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Western Art

西方艺术



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二〇〇〇年一月

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1

The High Renaissance

Before the end of the fifteenth century, Florence^[1] lost her unique position of leadership in the arts, for the innovations of her artists had become the property of Italian artists regardless of^[2] local political boundaries. This is not to suggest that Florence no longer produced the giants of an earlier age. Leonardo^[3] and Michelangelo^[4] called themselves Florentines even though they spent a great part of their lives outside the city, and the turning point in Raphael's^[5] artistic education occurred as a result of his experience of Florentine art. In addition, Florence, with the early work of Leonardo da Vinci, had

[1] Florence *n.* 佛罗伦萨(意大利中部城市);下文的 Florentine *a.* 佛罗伦萨(派)的, *n.* 佛罗伦萨人。

[2] regardless of 不分,不论,不顾;此处意为“……而不分地域政治边界”;本句两处 *her* 均指代 Florence。

[3] Leonardo (da Vinci) 列奥纳多(·达·芬奇)(1452—1519),意大利文艺复兴时期画家、雕塑家、建筑师和工程师。(详见后)

[4] Michelangelo 米开朗琪罗。(详见后)

[5] Raphael 拉斐尔。(详见后)

already become the source of sixteenth-century style and later shared with Rome the beginnings and growth of Mannerism^[1], a style that was to dominate western Europe during much of the sixteenth century. But there is the fact that Florence had come upon a time of crisis that began with the expulsion of the Medici^[2] and the brief and stormy dictatorship of Savonarola^[3] and was to end with the subversion of the Florentine republic by the Spanish and the return of the Medici (a collateral line^[4] of the original family) as tyrants under Spanish protection. Finally, in the 1530s, Florentine independence became a thing of the past when the state was made into a grand duchy under the crown of the Hapsburgs^[5].

The High Renaissance^[6]

Between about 1495 and the date of its own invasion and sack^[7] in 1527, Rome took the place of Florence, laying claim to the latter's artistic pre-eminence. A series of powerful and ambitious popes^[8] — Alexander VI (Borgia), Julius II (della Rovere), Leo X (Medici), and Clement VII (Medici) — created a new power in Italy, a papal state, with Rome as its capital; and Rome became at the same time the artistic capital of Europe. The popes, living in the opulent splendor of secular princes^[9], embellished the city with great works of art, inviting artists from all over Italy and providing them with challenging tasks. In its short duration the High Renaissance saw works

[1] Mannerism *n.* 风格主义, 亦称“矫饰主义”。

[2] the Medici 美第奇家族, 曾长期统治佛罗伦萨。

[3] Savonarola 萨伏那洛拉, 意宗教改革家。

[4] collateral line 旁系。

[5] grand duchy 大公国; Hapsburg 哈布斯堡王朝。

[6] The High Renaissance 文艺复兴盛期。

[7] sack *n. v.* 洗劫。

[8] pope *n.* 教皇。

[9] living in ... princes 过着世俗王公的豪华富丽的生活。

of such authority produced that generations of later artists were instructed by them; and the art of Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Titian^[1] is seen to belong to no school but is, in the case of each, something unique. The masters had of course inherited the pictorial science of the fifteenth century, and they learned from one another. Yet they made a distinct break from the past, occupying new and lofty ground, so lofty indeed as to discourage emulation^[2] by their successors.

The High Renaissance not only produced a cluster of extraordinary geniuses, but found in divine inspiration the rationale for the exaltation of the artist-genius. The neo-Platonists found in Plato's^[3] *Ion* his famous praise of the poet: "All good poets compose their beautiful poems not by art, but because they are inspired and possessed^[4] ... for not by art does the poet sing, but by power divine^[5]." And what the poet could claim, the Renaissance artist claimed also, raising visual art^[6] to the status formerly held only by poetry. Thus at the threshold of the modern world, the painter, sculptor, or architect comes into his own^[7], successfully claiming for his work a high place among the fine arts. In the High Renaissance the masters created, in a sense, a new profession, having its own rights of expression, its own venerable character, and its own

[1] Titian 提香(1490?—1567),威尼斯画家,擅长肖像画和宗教题材画,代表作有《圣母升天》、《乌尔宾诺的维纳斯》等。

[2] emulation *n.* 仿效。

[3] neo-Platonists *n.* 新柏拉图主义者; Plato 柏拉图,古希腊哲学家。

[4] inspired *a.* 受神灵启示的; possessed *a.* 着魔的。

[5] power divine 神力。

[6] visual art 视觉艺术(绘画、雕塑、建筑等)。

[7] come into one's own 发挥其所长,进入繁盛期,(成功地为自己的作品在美术界合理地取得应有的声誉)。

claims to recognition by the great. The “fine” artist today lives — often without realizing it — on the accumulated prestige won by preceding artists, beginning with those who made the first great gains of the High Renaissance.

Leonardo da Vinci

A man who is the epitome^[1] of the artist-genius as well as of the “universal^[2] man,” Leonardo da Vinci (1452—1519) has become a kind of wonder of the modern world, standing at the beginning of a new epoch like a prophet and a sage^[3] mapping the routes that art and science would take. The scope and depth of his interests were without precedent, so great as to frustrate any hopes he might have had of realizing all that his feverishly inventive imagination could conceive^[4]. We still look with awe^[5] upon his achievement and even more, upon his unfulfilled promise. His mind and personality seem to us superhuman, the man himself mysterious and remote; as Jacob Burckhardt^[6] writes: “The colossal outlines of Leonardo’s nature can never be more than dimly and distantly conceived.” Although we are here concerned primarily with Leonardo as an artist, we can scarcely hope to do his art credit^[7] in isolation from his science^[8], since his scientific drawings are themselves works of art, as well as models for that exact delin-

[1] epitome *n.* 典型, 象征。

[2] universal *a.* 多才多艺的。

[3] a prophet and a sage 先知和先贤。

[4] 本句前面是 so ... as to 结构, 后有两层定语从句修饰 hopes; 本句意为“他兴趣的广度和深度是史无前例的, 其广深度足以挫败他可能抱有的想实现他狂热的发明想象能设想出的一切的任何希望。”

[5] awe *n.* 敬畏。

[6] Jacob Burckhardt 布尔克哈特(1818—1897), 瑞士历史学家。

[7] to do his art credit 公正地评价他的艺术。

[8] in isolation from his science 脱离他的科学。

eation^[1] of nature that is one of the aims of science. Leonardo's unquenchable curiosity is best revealed in his voluminous notes, liberally interspersed^[2] with sketches dealing with matters of botany, geology, zoology, hydraulics, military engineering, animal lore, anatomy, and aspects of physical science including mechanics, perspective^[3], light, optics, and color. Leonardo's great ambition in his painting, as well as in his scientific endeavors, was to discover the laws underlying the flux and processes of nature. With this end in mind he also studied man and contributed immeasurably to our knowledge of physiology and psychology^[4]. Leonardo believed that reality in an absolute sense is inaccessible to man^[5] and that we can know it only through its changing images. Thus, he considered the eyes to be man's most vital organs, and sight his most essential function, since through these man can grasp the images of reality most directly and profoundly. Hence, one may understand Leonardo's insistence, stated many times in his notes, that all his scientific investigations were merely aimed at making himself a better painter.

Leonardo was born near Florence and was trained in the studio of Verrocchio^[6]. But he left Florence in 1481, offering his services to Ludovico Sforza, Duke of Milan. The political situation in Florence was uncertain, and the neo-Platonism of Lorenzo de' Medici and his brilliant circle may have proved un-

[1] exact delineation 精确描绘。

[2] liberally interspersed 大量地点缀着 (with)。

[3] hydraulics *n.* 水力学, 液压原理; animal lore 动物学 (与 zoology 同义); anatomy *n.* 解剖学; mechanics *n.* 力学; perspective *n.* 透视 (画) 法。

[4] physiology *n.* 生理学; psychology *n.* 心理学。

[5] inaccessible to man 人类所无法企及的; 本句意为“达·芬奇认为绝对意义上的现实是人类所无法企及的, 而我们只能通过其变化不定的形象来了解现实。”

[6] Verrocchio 韦罗基奥 (1435—1488), 意大利文艺复兴初期雕塑家、画家; studio 画室, 创作室, 演播室。

congenial to the empirical and pragmatic Leonardo^[1]. It may be, also, that Leonardo felt that the artistic scene in Milan would be less competitive. He devoted most of a letter to the Duke of Milan to advertising his competence and his qualifications as a military engineer, mentioning only at the end his supremacy^[2] as a painter and sculptor:

And in short, according to the variety of cases, I can contrive various and endless means of offence and defence. ... In time of peace I believe I can give perfect satisfaction and to the equal of any other in architecture and the composition of buildings, public and private; and in guiding water from one place to another. ... I can carry out sculpture in marble, bronze, or clay, and also I can do in painting whatever may be done, as well as any other, be he whom he may.

The letter illustrates the new relation of the artist with his patron^[3], as well as Leonardo's breadth of competence. That he should select military engineering and design to interest a patron is an index, in addition, of the dangerousness of the times.^[4] Weaponry had now been developed to the point, especially in northern Europe, where the siege cannon^[5] was a threat to the feudal castles of those attempting to resist the wealthy and aggressive new monarchs. When in 1494 Charles VIII of France invaded Italy, his cannon easily smashed the for-

[1] Lorenzo de' Medici 美第奇(1449—1492),佛罗伦萨统治者,教皇 Leo X 之父,诗人和艺术保护人;uncongenial to ... 与……不融洽;empirical and pragmatic 凭经验的和务实的。

[2] supremacy *n.* 优势,造詣。

[3] patron *n.* (艺术家等的)保护人,资助人;此处指米兰公爵。

[4] index *n.* 指标,指数;本句意为“此外,列奥纳多竟选择军事工程学及设计来邀宠于恩主显示了时世的艰危。”

[5] siege cannon 攻城大炮。

tifications^[1] of the Italian princes; and by the turn of the century, when Italy's liberties and unity were being trampled by the aspiring^[2] kingdoms of Europe, not only soldiers and architects, but artists and humanists were deeply concerned with the problem of designing a new system of fortifications that might withstand the terrible new weapon.

During his first sojourn^[3] in Milan, Leonardo painted the *Virgin of the Rocks*, a group that though it may derive ultimately from Fra Filippo Lippi^[4] is well on its way out of the older tradition. The old triangular composition now broadens out into three dimensions^[5], making a weighty pyramid. The linear approach, with its musical play of undulating contours and crisp edges^[6], is abandoned, as Leonardo returns through the generations of the fifteenth century to Masaccio's great discovery of *chiaroscuro*^[7] the subtle play of light and dark. What we see is the result of the moving together and interpenetration of lights and darks, and while "drawn" representations — consisting of contours and edges — can be beautiful, they are really not true to the optical facts^[8]. Moreover, a painting must embody not only physical *chiaroscuro* but the lights and darks of human psychology as well. Modeling with light and shadow and the expression of emotional states were, for Leonardo, the heart of painting:

A good painter has two chief objects to paint — man

[1] fortifications *n.* 防御工事。

[2] aspiring *a.* 野心勃勃的。

[3] sojourn *n. v.* 逗留, 旅居。

[4] *Virgin of the Rocks* 《岩下圣母》; Fra Filippo Lippi 利比(1406? — 1469)意大利文艺复兴早期佛罗伦萨画派画家。

[5] broadens ... dimensions 扩展成为三维(成为金字塔形)。

[6] undulating contours and crisp edges 起伏的轮廓线和起波纹的边缘。

[7] Masaccio 马萨乔, 佛罗伦萨画家; *chiaroscuro n.* 明暗对照法。

[8] not true to the optical facts 不符合光学真实性。

and the intention of his soul. The former is easy, the latter hard, for it must be expressed by gestures and the movement of the limbs. ... A painting will only be wonderful for the beholder^[1] by making that which is not so appear raised and detached from the wall.

The figures in the *Virgin of the Rocks* are knit together not only as a pyramidal group but as figures sharing the same atmosphere, a method of unification first seen in Masaccio's *Tribute Money*^[2]. The Madonna, Christ Child, infant John the Baptist, and angel emerge through subtle gradations and nuances of light and shade^[3] from the half-light of the cavernous, visionary landscape. Light simultaneously veils and reveals^[4] the forms of things, immersing them in a layer of atmosphere between them and our eyes. The ambiguity of light and shade — familiar in the optical uncertainties of dusk — is in the service of the psychological ambiguity of perception. The group depicted, so strangely wrapped in subtle light and shade, eludes^[5] our precise definition and interpretation. The figures pray, point, and bless, and these acts and gestures, though their meanings are not certain, unite them visually. The angel points to the infant John, who is blessed by the Christ Child, in turn sheltered by the Virgin's loving hand. The melting mood of tenderness^[6], enhanced by the caressing light, is compounded of yet other moods. What the eye sees is fugitive, as are the states of the soul, or, in Leonardo's term, its "intentions."

[1] beholder *n.* 观看者。

[2] *Tribute Money* 《纳税钱》。

[3] The Madonna ... angel 圣母、圣子、幼小的施洗者约翰和天使；subtle gradations and nuances of light and shade 明暗的微妙渐变和细微差别。

[4] Light ... reveals 光线同时遮掩和显示。

[5] elude *v.* 躲避；意为“……使人们无法作出精确的定义和解释。”

[6] melting mood of tenderness 柔情如水。

The style of the High Renaissance fully emerges in a *cartoon* (a full-size drawing) for a painting of the Virgin and the Christ Child with St. Anne and the infant John the Baptist. The glowing light falls gently on the majestic forms, and upon a tranquil grandeur, order, and balance^[1]. The figures are robust and monumental, moving with a stately grace reminiscent of the Phidian sculptures of the Parthenon^[2]. Every part is ordered by an intellectual, pictorial logic into a sure unity. The specialized depiction of perspective, anatomy, light, and space is a thing of the past; Leonardo has assimilated^[3] the whole learning of two centuries and here applies it wholly, in a manner that is classical and complete. This manner of the High Renaissance, as Leonardo here authoritatively shows it, is stable without being static, varied without being confused, and dignified without being dull^[4]. As in the similar case in Greece, this brief classical moment that Leonardo inaugurated unified and balanced the conflicting experiences of a whole culture.^[5] It would be difficult to maintain. In a rapidly changing world the artist might either repeat the compositions and forms of the day in a sterile, academic manner^[6], or revolt against the time by denying or exaggerating its principles. For these reasons the High Renaissance was of short duration, even shorter than the brief span of the Golden Age of Athens^[7] in the fifth century B.C.

[1] tranquil grandeur, order, and balance 安谧的壮丽、条理和均衡。

[2] reminiscent of 使人回想起; Phidian *a.* (古希腊雅典雕刻家)菲迪亚斯的; the Parthenon 帕台农神庙(雅典卫城上供奉雅典娜女神的主神庙)。

[3] assimilate *v.* 吸收。

[4] stable without being static ... dull 稳重而不呆板,多姿而不烦乱,庄严而不沉闷。

[5] inaugurate *v.* 开创;此句意为“……达·芬奇开创的这一短暂的经典时刻统一并平衡了整个文化的冲突经历。”

[6] in a sterile, academic manner 以一种无所创新作为的学院学习方式。

[7] the Golden Age of Athens 雅典全盛时期。

For the refectory of the church of Santa Maria^[1] delle Grazie in Milan, Leonardo painted the *Last Supper*. In spite of its ruined state, in part the result of the painter's own unfortunate experiments with his materials and although it has often been ineptly^[2] restored, the painting is both formally and emotionally his most impressive work. It is the first great figure composition^[3] of the High Renaissance, and the definitive interpretation of its theme. Christ and the twelve disciples^[4] are seated in a simple, spacious room, at a long table set parallel to the picture plane. The highly dramatic action of the painting is made still more emphatic by the placement of the group in the austere quiet setting^[5]. Christ, with outstretched hands, has just said, "One of you will betray me." A wave of intense excitement passes through the group as each disciple asks himself and, in some cases his neighbor, "Is it I?" Leonardo has made a brilliant conjunction of the dramatic "One of you will betray me" with the initiation of the ancient liturgical ceremony of the Eucharist,^[6] when Christ blessing bread and wine, said "This is my body and this is my blood: do this in remembrance of^[7] me." The force and lucidity^[8] with which this dramatic moment is expressed are due to the abstract organization of the composition. In the center Christ is in

[1] For the ... Santa Maria 为圣玛利亚修道院的食堂(refectory)(达·芬奇画了壁画《最后晚餐》)。

[2] ineptly *ad.* 笨拙地,不恰当地(修复);本句 materials 指颜料。

[3] figure composition 人物构图。

[4] disciples *n.* 门徒,信徒。

[5] in the austere quiet setting 置于严肃安静的背景下。

[6] made a brilliant conjunction of A with B 将 A 与 B 极巧妙地结合起来;initiation of the ancient liturgical ceremony of the Eucharist 开始古老的圣餐仪式。

[7] in remembrance of 为纪念。

[8] lucidity *n.* 清楚,清晰明朗。

perfect repose^[1], the still eye of the swirling emotion around him. Isolated from the disciples his figure is framed by the central window at the back, the curved pediment of which (the only curve in the architectural framework and here serving as a halo)^[2] arches above his head, which is the focal point^[3] of all perspective lines in the composition. Thus, the still, psychological focus and cause of the action is at the same time the perspective focus as well as the dead center^[4] of the two-dimensional surface; one could say that the two-dimensional, the three-dimensional, and the psychodimensional focuses are one and the same^[5]. The agitated disciples, registering a whole range of rationally ordered, idealized, and proportionate responses^[6], embracing fear, doubt, protestation, rage, and love, are represented in four groups of three, united among and within themselves by the gestures and postures of the figures. Leonardo sacrifices traditional iconography to pictorial and dramatic consistency^[7] by placing Judas on the same side of the table as Jesus and the other disciples. His face in shadow, he clutches a money bag in his right hand and reaches forward his left to fulfill^[8] the Master's declaration: "Behold, the hand of him that betrayeth^[9] me is with me on the table." The two disciples at either end of the table are more quiet than the others, as if to enclose the overall movement, which is

[1] in perfect repose (基督神态)极为安详。

[2] curved pediment (窗上的)曲线型山花饰; halo *n.* 光环, 晕。

[3] focal point (所有透视线的)焦点。

[4] dead center 正中。

[5] the two-dimensional ... the same 二维、三维和心理维的焦点均是同一点。

[6] registering ... responses 显示出各种各样的理性上有条理的、理想化的和相称的反应。

[7] sacrifices ... to ... consistency 牺牲了传统的形象以达到肖像与戏剧的一致性。

[8] fulfill 意为“以应验(耶稣基督的宣言……)”。

[9] betrayeth = betrays。

more intense closer to the figure of Christ, whose calm at the same time halts and intensifies it. We know from numerous preparatory studies that Leonardo thought of each figure as carrying a particular charge and type of emotion. Like a skilled stage director — perhaps the first in the modern sense — he has carefully read the gospel story and scrupulously cast his actors^[1] as their roles are described. With him begins that rhetoric^[2] of classical art that will direct the compositions of generations of painters until the nineteenth century. The silence of Christ is one such powerful rhetorical device. Indeed, Heinrich Wölfflin saw that the classical element is precisely here, for in the silence following Christ's words “the original impulse and the emotional excitement continue to echo and the action is at once^[3] momentary, eternal and complete.” The two major trends of fifteenth-century painting — monumentality and mathematically ordered space at the expense of movement, and freedom of movement at the expense of monumentality and controlled space — are here harmonized and balanced^[4]. The *Last Supper* and Leonardo's career leading up to it are at once a synthesis of the artistic developments of the fifteenth century and a first statement of the High Renaissance style of the early sixteenth in Italy.

If Leonardo's *Last Supper* is the most famous of religious pictures, the *Mona Lisa* is probably the world's most famous portrait.^[5] Since the nineteenth century, perhaps earlier, the enigmatic face has been a part of Western folklore^[6]. Painted

[1] gospel story 福音故事; scrupulously cast his actors 小心谨慎地遴选演员。

[2] rhetoric *n.* 修辞学, 雄辩术; 此处作“艺术语言, 艺术风格”解。

[3] at once 同时; 后半句意为“该行动既是瞬间的, 又是永恒而完善的。”

[4] monumentality 纪念碑风格, 雄伟性; at the expense of ... 牺牲……以……作代价; are here harmonized and balanced 在这里得到了和谐和均衡。

[5] *Mona Lisa* 《蒙娜·丽莎》; portrait 肖像画。

[6] enigmatic *a.* 谜一般的, 令人难解的; folklore 民间故事, 民俗学。