

Julius von Schlosser on Vasari: a translation from *Die Kunstliteratur* (1924)

Karl Johns - Julius Schlosser and the location of Vasari

When Thomas Mann was composing *Doktor Faustus* and decided to have the devil make an appearance at the precise center of the manuscript, he was applying his literary irony to a phenomenon in which he had himself participated, which affected his life directly, and threatened those of his wife and children.¹ When Julius Schlosser made Giorgio Vasari the isolated subject of Book Five of his *Kunstliteratur*, he was also describing a certain development in idiosyncratic literary terms and placing a figure at the center who could not ultimately be applauded according to the terms of his 'Kunstliteratur'. Unlike the world of Adrian Leverkühn, Schlosser, who was felicitously described in a 1939 obituary as 'an anachronism in the very best sense of the term', had developed his concept of the literature of art 'Kunstliteratur' independently of the trends of the time. Indeed, his most ambitious essays had included a systematic refutation of the flawed premises of various types of scholarly writings about earlier art then flourishing. Formalism and undue abstraction were then exciting popular interest and drawing unusual numbers of auditors into academic lecture halls. The burgeoning literature of dissertations was being roundly criticized. In this period of emotional nationalism and rising fascism, his development of the concept of 'Kunstliteratur' served to stress the importance of objectivity in historical scholarship independently of anything one might feel. To create such a footing it would be necessary in his 'classic' book to clarify the entire emergence of the academic discipline of the history of art.

To characterize a typically Italian literary view on the business of the world, Thomas Mann had also come up with the phrase of 'life viewed from the balcony' (referring to d'Annunzio). Although he seldom cited living authors, this pleased Schlosser well enough to quote more than once in the course of his writings, and it also comes to mind in relation to Schlosser's own critical distance to the long and uninterrupted development of artistic theory and practices as he observed it transpiring throughout the epochs with the continual influence of previous ideas, the alternating reactions of spontaneity and norms, and the repeated phenomenon of old and influential centers experiencing a mutual assimilation with Barbarians at their gates. While valuable translations, commentaries and studies continue to elucidate individual critics and periods for us, the continuing significance of this work lies in the balance of his

¹ Thomas Mann, *Doktor Faustus Das Leben des deutschen Tonsetzers Adrian Leverkühn erzählt von einem Freunde*, Stockholmer Gesamtausgabe der Werke von Thomas Mann, Frankfurt: Fischer 1951, pp. 333-375.

comprehensive knowledge of the bibliography and the entire development of artistic theory.

Much of his scholarly writing had been devoted to establishing the importance of Lorenzo Ghiberti in the European artistic and historiographic tradition.

With the manuscript of his *Commentarii*, Ghiberti had become the first art historian in the sense intended by Schlosser. This meant that Ghiberti addressed art as a total phenomenon without undue exaggeration of its subject matter or isolated formal qualities, while considering its original artistic as well as collective technical aspects, without a projection of biographical data into its interpretation, and among other things, without norms applied arbitrarily from without. These ideas are here developed slightly more explicitly than in the earlier version published by the academy during the war.²

Schlosser felt that this intellectual innovation was decisively undercut by Giorgio Vasari, and not properly revived until Johann Joachim Winckelmann toward the end of the 18th century. As it were, Vasari had forced himself to the center of the 'Kunstliteratur' by the rigor with which he collected material as well as by the interest, imitation and angry opposition he was able to arouse in the following generations, primarily in other regions of Italy. When Schlosser spoke of the 'pragmatic' method of Vasari, he was presumably referring to the tendency to compromise historical truth, to fudge and invent details in a way Ghiberti did not. The present chapter five of *Die Kunstliteratur* might be the most succinctly informed discussion of the problems arising from the changes between the first and second editions of the *Vite*.

In a characteristically convoluted way, Schlosser stated his basic principles at the beginning of the volume:

Our subject is therefore ultimately one of philology, and for this reason, the structure for the study of art historical sources necessarily follows the directional points with the principles of classical philology providing such a marvelous and finely hewn model. Heuristics, criticism and hermeneutics of the sources provide an equal number of superimposed steps in either case. A primary goal for the study of the sources is to establish the extant material and in the very least to arrange it bibliographically. At a more advanced level, it proceeds to critically evaluating this raw material, and must do so in a way that is apt for each individual historical period. It only reaches the status of the other 'auxiliary sciences' – to use that awkward phrase – when it reveals the innate historical content in a philosophical spirit which then necessarily leads into the most recent period, where it merges into the history of our discipline.

The author is fully aware that it is impossible to complete such a task, but that one can only provide the basis and do approximate justice to no more than some of these points. In what follows, we might in one form or another have achieved the lowest level of a bibliographical collection of sources, although

² *Materialien zur Quellenkunde der Kunstgeschichte* 5. Heft *Vasari*, Kaiserliche Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien Philosophisch-historische Klasse Sitzungsberichte 189. Band, 2. Abhandlung, Vienna: Hölder 1918, 77 pp.

forbearance is required even here. As far as the criticism of sources is concerned, advances have recently been made with regard to the most influential historian, namely Giorgio Vasari, who, for better or for worse, provides the nub and the center of the whole. Aside from a few recent contributions, the criticism of written sources from the Baroque period is by contrast still in its infancy. For these reasons alone, a well rounded survey of the sources, as it exists in other historical fields, is not yet possible here. The same is equally if not more true of the third and highest level in which existing preliminary studies are even fewer and less relevant.³

Even if his view of Vasari was finally one as a pernicious influence, and his comments might seem scanty within the context of such a broad survey, Schlosser will remain a valuable didactic example due to his critical reading of all sources, his unequalled comprehensive knowledge of the materials from all periods, including those which no longer survive, and of the thinking which went on and animated many of the stylistic and other changes in the course of art in the early modern period.

Although he might appear to be rather threadbare in his comments, when his vantage point from the later nineteenth century was combined with his unusual linguistic gifts and philosophical preoccupations, Schlosser did however assume a position to affect academic art history perhaps even more decisively than any of his predecessors in the university chair in Vienna. This might not have been obvious in every case. Some of the insights later contributed by Johannes Wilde to scholarship on Michelangelo certainly had their original impulse in the regular 'Übungen' which Schlosser held with the Viennese students surrounding the textual criticism of Vasari. Another product of these was the illuminating article by Otto Kurz.⁴ The *Kunstliteratur* was closely followed by a succeeding generation in the work of figures such as Oskar Pollak and Jacob Hess, but ironically he was never able to move a student to further the work of Wolfgang Kallab about Vasari – the Milanese edition continues to be cited as the standard.

It was always integral to the flavor of his style to force a sacrifice on the part of the reader. His sentences cannot be altered without significant falsification. Somewhat obscure terms such as 'pragmatism' of Vasari or idiomatic and not precisely translatable Austrian usage such as 'der alte Ghiberti' lend the entire book an air of colloquialism. This personal set of allusions provides the undercurrent between favorite ideas such those shared with Croce and Vossler, pet topics such as the traditional misconceptions of the Trecento, as well as innumerable relative clauses connected only indirectly to what

³ Julius Schlosser, *Die Kunstliteratur Ein Handbuch zur Quellenkunde der neueren Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna: Schroll 1924, p. 2. His most sustained statement of principles might have been: Julius von Schlosser, 'Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten Prolegomena zu einer künftigen Ausgabe', *Kunstgeschichtliches Jahrbuch der K. K. Zentral-Kommission für Erforschung und Erhaltung der Kunst- und Historischen Denkmale*, Band 4, 1910, 105-211, 245.

⁴ Otto Kurz, 'Zu Vasaris Vita des Filippo Lippi', *Mitteilungen des österreichischen Instituts für Geschichtsforschung*, Volume 47, 1933, pp. 82-93.

precedes or follows. Throughout his writings, redundancy and complicated negations often disrupt the train of thought and remained typical of his nested sentences. Like his teaching and lecturing, his style of writing was also meant to repel any faint hearted auditors or readers lacking in what he considered the necessary prerequisites. While this means that there can never be a 'good' translation of his prose, even what the medieval proverb would call a 'limping version' of the original can convey to a wider audience what animated Schlosser in this more popular book and assist in allaying the traditional impression that he had compiled nothing more than a 'long telephone directory'.

Karl Johns completed his doctorate in the history of art at the Fogg Art Museum, and has worked with the Dallas Museum of Art, the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art among others. His publications have centred on the art of the Netherlands in the early modern period and the earlier Viennese art historians.

Karl Johns
270 Goins Court
Riverside CA 92507
USA

KarlTJohns@aol.com

Book Five: Vasari⁵

Introduction

Since the excellent Vasari Studies by my early departed friend and collaborator Wolfgang Kallab have already been published from his estate some time ago, it is possible to be all the briefer here in summarizing the life work of Giorgio Vasari. A characteristic aspect of the completely dithering and untenable secondary literature of our discipline can be seen in the fact that this publication has not received particular attention; indeed it has been obtrusively avoided.

Giorgio Vasari was the child of a family of craftsmen; the grandfather of the same name had practiced the ancient art of pottery; local to his native Arezzo, where Giorgio was born in 1511, and which became the source for the family name (*vasaio*). According to the charming anecdote told by Vasari himself in the life of that great painter from Cortona (ed. Milanese 3, 693), the son of his own great grandfather Lazzaro's sister is supposed to have been Luca Signorelli, whose beautiful portrait in old age deeply impressed the receptive boy in his younger years. However, this reveals equally well his tendency to mix reality and invention with great fantasy - and to present himself as a figure gifted and recognized with genius in early life. His assertion that this Lazzaro was a painter has not been seriously upset by the unsuccessful attempt of Milanese to identify him with a simple master saddler of that name who appears in the tax registers of Cortona. Again, this reveals the naïve tendency of Milanese, that avid student of written documents, to treat these too literally. It is nonetheless a fact that Vasari greatly exaggerated the work of this great grandfather as a painter. In the second edition, and emboldened by his success, it is particularly suspicious to see this humble cassone painter of the first edition presented as a local celebrity with a large and busy workshop. This must arouse our suspicions and also cause us to view with some scepticism his depiction of his grandfather, the artful potter who inaugurated a renaissance of the ancient Aretine clay craft, and whose works were proudly exhibited in the family house. It is quite remarkable that Vasari has told us nothing about his father Antonio. This obscure upright and (presumably) conservative craftsman was probably still too vivid in recent memory for the child with such gifts of imagination to enlist him in his presentation. These family stories have taken up so much space here because they illuminate a characteristic aspect of our author.

It is important to recognize that Vasari was a pupil of Humanism, a painter educated according to the ideals of his time. He learned Latin in his youth. Kallab has gone into greater detail (op cit. pp. 13 ff) about the instruction which he received in Arezzo from the Humanist Pollastro, and then in Florence, where Vasari studied under the tutelage of Pierio Valeriano, the famous author of the Hieroglyphs.

⁵ Translated by Karl Johns from Julius von Schlosser, *Die Kunstliteratur: Ein Handbuch zur Quellenkunde der Neueren Kunstgeschichte*, Wien: Kunstverlag Anton Schroll & Co 1924, 253-304.

Cardinal Passerini probably brought the thirteen-year old to Florence as a companion to the young Ippolito Medici. Kallab was correct in this since any proper criticism of the entire work of Vasari depends on this question and the education or fundamental assumptions of the time (*Schulgut*), which guided him to the end of his days, and provided an essential factor in his individuality as an author.

The achievements of Vasari as an artist cannot occupy us here. From his main works as a painter - the frescoes in the Sala regia in the Vatican and the allegories in the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence which he himself discussed in his *Ragionamenti* - he can be recognized as a not insignificant protagonist of the Mannerist style, which has long been misconstrued and denigrated as nothing more than an early phase of the Baroque. It certainly presents a chapter which is not the least interesting in the history of Italian art. His most personal work is the decoration of his own house in Arezzo which is still preserved today.

Vasari is uncontested in his rank as an architect. The Uffizi, the house of the Knights of St. Stephen in Pisa, with its beautiful exterior staircase, and finally the Badia in Arezzo (as well as his own house) are among the outstanding achievements of the later Renaissance in Tuscany, that remarkable period in both historical and artistic terms.

After a long and busy life, replete with successes as well as troubles, Giorgio Vasari died on June 27, 1574 just a few months after his friend and patron Cosimo I, to whom he had dedicated the *Vite*, the work which accounts for his European fame - and which we shall now discuss.

I. The Origins of the Lives – The Relation of the First to the Second Edition

Vasari himself related the story of how his main work came about: in his strangely fragmentary and colourless autobiography which appeared as an appendix at the end of the second edition. The story of a social gathering with Cardinal Alessandro Farnese on an evening in Rome during 1546, including Paolo Giovio and Annibale Caro at which the former lectured about the painter Cimabue, presents all sorts of chronological difficulties as Kallab in particular has demonstrated, and it is certainly not literally true. Paolo Giovio, whose Eulogies (cf. Book IV above) Vasari seems by the way not to have known, was indeed his predecessor, but Vasari's serious interest in such things had been prepared by his humanist education and must have dated much further back than this: in the dedication to Cosimo I he stressed having spent ten years preparing the work. Even if the Horatian *Nonum premature in annum* might have played a part in this, such an attitude is understandable in light of the vast amount of material which he seems to have collected - especially considering that Vasari was already then quite busy as an artist accepting and fulfilling large commissions. There are solid indications that his preparatory work was underway by 1540 at the latest. As we know from the correspondence, he was already able to send a selection of it to Annibale Caro in 1547. The response from

Caro is quite interesting: he praised the style and content, rebuking only certain stylistic tendencies which struck him as out of accord with the language as it was naturally spoken. As Vasari himself called it, he very tactfully avoided the subject of his folksy painter's style. Unlike those of the introductions where he attempted to flaunt a more literary mode, these are in fact the best passages. Vasari himself told of sending the manuscript as it then stood (1546) to the abbot of the Olivetan Monastery in Rimini, who with one of the monks made corrections. This revision has been unnecessarily exaggerated in its importance by the most recent author to discuss Vasari's writing technique, (Ugo Scoti-Bertinelli) who pursued a fruitful thought - that of the foreign elements - to absurd conclusions. Since we do not know the style of these putative 'assistants', any such conclusions are unsupportable. Such a trend presents a continuation of traditional tendencies. As it usually occurs in such cases, the great success of the first edition gave rise to a murmuring of rumours questioning or denying its originality. This led to its being attributed to a man from the circle of Vasari's friends, D. Silvano Razzi - a silly claim since the concoction by Razzi as it can be examined fresh for printing in the National Library in Florence reveals itself as a mediocre selection from the second edition of 1567 (made in 1615!).

These 'assistants' of Vasari have been the subject of a great deal of discussion - as is already clear from the malicious glosses by Cellini about the twins, Vasari and his learned friend Vincenzo Borghini. As we can recognize from his correspondence which has recently been published, this Vincenzo Borghini (who should not be confused with Raffaele Borghini to be discussed below) is quite a typical figure for Florence at that time. He was a dilettante and collector in his own right, his *Libro* was frequently mentioned by Vasari, and this collection of old master drawings aroused Vasari to imitate him. He did in fact assist his friend with the abundant treasury of his knowledge, policed the production of the first edition together with Giambullari, provided excerpts from authors such as Paulus Diaconus and also contributed a voluminous Neo-Platonic essay about the meaning of painting (with the first chapter on its technical aspects). From the roster in the book by Scoti-Bertinelli, we can see how Vasari himself reworked it all and renewed it in his own idiosyncratic style. Even Scoti, who was completely devoted to finding the borrowed elements was forced to admit that these did not in any way influence the content. The moralizing preambles to the *Lives*, in which Vasari gushed in the contemporary literary style, are completely his own. The truly foreign elements are easily recognized, such as the epitaphs from the first edition contributed by Annibale Caro, Adriani, Segni among others, or the chapter by another friend Cosimo Bartoli about the miniature painting by Attavante (in the first edition), as well as the letter from Adriani, a fairly worthless selection from the history of ancient art of Pliny which was inserted inorganically during the preparation of the second edition before the Life of Beccafumi. We are left to conclude that the *Lives* are definitely his own personal property.

This is the form in which the first edition was printed by Torrentino during 1550 with three parts in two volumes. Its publication had been long awaited with excitement, with Paolo Pino even publicly referring to it in northern Italy in his Dialogue of 1548, and Marcantonio Michiel as well as possibly the Anonimo Magliabecchiano temporarily putting aside their own similar work (cf. Book 3 above). In spite of all of its shortcomings, this first edition is more completely rounded and a work of art to a far greater degree than is the second edition. In its strict composition, it is true to the traditional Florentine tenet of art historiography in dealing only with figures no longer living - or rather those whose development is complete (as with Rovezzano who had gone blind). There is a single exception to this, and it is the figure of Michelangelo, the great hero of this period but above all of Vasari himself, who had achieved immortality even during his own lifetime. Michelangelo presented the final development and the coronation of the entire construct which found its fulfilment in him. The impressive structure of the work was lost in the second edition.

This second edition appeared eighteen years later, published by Giunti in 1568. In the meantime, Vasari had seen and learned many new things; he was able to travel to regions he had previously never seen at all or only in a very cursory way (such as Assisi and northern Italy). Undeniably, there is much that was adjusted, elusive passages and misunderstandings were corrected – for instance the Pisani were given their own chapter after having been curiously treated in the first edition as pupils of the far later Andrea Pisano. Resentment had given rise to talk of *infinite bugie*. Vasari had not ignored justified criticism, his historical conscience was refined, and he therefore eliminated a large number of those epitaphs which he had ordered ad hoc and presented as if they were historical fact. However little he was aided by this, the aforementioned letter by Adriani does indeed reveal how he sought to lend depth and perspective to his work. Since his employment in the Palazzo Vecchio confronted him with the intellectual elite of the Medici, he became familiar with new sources, and above all with portraits. In his work, Vasari included portraits of the artists following his own designs and those of pupils, which became a model for later authors. He himself occasionally complained about the Venetian wood block carvers and the often insufficient felicity of their work. His book lost much of its internal coherence; it is clear how he worked, the printed sheets of his personal copy were supplemented with additions and covered with deletions. This explains many of the cobbled sentences, and how some annoying things were overlooked and others repeated (Life of Peruzzi). His material had expanded greatly as one can see from the outward form of the second edition. There are a large number of completely new biographies (thirty four in the Cinquecento alone!), but above all, figures still living were included in a substantial appendix. As we have already noted, his own strangely dry, lifeless, and even inaccurate autobiography is also not absent from this. Aside from the portraits which have already been mentioned, a new and direct source presents itself - the drawings. For the first time, there was a reference to the art collection of Vasari himself and his famous *Libro*.

Vasari who by now justifiably saw himself as a recognized author, passionately attempted to improve his style and presentation, frequently by sacrificing the fresh and natural effect of the first edition. Some naïve aspects of this were completely eliminated or suppressed, especially the gossip about the surviving wife of his former teacher Andrea del Sarto. Yet as we have said, the bold structure of the first edition was disfigured and became unclear. However grateful we must be to him for his diligence and for the new material he collected, the image of Vasari as an author had been incomparably purer and more artistic.

II. The Sources of Vasari.

Vasari used most of the available art historical literature assiduously and with discernment, and this to a greater extent in the second than in the first edition - as noted, with a heightened historical conscience. Many of the sources which had gone unmentioned or only vaguely referred to before were now cited by name. Of course it is necessary to recall that the Renaissance conception of plagiarism was different, and more lax than it is for us today. One must again refer to the studies by Kallab, who dealt with this material especially thoroughly and with critical acuity. In what follows, the goal is simply to summarize the literary knowledge of Vasari. This knowledge was quite abundant.

1. The Strictly Art Historical Sources

We must bear in mind that Vasari had access to the greater number of these sources only in their often difficult handwritten form, since the printed editions of the most essential texts were not made until the nineteenth century! Today, we can still feel admiration for the perspicacity with which he did this, and this might allow us to overlook his occasional cursory treatment or lack of meticulousness. At times he referred to the location of his source and at other times omitted it. He made use of the Commentaries of the old Ghiberti, from the unique preserved manuscript, then belonging to his friend Cosimo Bartoli, occasionally mentioning them with the felicitous *verissimo* (Life of Giotto, second edition), while we know that his contemporary, the Anonimo Magliabecchiano, had access to the original which has since been lost. In the addition where he referred to the treatise of the old master (Life of Ghiberti), he did offer a skewed, unjustified, patently incorrect and dishonest appraisal of him. After he himself had used Ghiberti as the most abundant and reliable source for the Trecento, sometimes quoting passages literally, he then insolently stated that the manuscript was 'of little use.'

Aside from Ghiberti, the *Libro* (of Antonio Billi) was his most important source for the Trecento and particularly also for the Quattrocento. Aside from this, there is a hypothetical 'Source K' as it has been finely distinguished by Kallab, and which also served his competitors, the Magliabecchiano and Gelli. He made thorough use of the biography of Brunelleschi by Manetti, expressly also of its

strange excursus on the history of architecture. It was not until the second edition that he gained access to a northern Italian source, a letter of Campagnola about the painters of Padua, also used by Marcantonio Michiel. The contrary view expressed by Felix Becker that he made use of the small publication of Facius (cf. Book 2 above) must be admitted to be a mistake. Particularly in the second edition he overlooked a potentially abundant source in the writings about individual artists ('Künstlerschriften') including a theoretical bent. This is where he became the first to report of the old studio manual of Cennino Cennini, then belonging to the Sienese goldsmith Giuliano. In the biography of Genga (second edition) he referred to the treatise by G. B. Bellucci of San Marino about fortress architecture (the manuscript of which was then in Florence in the possession of M. Puccini). That by Francesco di Giorgio Martini is mentioned (in the second edition) as belonging to Duke Cosimo. He also made use of the art historical novel by Filarete for the same edition. By contrast, he was only aware of other sources by hearsay, above all the writings of Leonardo, who had long ago left the native climes of Tuscany; although he was aware of a remarkable reference to an unnamed Milanese painter who made efforts to publish the treatise on painting. His knowledge of the treatise of Piero della Francesca and the supposed plagiarism of Luca Pacioli was actually limited to gossip. He knew of the writings of his contemporary and competitor Benvenuto Cellini, in spite of the fact that the famous autobiography was not published until the eighteenth century, and the technical treatise did not appear until the same year as his own second edition (1568).

There are a large number of handwritten sources, such as writings by painters and the like, referred to by Vasari in obscure terms. Among these is a 'Libretto antico' (in the Life of Gaddo Gaddi in the second edition), 'certi ricordi di vecchi pittori' (the anecdote of Charles of Anjou in the Life of Cimabue, second edition), 'ricordi di molti che me scrissero' (the so-called Giotto as sculptor refers to the book by Billi). His references to stratti (estratti) and ricordi by Ghirlandaio and Raphael (first edition Stefano and in the conclusion to the entire work) are particularly tantalizing. References such as 'si legge' remain completely impossible to interpret (Life of Duccio second edition, on the putative Moccio, Life of Jacopo di Sacentino, information about the Landini family).

Vasari very naturally also used the published sources. Strangely enough, he remained ignorant of the treatise by Gauricus which had been published long previously; we do know that this book circulated far less in Italy than in northern Europe. By contrast, he made use of the Florentine guide book of 1508 by Albertini as well as the writings of Leon Battista Alberti the translations by his friend Cosimo Bartoli were published precisely in the same years as his own first and second editions of the *Lives* (1550 and 1568). The Latin Life of Lambert Lombard which had been addressed to him with a flattering letter from its author Dominicus Lampsonius (cf. Book 7, p. 590 of 1924 German edition) must also be mentioned here. On the other hand, he did not have more than a superficial knowledge of the writings of Albrecht Dürer which were being eagerly read in Italy. His relation is

quite strange to the Life of Michelangelo by Ascanio Condivi, published in 1553. Out of jealousy, Vasari indulged in a true and quite unappealing case of plagiarism. He made quite close use of it and reported the details as if he knew them from personal experience. Nowhere did he mention the name of the author, other than among the list of pupils of Michelangelo. His reasons are not difficult to divine: Condivi had used the first edition of Vasari from three years earlier and made snide comments. It is apparent that the artist author could not enter unscathed into the business of literature. Although both of them report a certain anecdote about Giorgione, which suggests a mutual and probably verbal source, it is not likely that Vasari knew the short dialogue by Paolo Pino, published in northern Italy and announcing his own later publication. His relation to the *Description of the Netherlands* by Ludovico Guicciardini (1567) is not completely clear. His own first edition had provided a source for this, was lavishly praised there, but its copious survey was then nearly literally repeated by Vasari in his second edition of 1568. From what we know of Vasari, it cannot surprise us that he did not mention his source. Yet there are striking disparities here so that Schnaase, although there is no indication of this, was led to assume that Dominicus Lampsonius had been the source. One might equally well (and possibly with a greater justification) consider Lambert Lombard in this role. Kallab was no longer able to deal with this problem.

One can assume that as an architect, Vasari was familiar with the already extensive literature about that subject. He himself cited the writings of Vitruvius and the commentaries by Cesariano (Milanesi ed. Volume 4, p. 194), Barbaro (6, p. 364), Caporali (3, pp. 547, 694), Barbaro (6, p. 488), Serlio (5, p. 431), and Vignola (5, p. 432), while he already announced the work of Palladio which had then not yet appeared (7, p. 531). He was also familiar with the book by the Frenchman Jean Cousin or Cugini (5, p. 531), while the architectural measurements made by Baldassare Peruzzi and Bramantino were mentioned in passing (4, p. 604).

Indeed, Vasari did set a complete gang of assistants to work, who provided him with selected transcriptions and notes as it was common at that time. We have seen that Marcantonio Michiel had done the same, and shared one of these sources, Campagnola, with Vasari. We have already mentioned the contribution of Cosimo Bartoli about the Silvius Italicus manuscript at SS. Giovanni e Paolo in Venice, written completely in the style of a modern dissertation, as well as the letter from Lampsonius. We must assume that written contributions of this sort also arrived from the other companions we have already mentioned, from Fra Marco de' Medici in Verona and Danese Cattaneo, informing him about Pisanello and the other Veronese, from G. B. Grassi in Udine about the painters of Friuli, while Dominican circles must have provided the very meticulous information about Fra Bartolommeo. In the second edition, he himself still lamented that he did not have information from Venice (Life of Carpaccio). A surviving letter by Bombaso from Reggio about the local artist Prospero Clementi is of some interest in this connection (dated as late as 1572). It was that northern painter, Lambert Lombard from Liège who sent him information in 1565 about northern German and Netherlandish

artists. It is obvious that he also made thorough use of his otherwise extensive correspondence; he himself used material from his own correspondence with Salviati and above all Michelangelo.

2. The Historical Literature

In the second edition, Vasari made relatively thorough use of this. This is a subject which was treated quite extensively and astutely by Kallab - which he then presented in concordances. It was probably Borghini who provided him with selections from the *Lombard History* by Paul the Deacon; that author had already been printed in 1514 and the Italian translation by Domenichi had also appeared in 1518. He also consulted local chronicles of Florence, Siena (that by Andrea Dei) and Venice; some - such as the chronicle of S. Domenico in Prato which was already mutilated by the time of Vasari - has not survived. The biography of Pope Nicholas V by Manetti (which was not published until Muratori did so in his monumental collection) seems to have been available to him in an Italian version; in the Life of Gentile da Fabbriano he cited the lives of the Popes by Platina in a cursory way, as he did the chronicle by Biondo of Forlì. What is most remarkable and characteristic for the working method of Vasari is his use of the Florentine histories by Giovanni and Matteo Villani, which Kallab documented by printing the parallel passages side by side. Vasari lifted the passages relating to the monuments of Florence with much supplementation - and what has characteristically been ignored in the art historical secondary literature - included original additions within the texts of the early chronicles which he frequently repeated literally. This is particularly true of the names of fourteenth century artists which Vasari inserted into the anonymous texts with a free ranging imagination from the chronicles in order to fill out his meagre information. Nearly each and every one of these attributions has been shown to be mistaken in spite of the fact that the art historical secondary literature has and frequently continues to treat them as true. This process is probably more typical of Vasari's technique of writing historical romance.

Vasari also claimed to have consulted documents. He referred to the *Libro Vecchio* of the Florentine company of painters (Life of Giotto) and the *Libro dell'arte della Calimala* (Life of Andrea Pisano). Kallab paid particular attention to this question and has shown that Vasari cannot be said to have used documents in any true sense - as the learned Filippo Baldinucci did in a later completely different period - and that the opinion still asserted even today that his apparently authenticated data are based on now unknown or lost documentation is completely uncritical and incorrect. In spite of its apparent precision, the tables which Kallab diligently compiled demonstrate quite copiously how whimsically Vasari constructed his chronological data. On the other hand, he already paid close attention to inscriptions in the first, and then more so in the second edition. Since these were more closely related to the art works themselves, he felt a closer

relationship to them and recorded and reproduced them with an often fastidious accuracy.

3. Other Literature

Vasari, who had received good instruction and was unusually well educated for an artist of this time, was well familiar with the Italian national literature and exploited it for his art historical purposes. This is particularly true of Dante and the related scholastic literature; he was able to consult the commentary known as 'Ottimo' in the library of his friend Cosimo Bartoli among others. He also knew the novels of Sacchetti (then still unpublished) and inserted them variously into his work (*Life of Giotto, Life of Buffamalco*), as well as using Boccaccio, the Petrarch sonnets about Simone Martini and that of Giovanni della Casa on Titian as sources in his own manner. In the same way, he inserted sonnets by Michelangelo at the proper spot to characterize that figure whom he admired and honoured so greatly. These are also intended to testify to his credentials in writing about these subjects. In this he had been put on the defensive by diatribes such as that from Condivi, while he inserted and naturally also distorted his letters to serve his own purpose. As we have already seen, he also used letters from artists and others interested in the arts, interlacing them into his text. Aside from those of Salviati, one should also mention the letters of Sofonisba Anguisciola and from Raphael to Timoteo Viti. Vasari quoted a letter from Pietro Bembo to the Duke Cosimo I on the subject of Pisanello's medals which had been published in the *Epistolario* of Bembo in 1560.

Such a cursory survey reveals how eclectic and far-sighted Vasari was, and how he commanded sources in a way unprecedented in any other artist or author about art.

4. Verbal Traditions – The Knowledge of Monuments and Autopsy of Vasari

With his far flung connections, Vasari was able to thoroughly exploit the living oral traditions. Kallab has dealt with the role of these sources in some of the most extensive and fondly treated chapters of his posthumous book (pp. 271 ff and 390-391). Vasari was particularly able to animate contemporary artists; he received information from Francesco da San Gallo (about his brother Giuliano), from the Peruzzi pupil Francesco Senese about his master, from Andrea Palladio about Fra Giocondo from Verona, from Beccafumi about Jacopo della Quercia, from Bronzino about Pontormo, and from the father of Tribolo about his son. He allowed Girolamo da Carpi to narrate his own experiences in Rome during 1550; Vasari was very well familiar with the modern techniques of interviewing.

The most important aspect is of course the relation of Vasari to the primary sources and to the monuments themselves. In the course of his extensive travels throughout Italy, he was able to collect a mass of material never available to another artist either before or after. By contrast he was not able to gain access to the foreign

regions as did the *virtuosi* during the following periods, but instead he clung to the familiar territory in the traditional manner. That most important aspect in the life of Vasari, his itinerary, has also been established by Kallab on the basis of the most assiduous documentation of his biography (pp. 41-135 in 478 documents, pp. 247 ff, 375-376) with further material possibly awaiting discovery in the Vasari archive (cf. below). From the way in which Vasari was able to make use of portraits, engravings and above all drawings, one can see how he discovered the uses of sources hitherto neglected or unknown. His *Libro*, which he referred to frequently in the second edition, reveals his activities as a collector in this field. Remains of this can be recognized in collections such as Paris and the Albertina in Vienna on the basis of the frames which he himself drew.

One might reflect on the working technique of Vasari at this point. In spite of the fact that he occasionally consulted engravings as we have just noted, he did not have an abundance of illustrations at his disposal – as distinct from modern art historians. There can be no doubt that he must have made quick sketches and schematic records of pictorial compositions as mnemonic aids; such a schematic image seems for instance to have been before him in writing about the first set of doors by Lorenzo Ghiberti. His primary support must nevertheless have been his own innate artistic intuition. It was inevitable that this would introduce mistakes and distortions, but this distinguished him both from his predecessor Ghiberti and from that excellent art lover Marcantonio Michiel – as well as from the contemporary and past authors, such as Billi and the Magliabecchianus. We already know the extent to which he used written sources, and this medium often inserted itself blearily between the object and his often confirmed and unprepossessing vision as an artist. This occurred particularly in the second edition, by which time he was completely devoted to literary affectations (*literarische Allüren*). He never declined into the purely armchair production that had been typical of many of the Florentine compilations whose authors did not even make the effort to properly examine the monuments in their most immediate surroundings, and who continued their work in following the exemplum or written source in the medieval manner; yet he also often relied on second hand sources. There are cases in which he chose to repeat a phrase from a source rather than describe something he had himself seen. In describing the second set of doors by Ghiberti for example, he had the text by Ghiberti himself before him, as one can clearly tell, but then expanded this with original observations and formal judgments from his own materials (which then naturally create a dissonance in relation to the work of Ghiberti). Here again, his original view of art as well as that derived from others often intervened in very strange ways; it occurred that he would describe iconographical details in the work of an older artist which in fact do not exist, but are common in the more widespread compositional schemata.

III. The Historical Vision and Working Technique of Vasari

1. The Renaissance Concept of History

Without at least devoting a few words to the concept of history that was typical of his time and its difference to our own, it is not possible to appraise Vasari's conception of history – the necessary starting point for any study of his work. There is no lack of material: the Renaissance itself produced an entire series of books dealing with the subject; an analysis and survey of these can be found in Maffei, *I trattati dell'arte storica al rinascimento fino al secolo XVII*, Naples 1897. The earliest of these treatises was that of Robortella from Udine (1548) which appeared just shortly before the work of Vasari. The five books by Agostino Mascardi from Genoa, *Dell'arte Historica*, first printed in Rome in 1636 (a new edition by Adolfo Bartoli, Florence: Le Monnier 1859) were especially exhaustive and typical, still completely compiled according to the principles of the earlier periods.

Their greatest difference to the modern point of view is their conception of history as an art, taken over by the Renaissance from classical antiquity. It is remarkable that this idea has again emerged in the greatest Italian philosopher of our own time, Benedetto Croce, albeit under very different conditions, and more as a transitional phase. For the Renaissance concept of art also derived from antiquity and was very different and conceived in a far broader sense than ours. This did not belong to the sphere of expression, where we would today situate the essential nature of art, but rather to that of impressions and of its effects. The Horatian dictum of the goals of art to amuse and instruct proves itself again in this context. This had already been characterized in antiquity by the anecdote of Thucydides as the mentor of the orator and statesman Demosthenes, and to this period which had conceived of the state as a work of art (and who is not reminded of the observations of Jacob Burckhardt!) the practical meaning of history must have been particularly clear. The Renaissance emphatically endorsed the epithet of Cicero about 'magistra vitae' and 'lux veritatis' (*De oratore* 2); history was to be the teacher of humanity, extending the mirror of 'what actually occurred' - as opposed to poetry – but like poetry it was also veiled in the rich clothing of rhetoric to insure its effect. This is the reason for the ornamental elements as we know them so well from the ancient Greek and Roman historians, the intermittent inclusion of speeches (and letters) functioning not merely to this end but also illuminating the character of the protagonists. This point of view was definitely adopted by the Renaissance. The naïve narrative bustling with vivid details as it was typical of the medieval chronicles, came to be replaced by Livy as a model, and this can be seen already in the work of the Frenchman Froissart. The historians of the new Florence make their appearance draped in togas. What a Michelozzo sought to achieve in contemporaneous sculpture can also be sensed in the writings of Poggio Bracciolini and Leonardo Bruni. There was an immediate trend to establish rules for historical writing. In his dialogue *Il Lasca* (published Florence 1584), Salviati discussed the

question of rhetorical ornamentation and came to the express conclusion that *bugie* were acceptable since they appear more useful than the simple truth since the historian, like the poet, must address humanity as it should be and not as it in fact is. This is a *conchetto* which patently alluded to its origins in the ancient theories of art.

If one wishes to properly understand Vasari as historian, this must be the point of departure. The excellent Milanese still treated Vasari as if he were writing in our own time, and praised and blamed him according to current demands and experiences: this is the absolutely wrong approach and yet another indication that art historical research is completely helpless in the face of its sources! Of all of the historical sciences, there can be no doubt that the history of art is taking the longest time to develop beyond its infancy: it has no more learned the concept of distance to [or objectivity in terms of] the sources than did the period of Vasari itself, and Kallab might have been correct to characterize the persistent method as follows: 'Anybody able to use Vasari's statements in more than one connection attributes the value of a primary source to them; if they do not live up to the expectations, then their author is chided as sloppy or mendacious. Both the agreement and objection to his views is the result of facts selected no more than whimsically. His work is never seen as anything other than a source of historical materials, the views and reliability of which are judged either according to preconceived notions or by general impressions.'

It is telling that the incomplete manuscript of Kallab published in 1908 presents the earliest attempt to coherently characterize the personality of Vasari as an author; Scoti-Bertinelli was doomed to fail by the very fact that he limited his observations to the philological and literary aspect, and omitted the art historical element. It was Kallab again who in his insightful and profound review showed that even this was only very partially achieved. Even such an important question of the artistic terminology of Vasari awaits scholarly attention. Aside from the publication of Obernitz to be discussed below, there has been nothing other than the somewhat spleeny essay by the Englishman John Grace Freeman, whose has given a lexicographic analysis of one of the most important terms, that of *maniera*. Kallab had also begun his study of these questions, but his early death unfortunately prevented their completion.

We cannot here make it our purpose to speak of the literary style of Vasari; it must suffice to observe that Italians consider his biographies to constitute one of the classical monuments of their literary prose. We have already noted that this refers to the first edition of his book which is composed with incomparably greater discipline and artistry. Vasari was himself a true Tuscan breathing the 'refined' air of his ancient native city of Arezzo, but equalled his compatriot and fellow artist Cellini even less in the power of his diction than the force of his personality. He himself occasionally stressed that he worked with the 'penna di disegnatore,' that he wrote 'as a painter for other painters,' but in keeping with his semi-educated background he presented grand literary pretensions, especially in the second edition, where he

appeared as an author, known and celebrated throughout Italy, arousing the occasional objection. He was arrogant and condescending in describing old Ghiberti as one 'more fit to wield the chisel' as having strayed from the dignity of the objective historical practice to the crude familiarity of a first person narrative, and using the history of earlier artists as an excuse to portray his own life. Such an objection is incorrect in this form and can only be confirmed in very limited conditions, in any case revealing that Vasari had no more than a superficial opinion of the *Commentaries* of the older artist, and that he did not understand their essential qualities. Above all of this it seems paradigmatic that such a vivid and often graceful narrator as Vasari should tell the story of his own life in such sketchy and colourless terms. Vasari was more a writer than Cellini; this can be seen from his favourite habit of long winded moralizing introductions. In such situations, old Ghiberti had helped himself with allusions to the honoured ancient literature in a way that strikes us as naively medieval.

2. The Historical Intentions of Vasari

From what we have just seen, it is clear that Vasari was completely in accord with the assumptions of his own time. In the preface to his first edition of 1550 he announced that his stories about artists were intended to serve as memorials and to be practical. This is the Ciceronian requirement of history as 'lex veritatis, magistra vitae, vita memoriae' as it was accepted by the entire Renaissance. Similarly in the 'Conclusiones': it is his intention to collect material for the coming generations 'dilettando e giovendo' – the old Horatian formula of *delectare* and *prodesse*. It is obvious that Vasari conceived of history as art, completely in keeping with the contemporary demand on the poet. This also delineated the two great groups of readers to whom he addressed himself: the educated layman and the artist, thinking primarily of the latter as professional associates. This toga style in the ancient manner is particularly characteristic of the first edition. The dignity of historical writing is very important to him; this might have been the reason for his strange criticism of the personal element in the style of Ghiberti. He remained very conscious and aware of what distinguished him from the earlier and contemporary collections of formless excerpts of a purely literary character (such as Antonio Billi and the Anonimo Magliabecchiano); he was very careful to prevent his narrative from becoming a pure inventory, a naked catalogue and was conscious of pursuing a pragmatic historical trend, itself following a genre which had been developed and become influential in antiquity. He was interested in the motives animating the artists, and the recognition of these motives was supposed to elevate us to a greater practical wisdom both in a basic technical as well as a more general sense ('Proemio' to the second part). Like the old Ghiberti before him, and all of the Renaissance generally, he was following the model of Pliny, that great armoury which had preserved the details of the history of art in antiquity. His only actual predecessor in this among the moderns had been the very Ghiberti whom he had disparaged so

unjustifiably and superficially, and who had a profound and direct relation to the artistic objects and provided a vision far superior to Vasari. One should not forget that the earliest attempt at a literary and biographical appraisal of style on European soil took place in the medieval Provence, in that land and among the people who had the very greatest importance for the literary culture of Italy in particular - and whose refined culture became the first to lay the foundations of a fundamental poetics of style. It makes no difference that neither Ghiberti nor Vasari were directly familiar with the thirteenth century collection of biographies of the troubadours (edited by Mahn, Berlin 1853). In a crude and anecdotal form, this presented the first attempt in the field of the arts to pursue the source of all true poetry and the experience of the poet - almost in the sense of the 'occasional poetry' of Goethe. The interesting institution of the 'razos', the introductions preceding the song in which the singer himself would evoke the conditions of its origins, gave rise to imaginative descriptions of the life of the performer themselves, persistently concentrating on the artistic creation itself, just as this came to form the content of these biographies. In the visual arts we can see an influence from the famous artistic 'razos' in the miniatures of the Manesse song manuscript.

In approaching the question of the credibility of Vasari, one can never forget his intellectual origins and point of view. To do him justice it is very naturally necessary (although not realized by art historians) to consider his historical narrative technique rather than measure him according to the standards of a modern historian. However much of his work appears to us today as historical forgery, it is not possible to demonstrate bad faith or conscious mendacity on his part. It is very true that he moulded his material according to his goals, however remote these might seem to us today. This is an important point since contemporaries as well as later critics have accused him of being partisan, spiteful and mendacious. A prominent example of this can be seen in the venomous annotations made by Federico Zuccaro in a copy of the *Lives*. Of course such objections were not completely unjustified. The Tuscan, Florentine and ultimately Aretine 'campanilismo' of Vasari is plain enough to see (particularly in the second edition), and his sense of objectivity and clarity of vision lag behind the old Ghiberti. Yet Vasari did foster the goal of being a 'scrittore fedele e verace' (Life of Pontormo). He only then became partially or completely disingenuous when entering into the actual sphere of journalism, as was the case with his relation to Condivi. One can understand that he was not a professional author, but rather an artist who approached his subject with fixed opinions. From time immemorial there have been greater critics who have lodged biased objections against artists who were alien or opposed to their own intellectual preferences. Because of the aura surrounding Goethe for instance, one might accept statements from him which would not be accepted from any other - such as his reference to the 'hideous greatness' of Dante. By his Tuscan ancestry, Vasari felt all too full of a natural sense of leadership and made truly pejorative and ignorant judgments about Bolognese, Neapolitans or Lombards (Dosso). One should recall how difficult it still was for a figure such as

Jacob Burckhardt for instance to do justice to the Venetian artists. In the first edition, an artist such as Palma Vecchio was in fact portrayed in a negative light. His own admitted lack of source material about northern Italy surely played a part in this, and in the second edition there was an impulse to rectify or at least to ameliorate this, as can be seen in the case of Palma. His portrayal of Sodoma is unjustified. He rejected Boccacino for purely personal reasons (the negative attitude that artist held toward Michelangelo). He did nonetheless manage later to tactfully eliminate or at least mitigate some of the elements of gossip from the Florentine 'maldicenza' as they sprouted wildly from the 'marmi', those benches occupied by the mockers on the cathedral square. An example of this is the story he originally told of Lucrezia, the wife of his former teacher Andrea del Sarto, who was in fact still living (who died only in 1570!).

It is nevertheless striking how even-handedly and equitably he treated contemporaries such as Cellini or Bandinelli; they themselves did not always return the compliment. This is particularly true of Cellini. Vasari's strong sense of self-importance should not be held against him. Vasari was a member of the older generation which had been inwardly broken by the reaction to the decrees of the Council of Trent, although not to the extent of a Tasso, Ammanati or some of those. He was indeed one of the most important and revered artists of that circle. An impartial reference from northern Italy (Pino) testifies to the excitement with which his great work was awaited. It presents a monument for all times, unaffected by its partially detrimental historical effect which has lasted down into our own days. Especially in the second edition, where he was no longer a beginner, Vasari was fully conscious of this, and it soon made him a model for those north of the Alps. Occasionally he expressed himself very naively - this is the case for instance where says that the tomb of Andrea del Sarto was damaged by the removal of the busts and that he himself in his writings has set him a more permanent monument than that of the carved stone. In the first edition, he had more carefully expressed it 'for a certain length of time' (*per qualche tempo*); in the second edition he eliminated this and replaced it with the more bold phrase *per molti secoli* - and was correct in this!

3. The Historical Working Technique and Stylistic Criticism of Vasari in Detail

We have seen that Vasari's historical goals were consciously pragmatic and governed by artistic intentions. He sought to depict the lives of the artists in their totality, combining the external circumstances of their biographies with its main subject and greatest interest to him - their creative production. In doing this, he assumed the method which the Renaissance had adopted from ancient historiography. As we have already said, this method can be made clearer if we compare the techniques of the recent historical novels. What is the material at its disposal? These are primary and secondary sources taken together and treated equally, in a way quite distinct from Ghiberti. However much the literary or personal filter might have sullied and distorted his view, this consisted of

monuments which he had himself examined on the one hand, and on the other a largely anecdotal written tradition which had mushroomed to enormous proportions since the days of Ghiberti – the latter having almost completely escaped this and relied almost exclusively on objects he had himself seen while consciously relegating trivial anecdotalism to a minor space. Actual documents are still almost completely beyond the purview of Vasari.

For this reason, a great importance is assumed by the question not merely of his knowledge of original monuments, but of how Vasari pursued what we would today call stylistic criticism. Although this continues to be done, it very naturally goes without saying that we cannot place him in the context of one of our contemporary art historical university seminars. Vasari was not in possession of such acumen for stylistic judgment as Ghiberti, who had been trained in a large consolidated tradition organized along given workshop practices and faced more material than merely the Trecento. He was forced to come to terms with the far more abundant production of his own time, a disjointed and fermenting state of affairs and succumbed to common views, widespread feelings and obscure intuitions (*vorgefunde Schulmeinungen, vorgefundenes Gefühl und dunkle Erinnerungen*). This can account for the numerous contradictions not merely between his first and second editions – in the nearly two intervening decades Vasari almost became another person – but even those within each edition. He was very well aware that the precise observations of individuals provide the basis and his intelligent and discerning painter's eye often guided him well, even if he did not match Ghiberti in this – whose artistic gifts were also greater. An occasional observation which has also already occurred in Filarete is worth recalling. He compared (at the conclusion of his book) the artist who trains his eye in the study of earlier art to the employee of a chancellery (*cancelliere*) who is easily able to recognize the date and style of earlier types of handwriting. He became aware of the individual manual habits as they develop through the long development toward dexterity, the actual basis of each individual style as it stands behind the 'Morelli method' in our own time. It is natural that he would not propose any change to the arduous process which led to these results. Both he and the period in which he lived were lacking in any of the prerequisites that would have been necessary to do so – these were only to be seized incrementally by the historical sciences. It is surprising to see how well Vasari observed the impact of individual expression within the objective 'period style.' One example of this is the characterization of Greek statuary (in the introductory chapter on architecture) according to the *maniera* of their heads, hair arrangements, the depiction of noses in terms of vertical surfaces (*quadro*), or his overly sharp caricature of the 'Gothic' style. The felicity of some of his isolated observations on individual *maniera* is generally overshadowed or sullied by the cursory attention paid them by Vasari and by his dominant literary goals. A comparison of the two editions can often reveal strange things. In the first edition he attributed the side portal of the cathedral in Florence to Jacopo della Quercia for stylistic reasons – although it is documented as the work of Nanni di Banco. Having learned that this

was a mistake, he simply omitted the entire passage from the revision. In other cases he was far more naïve. After attributing a panel to Giorgione in the first edition, he bluntly stated in the second that anybody associating it with Giorgione is ignorant of that master!

For Vasari, the most important aspect was the vivid portrait of his artistic personalities, and his method of proceeding is made apparent in the added portraits as they were concisely and programmatically included in the second edition, frequently drawn from the most convenient source for any whimsical reason. He was not far removed either chronologically or intellectually from that naïve mentality of joy in the concrete example which led in Hartman Schedel's *Weltchronik*, or even later publications, to the use of randomly chosen portraits of completely other subjects or the use of one and the same image to characterize more than one place or person – still a very medieval use of symbolism.

In the structure of his biographies, Vasari was geared toward the totality and deployed the individual bricks in various ways according to his particular needs as they appeared to him. He reconstructed this totality as if he were reporting as a contemporary, and included such intimate details as could be known only to a direct witness. To properly understand this, it is again necessary to recall the technique of Renaissance historiography and that of more recent historical fiction. This aspect strikes us as strange today, one which we have experienced through positivist historiography with its demand for portraying the facts 'as they indeed occurred'. This element is represented by the speeches of the protagonists, and by the inscriptions from the tombs of the artists, which were often published in epigrammatic form with a summary of their work, anticipating and representing the portraits of his own second edition to some degree. They had from the beginning been conceived as rhetorical ornament, and in many cases, Vasari commissioned them from authors among his friends. In the second edition, we have noted that he became more self critical. In the Life of Ghiberti he eliminated the speech by Brunelleschi before the jury at the competition for the baptistery doors, explaining his withdrawal and that of Donatello (who was too young to have been present). He also omitted a great number of the false epitaphs. On the whole though, his system remained unchanged, and probably could not have been changed. This is also particularly true of another typical element of his technique and of the widely travelled virtuosi of the Mannerist period, which provided the chronological armature for his entire presentation. These are the itineraries of the artists which can be demonstrated to have been constructed artificially ad hoc, even for many who lived close to him in time; they often contradict the facts. Since Vasari, in keeping with his mode of narrative, was also given to relating the external to the internal lives of his heroes, their fate and their creations, this 'pragmatism' assumes a strong moralizing component. Since Angelo Gaddi was considered to have belonged to a famous family in the city who had attained a certain wealth, his artistic achievement was somewhat belittled. As Kallab has tabulated them (p. 237), the statistics surrounding the cause of the artist's death as Vasari portrayed them is very curious

in this regard, and not without an element of humour. He occasionally gave an actual clinical analysis, even for artists of a far earlier time, about whom no such intimate details could possibly be known. This device did allow him to make his presentation appear more vivid. It led him to such strange things as the story that Andrea Castagno murdered Domenico Veneziano out of material envy (*Brotneid*) – a complete impossibility since the victim died later than his putative murderer. The authority of Vasari caused the memory of an upright and competent artist to remain besmirched until very recent archival research could set the record straight. Naturally, the entire story had already been related in the compilation by Billi and this is the reason for its repetition in Vasari. Yet it was he who expanded the scant allusion of his source into a broad sort of fresco which could not fail to impress posterity. However the dramatic suspense of his narration should have raised suspicion. This imaginative Ulysses should keep us on our guard. In cases where the facts so obviously contradicted him and he was forced to retreat, as so often occurred in the second edition, it is interesting to observe how cleverly he extricated himself and always maintained his pragmatic stance (*unter Wahrung seiner Pragmatik*). In the first edition he had attributed the program of the Giotto frescoes in Assisi to Dante. In the second edition, after having learned that Dante had been dead by that time, he innocently assured us that there is still a grain of truth in this. Such things continue to be discussed among friends, and Giotto simply persisted with his memory of Dante. This method obviously led him to merge diverse artistic personalities into a single figure, even those who lived in separate periods of time. This occurred with Maso and the so-called Giottino, who was much younger. In this particular case, the confusion had already begun in the sources used by Vasari, such as Billi (cf. Schlosser 'Prolegomena,' ('Prolegomena to a Future Edition of Ghiberti' Lorenzo Ghibertis Denkwürdigkeiten Prolegomena zu einer künftigen Ausgabe," Jahrbuch der K. K.Zentralkommission für Kunst- und historische Denkmale, Volume 4, 1910, pp. 105-211 and p. 245). The Venetian Buon was also conflated with the far earlier Bonamico.

When motives of personal or local patriotism were involved Vasari allowed his imagination to run wild. Both of these were contained in his very detailed presentation of the figure of his putative artistic ancestor Lazzaro, and we cannot be careful enough in our reading. Although in the second edition he showed himself to be far more careful on many points, this is still true of the second edition. When he occasionally prefaced such details with a 'si dice' (it is said) in the first edition, he later simply proceeded merrily. After having originally appeared as a simple painter, his semi-mythical compatriot Margaritone of Arezzo later advanced to being a universal artist in the Renaissance sense, active also as a sculptor and architect. From his use of the chronicle of Villani, we are already aware of his unscrupulousness in matters from these earlier periods. He revealed the same tendency still apparent in Italian city guide books to attribute any somewhat superior work to the most famous local master. When Spinello Aretino appeared as a prodigy, this occurred in the same spirit, and seems to have been a pure invention

ad maiorem gloriam patriae. The attractiveness of his joy in imaginative story telling should not lead us to attribute his lively and graciously related fictional interjections to any actual experience or objective tradition. All critical study of Vasari must fundamentally accept nothing more than that which is rendered completely credible by a strict documentary tradition or the most painstaking stylistic analysis. The romantically ornamented story of the youth of Fra Filippo Lippi from the second edition provides but one of many examples. The goal of Vasari always remained the most vivid *rilievo* for his figures. This is true even of the names he gave them. He stood in as the godfather of his artists or at least confirmed many mistaken traditions with his authority. Rumohr had mistakenly accused our valiant Ghiberti of having given Giotto an incorrect patronymic (di Bondone) and established an imaginary hypothesis. It remained for the most recent archival research to brilliantly prove the reliability of the earlier author. With Vasari, things are different. The early artist documented as Cenni (i.e. Bencivenni) Cimabue was already given the first name of Giovanni by Filippo Villani and Billi; with the allusion to the patron of Florence seems tangible – but this name did not gain a canonical aura until Vasari. His 'Vittorio' Pisanello was not returned his actual name of Antonio until archival publication of the most recent years.

Clearly, Vasari possessed nothing of the prudent reserve of a Ghiberti. Anecdotal and fictional traditions were no less valuable to him than dry documentation, indeed they certainly appeared more valuable since they enlivened things. It was along these lines that the genre of the novella surrounding the subject of an artist as it had been so abundantly developed in Florence achieved the status of a source. As we have already mentioned, he introduced entire unpublished novels by Sacchetti into his work. He adduced historical data from them. Such is the origin for instance of Andrea Tafi as the supposed teacher of Buffamalco. Vasari revealed how much typology in the medieval sense is still involved in this anecdotal genre. The most strikingly typical fiction of the discovery by the older artistic master of the young genius tending sheep had first been told as an attractive idyll by Ghiberti in his story of the youth of Giotto – one of the few cases in which Ghiberti included an anecdotal tradition. In the book by Billi, the same story was told of Andrea Castagno. Vasari repeated both from his sources, and in the first edition applied the anecdote to Andrea Sansovino and in the second to Domenico Beccafumi. As we have already noted, this is in fact almost like repeating an impression from one and the same wood block to indicate the greatest conceivable variety of city views in the chronicle by Hartmann Schedel. We might mention in passing that this same anecdote was very recently told and believed in relation to one of our contemporaries, Giovanni Segantini, until an authentic refutation was made. During the world war we experienced the strangest examples of legendary repetition. It is instructive to note that Christian Hülsen has recently shown (*Byzantinisch-neugriechische Jahrbücher*, ed. Bee, 2, 1921, 453) the story of an incident supposed to have occurred during the erection of the obelisque on the Square of St.

Peter's in Rome by Domenico Fontana (1586) had already been told in connection with the Atmeidan obelisque in Constantinople thirty years earlier!

As Vasari told it, the story of the 'invention' of oil painting by Jan van Eyck belongs to the same sphere of 'historia altera'. The Renaissance devoted entire books to theories surrounding inventors and could not conceive of the general facts of the development in any other way than in personal terms. It is no more necessary than to allude to the fact that the portrait belongs to this sphere of anecdotalism and that it was a particular occasion for the formation of myths. One curious example can demonstrate how such things have continued into our own time. In his painting of the *Last Judgment* in the Ludwigskirche in Munich, Peter Cornelius is supposed to have included Goethe and Schiller among the figures of the damned – the sort of fable born in a sacristy, which still required refuting by Ernst Förster the pupil and biographer of Cornelius. It demonstrates how easily fables and legends grow around art works and how we must remain particularly aware of this.

IV. The General Historical Vision of Vasari

This question is dealt with primarily in the preambles to the entire work, those to the three individual sections as well as in the 'conclusionone' at the end. We are already aware that Vasari did not establish his own concept of historical development – his predecessors had shown the way and cleared the path – yet he did pursue it consistently and by his authority and still persistent influence led it to become the common position in the following period. This point of view is very optimistic and, as Kallab has already quite rightly stressed, distinguishes itself very sharply from the way in which Machiavelli for instance viewed his contemporaries as constituting a sharp decline from the golden age of republican freedoms and dignity. This immediately recalls the Christian philosophy of history since St. Augustine, contradicting the ancient pagan pessimism and placing its faith in an absolute progression, projected into an endless distance - an idea to which we must return further on. For Vasari, the present is the period which produced the greatest artist of all times and nations, the peak and the crown, and we have reiterated how the description of the career of this unique individual [Michelangelo] provided the impressive and harmonious conclusion of the first edition. After such a brilliant revelation, the idea of decline in the form of epigones is quite overt.

Of course, Vasari borrowed this image of organically natural growth and flowering from earlier philosophy. With the concepts of golden, silver and bronzen Latinity (in an albeit declining and 'pessimistic' form), it had already been applied over a long period by popular Roman authors such as Florus and Velleius Paterculus to the life of nations and states. Yet, as far as one can tell, the consistent extension of this conceit to the entire history of the visual arts seems to have been completely original to Vasari and to have exercised a very long influence. This determined the architectonic structure of his work. Already in the first edition, it is the three ages ('età' or also 'maniere') of this development which provided for the

three parts of the *Lives*. Vasari wished only to describe the three periods of the 'Rinascimento'. It is well known that he was pursuing an idea that had been developed earlier by the Humanists and Ghiberti. This was the idea of the 'reborn' art which had died at the end of antiquity, since the 'medieval' period has no justification according to this consistent view, according to which art in the Renaissance sense was understood to involve spatial illusion and models from nature, the 'naturale'. In this form, the famous expression 'rinascità' occurred here for the first time in the literature of art in two places - within the general 'proemio' ('restaurazione e per dire meglio rinascità' - 'il progresso della sua rinascità,' ed. Milanesi 1, 223). Its criterion was to be seen in the progressive mastery of the 'naturale' and the increasing freedom of the 'maniera', a question which shall occupy us later on. In this way his presentation structured itself automatically. The earliest period (Part one of the *Lives*) subsumes the beginning, the childhood, timid liberation from the medieval distorted images about Cimabue, the Pisani, Giotto, Arnolfo on to the end of the fourteenth century. This is followed by the second period (Part two) with the youth and preparation, from Quercia, Masaccio, Donatello, Ghiberti and Brunelleschi to the end of the fifteenth century. A total illusion of natural qualities was pursued through arduous studies of anatomy and perspective, and stylistic perfection by the application of rules (Regelmäßigkeit - regola, ordine, misura), but the two were still not joined to an internal unity. For this reason these works appear brittle, dry ('maniera secca') and smacking of the model. The artists were reproducing only what they saw and nothing more. It is particularly instructive to see what Vasari said about the 'manner' of Bellini. Not until the third period (Part three) was the complete zenith reached. This was the period of efflorescence and maturity finding its highpoint in the 'età d'oro' of Pope Leo X, the Cinquecento, and was characterized by the names of a Giorgione, Titian, Andrea del Sarto, Fra Bartolommeo, but above all by the triumvirate already ascertained by Paolo Giovio - Leonardo, Raphael and Michelangelo. As we know, Vasari stressed the last of these as the highest peak which could no longer be superseded and which antiquity itself could not match; he was called the 'divino', in an echo from the genius doctrine of Neo-Platonic philosophy. This period achieved the perfection of 'disegno' (in the broadest sense), what could simply be called the 'perfetta maniera'. It was based in the completely free manipulation of the natural model of 'licenza', which dispenses grace and variety, replacing timid copying with the 'far di pratica' (or 'di maniera' to use a phrase still current in Italy) - that is to say freely plying the treasury of studies from nature. In a very fine and profound passage, Albrecht Dürer from Germany spoke in this connection of the concealed treasures of the heart. The second resulting advantage was a technical liberation of painting, revealing itself in a previously unimaginable speed of production, as Vasari on the basis of his own work stressed this as an achievement of the time. The scene of action shifted from Florence to Rome, with the discoveries of antiquities made in the early 16th century of the Laocoon, the Apollo Belvedere, the Hercules

Torso, the Cleopatra making the grand style of the ancients more apparent and inaugurating a new era.

However lavish Vasari was in praising his own time and immediate environment, he was nonetheless possessed with an unclear feeling that even in purely theoretical terms the zenith of a development as he posited it can only be followed by a period of decline. He provided a particularly generous amount of space for this fourth 'età', for his own contemporaries, in the second edition; and it was here that he expressed his feeling of being an epigone. He himself stood at the centre of what later came to be called the period of Mannerism, and clearly recognized its shortcomings as well as its merits. He was not unaware of the all too slavish devotion to a single model in one artist considered superior to all else – it was not without reason that Jacob Burckhardt described Michelangelo as the fateful figure (*Schicksalsmann*) of Italian art. Vasari criticized the patchwork character of such art, its inorganic conflation of motifs taken from outside models as one of the most intrusive qualities of his time. He charged a Pontormo with copying Dürer, adding that the 'Flemings' had nothing better to do than come to Italy to discard their own style as quickly as possible. He was struck by the hankering for pathos at any price, the introduction of exaggerated and therefore vacuous gestures such as figures baring their teeth or wrinkling their brows in the most indifferent and incongruous situations. He referred to the 'Satanic grimaces' of the Apostles as painted by a Rosso Fiorentino and occasionally characterized the 'ariaccie spaventate' of a Beccafumi quite felicitously. Like many of the 'Mannerists' Beccafumi was also among the greatest draftsmen – and this quality was also quite visible in the 'strafare' and the 'sforzare' of nature as in the muscle men by Battista Franco. He was an insightful man even if his own paintings are very much of their own time. They are also not the source of his importance as an artist, which is rather to be seen in his work as an architect and decorator. Among the most brilliant achievements of late Renaissance Florence, his are among the greatest. We are now again slowly gaining sufficient distance and a proper attitude toward the peculiar stylistic problems of Mannerism, not merely as a preliminary to the Baroque but also in its own right – aside from its achievements in the field of portraiture which have already been recognized. To a certain degree of course, Vasari was correct in his image of a withering within the development. To remain with this metaphor, it was necessary for the flowers of the High Renaissance to pass in order to make space for the heavy fruit of the abundant autumnal period of the 'barocco', and this placed Vasari and his contemporaries on an obscure and uncomfortable transitional stage.

This bright aspect of the 'rinascimento' faces the darkness of the 'Middle Ages.' We are already familiar with the development of this conceit; Vasari did no more than adopt it, but he became the first in a long sequence extending into Romanticism to speak of the horribly 'dark' medieval period, the 'tenebre'.

The tripartite structure of historical development was repeated in that of world history. The 'maniera antica' of the ancient world was followed by the

'maniera vecchia', the low ebb of the middle period, and the 'maniera moderna' which replaced it and mirrored the first. Neither of these concepts are original, having already been chosen at the end of the 15th century as pen names for two artists (L'Antico and il Moderno).

The historical construction of antiquity had also been developed and brought into a coherent form before Vasari. We know that the earlier Tuscan authors particularly emphasized the Etruscan element; the native of the ancient Etruscan city of Arretium could not possibly have ignored this. Vasari indeed reported the discovery of the famous Chimaera during 1554 and made interesting statements about the imitations of ancient Aretine vases by his grandfather. In the end, this was no more than a patriotic episode, for the grand development was linked to the three main centres of ancient art: Egypt, Greece, Rome. Here again, there was a rising curve to be discerned in the development. Roman art achieved the highest point and was superior to the Egyptian and Greek preparatory periods, a view which is well known to have persisted into the time of Winckelmann. After this the naturally necessary decline and dissolution began with the period of Constantine the Great. It is remarkable to observe how Vasari treated the beginnings of a lack of style among the reliefs on the Arch of Constantine in such a similar way to the views expressed in the exposé attributed to Raphael (cf. Book 2 above). That also remained a dogma until the brilliant analysis of Alois Riegl in most recent times.

The conception of a 'theory of Barbarians' was essentially propagated by Vasari. In this though, he was also not being original. His words are based on those of Manetti's *Life of Brunelleschi* and its remarkable historical excursus on architecture (cf. Book 2 above). With the selections from Paulus Diaconus, we do however know that he made a serious effort to inform himself particularly about the architecture of this period. He produced a distortion of the medieval style, the 'infelice secolo', which contains truths precisely in its caricatured aspects: the typical lack of a sense of space, the linear manner, figures standing on the points of their toes, the 'occhi spiritati' etc. All such things could only have appeared as roughnesses and imperfections to Vasari ('rozzezze' and 'goffezze'), whose conceptions survive to this very day - as one can understand this of the people of the Renaissance with their completely opposite orientation toward questions of space and light, at the pinnacle of reaction against this art of their ancestors. A moderate praise of this 'maniera greca' and 'tedesca' occurred only occasionally with regard to its technical aspects (the mosaics of S. Giovanni). The two strongest motivations, or more cautiously stated symptoms, of this reaction had already been stressed by Vasari himself in the return to natural models as he observed it at work since the 14th century, and in the influence of antiquity which dovetailed with his idea of the third great liberated style in Rome - occurring just as ancient statuary was being discovered.

Vasari's presentation is dominated by the conception of development, not as it can be found in post-Kantian philosophy or the modern natural sciences, but

veiled in a mythologizing image of natural organic growth, fertility, blossoming and wilting, derived as we have seen from antiquity. This however included two currents. First of all, there was that of the pessimistically tinged pagan conception of history with its idea of a better original state, and the present showing no more than a regressive development, as it had already been proclaimed by Hesiod in his mythological poem about the four stages of the world, but also adopted by Christianity in its conception of the earthly paradise. Ultimately this was a version of the universal folklore motif that humanity had been larger, more beautiful, better, healthier and more long lived in earlier times, just as it resurfaced again later in the philanthropic age of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and also at the genesis of linguistics with the idea of an original language. Aside from this, there was also the ancient Christian historical view of a progressive development (before the law, under the law, state of grace) from the same point to a state of perfection in the distance (St. Augustine *City of God*), which also reappeared in the Romantic philosophy of history with Schelling, Hegel and all socialist and communist visions. It is very odd how these two currents were merged during the Renaissance and in its most typical protagonist in Vasari. This period with its joy in the present and self confidence in having triumphed over a 'Barbarian' past, embraced such progress most vigorously and announced that its own time and the work of its artists provided the pinnacle of all art. It became inevitable that this would lead to a melancholic autumnal sense of being a later imitator, comparable to that pessimism from antiquity, and Vasari occasionally expressed this quite openly. In this way he cited an epigrammatic statement of Michelangelo, doctored for his own purpose, about the work of Valerio Vicentino the talented renewer of the ancient technique of gem carving. The hour of death had come for this art form, since no progress beyond it was possible. Unique art-political thoughts follow from this. In the conclusion to the first edition of his work, which was originally addressed to the artists of his own day but later changed, Vasari announced that the most prominent purpose of the history of art lies in showing the great examples of earlier art to the young practitioners so that they might be motivated to make these appear 'men chiare e men belle'. The pedagogical reason for the 'magistra vitae' is placed here in an unusual light – it presents the negation of all truly historical study in our sense. The strong tendency of this work became clear amid the artistic activity of its own time, growing from this and consequentially finding its apotheosis in the career of Michelangelo (who stood at the end of the first edition).

The idea of a progressive development transfuses the entire work of Vasari's *Lives* in this peculiar form. Leonardo had distinguished the 'vile imitatorum pecus' from the great pathfinders Giotto and Masaccio, and found the criterion of decadence in that imitation which turns a son of nature into a grandson. For Vasari the Mannerist, imitation had a completely different meaning. For him the chronologically later figure is nearly always the more progressive, standing at a higher spot in a certain sense since they disposed over greater artistic means. This was the appraisal and overvaluation of the technical aspect in this period of

virtuosity. This placed Stefano above Giotto in some manner, and he was himself surpassed by Spinello Aretino in his drawing and colour. Nino Pisano is a 'better' master than Andrea, not stylistically, but because he was younger and had a greater reservoir of common experience at his disposal - a pure postulation not emanating from any analysis of the artistic evidence. It is not superfluous to mention that many obscurely conceived 'sequential rows' devised by art historians in our own time include the same technical superstition.

What might be called the mythological thinking of Vasari remained thoroughly within the character of his time. The inventor theory of the Renaissance played a great part in this. Collective artistic facts were readily turned into individual origins. This allowed Duccio to be celebrated as the 'inventor' of the floor mosaic, the Gothic S-curve of Parri Spinelli was explained by his personal joy in bravura. A grain of truth is present in this.

As little as Vasari was a strict dogmatist and however colourful his historical construction glistens, he remained completely conscious of this and touched on ideas being vigorously discussed today. The expression and concept of his 'rinascimento' was of course borrowed from earlier authors; he did nonetheless seem to have sensed the existence of typical developments, the apparent repetition of similar historical forms or ways (*Daseinsformen*). He also found the tripartite developmental rhythm of seed, growth and flower in antiquity, even if he only referred to the sequences of Calamis-Myron-Polyclitus on the one hand or Polygnotus-Zeuxis-Apelles on the other as a purely literary conceit. As we have reiterated, this was a purely literary construction, but appears to be original with Vasari. In his famous book of a century later with the self assured title of *Scienza nuova*, Giambattista Vico in Naples developed the grand historically philosophical idea of his 'corsi' or 'ricorsi'.

Vasari also contemplated the reasons for the development. Throughout his work, he repeatedly invoked the doctrine of the 'medium' as derived from antiquity. This led (in the Life of Gaddi) to the 'sottilità' in the air as an explanation for a certain determining factor; a well known aperçu from Michelangelo also referred to it. The ancient physician Galen had already anticipated this. In the chapter about the so-called Prete Calabrese (in the third part) Vasari made remarkable observations about the strikingly regional character of art and its types in Italy (*Anlage zur Kunst*). From an admitted lack of information, he strongly emphasized the hegemony of Florence in relation to the rest of Italy in the first two parts, and naturally aroused a very bitter response from the northern regions in particular. This became the point of departure for the numerous collections of biographical notices, many conceived in opposition to Vasari, as they continued to appear into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As we have already noted, Rome assumed that place in Vasari's 'terza età' which it had already had in antiquity. The discoveries of ancient remains determined this style. The true and original 'disegno' was then disseminated by the 'sacco di Roma' and by the graphic work of Marcantonio Raimondi. It is here that those statements appeared which aroused such opposition to Vasari and his Tuscanism and Romanism, particularly in northern

Italy which was so differently tempered. Vasari covered himself with a statement by Michelangelo that the drawing of Titian would have been better if he had been trained in Rome. This prepared the ground for the extended feud between the 'Lombard' and central Italian conception of art. It was not necessary to wait for the Venetians to reply: if they were apparently unable to draw, then their opponents could not 'paint', and from their own point of view each of these parties was correct. The Roman-classicist alignment was inordinately encouraged by the authority of Vasari. With Correggio, and even his teacher Andrea del Sarto, he complained of the degree to which their work suffered from their not having visited Rome and learned the 'grand style' from its antiquities. This anticipated the approaching Baroque. Another of the early teachers of Vasari, the French glass painter Marcillac, also only attained to this 'grand style' after arriving in Rome. Vasari's relation to Albrecht Dürer is completely characteristic: in spite of an almost atavistic opposition, Dürer's art impressed him deeply, as it did the Italians generally. He sought to come to terms with this as best he could. Gone is the large and open vision with which Ghiberti, who had of course been trained in a 'Gothic' workshop, was still able to view the art from north of the Alps (Gusmin !), unsullied by theoretical prejudices. This leads us into the most important final consideration, that of Vasari in his relation to the theory of art which had already been so richly developed before him.

V. The Aesthetic and Art Critical Standpoint of Vasari

His bearings have been treated by Obernitz in a studious but inadequate publication; even though one can nowhere speak of a full blown system with Vasari, its limitation to the subject of painting is itself a cause of lop-sidedness. Vasari's standpoint or judgment shifted according to whether the subject was an earlier artist or a contemporary, whether he was speaking of Tuscans or of foreigners - understandably enough with a practicing artist speaking of colleagues whose work was related to his own. In addressing general questions he made use of the relatively firmly articulated system as it already existed, with his tools deriving from the traditional arsenal of ancient rhetoric. For these reasons it is difficult to attribute general guiding principles to him; his analysis was always based on individual examples, the broad theories only apparently emerging from this had a general validity for him. This explains his contradictions; he succeeded in holding contradictory opinions. As an artist, he did not yet arrive at the idea of constructing a 'doctrine' (*Lehrgebäude*) in the manner of Winckelmann; he applied the general principles according to the individual situation as required by each. In appraising the artistic views of Vasari, it is important for this reason to always consider the context in which they were expressed. Aside from the fact that he frequently manipulated texts from others, and further that he himself was possessed by a very wide array of artistic moods, while the 'objective' mode came naturally to his experienced and versatile spirit, the individual judgment (as he often expressed it

precisely and felicitously) is far more important in his work than any of the doctrinaire statements he liked to make.

Only in these conditions (and only in a very limited sense) is it possible to speak of aesthetics in connection with Vasari.

His two supreme categories were very traditional: drawing ('disegno') and invention ('invenzione'), as the 'father' and the 'mother' of the arts. This stress on drawing is again a result of his Tuscanism, and when Vasari criticized Tintoretto, whom surprisingly he appraised quite aptly, this occurred on the basis of the traditional theory of colour as a mere accidental quality, recorded already by Leonardo in theory as well as practice, as it seemed so natural to the sculpturally inclined Tuscans. These two dominant categories also evoke the fateful dualism of 'form' and 'content,' since 'invention' tends to refer primarily to the material, the 'idea' of the image, while the 'drawing' in the broad sense includes all of those aspects which we are accustomed to calling 'form.' Occasionally, Vasari expressed this dualism openly. For instance, the inventions of Filippo Lippi struck him as fortunate to the same degree that his drawing was unfortunate. Completely in keeping with his Mannerist program, he favoured 'cose strane' wherever he was able to discover them (Life of Bagnacavallo) while 'ingegno Pellegrino' was among his favourite expressions.

What does this high valuation of 'disegno' actually entail? Vasari did not arrive at a definite answer any more than his own contemporaries; he continually vacillated between principles of naturalism and stylization. On the one hand, the old view continued to persist that the imitation of nature provided the essence of the art of painting, and that this can never be accomplished thoroughly enough. Vasari also included the ancient fables ('Sperlingsgeschichten') from the traditions of antiquity, among others in the Life of Fra Giocondo. His figures seem to 'speak' – the anecdote that Donatello called to his 'Zuccone', 'favella, favella' is one of these – and influenced by that trope he said of the latter artist that the second period of the 'rinascità' replaced statues with living persons. When he told the story that Leonardo is supposed to have frightened his father Ser Piero with the Head of Medusa as if it had been real, his general remarks – 'questo è il fine che delle opere s'aspetta' – are cut from the same cloth. In the Life of Masaccio, painting was also defined in passing as un 'contraffar tutte le cose della natura viva'. It was in this context that the typical crude studio expression 'ducare il muro' was inserted. The spatial expression of Masaccio broke the walls for the spectator and is 'illusionistic' as would once have been said. From the point of view of Vasari, it is consistent that he would praise of the paintings of the Camera dei Giganti in Mantua by Giulio Romano as the pinnacle of artistic achievement, with his warm hearted 'objectivity' which allowed him to empathize so well with each particular subject. The same theoretical view also provided the basis for that other studio expression so frequently used by Vasari – 'terribile'. This might very well derive from ancient phraseology (δειός), but Vasari uses it with the old and folksy connotation of the 'demonic.' This is for instance the case when he said of the Portrait of Pope Julius II

by Raphael that it 'instils fear in the viewer, as if it were alive'. This is the immediate and enthralling impression of life which the Renaissance in fact pursued in a great variety of ways, with the folksy coloured sculpture of Guido Mazzoni as well as in the efflorescence of portrait sculpture in wax and other natural materials.

Beside these naturalist tendencies, conceits of another kind were also current, directed not to grasping material reality, but rather to consuming it - yet also derived from antiquity. There was the conceit of the principle of selection, the choice of the most beautiful parts from various models as Cicero had elucidated this in a much quoted passage from his influential book about invention, later to be so vehemently contradicted by Bernini. Vasari cited it at certain points: in the Life of Giotto; most strongly in that of Mantegna, where he claims it to have been a specific doctrine of that master, apparently diagnosed from an examination of his work. One of the favourite ideas of classicism and still present in Friedrich Schiller arose here also: Antiquity is a source preferable to nature and the living model since it had already made this selection. It is not difficult to recognize this as the root of the ideal of beauty as proclaimed in the art of the seventeenth century; the thought that beauty should be the central principle of art occurred repeatedly in Vasari, but not in this dominant sense. The concept of beauty in art (die 'schönen Künste') is not yet present in his writings; his use of the term 'bello' still has a very different resonance with him than for us, which should remind us of the inconsistent and compromising nature of his 'aesthetics'. He occasionally used the expression 'graziata bellezza' as the supreme principle of architecture, yet this is simply a paraphrase of 'eurhythmia' in Vitruvius. When he criticized the nudes by the German artists, adding that they were 'attractive men when dressed', this is more of an expression of a cultural nationalism of a completely different sort. It is a question which stumped the greatest minds of Italy when faced with an art such as that of Dürer.

Vasari did value expressions and characterizations very highly; he assessed the paintings in the Sistine Chapel nearly completely in these terms. He also stated that the expression of the figures by Giotto was particularly effective (we today would probably use the term 'dramatic' in this context) without affecting their 'beauty'. Occasionally he even skirted the question of ugliness in art (in connection with the 'carro di morte' in reference to Piero di Cosimo); Vasari allayed this with a reference to tragedy, which also has its 'appeal'. From such passages it is clear that this aspect of thought was not his strongest suit; as a practitioner it is not close to his heart, although he consistently employed aesthetic concepts and categories - much in the vein of our more recent history of art purporting to be 'independent of aesthetics'. All of these had their (often quite diverse) origins in literature, and we must always remain mindful of that still rather obscure substructure. Just as Vasari vacillated between the (aforementioned) naturalistic and the idealist-classicist attitude, so also did he adjust his criteria according to each separate situation. Occasionally he recognized (Life of Titian) that in spite of imitative character, art is something completely independent from nature. He frequently evoked the subject of 'purified nature' as it was after all confirmed by the theory of selection. Such a

process of choice allowed the achievement of that 'grazia' and 'perfezione', which nature cannot possess in itself. Even here though, Vasari was not consistent. He sensed that the 'maniera' (both in the good and the negative sense), that is to say the style of each individual artist, was his most personal action (Life of Giotto, 'proemio' to the second part). He cited a curious remark by Michelangelo that the artist is the only person who can surpass himself, in other words can be compared only to himself. At one spot in the biography of Peruzzi, Vasari used the Biblical expression that this work in the Palazzo Chigi was not 'murato, ma veramente nato'. This is the critical point of an individualist art criticism, what has more recently been very aptly called the 'insularity' of the work of art. In spite of his doctrine of absolute historical progress, Vasari was very capable of observing and lovingly characterizing the artistic particularity (*das künstlerische Moment*), for instance of the Trecento in spite of its 'imperfections'. At such moments the artist in him emerged and silenced the tendentious theorist (*angeflogene Theorie*). This obviously also included a condescending sympathy. The prejudicial dismissal of the 'secolo infelice' from his preconceived idea of 'primitive periods' introduced the very ambiguity which has stayed with the history of art from Vasari to the present day. Yet the idea of seeking the artist himself within his own work was frequently expressed by Vasari. These are usually only technical categories, and in light of the manifest intention to mediate between earlier art and the present, they became bogged down in theory. Vasari's constructions were always distorted by his own period which had achieved such incomparable greatness. The manner of using grand catchphrases, either meaningful or vacuous, but in any case swelling the space (as Detmold has delightfully mocked it in a small book), had to a far greater extent become a routine by the time of Vasari than it had been in that of old Ghiberti, who succeeded with only a few traditional programmatic phrases such as 'ordine', 'misura', 'doctrina', 'diligentia', and so forth. The concepts from artistic studio practice had by this time become far more refined, declining into a jargon.

In Vasari, the tendency to an internal criticism is still only very shy; in keeping with his pragmatic mode of presentation this usually had a 'mythologizing' quality. What might be called artistic psychology remained quite undeveloped in Vasari. The 'timidità' of spirit and a 'certa natura dimessa' which he attributed to Andrea del Sarto clearly referred to his life more than his art. When Vasari attributed the mannered figures of Parri Spinelli – whom he parenthetically characterized very well – to an unpleasant experience of the artist (who had once been robbed) this is no more than a remnant of a naïve anecdotalism. He believed that the emotional shock took its effect on the figures emanating from his imagination. In a naïve 'mythologizing' way this includes a very fortuitous thought – that of the expressive unity of the artistic personality and its work. This had occurred to others earlier, particularly to Leonardo: the artist was held to create himself and to provide his own model intellectually and emotionally as well as physically (his own hand!). Vasari simply attributed characteristics he believed to have discerned in their work to the person of the artist. The most prominent

example of this occurred with Andrea Castagno whose figures with their gloomy and defiant expressions aligned perfectly with the character of the uncouth and wild person described by Vasari. The crown of it all was reached with the apocryphal story of Castagno's murder of poor Domenico Veneziano. This should be a drastic warning against deriving moral qualities of a person from their work.

The same waffling and the same dependence on widespread ideas and their implications is apparent in Vasari's conception of art. We must not foist our own view upon him as it has developed since the eighteenth century. Like much of the Renaissance generally, and as this is becoming increasingly clear to us, he was still quite dependent on the medieval conception. In the biography of Albertinelli for instance, he unselfconsciously reported that this painter exchanged his art for another 'arte più bassa', to run a taphouse. One should recall that this valued profession, which we with a different term would today call the 'art of cooking', was formerly classified among the 'artes mechanicae', not distant from the visual arts. Vasari was a grandson of that generation which in the fifteenth century proclaimed their craft to be a 'liberal' art and even identified it as a science. He nevertheless still showed traces of earlier conceptions when he reported of Rustici, a pupil of Leonardo, that his reputation as a nobleman was compromised by his choice to work as an artist. During the lifetime of Vasari, a thorough shift had occurred in social terms: the period in which cavaliere Bernini would be welcomed in France with princely pomp was not too far away. The 'high' and academically oriented art now came to be divorced from handicraft; during the fifteenth and even the earlier part of the sixteenth century their unity continued to be maintained even outwardly by their workshop organization. Although it was once so highly regarded for its highly prized problems of 'prospettiva' that Pollaiuolo had even placed this on his papal tomb as an eighth liberal art, the art of intarsia was now presented as a lower ('bassa') activity (Life of Benedetto da Majano) and not dignified for an 'ingegno alto e Pellegrino'. When Raffaellino del Garbo was forced in old age to support himself by supplying designs for embroideries, he was presented as having involved himself with a 'lavoro meccanico' – as had been the name of the most noble among the 'artes mechanicae', that of weaving. The teacher of Perino del Vaga was presented as a mediocre painter who also practiced 'cose meccaniche' in his open 'bottega', as had been the practice in the Giottoesque workshop of Cennino Cennini and as it continued to be customary among craftsmen. In the biography of Tribolo, the 'seghe', one of the tools used by marble workers was even described as 'fermenti dishonesti', and the typical Florentine votive wax figures ('boti') of the fifteenth century, which occupied the greatest artists of their time were dismissed as 'basse cose' (Life of Salviati). Of Dello, who painted wedding chests ('cassoni') – one of the most lucrative branches of fifteenth century painting! – we are told dryly that such a practice would embarrass any painter of the later time. These are essentially ancient and medieval images of philistinism surviving here under a new context. Here, one can see the typical arrogance of the 'grand' art emerging quite openly. We all know how long this

survived into recent times and how the class pride of 'academic' painters, especially 'history painters' could be forced only by the most bitter hardship to make designs for the applied arts which could associate them with what in Munich would be called a 'Flachmaler' (surface painter) as opposed to a 'Kunstmaler' (art painter), or worse still to be forced to paint flag poles in a back room like the *Grüner Heinrich* of Gottfried Keller. This would necessarily be done in great secrecy or at best presented as nothing more than a recreational pastime. An obviously new conception of art was emerging in the period of the Mannerists and virtuosi around Vasari. It is here that the famous aforementioned dualism of the distinction between form and content with its strong medieval element, assumed its fateful role. The value and dignity of a work of art is to be determined primarily by the 'invenzione', the content. Alberti had already praised the 'history painting' as the highest form of art. What was then more of an imaginary ideal, had by now become the foundation for the newly founded academies. The history composition in its actual Roman sense was elevated beyond what the Venetians called the 'poesie' (as inspired by authors of lower standing). This again was essentially an old Scholastic thought; since poetry is fictional, it was rated lower than depictions of what is ostensibly 'real.' Another factor at play here was a typical Italian national characteristic, a preference for monumentality. Just as Vasari spoke as an architect completely in the spirit of his own time when he posited architecture as the most universal art with the others subservient to it, so too did he often see the spatial extensiveness of painted surfaces as the outright criterion for greatness in art. It is very different from the old Ghiberti when Vasari compared the large Sienese frescoes filling entire walls to the custom of dividing them into smaller compartments as was typical in the followers of Giotto, and disdained the latter, 'as it is still being practiced today'. This explains one of his typical statements: the small paintings by Pontormo would have been perfect works of art if only he had made them (like the Roman school of the 'terza età') in fresco on a large scale to fill a wall! He clearly overestimated the artistic means, and presented their technical advantage especially for the current time as a scale of value. It might be acceptable to conceive of the fresco as the greatest most masculine of the art forms if this did not include the insinuation that it must necessarily be superior to panel painting. Tempera painting was given a particularly low estimation as an obsolete technique from a past era (Life of Ghirlandaio). In other passages Vasari with his own peculiar objectivity considered each case individually and defended these against their detractors, as continued to occur in the seventeenth century. Again, it is the idea of absolute progress that seems to be diverting his pen almost against his own will.

All of these things accord with the program of Mannerism as it was propagated explicitly (Life of Lappoli) by Vasari himself. This called for 1. the abundance of invention ('invenzione'), stressing the content above all else. 2. Mastery of the nude ('nudo') which obviously played an overt role in this period: occasionally Vasari himself complained that history paintings were being stuffed with such show offs, frequently nothing more than theatrical extras; we have

already seen that he was not unaware of the weaknesses of his own time. 3. 'Facilità', the actual virtuoso quality, the painting with the wrist with a complete mastery of the material. As an example of this, he self-assuredly mentioned one of his own works, the *Story of Esther* in Arezzo, twelve ells long and painted in forty-two days.

We have repeatedly noted how Vasari was indebted to earlier periods. While Giovanni Francesco Rustici, the Florentine nobleman, was considered to be abandoning his class by becoming an artist, Vasari remained true to the traditions of his bourgeois caste. In the Life of Alfonso Lombardi, who was scolded for aristocratic pretensions, he bluntly opined that this style of life is unsuitable for an artist. Nonetheless, his own period saw its artists as 'conti' and 'cavalieri', Titian and Bandinelli provide examples, and his own compatriot Leone Leoni built a truly princely home for himself in Milan, the Palazzo degli omenoni, which distinguishes itself characteristically enough from the modest but beautifully decorated house of Vasari in his native city. This was typical for him. Although he was a courtier, his position anticipates that of the artist as a 'valet de chambre' at the princely courts, as it survived in northern Europe until not long ago; one has but to recall Gottfried Schadow or Franz Josef Haydn ! Vasari remained rooted in the humble bourgeois medium, while the court of the Medici also retained a certain bourgeois character. He stood in the final glow of the golden 'età'. He remained remote from the conflicts of conscience endured by a Torquato Tasso or Bartolommeo Ammanati. Even if he was not completely untouched by the reaction and (in spite of the fact that his idol Michelangelo might have provided the strongest example) believed it necessary to express doubts about the excessive depiction of naked figures in churches, he was nonetheless free of prudery and occasionally expressed apposite words against those guardians against immodesty (Life of Fiesole). He asked with humour how any of those who felt such shame in seeing these painted figures could ever stand being confronted with such temptations in reality! In other ways he managed to remain free of dogmatic anxiety. When facing the supposedly heretical image of Botticelli he frankly stated that as an artist he can interest himself only in the excellence of the painting, and that he would leave these other questions to theologians. Soon thereafter such a balanced attitude would become very rare. Directly below we must address the dialogue of Giovanni Andrea Gilio with its attacks on Michelangelo; as well as the effect of these opinions on Borghini in the *Riposo*. In the seventeenth century a very influential fashionable painter, Pietro da Cortona, allied himself with a prince of the church in a book about the mistakes made by painters in terms of the ecclesiastical dogma and the Gospels, a subject which continued endlessly into the eighteenth century, in the Protestant as well as the Catholic camp.

In the good as well as the bad sense, Vasari became the true Church Father and elder of modern art historical literature, not only by the example of his great, influential and widely imitated history of the individual artists with its historical construct - itself to become canonical and expanded upon - but also by his intended sense of objectivity

in the face of the most diverse imaginable array of artistic phenomena. His influence also rested on the categories of value and fundamental concepts which lacked clarity in spite of being applied ubiquitously and often in contradiction to his larger scheme. His importance as a stylist is also entirely confirmed by his *Lives*, as they were oddly published in two versions. They comprise his unique and actual work which has immortalized his name. His *Ragionamenti*, which elucidated the paintings he made for the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence, had been ready for printing by 1567 but were published only posthumously from the estate by his nephew Giorgio Vasari the younger in 1588, and are not comparable whatsoever in their importance. Of course these seven dialogues (corresponding each to one of the chambers) between the 'principe' (Francesco de' Medici) and the author himself are typical for the period of Vasari and are very instructive about iconography in the Mannerist era. In these abundantly mythological and allegorical celebrations of the Medici family, replete with hieroglyphs, the literary element is stronger than in any earlier period. Although Vasari had been trained among Humanists, he was himself not able to do so and himself reported that his friends Vincenzo Borghini and G. B. Adriani assisted him in devising these subjects. Here again it is the ingenious 'invenzione' which triumphs, and Vasari lavished more than a little attention on it. He himself said 'È lecito al pennello trattare le cose della filosofia favoleggiando'. This is a conception of art that would one day find its greatest opponent in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, an author of literature who approached the visual arts of his own accord. In a certain sense then, this book presents us with a Bible of that remarkable period of 'Mannerism' the significance and interest of which is becoming ever clearer to us in formal terms - even if its art did not attain to the European significance of the biographical opus magnum by the artist from Arezzo.

Bibliography

It does not appear inappropriate to note at the outset that the following pages present the first essay in a bibliography of Vasari, and that one might for this reason overlook its shortcomings and omissions.

The main work of Vasari appeared in its first edition with the title *Le Vite de' più eccellenti Architteti, Pittori et Scultori Italiani da Cimabue insino a' tempi nostri descritte in lingua Toscana da Giorgio Vasari pittore Aretino con una sua utile & necessaria introuzione a le arti loro*, published in Florence 1550 by Lorenzo Torrentino - three parts in two volumes in 4° with indices (Volume 1 includes part 1 and 2, Volume 2 part 3) encompassing 992 pages in all. This publication is today a great bibliographical rarity and sells at a high price. On the history of the publication cf. the precise study in Kallab, *Vasaristudien*, pp. 447 ff.

The second edition, which has also become rare, appeared with the title (the changes being of some interest): *Le vite de' più eccellenti Pittori, Scultori e Architettori, scritte da M. Giorgio Vasari Pittore & Architetto Aretino di nuovo ampliate, con i ritratti loro, et con l'aggiunta delle Vite de' vivi et de' morti, dall'anno 1550 insino al 1567*, published 1568 by the Giunti in Florence, in 4° in three volumes (Volume 1 again includes parts 1

and 2, the other two include part 3 which involves the most extensive revisions), in 1012 pages. An interesting addition are the woodcut portraits, which according to Vasari himself were made in Venice. The second volume includes the letter from G. B. Adriani about the ancient artists, dated September 8, 1567, inserted inorganically during the printing (on this cf. the notes by Angelo Comolli, *Bibliografia storico-critica dell'architettura civile ed arti subalterne*, Volume 1, 215). These selections from Pliny had already been published separately in Florence in 1567 (*Lettera di G. B. Adriani a G. Vasari sopra gli antichi pittori nominati da Plinio*). The autobiography of Vasari has been appended as a conclusion. The second edition is marred by distorting typographical errors to an even further extent than the first, and was only partially corrected by the relatively copious *Errata carriage*.

A few years after this second edition, Vasari himself prepared an extended version of his Life of Jacopo Sansovino with no date or place of publication, but apparently made in just a few copies during the year of the death of that artist (1570) to commemorate his funeral; this extraordinarily rare pamphlet was reprinted by Jac. Morelli in Venice 1789 in an edition by Zatta. This final redaction by Vasari himself is also the form in which that biography appeared in the two great Florentine editions by Lemonnier and Sansoni. *The Life of Michelangelo*, which was also reprinted in a very rare special edition with an original preface dedicated to Alessandro de' Medici of February 6, 1567 (Florence, Giunti 1568), was reprinted in Rome 1764 with engravings. The woodcuts of the second edition were published separately in Florence by Giotti in 1629.

A number of copies of the second edition reveal the extent to which there were objections especially among practicing artists, annotated with hand written comments (Postillen), which largely reveal more about their authors than for the text beside which they are written. The most important of these were written by a contemporary of Vasari himself, Federigo Zuccari, and can be read in a copy belonging to the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (Comolli, *Bibliografia*, Volume 2, p. 7; cf. also the letter from Mariette to Bottari in the *Lettere pittoriche* of the latter, ed. Ticozzi V, 365). Bottari used them for his edition and published some, they were also taken into the Milanese edition of Vasari. They refer to the biography of Federigo's brother Taddeo and include commentaries and additions of various sorts (Vasari ed. Milanese, volume 7). In the Vatican library there is a copy with annotations taken to be by one of the Caracci (Agostino) which were already consulted by Giulio Mancini (Malvasia, *Felsina Pittrice*, volume 2, 135; Pierre Jean Mariette in the *Lettere pittoriche*, Volume 4, 337; Comolli II, 7; Johann Dominik Fiorillo, *Kleine Schriften artistischen Inhalts* Göttingen: H. Dieterich 1803-186, Volume 1, 110 ff.). cf. the extensive review by Hubert Janitschek, *Einige Randglossen Agostino Caraccis zu Vasari*, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Volume 2, 1879, 26-34 (with examples). A manuscript of the Magliabecchiana in Florence includes annotations by the hand of the well known Florentine topographer De Migliore (Vasari, *L'opere*, ed. Milanese, Volume 2, 641; on French comments in a copy in the Biblioteca Corsini (Life of Filarete and Giulio Romano) cf. Comolli op cit., Volume 2, 6, there is only a copy in the Biblioteca Imperiali with annotations by the

hand of the Roman topographer G. Celio. Postills of an anonymous 17th century Milanese in a copy of the first edition of 1550 were made known by Mongeri, *Postille di un anonimo seicentista*, *Archivio Storico lombardo*, Volume 2, 1876. There was also a copy of the first edition with sardonic marginal annotations by the famous Padre Resta in the library of Leopoldo Cicognara, *Catalogo ragionato de libri d'arte a d'antiquità*, Pisa: Presso Niccolò Capurro co' caratteri di F. Didot 1921, Volume 1, no. 2390, now in the Vatican.

Posthumous editions. Third Edition, Bologna 1647 edited by Carlo Manolessi, 3 volumes in 4°, simply a reprint of the edition of 1568, including many mistakes. The woodcuts have been pulled from the worn blocks of the 1568 edition, are therefore of a much lower quality, with a few new ones having been added. On the various titles of these individual volumes (from 1648, 1663, 1681) cf. the careful specifications in Fiorillo, *Kleine Schriften*, op. cit., Volume 1, 118-119.

An important edition by contrast is the (fourth) Roman edition, edited by the famous Italian art historiographer Monsignore Bottari, in Rome 1759 to 1760 with the brothers Pagliarini, in 3 volumes in 4°. In place of the old woodcut portraits of the original Vasari, it includes engravings made after these (also a few new portraits), and was executed cleanly by Francesco Bartolozzi and Antonio Capellari, which was also published in a separate edition, *Ritratti de' Pittori ecc.*, Rome 1760 with Pagliarini. In the later printings, the engravings of this Bottari edition appear very watered down. This edition is particularly important because of the extensive notes by Bottari, which are still of value today and for this reason were partially taken over in the Milanese edition.

Only a few years separate the fifth edition from this most valued of the earlier editions. It appeared in seven volumes with engravings in the years from 1767 to 1772 in 4°. The first volume was published in Livorno by M. Coltellini, and the remainder were published in Florence by Stecchi and Pagani. The editors were the Cavaliere de Giudici from Arezzo and two Florentine painters, Tommaso Gentili and Ignazio Hugford; Bottari availed himself of his assistance and added some notes. Yet this refers only to the first two volumes; the remainder are meager with mistakes in the printing.

The sixth edition published in Siena in 1799 by Pazzini in eleven octavo volumes, edited by the great local historian P della Valle, has a greater value in spite of imperfections Pazzini with relatively weak copies of the engravings. The preface includes a report about the previous editions; the notes from the earlier editions have been taken over and emended – which are only of interest in regard to a group of questions surrounding Siena. The editor has himself added substantial excurses, on Siennese artists for instance; on the whole though, this edition is of little value. The seventh edition appeared in the well known and beautifully produced collection – nonetheless including many mistakes – of *Classici Italiani*, Milan 1807-1811, in 16 volumes (with notes by D. Vincenzo Pagave) It is on the whole a simple, partially more corrupted reprint of that from Siena. An eighth edition appeared with Stef. Audin in Florence 1822 in 6 volumes in 8°, especially interesting since it

includes the letters of Vasari collected by the younger Vasari in a volume preserved in the Riccardiana in Florence. These have been repeated in the ninth edition prepared by a society of Florentine scholars which appeared in Florence with Passigli 1832-1838; some of its notes have been taken over by Milanese (cf. the note preceding the biography of Cimabue Volume 1, 247).

There is of course no point in enumerating even selectively the endless number of text-, study- and school-editions and anthologies which have been devoted by modern Italy to its author (who is considered a classic and example of the history of the language and style); these have all been based on the large complete edition of the writings of Vasari, Venice 1818-1830, and are of no independent scholarly interest.

The earliest edition to have been made on the basis of modern critical standards began to be published by Lemonnier in Florence in 1846 (per cura di una Società di amatori delle arti belle); four men whose names will always be associated with research of the history of the local art combined forces in editing this: the historiographer of the art of the Dominican Order Vincenzo Marchese, Carlo Pini and the brothers Carlo and Gaetano Milanese; in 1870, the birth year of the unified Kingdom of Italy, the last (14th) volume of the work was published in octavo, with all of the care associated with the well known publisher. This edition which presented a revision of that published in Florence by Passigli, already includes some of the advantages as well as the deficiencies of the following one, has maintained a unique place as well as a value of its own (cf. below), so that it is still in use today.

Finally, the edition which has still today not been replaced or rendered obsolete, appeared as the work of a single man, the same Gaetano Milanese, who began publishing it at an advanced age, eight years after that of Lemonnier, with the Sansoni publishers in Florence, begun in 1878 and completed in 1881. In 1885 the final final volume with indices appeared. In nine large octavo volumes, it includes the entire written oeuvre of Vasari, the *Lives* fill volumes one through seven and the smaller writings are in volume eight, these being the *Ragionamenti*, and the letters by Vasari as they were then available (those published in the editions of Audin, then Passigli, the [54] letters included in the volume in the Riccardiana, to which were added those from the Carteggio of Gaye as well as in more recent publications, and finally also some that had not been previously published; 260 in all). As we have already remarked, the annotations included some from the previous editions. Milanese also added a large number of original and independent essays and excurses which are based on a thorough familiarity with the archives. To the extent to which Milanese considered them significant, he also recorded the differences between the first and later editions, yet this was done far too little. His limited and one-sided approach accounts for the fact that his knowledge of the monuments was not particularly great or profound; this limits the value of his diligent work, as did his all too limited awareness of the later literature, especially the art historical publications from other countries. An extrinsic defect which also applies in some ways to the earlier Lemonnier edition, lies in the fact that Milanese omitted the original portraits

from the second edition due to a misunderstanding of the literature. To save space, he also omitted valuable essays of his own which had appeared in the earlier Florentine edition (including that about Tuscan miniature painting for example).

The merits of Milanesi in relation to Vasari are great and lasting; as we have said, his edition still provides the basis for all research today, but technically it cannot be considered a philologically critical edition - either in terms of its annotations or in terms of his familiarity with the state of art historical research at the time; its typical Tuscan regionalism embodies one of the last strands of the older sort of Italian editorial work as well as its spirit.

And thus we today still do not have a basic critical edition of modern historical and philological standards of the primary author of our discipline. It is typical that all of the previous attempts to undertake such a task have come from the German language area; the Italians are lagging behind with this important national author of theirs, while the English and French contributions do not carry so much weight. These efforts reveal more than anything else the childish innocence, helplessness and ineptitude which causes our discipline to be euphemistically described with a dodgy epithet as a 'young' science. The spectacle of these first attempts to walk are nothing less than instructive.

In at least a limited way, the most enterprising and successful efforts surrounding a Vasari edition have come from a recently deceased German scholar, Karl Frey in Berlin. This was of course only a half- or a quarter success, due in part to the not always sympathetic character of this man whose strange personality has recently been appraised in an excellent and objective study by Hans Mackowsky (*Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Volume 40, 1917, pp. 232-247. Frey began with a selection from Vasari for study purposes, of which four small volumes appeared: *Sammlung ausgewählter Biographien Vasaris zum Gebrauche bei Vorlesungen*. I. *Donatello*, 60 pp., Berlin: Hertz 1884. II. *Michelangelo*, 444 pp., Berlin: Hertz 1887. III. *Ghiberti*, 115 pp., Berlin: Hertz 1886. IV. *Brunellesco*, 211 pp., Berlin: Hertz 1887. This edition stagnated with the latter volume. Frey was following the inspiration from his mentor Hermann Grimm, who had published an edition of *Vasaris Vita di Raffaello da Urbino zum Gebrauche bei Vorlesungen*, Berlin 1876 (48 pp.). This had been preceded by the same editor's *Das Leben Raffaels von Urbino, italienischer Text des Vasari, Übersetzung und Kommentar I. Teil*, Berlin: Dümmler 1872. This inspiration was only extrinsic; Frey followed a completely different path than that very original but also quirky man who did not conform with the directions of modern scholarship and whose publications resulted from his highly personal study of Raphael and not of the writings of Vasari himself.

The critical documentation is already remarkable in the earliest of Frey's publications. He made careful comparisons of the first and second editions with the alternative versions from the first published beneath the text. This was augmented by voluminous appendices from other printed and written sources. In his volume on Michelangelo, Frey included the entire biography by Ascanio Condivi, the most important historical parts from the *Commentaries* by Ghiberti, the *Life of Brunelleschi*

by Manetti as well as selections from the Anonimo Magliabecchiano among others. All of this is justifiable in a study volume barely intended originally to include even the complete text, and we can also be grateful for his collection of the other references made by Vasari to the artist. The earlier editions of Vasari were compared and critically illustrated in a large section of notes. Frey made a special effort at correct orthography and punctuation (in the *Life of Michelangelo*, second volume pp. 405-408) and devised an entire set of carefully considered rules (the very thorough preface to the introduction to that volume pp. V-XI). This also reveals a certain excessiveness, with Frey frequently getting lost in trivia, having no actual relevance, and even presenting himself as a judge in linguistic matters, in fact self-righteously contradicting Italians themselves (also in his otherwise useful editions of the Magliabecchiano and Billi) - which is quite surprising since he as a foreigner does not seem to have commanded the necessary intuition or knowledge. In spite of the often groundless minutiae, the honest and diligent work of this overly conscientious scholar does him much credit, even in relation to the great Italian Vasari editions by Milanese which represent a considerable achievement while randomly modernizing the text and taking no account of the demands of modern scholarship.

All of these were no more than preliminary steps toward the large complete edition, as it was projected by that tireless worker, the first volume (and last) of which finally appeared in Munich with Georg Müller 1911, in a colossal quarto of no less than 914 (+XXIV) pp. It is something one holds with an odd mixture of regret, gratitude and a certain emotion. It was not without a certain sense of tragedy that this man who was by then no longer young considered his life to have reached the stage of drawing a conclusion to the project in this way. The characteristic qualities but particularly the shortcomings of Frey's methods of procedure have grown to almost monstrous proportions. This volume includes nothing beyond the introduction by Vasari, the introduction about technical matters ('ziemlich stiefmütterlich behandelte'), the letter from Adriani (again given more care than this worthless concoction deserves), and then finally no more than the first three biographies (Cimabue, Arnolfo, the Pisani), which take up more than half of the volume (pp. 387-899)! It is unimaginable how a publisher could have agreed to such a project, which if it could ever be completed would have a size somewhat greater than the large Weimar edition of the works of Goethe and whose first volumes would be obsolete by the time the last would appear. For Frey attempted to fit everything that was known about those three artists in appendices, excurses, transcriptions of documents, tables etc., detail which is extraneous to the edition of a text and distract unnecessarily - the only thing lacking seems to be the visual material! This not merely includes unpublished data and such which has only now become available (such as the *Carte Vasariane* [cf. below] which adds nothing to the subjects of this volume), but also much material which has been long known and previously published. As in all of the publications by Frey, this is compounded by the confusion, dissipation in countless minutiae which often make it impossible to use

this heavy volume, considering also that it is not indexed. The work of this meritorious and tireless scholar which will probably forever remain incomplete, provides a prime example for the lack of orientation in a field of the history of art which owes so much to him. One should mention the very extensive review by Supino: Una nuova edizione critica delle vite del Vasari, *Rivista d'Italia*, January 1912, which naturally is primarily devoted to concrete matters and deals very little with the questions of textual criticism. For the posthumous publication of the *Carte Vasariane* by Frey cf below.

From Italy itself, where the most authoritative work might be expected, there is for now nothing better to report. The first and only volume of a Vasari edition, (*Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori e architettori Ed. crit. con note, documenti a cura di Adolfo Venturi*, Volume 1 Florence: Sansoni 1896 xv, 130 pp.), from the prolific pen of Adolfo Venturi makes the impression of being a caricature of the method of Frey. It includes nothing more than the relatively short double biography of Gentile da Fabbriano and of Pisanello (Text of the first and second editions). In these 130 pages, one finds all conceivable information that would be necessary for a monograph about these two artists, even with a generous selection of reproductions; yet these are all things that belong in a monograph and not in an edition of the writings of Vasari. We have learned nothing about further volumes which might lead this one to surpass the Frey edition in number.

Under the direction of Ludovico Occhini and Ettore Cozzani a series of small individual volumes (*Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori*) have been appearing in Florence published by Bemporad since 1911, edited by younger Italian art historians, with annotations, bibliographies, a number of plates, very uneven in their quality, intended more for a popular than a scholarly audience and therefore priced very inexpensively – most of them 1 Lira each. Of these volumes, about twenty of which had appeared before the Italian declaration of war, I am only familiar with some, but list them here to the extent to which I am able. (Orsini, Orcagna; Lorenzetti, Jac. Sansovino; Scalia, Antonello de Messina; Saporì, Sodoma; Calzini, Raffaello; Del Vita, D. Bartolommeo della Gatta; Mason Perkins, P. Laurati; Giglioli, A. Baldovinetti; Campetti, Fra Bartolommeo; Rusconi-Jahn, Duccio; Papini, B. Gozzoli; Urbini, Bandinelli; Supino, The Pisani; Serra. L. Lotto; Salmi, Parri Spinelli; Miniati, Jac. di Casentino; Mario Labé, Perino del Vaga.) A similar project is also planned – the *Lecture Vasariane*, published in Arezzo (since 1910, ed. Amici dei monumenti) in small individual volumes (Salmi, Niccolò di Piero; Del Vita, Margaritone), as well as the Life of Andrea del Sarto by Vasari, which had appeared in a similar form in Florence 1909 (Soc. ed. Etruria). Vasari's Life of Leonardo with a commentary by Giovanni Poggi, profusely illustrated, appeared in the Collezione d'arte (number 1), Florence: Pampoloni 1919 (*Leonardo da Vinci. La vita di Giorgio Vasari nuovamente commentata e illustrata con ... tavole a cura di Giovanni Poggi*). One must also include among the individual editions the Life of Donatello which appeared in the book by Hans Semper, *Donatello, seine Zeit und Schule*, Vienna 1875. An separate edition with commentary has been published by Herbert

Y. Horne, *The Life of Leonardo da Vinci, by Giorgio Vasari, done into English from the text of the second edition of the "Lives," with a commentary by Herbert P. Horne, Artist's Library* ed. Laurence Binyon, number 9, London: Unicorn 1903.

And thus a historical-philological edition of our author remains an unfulfilled desideratum. At approximately the same time as that by Frey, the old publisher Sansoni announced a new edition with commentary to be edited by the experienced Giovanni Poggi, yet nothing further has been heard of this; the appearance of the tome by Frey and the acerbic dispute surrounding the *Carte Vasariane* seem to have led the publisher and the editor to abandon the idea, which is to be regretted.

As far as translations of Vasari are concerned, the eminent translator nation (κατ' ἔξοχήν) the Germans, again stand in the first place, since an old French translation of the *Life of Raphael*, by Daret, *Abregé de la vie de Raff. Sanzio*, Paris 1651 (cf. Eugène Müntz, *Les historiens et les critiques de Raphael 1483-1883 Essai bibliographique pour servir d'appendice à l'ouvrage de Passavant avec un choix de documents inédits ou peu connus*, Bibliothèque internationale de l'art, Paris: Rouam Hachette 1883, p. 29), is beyond our present subject. An early English selection (of poor quality) from the biographies of Vasari appeared somewhat later in the *Painting Illustrated in three dialogues containing some choice observations upon the art. Together with the lives of the most eminent painters, from Cimabue, to the time of Raphael and Michael Angelo. With an explanation of the difficult terms*, by William Aglionby, London: John Gain 1685. The *Life of Fra Angelico* translated by G.A. Bezzi, London 1850, is a typical contribution from the period of English Preraphaelitism, made to accompany the plates published by the Arundel-Society.

The earliest translation of Vasari was made by two well known German art historical scholars Ludwig Schorn and Ernst Förster, and appeared in the years 1832-1849 with Cotta in Stuttgart in six volumes with an index (*Leben der ausgezeichnetsten Maler, Bildhauer und Baumeister, von Cimabue bis zum Jahre 1567*). Of course, it is not complete, lacking the general and the technical introductions, but then including the earlier woodcut illustrations with way of lithographic contour drawings. In spite of some mistakes, this edition can be considered to be good and adequate to the purpose; the small single volume edition which was published by Jaffé in Berlin, Julius Bard 1910, is only a selection from this. The first volume of the Schorn-Förster edition has a particular value since Karl Friedrich Rumohr contributed a series of annotations to it. Cf. Franz Kugler in his *Kleine Schriften und Studien zur Kunstgeschichte*, Stuttgart: Ebner & Seubert 1853, Volume 1, pp. 528 f.

It was to take decades before another German translation was ventured. This attempt on the part of Emil Jaeschke (published by Heitz in Straßburg 1904, *Die Lebensbeschreibungen der berühmtesten Architekten, Bildhauer und Maler*) was quite unfortunate. A fundamental error of this publication lay in the archaic organizational principle of picking apart the unified conception of Vasari and arranging the individual biographies according to 'schools'. The second volume, which became the first to appear, was devoted to Florentine painters of the 15th

century. This still incomplete project as then continued in fits and starts according to the same unhappy principle. The more recent editors, Georg Gronau und Adolf Gottschewski, have taken care to include notes with the most recent state of research. Those most important introductions by Vasari have still been omitted (Volume 1, first half, Trecento, edited by Wackernagel, Straßburg 1916. Second half edited by Paul Schubring. Volume 2, Florentiner Maler des Quattrocento edited by Emil Jaeschke, 1904. Volume 3 Italienische Architekten und Plastiker des 15. Jahrhunderts edited by Adolf Gottschewski. Volume 4. Mittelitaliener edited by Georg Gronau, 1910. Volume 5, Oberitaliener edited by Georg Gronau, 1908. Volume 6, Florentiner Maler des Cinquecento edited by Georg Gronau, 1906. Volume 7, first half, Italienische Architekten und Bildhauer des Cinquecento edited by Adolf Gottschewski, 1910.) A translation was planned by Frey but never realized.

Of the translations into other languages one should mention the early French version by Jeauron and Léopold Leclanché, Paris: J. Tessire 1839-1842, in 10 volumes, *Vie des artistes, vies des plus excellents peintres, sculpteurs et architectes*, and that republished in Paris: Dorbon 1913 by Charles-Auguste-Gustave Weiß (*Les vies des plus excellents peintres, sculpteurs et architectes traduction nouvelle*, that in English by Mrs. Jonathan Foster (*Lives of the most eminent painters, sculptors & architects* with the collaboration of Jean Paul Richter), Bohn's Standard Library, London: Bohn 1885-1887, and the new one by Gaston Duc de Vere, London: Warner 1912 (*Lives of the most eminent painters, sculptors & architects*, 10 volumes). I can make no judgment about these. A very useful book produced with typical English practical spirit is the translation of the introductions on technical matters by Louisa S. Macle hose with instructive notes and illustrations by G. Baldwin Brown, *Vasari on Technique*, London, Dent 1907 (cf. *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 10). On this subject cf. also Ernst Berger, *Beiträge zur Entwicklungs-Geschichte der Maltechnik*, Munich: Callwey 1897-1909, Volume 4, pp. 21-38.

The voluminous and very important correspondence of Vasari is also a source for the history of his main work. We have already referred to the earliest publications from it. We have already noted that Milanesi collected what was then available in the eighth volume of the Sansoni edition (1882). Lonardo contributed additional information, (3) *Lettere inedite di G. Vasari* (1569, referring to the construction of the Palazzo dei Cavalieri in Pisa), published in the *Studi storici*, Turin Volume 6, 1897, and Georg Gronau, Una lettera inedita di G. Vasari (addressed to Duke Cosimo, 1572), *Rivista d'arte*, Volume 4, 62. Gherardi, Una lettera inedita di G. V. dell'anno 1547 (incorrectly dated 1549, cf. Kallab, *Vasaristudien*, Reg. 153). Per Nozze Bacci - Del Lungo, Florence 1895, cf. *Archivio storico Italiano*, 1895, 448. By far the most important was the discovery of the so-called *Carte Vasariane*, the Vasari archive, consisting primarily of letters addressed to Vasari, and particularly important due to the personalities of the authors who included nearly all significant contemporaries. In the eighth volume of his edition, pp. 230-231, Milanesi had already published an early index of this cache which had once belonged to the

younger Vasari, nephew of the author (and editor of the *Ragionamenti*, cf. above). This follows a note which appears in that volume in the Riccardiana in Florence, probably also compiled by the same younger Vasari, which includes the earliest collection of letters by Vasari which were themselves first published in the edition of Audin in 1822 (cf. above). In the days of Milanesi and until very recently they had been considered to be lost; then in 1908, the meritorious Giovanni Poggi, then director of the Museo Nazionale in Florence, discovered them in Florence itself, in the splendidly organized private archive of the Conte Rasponi-Spinelli, a descendent of the Spinelli who had been among the executors of Vasari's will; surprising that it could survive like a Sleeping Beauty directly under the sensitive noses of so many local historians and archivists. Their value is evident from the contents listed in the index from the Codex Riccardianus. Aside from letters from the popes from Clement VII. to Gregory XIII., from the Medici and other nobles, this includes figures such as Pietro Bembo, Cardinals Ridolfi and Carpi, Alessandro Farnese, also Sadoleto, Giovo, Michelangelo, Vincenzo Borghini, Silvano Razzi, Pietro Aretino, Annibale Caro, Benedetto Varchi, G. B. Adriani, Claudio Tolomeo, Pollastra, Cosimo Bartoli, Leone Leoni and many more. In addition to this, there is also a *Libro de' ricordi* by Vasari himself, notes for his biographies and others. It is a treasure for the biography of Vasari still awaiting use, and unexpectedly supplementing and correcting the diligently tabulated documentary lists (Regesten) by Kallab. This beautiful discovery is unfortunately related to an unedifying subsequent story which has been carefully and reluctantly related by Steinmann, Zur Publikation des Vasariarchivs (*Der Cicerone*, Volume 2, 286). The discovery was savagely pilfered from Giovanni Poggi in a way that justifiably ruffled the Italian sense of justice; even if this was only a storm in a teacup, it did indeed constitute one of the imponderables which unfortunately played a part in the ultimate stance of Italy as the war approached! With the financial support of the German government, Karl Frey was able to secure the exclusive right for its publication from the owner. After he had been able to use a very small amount of the material in the first volume of his projected Vasari edition, Frey also did not harvest the fruit of his victory; The *Carteggio* has only now been published the his son in a large volume with critical commentary entitled *Vasaris literarischer Nachlaß, hrsg. und mit kritischem Apparate versehen von Karl Frey*, Munich: Georg Müller 1923. On the eve of the World War another part of the material relevant to this section was published – the correspondence of Vincenzo Borghini which is also of great importance to Vasari, *Carteggio artistico inedito di D. Vincenzo Borghini*, volume 1, edited by Lornzoni, Florence, Seeber 1913.

Among the other sources for the main work of Vasari which allow us to observe the process of its inception, one should also mention the biography of Lambert Lombard written in Latin by Dominicus Lampsonius, *Lamberti Lombardi apud Eburones pictoris vita*, Bruges, with Hub. Goltzius 1565). In his second edition, Vasari himself published a flattering letter he received from the latter (Ed. Sansoni VII, 590-591); a second was first published by Bicchierai, *Alcuni documenti artistici*, Per nozze, Florence 1855. The book by Lampsonius about the Netherlandish artists,

directly inspired by Vasari has the title: *Pictorum aliquot celebrium Germaniae inferioris effigies, una cum doctissimis D. Lampsonii ... elogiis*, published in Antwerp by Hieronymus Cock in 1572. The important letter (of 1561) by Lambert Lombard himself to Vasari as well as notes on German and netherlandish artists was first published in Gaye, Carteggio III, 173, and then reprinted with an extensive introduction (Lettre de L. Lombard à Vasari) Liège 1874. Cf. Felix Becker, *Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der altniederländischen Malerei nach den Hauptmeistern chronologisch geordnet*, Leipzig: Sellmann & Henne 1897, p. 65 f. and Henri Ekhard Greve, *De Bronnen van Carel van Mande voor "het leven der doorluchtighe Nederlandsche en Hoogduytsche schilders"*, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot ed., *Quellenstudien zur holländischen Kunstgeschichte* Volume 2, The Hague: Nijhoff 1903, pp. 70 ff. About Lambert Lombard cf. Adolf Goldschmidt, Lambert Lombard, *Jahrbuch der Preußischen Kunstsammlungen*, Volume 40, 1919, pp. 206-240, especially the bibliographical references, p. 208. Further: Durand-Gréville, *Vasari et les Flamands, Chronique des arts*, 1908, 86; Fernand de Mély, *Les artistes français et flamands du moyen-âge dans Vasari, Chronique des arts*, 1908, 64.

The way in which large amounts of information reached Vasari even after his second edition was published can be seen instructively by a letter sent to him by Gabriello Bombaso from Reggio about an artist of his native city, Prospero Spano (Clementi), from 1572, first published in Girolamo Tiraboschi, *Notizie de; pittori scultori, incisori, e architetti natii degli stati del serenissimo Signor Duca di Modena*, Modena: Società Tipografica 1786, 169 (with a commentary), and then again in *Lettere pittoriche*, ed. Stefano Ticozzi, Volume 1, 545.

The existing biographies of Vasari are either obsolete, such as Cesare Guasti, *Giorgio Vasari discorso letto*, Florence: Barbera, Bianchi & Cie 1885, or else inadequate, as is the case with Robert Walker Carden, *The Life of Giorgio Vasari A Study in the Later Renaissance Italy*, London 1910. Corrado Ricci, Giorgio Vasari, *Nuova Antologia*, Volume 154, 1 agosto 1911, is a short occasional piece. A future biographer will necessarily base their work on the diligent documentation collected by Kallab and above all on the material in the new Vasari Archive. I have not been able to consult a *Bibliografia Vasariana* by Sidney Churchill, Florence 1912, which appeared without a place of publication (published in Naples 1912, which includes a list of his drawings in Florence and London; in his review of my *Materialien*, (*Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft*, 1921), Ernst Steinmann reported about it at length. Further bibliographical tidbits include: Amadio Ronchini, Giorgio Vasari alla corte del Cardinal Farnese, *Atti e memorie della deputazione per gli studi di storia patria delle provincie di Modena e Parma*, vol. 2, 1864, 33 pp. Accademia Petrarca di lettere arti e scienze, *Descrizione delle opere eseguite in Arezzo da Giorgio Vasari : omaggio della R. Accademia Petrarca per il quarto centenario dalla sua nascita*, Arezzo: Sinatti 1911, with illustrations. Gamurrini, *Le opere di Giorgio Vasari in Arezzo*, Arezzo 1911. Ubaldo Pasqui, *La famiglia del Vasari e la casa dove nacque lo scrittore delle Vite*, Arezzo: Cooperativa tipografica 1911 (including illustrations). Gualtiero Viroli, *L'opera e il soggiorno di Giorgio Vasari in Rimini e l'abate riminese Giov. Matteo*

Faitani, Jesi : La tipografica jesina, 1908, La Romagna 1908 Oct: Dec.

In his *Giorgio Vasari scrittore* (Pisa: Successori Fratelli Nistri 1905, *Annali della R. Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, vol. 19), Ugo Scoti-Bertinelli has attempted a comprehensive survey of Vasari as an author. In spite of many merits, it essentially represents a failure; it has not grasped the nub of the question, not least because the author had no conception of the art historical literature – which obviously enough cannot be ignored in dealing with Vasari. In an excellent review which can be read as an independent essay, Kallab has demonstrated this (in the *Kunstgeschichtliche Anzeigen*, ed. Franz Wickhoff Volume 1, Number 4, 1904, 101-103), and because of its innate and lasting value, I reprinted it as an appendix to the *Vasaristudien*, published from his estate (pp. 429-454). The careful chronological relation of the progress of publication and correct date of the first edition is particularly important and we have already alluded to it, something that might only appear superfluous or unnecessary to those unfamiliar with the inescapable philological meticulousness which is called for in such studies – which includes most art historians! A further review was written by Georg Gronau, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Volume 29, 1906, 173-182. A handsome appraisal of Vasari as an author is available in the posthumous volume of Ernst Heidrich, *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, edited by Heinrich Wölfflin, Basel: Schwabe 1917.

This brings us to the book which presents the most substantial, essentially including the first essay at the ever so important comprehensive textual criticism and textual history – I refer to the studies of Vasari by the early departed Wolfgang Kallab, my unforgettable young friend and colleague, which I published as a fragment from his estate: *Vasaristudien. Mit einem Lebensbilde des Verfassers*, Vienna 1908, *Quellenschriften für Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttechnik* ed. Ilg and List, N. F. 15. Volume 43, 454 pp. In spite of being nearly completely ignored in the art historical secondary literature – an original and probing review by Gargiulo can be found completely elsewhere, in the *Critica* Volume VII edited by Croce – the name of Kallab will always remain linked in the history of our discipline as well as the embarrassing fact, revealing its insufficient scholarly foundations, that it took that long before the fundamental author of the discipline was studied in this way – whose work we have seen has still not been published in an edition that satisfies the needs of scholarship. For the sake of justice one must add that an enormous amount of material is to be found about this fundamental question in the books by Karl Frey (Vasari-Editions, Editions of the Anonimo Magliabecchiano and of Antonio Billi, in his publication about the Loggia de' Lanzi etc.); yet this material is so peculiarly flattened, tangled, and in spite of all the apparent meticulousness mixed with trivia that it is difficult to recognize the leading thoughts in spite of all of the energy and sedulousness of the work.

The account of Vasari in Eduard Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*, Handbuch der mittelalterlichen und neueren Geschichte Abteilung 1, Band 1, Munich: Oldenbourg 1911, which alas does penetrate too deeply, is

essentially inspired by the research of Kallab. A relatively banal appraisal of Vasari is given in Mary Pittaluga, E. Fromentin e le origini de la moderna critica d'arte, *L'Arte*, 20, 1917, 6 ff.

The earliest attempt to account for the sources of Vasari, and only of historical interest to us today, can be seen in the essay by the hearty old Fiorillo, Über die Quellen Vasaris, Johann Donimik Fiorillo, *Kleine Schriften artistischen Inhalts*, Göttingen: H. Dieterichs 1803, Volume 1, 83.

Individual questions of textual criticism have been treated in the following publications: summarily in his well known original manner by Berenson, Vasari in the light of recent publications, published in his book: *The Study and Criticism of Italian Art*, London: Bell 1901 (German translation by Julius Zeitler, Bernhard Berenson, *Italienische Kunst*, Leipzig: Seemann 1902). Ludwig Kämmerer, Die neuere Quellenkritik Vasaris, *Sitzungsberichte der kunsthistorischen Gesellschaft in Berlin*, 1893. Georg Gronau, Die Quellen der Biographie des Antonello da Messina, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Volume 20, 1897, pp. 347-361, 353, Bernardo Morsolin, Valerio Vicentino nelle 'vite' di Giorgio Vasari, *Atti del R. Istituto Veneto*, Ser. 6, vol. 4, 1885-1886, Jean Paul Richter, *Notes to Vasaris lives of the painters*, London: Bell 1902. Modigliani, Guillaume Marcillat, Note critiche alla vita del maestro vetraio scritta dal Vasari, *Annales internationales d'histoire comparée, Congrès de Paris, 1900, Section 7 Histoire des arts du dessin*, Paris: A. Colin 1902, 157 ff. Masaccio, Le fonti della biografia Vasariana, *Miscellanea dell'arte Rivista di storia dell'arte medievale e moderna*, Florence 1903, p. 55 (including a summary of the passages from Landoni onwards, a comparison of the first and second editions etc. Nicola Cianci Sanseverino, Giorgio Vasari e Francesco Solimena, A proposito di alcuni quadri nel salernitano memoria letta all'Accademia dal socio Nicola Cianci di Sanseverino, *Atti dell'Accademia Pontoniana*, serie 2, volume 33, Naples: A. Tessitore & Figlio 1904, 62 pp. Herbert Horne, A commentary upon Vasari's Life of Jacopo dal Casentino, *Rivista d'arte*, Volume 6, 1909. A contribution to the study of Vasari also appeared in Christian Hülsen, Morto da Feltre, *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz*, Volume 2, 1916, 81-89.

The various editions of Vasari were first assembled and illuminated critically by Angelo Comolli, *Bibliografia storica-critica dell'architettura civile*, Rome: Stamperia Vaticana 1788-1792, Volume 2, 1 ff. On this, cf. the essay by John Dominik Fiorillo: Literarisch-kritische Untersuchungen über die verschiedenen Ausgaben von Vasari, *Kleine Schriften artistischen Inhalts*, Göttingen: H. Dieterichs 1808-1811, Volume 1, 99. A remarkable essay to study the terminology of Vasari on the basis of a single example was published by John Grace Freeman ed., *The maniera of Vasari*, London: Westbury 1867. It includes a complete alphabetically organized collection of all passages in which this important expression occurs, with fastidious indices. On the collection of drawings assembled by Vasari cf. Alphonse Wyatt, Il libro de'disegni del Vasari, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, première année, tome 4, 6e livraison, 15 décembre 1859, 339-351. (with a collection of relevant references by Vasari in his Lives). Cf. also the reference by Franz Wickhoff

in his Katalog der italienischen Handzeichnungen der Albertina (Die italienischen Handzeichnungen der Albertina, *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, Volume 23 Beiheft, 1891-1892, Scuola Venez. 17). Valuable information about Vasari's house in Florence (no longer extant) and his collection of paintings can be found in the work of a younger cotemporary, Francesco Bocchi in his *Bellezze elle città di Fiorenza*, Florence: Bartolomeo Sermartelli 1591, edited and augmented by Cinelli Florence: Gugliantini 1677, 305 f.). Finally, there is the general essay by Wilhelm von Obernitz, *Vasaris allgemeine Kunstantschauungen auf dem Gebiete der Malerei*, Straßburg: Heitz 1893, meticulous, but not penetrating far beneath the surface.

The important question of the putative assistants of Vasari, recently again approached by Scoti-Bertinelli, and treated insufficiently, is skirted in a note signed J. F. Ein Helfer Vasaris, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Volume 3, 1880, 237-238. The reference given there following an English source of little relevance to D. Silvano Razzi was already treated in the earlier Italian specialized literature, cf. Comolli, *Bibliografia*, op.cit. Volume 2, 25, Note. This is the persistent claim to be found throughout the secondary literature originating already during the lifetime of Vasari himself that he was not the true author of the *Lives*, but rather his friend D. Silvano Razzi. This was first asserted by the brother of the latter, D. Serafino Razzi, in his publication about the saints of the Dominican Order. This strange misunderstanding is probably due to the concoction as it can still be seen in the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence with the imprimatur of the ecclesiastical censors of 1615, *Compendio delle vite de' pittori* (i.e. the work of Vasari), a simple and not particularly skillful selection from Vasari. Hubert Janitschek first referred to it in his edition of Alberti (Quellenschriften, Vienna, Volume 11, p. 236); thorough details are given by Scoti-Bertinelli op cit., p. 102, 'note'. For the sake of completeness we must mention another early plagiarist of Vasari, since it plays a certain role in the biography of Correggio. This is Ortensio Landi in his book *Sette libri di cataloghi*, 1552. Aside from Julius Meyer, Correggio, Leipzig: Engelmann 1871, p. 10, cf. especially Oskar Hagen, Correggio in Rom, *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 1917, 110.

The posthumous dialogues of Vasari (published by Giorgio Vasari the Younger) are entitled: *Ragionamenti di G. V. ... sopra le invenzioni da lui dipinte in Firenze nel Pallazo di LL. AA. Screnissime con D. Francesco de' Medici allora principe di Firenze insieme con la Invenzione della Pittura da lui cominciata nella cupola*, Florence 1588. A second edition decorated with the portrait of Vasari as published in Arezzo in 1762, the edition with the commentary by Gaetano Milanesi was most recently published in Florence 1906. The *Trattato della Pittura*, nel quale si comprende la pratica di essa divisa in tre giornate. Florence 1619 is nothing more than the proof for an investment on the part of a publisher with an altered title. The final dialogue (Giornata III) was once more published separately in Florence in 1810 as a Festschrift commemorating the festivities honoring Emperor Francis I. in the Salone. On this, cf. the recent extensive discussion of the *Ragionamenti* in Konrad Escher, Die großen Gemäldefolgen des Dogenpalastes in

Venedig und ihre inhaltliche Bedeutung für den Barock, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, Volume 41, 1919, pp. 110 f.

At this point we must add the important *Descrizione* of the wedding celebrations for the Crown Prince Francesco and Giovanna d'Austria, Florence 1566; together with another which was published in the same year by Dom. Mellini, reprinted in the Vasari edition of Milanesi Volume 8, 519 ff. The program was devised by D. Vincenzo Borghini, the secretary of the Florentine Academy; cf. his book length submission to the Grand Duke Cosimo of April 5, 1565, published by Bottari-Ticozzi, *Lettere pittoriche*, Volume 1, 125-204.

Vasari himself reported (Ed. Milanesi Volume 7, 228) that he intended to publish a conversation he had with Michelangelo on the subject of art in the Holy Year 1550; he was never able to do so.