- Fletcher, and Massinger collaborations, and unnecessarily vague about both Shirley and Shakespeare.
- 4 The book is particularly indebted to J. Q. Adams, ed., *The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert*; R. A. Foakes and R. T. Rickert, eds., *Henslowe's Diary*; Ann Haaker, "The Plague, the Theatre, and the Poet," *Renaissance Drama* n. s. I (1968), 283-306.
- 5 Bentley, *The Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time*, p. vii.

Frederick Hartt. *History of Italian Renaissance Art*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. and Harry N. Abrams, N.Y., 1969. Pp. x, 636.

This is a monumental work of scholarship by one of the greatest of the modern American historians of Italian art. It is, in the author's intention, addressed primarily to the students attending his art-history course at the University of Virginia. These students should (and I am sure they do) consider themselves fortunate to have such a mentor, a mentor who pays them the compliment of assuming that they are fully capable of the effort required to assimilate the occasionally difficult technical language of the arts. To an intimate grasp of the enormous materials of his specialty (a grasp which is the result of the "autoptic" inspection of each one of the art-works examined), Professor Hartt unites a complete knowledge of their backgrounds (political, religious, social, economic).

Professor Hartt excels in discriminating the strands of complex historical situations and in describing in concise but substantial outlines the peculiar originality of the various artists. Aesthetic enthusiasm predominates, but a sober, constantly well-balanced judgment controls that enthusiasm in matters stylistic and in the appraisal of the interrelationships prevalent between artists and between trends of artistic creation.

Professor Hartt feels – and there is, I think, thorough justification for this feeling – that in a period like the Renaissance, characterized by the versatility of its major figures, the main *arti del disegno* (as Vasari calls them), i.e., painting, sculpture, architecture, should be treated together, so as to compose a historical *tableau* where not only each one of those arts receives its due, but where they are shown (and sometimes in a very unexpected and astonishing way) to be interdependent. As Professor Hartt underscores, while there is no scarcity of English histories of Italian Renaissance painting, or sculpture, there has existed up to now no volume dealing with all three of them. This gap he undertakes to fill, and with results which attest to his mastery and to his penetrating insights into, at times, unexplored associations. Nor does he ever lose sight of the relations which obtain between Italy itself (the land, agriculture, types of population, climatic conditions, regional differences, etc.) and the art produced in that country; thus he gives concrete and brilliant confirmation of Goethe's dictum that whoever "wishes to understand the poet [i.e., the artist] should betake himself to the poet's native land." Nor can any critic, however carping, dispute the rightness of Professor Hartt's decision to treat at length revolutionary figures and major movements "rather than to include certain minor masters, no matter how delightful their works may be" (*Foreword*). He admits to a Tuscan (or rather to a Florentine) bias which (he says with a charmingly humorous smile) he "would be willing to relinquish if it could be proved that the Renaissance originated anywhere else" (*Foreword*). He is defending himself against the same criticism formulated against Vasari when he remarks that, despite his Tuscan bias, he has tried to be fair to other Italian *Kunstlandschaften*, but may be

castigated for having omitted ... Torriti and Rusuti, Poppa and Borgognone, Mazzolino and Ortolano, Romanino and Moretto, Bartolomeo and Alvise Vivarini" (*ibid.*). The controlling criterion, it is opportune to repeat, has been emphasis on major figures and movements, on relative importance and quality. And he cuts the sinews of the Tuscanocentric insinuation by remarking that it was precisely because of his being guided by that criterion, that he had to pass over such Tuscans as Pacino di Bonaguida, Giovanni del Biondo, Luca di Tomè, Taddeo di Bartolo, Bartolomeo di Giovanni, Neroccio, Agostino di Duccio, Mino da Fiesole, Bacchiacca, and Ridolfo del Chirlandaio" (*ibid.*).

I find Professor Hartt's plea in favour of iconology, as a discipline distinct from aesthetics, utterly convincing. He states that "aesthetically, of course, a work of art is no less interesting if we do not know what it represented. But a knowledge of its meaning can admit us into realms of experience, in both the personality of the artist and the period to which he was speaking, that would otherwise have been inaccessible." He adds that "such knowledge can also open our eyes to previously unobserved qualities of form and color in the work of art. And it can tell us much about why the artist did certain things the way he did – and even, at times, give us a flash of insight into the forces which cause styles to change or disappear, and new ones to take their places" (*ibid.*).

The reader may notice in the passage just quoted the "profound impression" which, by the admission of Professor Hartt himself, the theories of Panofski left on him; just as in Hartt's decision to treat only the major figures and movements, one might sense a mild reaction, perhaps, to Berenson's fondness for the re-discovery and re-evaluating of "minor" masters.

A most interesting and original aspect of Hartt's book I find to be represented by what he calls his "tentative ideas," which he proposes "more completely to expound elsewhere, supported by all the necessary evidence." Limitations of space prevent here a variety of exemplifications. I shall confine myself to drawing the reader's attention to what Hartt says about Botticelli (p. 281), and in particular about his later works. In reply to the question: "What accounts for Botticelli's present standing, which has endured for three generations, and seems unlikely to diminish?" "Partly," observes Hartt, "it is because Botticelli, more than any other master in Italian art – more even than Cimabue, his greatest predecessor in that vein – knew what line could accomplish" (*ibid.*). But partly also (and here is one of the ideas which Professor Hartt terms "tentative," but it is an idea which is highly tempting and, substantially, in my opinion, quite correct, although as Hartt emphasizes, seldom admitted) "it is because, in Botticelli's later works ... he achieved a sense of fatality so forbidding as to become oppressive. But the hardness, so nakedly evident in Botticelli's last style, underlies the drawing and organization of all of his pictures, whatever the apparent languor of the figures he paints" (p. 281). Here is a straight "jab" at Walter Pater, "the prince of Victorian aesthetes": "It would be a great error to consider Botticelli ever weak, or to allow the veil of sentimentality drawn over his personality in the Victorian era, to mask in any degree the rigor of his style" (*ibid.*).

In the attempt to bring out the originality of Hartt's ideas in this immense panorama, I find myself overwhelmed by an *embarras de richesses*. Tremendously interesting are the paragraphs devoted to the influence of L. B. Alberti's treatise *De Pictura*, "the first known treatise on painting as distinguished from handbooks of shop-practice, like Cennino Cennini's *Libro dell'Arte*" (p. 194). Hartt emphasizes: "In many respects Alberti's manifesto

harmonizes with the art of Masaccio ... but it comes far closer to the painting of Fra Filippo Lippi and Fra Angelico, whom Alberti must have known personally. The new perspective governs Fra Angelico's *Annunciation* in the San Marco corridor – as distinguished from his pre-Albertian treatment of the same subject at Cortona – as well as the entire spatial system of the San Marco altarpiece. The frequent use by both Fra Filippo and Fra Angelico of the foreground figures ... the copiousness and variety of their compositions, and their sensitive analysis of the reception of light, correspond to Alberti's principles.... By the end of the century, some of the classical subjects he recommends were actually adopted ... by Botticelli.

"In the 1430s and 1440s, the two surviving giants of early Quattrocento Florentine sculpture, Ghiberti and Donatello, underwent striking changes of style, fully in keeping with Alberti's new doctrine, if not always with the details of his formulae...." (p.196).

Fascinating are the condensed histories of the posthumous reputations (*Nachleben*) of certain masters whose intrinsic value the tides of aesthetic taste have caused alternately to surface or to sink. As an instance, let me quote Hartt's account of the "critical vicissitudes" undergone by Ghirlandaio. "When the Quattrocento was rediscovered in earnest by nineteenth century critics," Hartt writes, "Ghirlandaio's meticulous and convincing view of the life about him impressed a generation which never quite understood Masaccio and cast only a scornful glance in the direction of Uccello and Piero della Francesca. Then came the revolution of 'Form' in the wake of Cézanne, Picasso, and the Cubists, and that of 'Expression' after Van Gogh, Rouault, and Nolde; and Ghirlandaio fell from grace a second time.... So Ghirlandaio – who, to Ruskin, was the master of painting in Quattrocento Firenze – dwindled to minor significance in twentieth-century eyes. Gradually, in the last two decades, Ghirlandaio's real qualities have become appreciated again. After closer study, his art has shown at least three important characteristics, any one of which should guarantee his permanent position."

Hartt sums them up as follows: "He had the freshest and most consistent color sense of any Florentine painter of his day; he was closely familiar with the achievements of his contemporaries in the field of architecture, and was thus able to compose figures and architectural spaces into a complex unity beyond that achieved by Quattrocento painters anywhere in Italy; and finally, in his rendering of human beings, his reserve veils an unsurpassed delicacy in the analysis of character" (p. 304).

Here and there, a curious inversion of current judgments is to be noticed; but Hartt knows whereof he is speaking. He finds, for instance, that in one case (contrary to the *vulgata opinio*) it is not Raphael who imitates Michelangelo, but vice versa. In the latter's *Conversion of St. Paul*, "in the foreground, the blinded Saul, shortly to become the apostle Paul, one of Michelangelo's most beautiful figures," is "clearly suggested by Raphael's blinded Heliodorus" (p. 578). Professor Hartt is known to be a world authority on Giulio Romano; it is therefore immensely stimulating to hear him discuss the problem of the Titian-Michelangelo relationship. He writes (p. 542): "Titian's first contact with the Roman artistic vocabulary was at second hand, through the person of Giulio Romano, still working in Mantua ... in the huge, heavily muscled figures who battle and tumble through and out of Titian's *Cain Killing Abel*, *Sacrifice of Isaac*, and *David and Goliath* (Sacristy of Santa Maria della Salute, Venice) there is more than an echo of Giulio Romano's giants, not to speak of his later ceiling paintings." (p. 542).

As a model of investigation of the craftsmanship of a painter, I would point out Hartt's account of that of Tintoretto (p. 553-54); but throughout Hartt's book, in effect, such investigations are standard features and are made with unsurpassed competence and scrupulously technical exactitude. Certain *rapprochements* indicated by Hartt are as astonishing as they are corresponding to the facts. See, for instance, the arresting parallel between Angelico and Zurbarán (p. 185), Antonello da Messina and Caravaggio (p. 223).

Equally enlightening are Hartt's explanations of works of sculpture and architecture. What Hartt has to say concerning Donatello's relief sculpture is most instructive. "A cross-section of Donatello's *St. George and the Dragon* would be illegible, a mere series of shapeless bumps and hollows. All of Donatello's experiments in the optically conceived details of his statues come to a climax in this relief. Its projections and depressions are subtly manipulated so as to attract light and cast shadows. Donatello's relief sculpture no longer corresponds to the idea of the object, nor to the object as we know it, but exclusively to the image of the object that light casts upon the retina. There could be no more crucial distinction; for in it, is manifest the division between medieval and modern art" (p. 138).

The chapters of Professor Hartt's volume grouped under *Cinquecento* constitute the climax of this book, and deal with the High Renaissance in Florence, Rome, Venice, and the Mainland; the crowning point of this section is the part entitled *Michelangelo and the Maniera* (. 574 ff.). A welcome feature is that the exegesis of each work of art is accompanied by a photographic reproduction of it (over 800 of them, many in superb color).

Hartt's interpretations of Leonardo, Raffaello, Michelangelo, and Titian are gauges of the full measure of his stature as an art historian. The book is equipped with all the *realia* necessary to the reader utilizing it: glossary, chronological chart, substantial bibliography, and Index. The publishers deserve congratulations for the pains they have taken in producing a volume which is, in itself, a thing of beauty, and the finest of the histories of Italian Renaissance art produced in America.

ELIO GIANTURCO, *Washington, D.C.*

Aldo Scaglione. *The Classical Theory of Composition: From Its Origins to the Present*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972. University of North Carolina Studies in Comparative Literature 53. Pp. 447. \$15.

This book, as impressive as it is wide-ranging, furnishes a broad survey of "composition" in its rhetorical sense, "the stylistic criteria of sentence structure as first theorized in antiquity under that term and, as such, regularly transmitted through the centuries down to our own day." The investigation of this topic leads Scaglione into larger considerations of rhetoric and grammar, and the book emerges finally as a historical survey of theories of style, an examination of "the whole approach to the problem of expression."

Throughout this work is marked by a thorough comprehension of scholarship of the most pleasing kind, so that when Scaglione is not developing new theses of his own he is engaged in providing rewarding syntheses of both primary and secondary material. Moreover the author's depth of acquaintance with recent continental scholarship will make the book especially valuable for readers whose primary language is English and who may,