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" THE RELATIONS BETWEEN ART HISTORY AND ART CRITICISM "

Report of A. M. Hammacher :

The relations between Art History and Art Criticism have been altered at the XIX^e century by the classification of Art History among sciences and the rational and objective characters thus assigned to judgment at the expense of the "Unio Mystica" with the work .

The real contact with the work and the result of this sounding is not affected by the intelligence, although it is an eventual support, but by intuition . The expression of the experience that the spectator makes by its union with the work is not the result of intellectual learning . The subjective knowledge of the expert in Art contains truth, a truth that can be worked out up to a certain point only in a rational and scientific way .

If we admit, as Lionello Venturi did, the identity of Art History and Art Criticism, we neither solve this problem of a study of Art History connected with Science and Art Criticism in its social function - both of them socially separated - nor that of their exigences essentially different .

An Art Historian may be inefficient as a Critic of an unfinished work in our days, and inversely . The historic method is often insufficient just as the psycho-aesthetic sounding is lucid . If a reciprocal rapprochement is to be made between Art Criticism and Art History - not only theoretically - Art History will have to fix strict scientific limits and attribute a great value to the experience in Art as a source to subjective truth .

In the same way, Art Criticism will have to separate as much as possible from social confiscation - which must satisfy the public - and unvoluntarily takes the methods of publicity . Critical spirit must liberate itself on the two sides . On one part from the domination of the historic-scientific method, on the other part from confirmation to social exigences .

It is possible that, at length, the first wish will be gratified in studying the philosophy of Art on a larger scale. The realisation of the other wish seems impossible. The trial only gives a completely free thought. The duty of judging, even if the relation with the work is not realised, as a consequence of the subjective limits of individual judgment, threatens liberty as well as purity. The social form of criticism ends in the criticism by the government - it is clear - criticism in itself is annihilated, the essence of Art is not touched. The Criticism that government poetises is no longer a sounding, but a social defense.

To protect critical judgment, the union of free associations of Art Historians and Art Critics is already an improvement, although they will never cease to live in strained relations - always hesitating, both of them, to live side by side.