis has come about in part through problems in which small differences had to be disengaged and described precisely. Examples are the regional variations within the same culture; the process of historical development from year to year; the growth of individual artists and the discrimination of the works of master and pupil, originals and copies. In these studies the criteria for dating and attribution are often physical or external – matters of small symptomatic detail – but here, too, the general trend of research has been to look for features that can be formulated in both structural and expressive-physiognomic terms. It is assumed by many students that the expression terms are all translatable into form and quality terms, since the expression depends on particular shapes and colors and will be modified by a small change in the latter. The forms are correspondingly regarded as vehicles of a particular affect (apart from the subject matter). But the relationship here is not altogether clear. In general, the study of style tends toward an ever stronger correlation of form and expression. Some descriptions are purely morphological, as of natural objects – indeed, ornament has been characterized, like crystals, in the mathematical language of group theory. But terms like 'stylized,' 'archaistic,' 'naturalistic,' 'mannerist,' 'baroque,' are specifically human, referring to artistic processes, and imply some expressive effect. It is only by analogy that mathematical figures have been characterized as 'classic' and 'romantic.'

[III]

The analysis and characterization of the styles of primitive and early historical cultures have been strongly influenced by the standards of recent Western art. Nevertheless, it may be said that the values of modern art have led to a more sympathetic and objective approach to exotic arts than was possible fifty or a hundred years ago.

In the past, a great deal of primitive work, especially of representation, was regarded as artless even by sensitive people; what was valued were mainly the ornamentation and the skills of primitive industry. It was believed that primitive arts were childlike attempts to represent nature – attempts distorted by ignorance and by an irrational content of the monstrous and grotesque. True art was admitted only in the high cultures, where knowledge of natural forms was combined with a rational ideal which brought beauty and decorum to the image of man. Greek art and the art of the Italian High Renaissance were the norms for judging all art,

although in time the classic phase of Gothic art was accepted. Ruskin, who admired Byzantine works, could write that in Christian Europe alone 'pure and precious ancient art exists, for there is none in America, none in Asia, none in Africa.' From such a viewpoint careful discrimination of primitive styles or a penetrating study of their structure and expression was hardly possible.

With the change in Western art during the last seventy years, naturalistic representation has lost its superior status. Basic for contemporary practice and for knowledge of past art is the theoretical view that what counts in all art are the elementary aesthetic components, the qualities and relationships of the fabricated lines, spots, colors, and surfaces. These have two characteristics: they are intrinsically expressive, and they tend to constitute a coherent whole. The same tendencies to coherent (well-ordered) and expressive structure are found in the arts of all cultures. There is no privileged content or mode of representation (although the greatest works may, for reasons obscure to us, occur only in certain styles). Perfect art is possible in any subject matter or style. A style is like a language, with an internal order and expressiveness, admitting a varied intensity or delicacy of statement. This approach is a relativism that does not exclude absolute judgments of value; it makes these judgments possible within every framework by abandoning a fixed norm of style. Such ideas are accepted by most students of art today, although not applied with uniform conviction. [. . .]

13 Earl Rosenthal 'The Diffusion of the Italian Renaissance Style in Western European Art'

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The problematic aspects of the subject became apparent to me while studying individual instances of the diffusion of the style from Italy to Spain, specifically Italian sculptors who worked in Spain and Spanish architects and sculptors who returned from study in Italy to work in the Renaissance style. In this way I came to appreciate the difficulties they faced and the special talent for synthesis required of converts to the new style who returned to work in their native lands. I became increasingly curious about the process of the diffusion of the Renaissance style in Europe. Of course, there are scholars who assume that the Renaissance style emerged spontaneously and somewhat anonymously all across Europe out of the cultural conditions or, simply, the spirit of the age. Foremost among those favoring a pan-European genesis of the style are historians of painting, in great part because of the extraordinary development of spatial illusion in the painting of Flanders in the early fifteenth century. Most of these scholars seem to assume that what is true of painting, which is generally accepted as the leading art of the period, is also true of the other arts; but, as we shall see, that is not the case. Historians who specialize in sculpture occasionally cite isolated instances of late fourteenth-century naturalism in northern Europe as anticipatory of the Renaissance, but few challenge the primacy of Italians in the formulation of the Renaissance style. Historians of architecture unanimously credit Brunelleschi

with the inventive revival of classical forms and recognize that two generations of Italian architects expanded and elaborated the style before any tell-tale classical orders appeared in the rest of Europe. Clearly, therefore, historians of the three major arts have very different ideas of the genesis of the Renaissance style. One way out of this impasse, it seemed to me, was to gain more concrete evidence of the process of the diffusion of the Renaissance style in architecture and sculpture. Hence I shall present some preliminary evidence concerning that process in architecture and, more briefly, in sculpture and, finally, I shall offer some speculations on what happened in painting.

As most architectural historians see it, the process of diffusion began in Florence early in the fifteenth century when Brunelleschi, largely in the context of ecclesiastical commissions, formulated his idea of Roman architecture on the basis of ancient ruins in Rome and Romanesque buildings in Florence. These he obviously accepted as surrogates for classical models. The severity and restraint of his architectural forms would seem to be in accord with the admiration of contemporary Florentine humanists for Republican Rome, partly because Florence was founded during that period and partly because its authors provided philosophical support for the Republican government of Florence now endangered from within and without. Despite these political implications, the first Italian centers to adopt the new architectural style were those ruled by *signori*, specifically Lionello d'Este of Ferrara, Federico da Montefeltro in Urbino, Alfonso I of Aragon, the King of Naples, and the princely pope, Nicholas V in Rome. While these centers adopted the new style before 1450, several others followed shortly, including the principalities of Rimini, Mantua and Milan and the republics of Siena and Venice (though in the latter two the style was intruded rather than adopted officially). From these centers, the style in architecture was diffused over Italy in the last quarter of the century.

In the principalities of the early adopters, notably Ferrara, Urbino, Naples, Mantua and the Vatican, the new style was used primarily to renovate their medieval castles by adding classical frames to doors and windows, garden loggia and porticoed courtyards with arcades on classical columns. At times classical elements were painted on facades and interior walls. Restricted by the fortress function and the medieval dispositions of their castles, the lords of Italy more readily displayed their knowledge of the architecture of the ancients in temporal structures of wood, canvas and plaster erected for official festivities, triumphal entries and receptions and performances of various kinds. Of course, these are lost to us, and so are the conversations of these lords with architectural theorists such as Alberti, Filarete and Francesco di Giorgio Martini, all of whom made the rounds of the major courts of Italy. These conversations and ephemeral decorations for court festivals played a major role in the conversion of the ambassadors of European princes to the new style. Quite understandably, in the service of the lords of Italy, Tuscan theorists and designers were inclined to suppress Republican Roman models in favor of the more appropriate imperial motives. Thus the style that had been formulated by Brunelleschi largely in the context of ecclesiastical architecture, under the guidance of Republican ideals, was first accepted outside the territory of Florence by pseudomonarchs who used it primarily for

seignorial functions and favored imperial Roman sources. As we shall see, this redirection of the style by the *signori* at mid-century facilitated its diffusion to the rest of Europe.

A style is diffused not as a total configuration but, rather, in the fragments experienced by aliens of varied backgrounds who visited different Italian centers for various lengths of time at different stages of the development of the style. Inevitably, each visitor came away with a different and very personal idea of the new style. In spite of all these variables in the diffusion of the style from 1450 to 1600, some general patterns are revealed by the charting of the chronological and geographical distribution of concrete data: (1) the several architectural genres commissioned in the Renaissance style outside Italy; (2) the social class of the patrons; and (3) the nationality of the architect, specifically Italians working abroad and artists from other cultural areas who visited Italy and returned to their homelands to work in the Renaissance style.

The earliest architectural works reflecting the new style outside Italy are centered around Buda in Hungary, where Matthias Corvinus, the King of Hungary, began renovating several of his residences in the 1460s. Corvinus, the first European ruler to adopt the Renaissance style in architecture, was quickly followed by the King of Poland in the 1470s and the Bohemian court at Prague in the 1490s. The precocious Renaissance in eastern Europe was unfortunately interrupted by the incursions of the Turks. In western Europe, aside from the modest chapel designed in the 1470s by Francesco Laurana for Rene d'Anjou in the cathedral of Marseilles, the first building to reflect the Renaissance style was the palace of the [Mendoza] in Cogolludo in Castile, designed by Lorenzo Vazquez, a Spanish architect who returned from study in Italy about 1488. In the Loire valley in France, little more than ornament recalls Charles VIII's importation of Italian artisans to Amboise in 1495. Though western patrons adopted the style a generation after those of eastern Europe, there was a steady expansion of the style until it was firmly established in most of western Europe by the middle of the sixteenth century. In England most of the buildings in the Renaissance style were erected after 1550 and they were predominantly country houses. Of course, in England and elsewhere in northern Europe the style continued to expand well after my terminal date of 1600, but here we are primarily concerned with the process of the infusion of the style, not its full scope in any one area.

It is evident that throughout transalpine Europe, the overwhelming majority of works in the Renaissance style were seignorial residences, concentrated around the leading court centers of Europe. In Hungary, Bohemia and Poland, previous to 1550 there are eighteen seignorial residences as against only three civic buildings; and of the ten ecclesiastical works, eight are seignorial burial chapels. In France previous to 1550, thirty-four royal residences and chateaux were built or renovated in the environs of Paris, the Loire valley and Normandy. Of the four civic buildings known to me in this period, the town hall in Paris and the exchange in Lyon were designed by architects in the service of Francis I and a third, at Beaugency, was commissioned by the Duke of Orleans. It would seem, therefore, that many civic buildings owed their Renaissance style to princely

patrons rather than civic authorities. Seignorial residences and patronage also predominate in the Austro-German area, the Lowlands and England.

In Spain, the picture is quite different. Ecclesiastical commissions outnumber residential or civic buildings throughout the sixteenth century. Works in the new style are not concentrated at court centers alone because they were executed for both ecclesiastical and secular patrons in most of Spain. The Catholic monarchs, who initiated many buildings, did not adopt or encourage the Renaissance style in royal residences. In the few cases in which they renovated royal castles, the decoration was carried out in the Mudejar style. Around 1500, when they ordered the building of four hospitals following the cruciform plan in Santiago de Compostela, Toledo, Granada and Valencia, they followed the general disposition of Filarete's hospital for the Sforza in Milan, but that Italian model was probably suggested by the archbishop of Toledo, Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, a leading evangelist of the new style. Not until the 1530s, when Charles V ordered the renovation of the castles at Madrid, Toledo and Granada was the Renaissance style employed for a royal residence in Spain, but by then the style had been firmly established, primarily by members of the Mendoza and Fonseca families, many of whom had held ambassadorial posts in Italy. One of them, Inigo Lopez de Mendoza, while in Rome around 1505 sent a plan for the church of San Antonio in Mondejar in Castile. Although it was never completed, it has the distinction of being the first church with classical pilasters and ornament in western Europe. But it was only in the 1520s that the Renaissance style was generally accepted for church architecture in Spain with the design of the Hieronymite church in Granada by a Florentine, Jacopo Torri l'Indaco and the cathedral in the same city by Diego Siloe who had studied for an extended period in Italy. Their Renaissance ideas were developed in the cathedrals of Malaga, Jaen, and Baeza and, ultimately, in far off Mexico and Peru. In France in the 1520s evidence of the Renaissance style in churches is limited to ornament applied to the Gothic piers of St. Eustache in Paris and a few finials in the form of a candelabra on the chevet of St. Pierre at Caen. The first church to be designed in the new style was the chapel of the royal chateau at Anet designed by Philibert de l'Orme in 1549. In the rest of Europe, the acceptance of the Renaissance style for church architecture, apart from seignorial burial chapels, occurs even later.

It is also evident that princes and their highest ministers commissioned most of the architectural works in the Renaissance style outside Italy. Not only the seignorial residences and burial chapels, which make up the greater part of architectural commissions, but also many of the ecclesiastical and civic genres in architecture were executed in the Renaissance style owing to the intervention of the ruling class. Also indicative of the distinctly seignorial associations of the style in the early sixteenth century is the fact that some grand prelates did not initiate residences in the Renaissance style until they were appointed to high government posts. This was true of cardinals George d'Amboise, who became governor of Normandy in 1499, and Thomas Wolsey, who was appointed Lord Chancellor by Henry VIII in 1515.

In charting the nationalities of the architects involved in the process of diffusion, that is, Italians working abroad and native-born architects who had studied

in Italy and returned to work in the Renaissance style, Buda in the 1460s is again the earliest court in Europe to have invited Italian architects working in the Renaissance style, with Vienna and Graz following by the end of the century. In the West, Italian designers are recorded at Marseilles, Amboise and Lisbon. In the case of the latter, the Italian was Andrea Sansovino, the best architect and sculptor to go abroad in the fifteenth century. None of his works there, however, have been identified, and he had little evident effect on Portuguese architecture in spite of his being there the better part of a decade. We should note that late fifteenth-century Italians who went to Hungary, Poland, Bohemia and even to Germany, France and England, were often invited primarily for their expertise in fortifications, not because they worked in the Renaissance style, but then they were sometimes asked to make designs for non-military projects.

Numerous Italian architects are recorded in the latter half of the sixteenth century at the courts of eastern Europe, the Austro-German area, and Portugal, while there are none recorded in England, the Lowlands and France, and only one in Spain. This reveals the relative independence of the West and the continued dependence of the East on Italians for works in the Renaissance style.

An important variable in the tabulation of Italians abroad is the length of time they stayed in any one center. For example, in 1509 Michele Carlone went to La Calahorra in southern Spain just long enough to install a courtyard that he had executed in Genoa; while Primaticcio arrived at Fontainebleau in 1532 and continued to work for the French Crown for more than thirty years. Also some Italian architects customarily went to Austro-German centers as *gastarbeiter* [guest workers], arriving in the spring and leaving before the chill of autumn, and thus inevitably called "the swallows of spring" by envious German masons. Incidentally, it is often suggested that the diffusion of the Renaissance style in all the arts was due to a surplus of trained artisans in Italy who went abroad to seek work, but I have found little evidence of this. In most cases, architects were sent abroad by an Italian lord at the request of a foreign prince.

Thus far I have found no record of native architects who went to Italy from Hungary, Poland, Bohemia, Austria, Germany, Switzerland or Scandinavia. From England, only John Shute is known to have gone to Italy, where he was sent by the Duke of Northumberland in 1550 for the express purpose of studying ancient Roman and modern Italian architecture; and some of what he learned was included in a treatise finished in 1563. French architects first went to Italy in the 1530s, when Nicolas Bachelier accompanied the Bishop of Rodez to Venice and Philibert de l'Orme went to Rome, while Ducerceau and, possibly, Jean Bullant followed in the 1540s. Apparently a Spanish architect, Lorenzo Vazquez, has the distinction of being the first alien architect to study in Italy and to return (in 1488) to work in the Renaissance style in his native land. More than a generation passed before several other Spaniards (Alonso Berruguete, Bartolome Ordenez, Diego Siloe and Pedro Machuca) went to Italy for extended periods of study and, on their return in 1517-1519, made architectural designs in the new style. This group played a more active role than any of the Italians in the introduction and spread of the Renaissance style in Castile and Andalusia. At least four other Spanish architects studied in Italy before travel abroad required official

permission in 1559, but after that time Spaniards continued to utilize Italian architectural treatises, such as those of Serlio and Vignola. In contrast to the active role of Spanish architects, the French remained dependent on Italians for the first forty years of the assimilation of the style. Fortunately for the French architectural tradition, the Italian designers who worked there (Fra Giocondo, Leonardo, Primaticcio and Serlio) were of higher caliber than those invited to the rest of Europe in the sixteenth century. These Italians were the ones who accommodated traditional French architectural types to the new Renaissance style, whereas in Spain and England that task was accomplished less surely and more slowly by natives. It must be recognized, however, that in the design of country houses, English architects also benefited from the Italians' accommodation of the classical orders to the pavilion-and-corridor format common to both the French and English traditions.

The information gathered thus far makes possible the plotting of the diffusion of the Renaissance architectural style from Italian to tertiary centers in the rest of Europe. In the earliest instance of diffusion, the King of Hungary, who wanted an Italian architect to renovate his castle at Buda in the 1460s, quite naturally contacted princely rulers, the dukes of Ferrara and Milan. Shortly after, Rene d'Anjou made arrangements with the King of Naples for Francesco Laurana to come to Marseilles, and that was the port in which Charles VIII loaded two ships with works of art and Italian artisans to introduce the new style to France. Naples may also be the center in which Lorenzo Vazquez acquired architectural repertory that he employed in the very early palace in Cogolludo, begun in 1492. Around 1500, Milan and Pavia increased in importance. Reflections of the Lombard style are found in George d'Amboise's residence at Gaillon in Normandy, begun in 1501, and in the chateaux of the Loire valley; and, around the same time, Lombards working in the port of Genoa made portals and courtyards that were shipped to La Calahorra and Valencia in southeastern Spain. At the same time, Emperor Maximilian I at Innsbruck began to look to Milan, though he never had enough income to support grand scale architectural projects, and later Vienna, Graz and Dresden depended almost equally on Milan and Venice. Florentines, especially those working in Rome in the early sixteenth century, became important for Spain. The Torni brothers came from that ambience at the end of the second decade and so did the several returning Spaniards mentioned earlier, Berruguete, Machuca and Siloe, though the latter certainly worked with Ordonez in Naples and probably in Carrara. Florentines were increasingly important to Francis I, but of those who went to France, only Leonardo is known to have made architectural designs, while Primaticcio and Serlio, who were firmly rooted in the Florentine-Roman tradition, were Bolognese by birth. Hence, while Florence didn't at first play as important a role as the secondary centers of Milan, Genoa, Ferrara, Rome and Naples, she was always in the background as the fountainhead of the style, and she became a more active participant in the process of diffusion in the first third of the sixteenth century.

From these Italian cities the task of diffusion was passed on to northern European centers. Of those in eastern Europe, only Buda was of international importance; while in the west, Gaillon was quickly succeeded as a radial center of the

style by the Loire valley around 1515 and then by the royal works in Paris and Fontainebleau after 1530. The distinctive style in architecture and interior decoration formed there had extraordinary diffusion, not only in France but also in the Lowlands, England, Scandinavia and Germany. An offshoot of the Fontainebleau School is the center of Antwerp, which in the 1560s became important for the publication of pattern books of architectural ornament like that of Hans Vredeman de Vries. No center in the Austro-German area came to play an international role comparable to those in France and the Lowlands, but that is probably due, in part, to the proximity of Milan and Venice and, in part, to the division of income in prosperous Germany among eight princelings, about one hundred and fifty dukes and counts, and numerous free imperial cities. While there were many Italians in the Austro-German area in the latter half of the sixteenth century, they were almost exclusively occupied with the renovation and decoration of the interiors of princely residences rather than in architectural design. In Spain there were many centers of nearly equal importance locally. From the 1530s, the nation as a whole carried the Renaissance style to the New World, but in the 1550s court architects in Madrid had to approve all projects for major buildings in the colonies.

The essential mechanism of the diffusion of the Renaissance style is now clear. The initial agents of diffusion were, in the main, diplomats at Italian and then other European courts, and the early adopters (in transalpine Europe) were the princes they served. This is described as "social-group diffusion," in that it took place within a supra-national governing class that had regular channels of communication through diplomacy, war and also intermarriage. These princes and their ministers employed the new style primarily for their residences and funerary chapels and for temporary festive architecture, while other classes of society (even those with international contacts) generally refrained from using the style even after examples were scattered about Europe for more than a generation. This suggests that architecture in the Renaissance style had a value other than the aesthetic one for European princes and their ministers and, presumably, for other potential patrons of the day. Speculation on that value can be made more confidently after a brief review of the diffusion of the Renaissance style in sculpture.

Several problems in the charting of sculptural works should be noted. Many of its smaller genre, notably bust portraits, reliefs and statuettes migrate from the places in which they were made and they are seldom well documented. Also, we have lost more sculpture than architecture, because of the iconoclasm that accompanied the religious strife of the period, especially in Bohemia, Germany, Switzerland and the Lowlands, while in Hungary even more was destroyed by the Turks. Moreover, problems are posed for some scholars by the affinity of some northern schools with aspects of Italian Renaissance sculpture, especially the serene sculptural forms of the *Detente Style* in fifteenth-century France and instances of the marked naturalism in anatomical detail in the statuary of the Netherlandish-German tradition; but none of these have been included in my charts of the diffusion of the Italian Renaissance style because both schools are wholly understandable within their own art traditions.

The primary sculptural genre involved in the diffusion of the Renaissance include funerary monuments, fountains, ecclesiastical sculpture of various kinds, portraits, and ornament. The earliest evidence of the style in sculpture outside Italy is found in Valencia where, in 1418, Juliano Florentin executed reliefs that repeat motives from Ghiberti's first doors; but nothing came of this precocious intrusion of the new Florentine style in Spain. In the East, the King of Hungary in the 1460s began importing sculpture by Verrocchio, Benedetto da Maiano and other Florentines for his residences in and around Buda. In the 1470s, Francesco Laurana, who was brought to France by Rene d'Anjou, made Passion reliefs at Avignon; but French sculptors seem not to have responded to them. Only from the 1490s, in the familiar architectural centers of Toledo, Avila and Burgos and in the Loire valley and in Paris, was the new style gradually assimilated. In 1499 Maximilian I called a Lombard to Innsbruck to design an equestrian statue, which was never executed, and he initiated work on a huge free-standing sepulchre for the court chapel which was to include about forty over life-size statues in bronze, executed by German sculptors.

In sculpture, as in architecture, the new style was again sustained by continuous patronage through the sixteenth century and firmly established in western countries, while in the East, only Poland continued the style, almost exclusively in funerary monuments. In much of northern Europe, especially in Bohemia, Germany, Switzerland, and the Lowlands, reform movements disrupted the sculptural tradition for more than a quarter century, but Germany came back vigorously in the last third of the sixteenth century, particularly in fountain sculpture and statuettes in bronze.

Also evident from these tabulations is the predominance of one sculptural genre — funerary monuments. Sepulchres made up about 85 percent of the sculptural commissions in England and Poland, about half in France and the Lowlands. In Spain, thirty-one funerary monuments were commissioned in the Renaissance style previous to 1550, but the genre does not predominate because of the extraordinary number of polychrome wood altarpieces and religious statuary that reflect the Italian Renaissance style. Polychrome wood was also the primary medium in transalpine Europe, but few altarpieces in the new style were made there. That medium in the North proved to be a major obstacle to the infusion of the Renaissance style, which had been developed primarily in marble and bronze, usually free of polychromy or even gilding. Another obstacle was the lack of coincidences in the sculptural genre of Renaissance Italy and northern Europe where there was virtually no secular sculpture.

The early patrons of sculpture in the Renaissance style were also princes and their courtiers though the percentage in sculpture may be closer to 70 percent in contrast to the near 90 percent in architecture. Even the Catholic monarchs, who had not fostered the Renaissance style in architecture, began in 1511 to commission a series of family tombs from Domenico Fancelli, a Florentine who worked in Carrara; but, not surprisingly, the Mendozas had employed him earlier for the same purpose.

Italian sculptors in northern Europe were concentrated even more exclusively at princely courts than were Italian architects, and there were fewer major centers

for sculpture, although Augsburg and Nuremberg were important additions in Germany. In the latter half of the sixteenth century in Germany and Austria, many Italian sculptors were at work, but they were usually limited to figural decoration in plaster.

Surprisingly few European sculptors other than Austro-Germans and Spaniards went to Italy to study Renaissance or ancient sculpture. While Michel Pacher must have visited Padua and Mantua previous to executing his paintings of the St. Wolfgang altarpiece in the 1470s, the trip left his sculptural form unaffected. A generation later, in the first decade of the sixteenth century, a few young German sculptors (the Vischer brothers and Hering Loy) made brief trips to Italy; and a few more went in the last third of the century with the break explained by the disruptive religious disputes of the intervening years. Before 1500 Vasco de la Zarza returned from Italy to Avila and Damian Forment, to Valencia, and in the years 1517–1519, three major Spanish sculptors (Siloe, Ordóñez and Berruguete) returned to Spain after extended periods of study in Italy. Between that time and the restrictions on travel abroad, four other sculptors are known to have studied in Italy. Thus Spain maintained a fairly steady contact with the Italian developments in sculpture.

In sum, the patterns of diffusion in the two arts have much in common. In both cases the patrons were primarily princes and a signorial art genre predominated in each. Those genre — palatial residences and funerary monuments — were sufficiently complex in form to embody the primary design principles and a fair part of the characteristic motives of each medium and also to display the feeling for form peculiar to the style. A palatial residence is the best of all possible genres for the diffusion of the Renaissance style in architecture, whereas lesser works such as isolated portals, loggia, staircases or private chapels would not in themselves be sufficient to adequately reveal the essentials of the style. In sculpture, the free-standing tumba (which was favored over the wall tomb in most of Europe) was the most complex of genres in the sculptural medium, with the possible exception of monumental fountains. The tomb usually included a recumbent effigy and praying figures of the deceased as well as allegorical statuary in niches or placed along the sides of the sepulchre and, on the stylobate, narrative reliefs. Lesser sculptural genres, such as bust portraits, reliefs of the Madonna and Child, or even equestrian monuments are too limited in form. Perhaps, indicative of the importance of the primary vehicle in the diffusion of the style is the fact that there was a long delay in the diffusion of an important Italian sculptural type not included in the tomb, that is, the statue standing free of an architectural framework and designed to be of almost equal interest from all angles of view — surely the most important achievement of Italian Renaissance sculptors. A few fountains with free-standing (but not necessarily plurifacial) statues were brought from Florence to Buda in the 1470s and to Gaillon from Genoa and Venice around 1510, and Cellini made a project for a gigantic fountain for Francis I in the early 1540s, but non-Italians remained oblivious to the problem of plurifacial design in statuary. Even the south German sculptors who began to make statuettes in wood and bronze around 1510 did not design them to be seen from more than a shallow frontal angle until the last third of the century.

when the formal problem was posed in a series of monumental fountains in bronze commissioned for the main squares of south German cities.

The sculptural and architectural genres that served as primary vehicles for the diffusion of the Italian Renaissance style in Europe were supported by princely patronage in a few interrelated court centers, and there was a sense of competitiveness among them. These conditions encouraged the continued exploration of the potential of the style in each genre, and they may even be requirements for the rapid and successful diffusion of a style. If patronage in an imported style is discontinuous and uncompetitive, and if the works commissioned pertain to lesser art genres and are scattered in unrelated centers, diffusion is not likely to take place.

The predominance of the seignorial class as patrons and the princely palace and funerary monument as the genres they commissioned in the new style suggests that its initial value was symbolic rather than aesthetic. Of course, the choice of the Renaissance style for seignorial functions was prepared for by humanists, who had delineated the configuration of the Renaissance prince largely on the basis of Roman models and, in their panegyrics, made lavish use of heroic metaphors derived from antiquity. These persistent references to ancient Rome, together with the architectural theorists' formulations of a hierarchy of increasingly geometric residential plans for social groups from the artisan to the prince, led to dissatisfaction with the irregular and even accidental aggregation of structures that usually made up the fortified castles inherited from feudal forebears. Also, humanists fostered architecture along with literature as the most princely kind of patronage and the best suited to attain glory in their own day and enduring fame through the ages. Once convinced of the propaganda value of magnificent palaces and funerary monuments for themselves and their dynasties, princes inevitably employed the most rhetorical of architectural styles, that of ancient Rome. Its grand scale conveyed an idea of strength and security free of the tyrannical associations of the out-dared fortress, and its strict symmetry and pervasive proportionality embodied the ideal of stability and order and even foresight (virtues generally claimed for the principality over the republic). And, of course, the magnificence associated with rulership was best expressed in the humanistic ambience of these courts by the costly materials and rich ornament of imperial Rome as revived by Renaissance architects. These associations also pertain to the architectural and sculptural components of the funerary monument which was increasingly concerned with the commemoration of the heroic deeds of the triumphant ruler. While much more could be said of these associations, the essential point to be made is the essentially symbolic value of the new style used for the seignorial genre that served as the primary vehicles for the diffusion of the new style in architecture and sculpture.

The first evidence of the Italian Renaissance style in painting is somewhat earlier than that for the other arts in each cultural area (the 1440s in Flanders, 1450s in France and the 1470s in Austria and Spain), but its progress was a good deal slower than that of the other arts. Painting also differs in that the seignorial class played no greater role in its patronage than the clergy or the upper middle class, and the subjects of early examples of the style are not generally

overwhelmingly religious. We are confronted with the anomalous conclusion that painting, which is usually considered the leading art of the period, was not in the vanguard of the diffusion of the style in Europe, and this would seem to be due, at least in part, to the relative lack of princely patronage. That, too, is odd because the *signori* of Italy were early and enthusiastic patrons of monumental mural decorations for the great halls, courtyards and even facades of their residences. The subjects were usually historical or mythological narratives and, at times, events in the life of the lord himself; but in all cases the themes were metaphorical references to his courage, wisdom, power, and magnificence.

Why, we must ask, didn't the princes of Europe emulate the *signori* of Italy in the use of propagandistic murals in their palaces? One might be inclined to suspect a technical obstacle, because there were few practitioners of true fresco outside Italy at this time, but European princes could have followed the Venetians who painted narrative cycles on huge canvases, first in a stain technique and then in oil. In fact, the obstacle was not technical but generic. The figured tapestry, a highly developed representational art in the Franco-Flemish area, served to decorate the interiors of the castles of most of Europe; and it had the added advantage of contributing to the warmth of northern interiors. Even after Francis I's gallery at Fontainebleau popularized murals within elaborately modeled plaster frames in the 1530s, the progress of the genre was slow because northerners continued to favor tapestries. Monumental murals had even less of a chance in northern churches, because windows were larger and wall areas smaller than in Italy and sacred imagery was executed in the splendor of stained glass. Other than monumental murals, the ideal genre for the diffusion of the Renaissance style in painting, narrative subjects might have been executed on panels or canvases for altarpieces, which were attaining gigantic proportions in late fifteenth-century Italy; but that prospect was blocked by another obstacle. Transalpine Europe and Spain continued to prefer carved altarpieces in polychrome wood.

Hence the two genres that would have served best to display the essential features of the new style in painting were not of use to either princely or ecclesiastical patrons during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, and the infusion of the style into the North was left to lesser pictorial genres that had no sustained patronage or important social function. There was no primary vehicle comparable to the palatial residence and the funerary monument in the other major arts, and thus the diffusion took place willy-nilly with Italian Renaissance ideas infused almost imperceptibly at times into northern pictorial genres.

While painting faced more obstacles than other major arts, there is no reason to deny that diffusion took place, and that the Renaissance style in painting, as in architecture and sculpture, was formulated by a small group of artists and patrons in Florence in the early fifteenth century and that from the 1440s it was extended and elaborated in secondary centers in Italy and then in tertiary centers abroad. The new social system of Europe, rather than giving rise to the style, provided institutional channels for its diffusion. While thus denying a pluralistic genesis of the Renaissance style, we can properly describe it as pluralistic in achievement in that individual converts all over Europe extended the potential

of the style.



The Renaissance in Europe

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