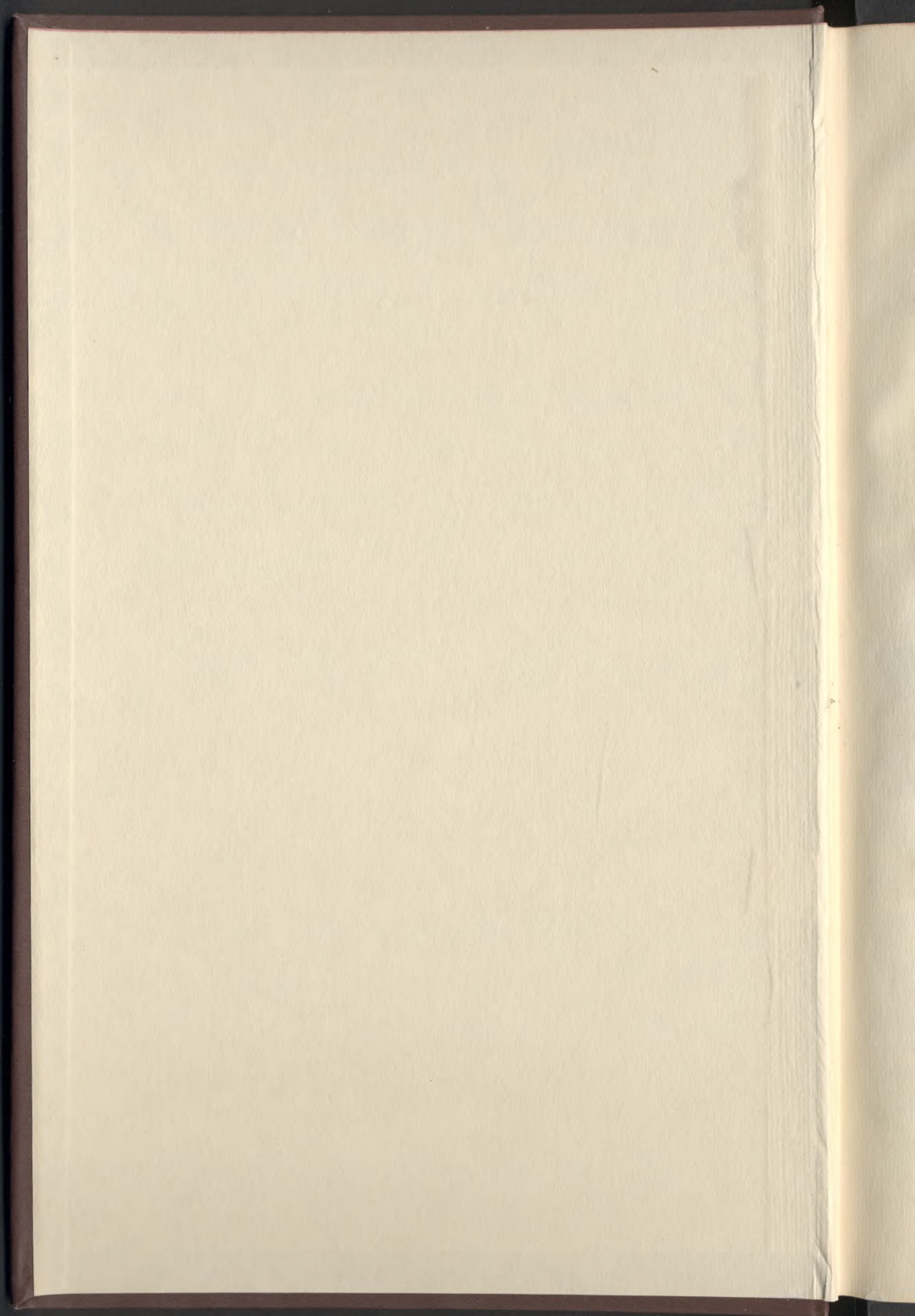
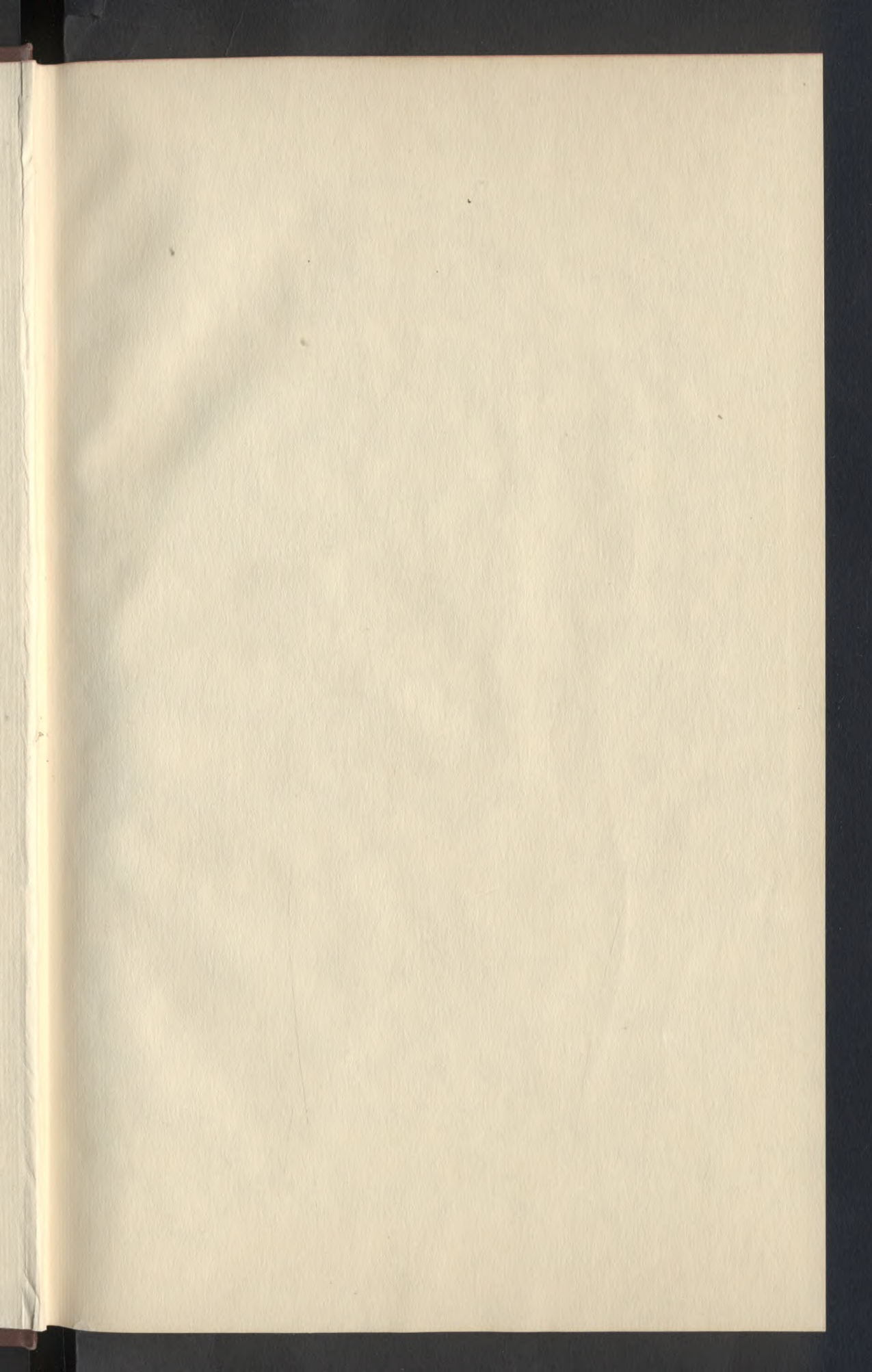


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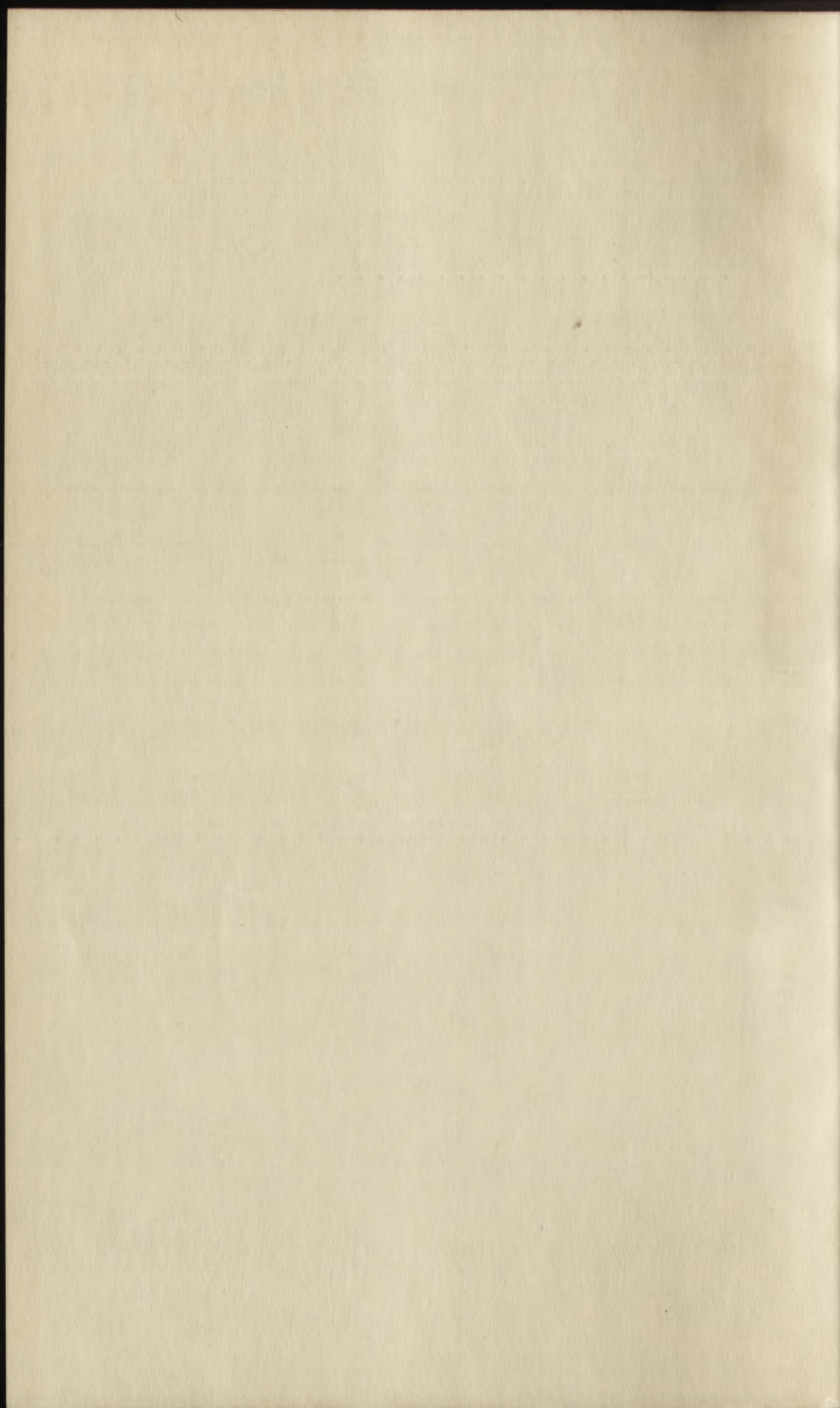














## FUSELI STUDIES



*By the Same Author*

FLORENTINE PAINTING AND ITS SOCIAL BACKGROUND. 1948



# FUSELI

## STUDIES

by  
FREDERICK ANTAL



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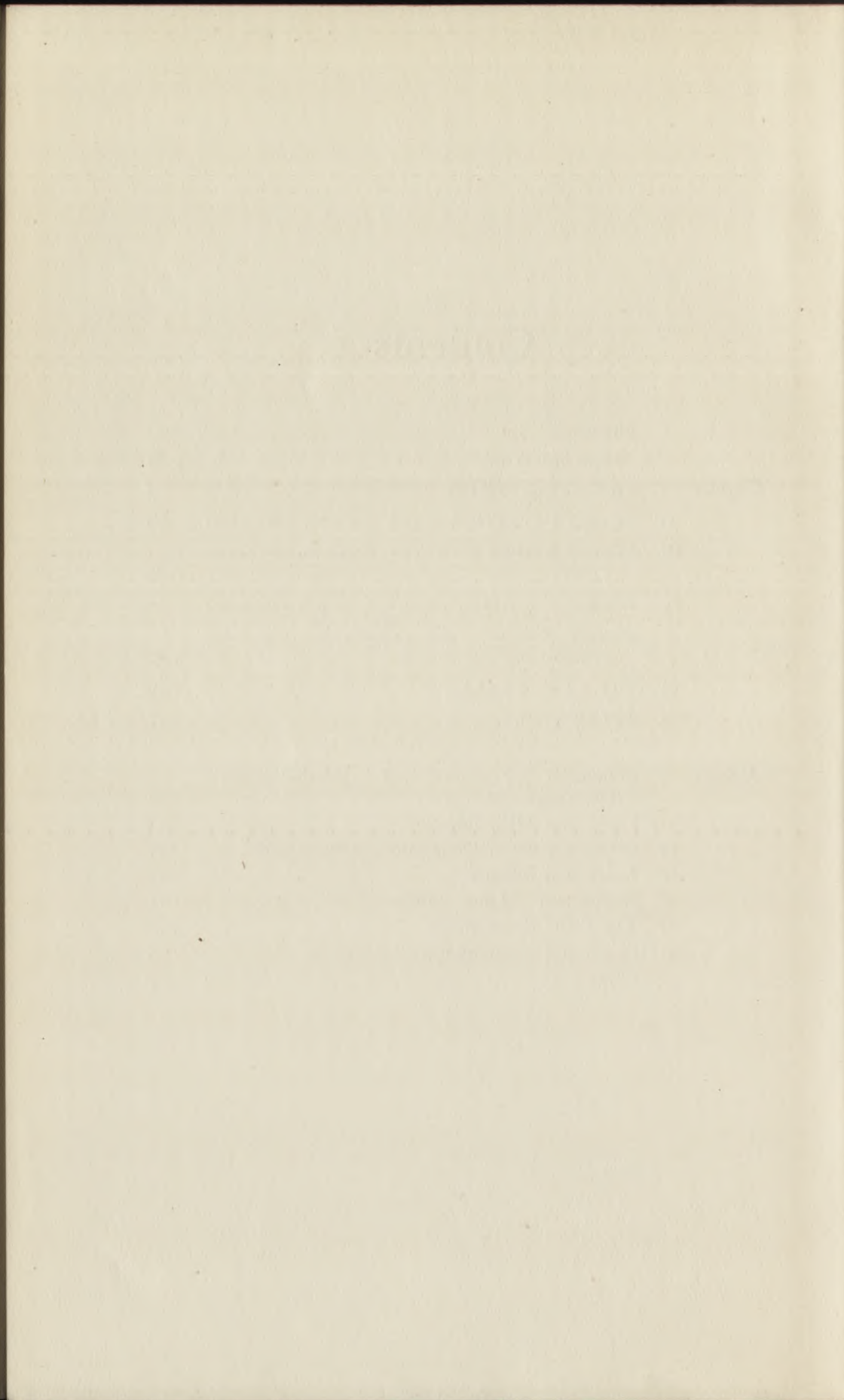
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# Contents

	PREFACE	xì
	INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Chapter</i>	I THE EARLY YEARS	5
	II FUSELI'S ITALIAN STYLE AND MANNERISM	28
	III FUSELI'S STYLE IN ITS EUROPEAN CON- TEXT	66
	IV FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM	78
	V OTHER FACETS OF FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE	117
	VI THE LAST YEARS	132
	VII AFTER FUSELI	147
<i>Appendix</i>	I Mannerist Features of Michelangelo's Drawings	153
	II Fuseli and Michelangelo	155
	III Ottley's View of Donatello and Bandinelli	157
	IV Fuseli and Rubens	159
	V Heinse and 'Maler' Müller	161
	VI The Faust Illustrations	163
	VII Fuseli and Contemporary Literature	165
	Index	167





## List of Illustrations

1. FUSELI: Fall of the Titans (pen and ink). Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.
- 2a. FUSELI: Mars and Venus after G. Ringli (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 2b. FUSELI: Copy after C. and R. Meyer's *Narrenbuch* (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 3a. FUSELI: Illustration to Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle* (engraving).
- 3b. FUSELI: Illustration to the *Deeds of Till Eulenspiegel* (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 4a. FUSELI: Copy after C. and R. Meyer's *Narrenbuch* (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 4b. FUSELI: 'Adelheide' (water-colour drawing). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 5a. FUSELI: Family Breakfast Scene (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 5b. FUSELI: Death of an Hungarian Hussar (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
- 6a. FUSELI: Murder Scene (pen and wash). Goethe Nationalmuseum, Weimar.
- 6b. FUSELI: Tug-of-war (pen, ink and wash). Zentralbibliothek, Zürich.
- 7a. BENTLEY: Illustration to Gray's *Long Story* (engraving).
- 7b. XAVERY: Fête Rampante (oil). Roland, Browse and Delbanco, London.
8. FUSELI: Harp-playing Scald (pen, ink and wash). Bollag Collection, Zürich.
9. BANDINELLI: Deposition (pen, ink and wash). Uffizi, Florence.
- 10a. MICHELANGELO: Man writing from the Josaphat Lunette (detail of fresco). Sistine Chapel, Rome.
- 10b. FUSELI: Copy of the Man writing from the Josaphat Lunette (pencil). Kunsthhaus, Zürich.
11. FUSELI: Self-portrait with Homer (chalk). Hürlimann Collection, Zürich.
- 12a. ROMNEY: Bolingbroke and Marjory Jourdain in Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (pen, sepia and grey wash). Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- 12b. FUSELI: Sketch for the Death of Cardinal Beaufort (pen, ink and sepia wash). Gilbert Davis Collection, London.
- 13a. Rosso: Figure Studies (pencil). Staedel Institute, Frankfurt-am-Main.
- 13b. Rosso: Figure Studies (red chalk). Victor Koch Collection, London.
- 14a. BANDINELLI: Judith and her Attendant (pen and ink). Biblioteca Reale, Turin.
- 14b. BANDINELLI: Mother and Child (pen and ink).
- 15a. FUSELI: Executioner (pen and ink). Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Weimar.
- 15b. SIGNORELLI: Detail of fresco. Orvieto.
- 16a. Rosso: Seated Figure (chalk). Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.
- 16b. Rosso: Conversazione (pencil). Louvre, Paris.
17. FUSELI: 'Fear' (pencil and chalk). Kunsthaus, Zürich.
- 18a. FUSELI: Lear mourning over the dying Cordelia (detail; pen, ink and wash). British Museum.
- 18b. Rosso: Deposition (detail; oil). Volterra.
19. FUSELI: Portrait of Caterina Bolio (pencil). Roman sketch-book, Kunsthaus, Zürich.
20. FUSELI: J. T. Sergel in his Studio (pen, ink and wash). Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.
21. BANDINELLI: Academy of Pupils. Engraved by Enea Vico.
- 22a. RUBENS: Battle of the Standard (chalk and wash). British Museum.
- 22b. FUSELI: Copy after Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari* (pen, ink and wash). British Museum.
- 23a. PERINO DEL VAGA: Psyche watching Amor at Night (fresco). Castel S. Angelo. Rome.
- 23b. FUSELI: Free interpretation of Vaga's fresco (pencil). Kunsthaus, Zürich.
- 24a. FUSELI: Standing figure of Man in Profile (pen, ink and wash). Mrs. M. C. Heath Collection.
- 24b. Rosso: Figure of a Man in Profile (red chalk). Uffizi, Florence.
- 25a. BANDINELLI workshop: Free copy of left half of Michelangelo's Naason Lunette (pen and ink).
- 25b. Figure of Klytius on the Meidias Vase. British Museum.
- 25c. INGRES: Oedipus and the Sphinx (detail: oil). Louvre, Paris.
- 26a. FUSELI: Vision of the Madhouse (pencil and wash). Kunsthaus, Zürich.
- 26b. S. W. REYNOLDS: Interior of a Windmill (oil). Major Simon Whitbread Collection, Southill Park.
27. FUSELI: A Sibyl (pencil). Kunsthaus, Zürich.
28. FUSELI: Oath on the Rütli (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthaus, Zürich.
- 29a. DAVID: Oath of the Horatii (oil). Louvre, Paris.
- 29b. PRIMATICCIO: Odysseus and Polyphemus. Engraved by van Thulden.



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

30. CORNELIS VAN HAARLEM: Icarus. Engraved by Goltzius.
- 31a. BLAKE: Queen Katherine's Vision (pencil and grey wash). Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.
- 31b. FUSELI: Queen Katherine's Vision, engraved by Bartolozzi, 1788.
- 32a. BLAKE: Mirth and her Companions. Illustration to Milton's *L'Allegro* (engraving).
- 32b. RUNGE: Morning (oil). Kunsthalle, Hamburg.
- 33a. FUSELI: King John absolved by the Cardinal Pandulph. Engraved by Blake. Illustration to C. Allen's *History of England*, 2nd edition, 1798.
- 33b. TIBALDI: Figure of Slave (detail of fresco). Palazzo Poggi, Bologna.
34. FUSELI: Nightmare (oil). Goethe Museum, Frankfurt-am-Main.
- 35a. GIULIO ROMANO: Il Stregozzo. Engraved by Agostino Veneziano.
- 35b. MARCANTONIO: Dream of Raphael (engraving).
- 36a. GIULIO ROMANO: Hecuba's Dream (fresco). Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.
- 36b. TIBALDI: Monkeys (detail of fresco). Castel S. Angelo, Rome.
- 37a. FUSELI: Nursery of Shakespeare (oil). Courtauld Institute of Art, London.
- 37b. SALVIATI: Charity (oil). Uffizi, Florence.
- 38a. FUSELI: Achilles at the Funeral Pyre of Patroclus. Illustration to the *Iliad*, XXIII (pen, ink and wash). Kunsthau, Zürich.
- 38b. ROSO: (engraving after) Mars.
- 39a. GOLTZIUS: Mars. Engraved by Matham.
- 39b. FUSELI: Religious Fanaticism attended by Folly trampling upon Truth (mezzotint).
- 40a. FUSELI: Two Women (pencil). Kunsthau, Zürich.
- 40b. BELLANGE: The Three Marys (etching). British Museum.
- 41a. UYTEWAE: Joseph and his Brethren (detail: oil). Museum, Utrecht.
- 41b. FUSELI: Hotspur and Glendower from Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (oil). City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham.
42. FUSELI: Nude Woman listening to a Girl playing upon a Spinnet (oil). Ganz Collection, Chicago.
43. TITIAN: Venus and the Organ-player (oil). Prado, Madrid.
44. FUSELI: Solitude in Twilight (oil). Private Collection, Zürich.
- 45a. GOLTZIUS: Mars and Venus (detail; engraving).
- 45b. FUSELI: Nightmare (pencil and wash). Kunsthau, Zürich.
46. FUSELI: Dream of Guyon from Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (pen, ink and wash). Albertina, Vienna.
- 47a. FUSELI: Free copy after Dürer's 'Lovers' (pencil). Kunsthau, Zürich.
- 47b. FUSELI: Portrait of Lavinia de Jrujo (pencil). Kunsthau, Zürich.



# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- 48a. BANDINELLI: A Woman sewing (chalk). Louvre, Paris.
- 48b. FUSELI: A Woman sewing (pen and wash). Lord Wharton Collection, Dublin.
49. FUSELI: English Suburban Garden (pencil and wash). Roman sketch-book, Kunsthau, Zürich.
50. FUSELI: The Women of Hastings (oil). Private Collection, Zürich.
51. HEIDELOFF: Fashion-plate from 'Gallery of Fashion' (aquatint). 1797.
52. FUSELI: A Woman walking (pencil and wash). Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.
- 53a. FUSELI: Young People on the Banks of the Thames (pen and ink). Kunsthau, Zürich.
- 53b. LIEVENS: Raising of Lazarus (oil). Museum and Art Gallery, Brighton.
- 54a. FUSELI: Scene from Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (oil). Frau von Albertini Collection, Zürich.
- 54b. FUSELI: 'Newsreading in the Country'. Illustration to Cowper's *The Task* (oil). Private Collection, Geneva.
- 55a. BLAKE: Frontispiece to Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories* (engraving).
- 55b. FUSELI: 'Family Life in the Country'. Illustration to Cowper's *Retirement* (oil). Private Collection, Basel.
- 56a. FUSELI: Victim of a Dagger Wound supported by Monks (pencil and wash). Bollag Collection, Zürich.
- 56b. VON HOLST, here attributed to: Faust and Gretchen (pencil and wash). Mrs. T. Lowinsky Collection, London.
- 57a. MUNCH: The Kiss (woodcut). 1897.
- 57b. FUSELI: The Embrace (pencil). Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.
58. FUSELI: Young Woman imprisoned with a Skeleton, watched by an old Man in Armour (oil). Private Collection, Zürich.
59. FUSELI: Girl combing her Hair watched by a young Man (water-colour). Kunsthau, Zürich.
- 60a. FUSELI: Flight from the Family Circle (pencil and wash). Kunsthau, Zürich.
- 60b. GREUZE: The Father's Curse (oil). Louvre, Paris.
61. FUSELI: Portrait of Miss Otway-Cave (oil). Private Collection, Basel.
62. FUSELI: Woman seen from the Back (chalk and wash). Kunsthau, Zürich.
63. FUSELI: Release of a Maiden (oil). Private Collection, Basel.
- 64a. JOHN MARTIN: The Bard (oil). Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-on-Tyne.
- 64b. FUSELI: The Bard. Illustration to Gray's Poem. Kunsthau, Zürich.



## Preface

THE following study of Fuseli was almost completed when my husband's last illness broke upon us; it is the first of his various unpublished manuscripts to appear in print. Of recent years, as his researches had increasingly extended to the social background of the periods with which he was concerned, his interest turned towards artists of a more realistic persuasion, notably Hogarth, Caravaggio and the Caravaggeschi. Yet a certain preoccupation with Fuseli had remained, as a kind of legacy, from the intensive study of mannerism which had engaged the greater part of his working life. It is perhaps fitting, therefore, that his reflections on this subject should be the first to appear posthumously. His intention had been to condense somewhat Chapter II and to elaborate Chapter VII, the subject of which greatly fascinated him, but I have preferred to interfere as little as possible with the text. Some other scholar may perhaps be stimulated to take up the subject and enlarge upon it.

I have received great kindness from many sources in the preparation of this book for the press and it is a pleasure to record my thanks to those who in one way or another have sustained me through difficult moments in my work. I regret that space does not suffice to mention all by name. Sir Herbert Read deserves my deepest gratitude for his constant encouragement. I am especially indebted to Professor Anthony Blunt for the care and patience with which he has read through the manuscript and offered most valuable suggestions as to phrasing. I am equally grateful to Mr. Benedict Nicolson who has also contributed advice in revising the text and has enlightened me upon the disposition of plates. I also wish to offer my thanks to Dr. Wehrli of the Kunsthhaus who gave great assistance in technical matters when my husband was studying the large Fuseli collection in Zürich and has tirelessly aided me in assembling photographs; to Dr. Andrew Révai for his advice and unfailing helpfulness; to Mr. Peter Powell who has generously put his photographic material on Fuseli at our disposal over a prolonged period; to Sir Geoffrey Keynes for the loan



## PREFACE

of his unique copy of Charles Allen's *History of England* to make Plate 33a, and to Mr. Peter Murray and his assistants at the Witt Library of the Courtauld Institute for their ever-ready help. Acknowledgment is due to the following owners who have kindly allowed me to reproduce their drawings or pictures: Frau von Albertini; Mr. Bollag; Mr. Gilbert Davis; Dr. Paul Ganz; Mrs. M. C. Heath; Mrs. T. Lowinsky; Lord Wharton; Major Simon Whitbread. I am no less indebted to the authorities of the galleries and institutions, who have permitted me to publish works in their possession.

London. *January*, 1956.

EVELYN ANTAL

### *Acknowledgment of Photographs*

Albertina, Vienna, Pl. 46; Alinari, Pl. 23a and 36a; Anderson, Pl. 10b, 15b and 36b; Archives Photographiques, Pl. 25c, 29a and 60b; Braun, Pl. 16b; Brighton Museum, Pl. 53b; British Museum, Pl. 3a, 22a, 25b, 31b, 32a, 39b, 55a; P. & D. Colnaghi and Co., Pl. 48b; Committee of the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Pl. 64a; A. C. Cooper, Pl. 26b and 41a; Courtauld Institute of Art, Pl. 33a and 37a; Fine Art Engravers Ltd., Pl. 18a and 22b; The Arts Council of Great Britain, Pl. 34, 55b and 57a; A. Giraudon, Pl. 48a; Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Pl. 32b; Kunsthau, Zürich, Pl. 2a and 2b, 3b, 4a and 4b, 5a and 5b, 6b, 11, 17, 19, 23b, 26a, 27, 28, 38a, 40a, 47a and 47b, 50, 53a, 58, 59, 60a, 61, 62 and 64b; Laboratorio Fotografico Museo del Prado, Pl. 43; Museum and Art Gallery Committee of the Corporation of Birmingham, 41b; Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Pl. 20; Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel, Pl. 52 and 57b; J. H. Orgler, Pl. 12b; Roland, Browse and Delbanco, Pl. 7b; Soprintendenza alle Gallerie di Firenze, Pl. 18b; Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Weimar, Pl. 6a and 15a; Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Pl. 12a and 31a; Victoria and Albert Museum, Pl. 51.

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## Introduction

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IN English painting we do not find a steady tradition of straightforward, rational and realistic classicism, comparable to the consistent development in France of David's progressive middle class art which, shortly before the French Revolution, inaugurated a reaction against the baroque and rococo. Instead, astonishingly early anticipations of classicism appeared in the 1760s and '70s (Gavin Hamilton, West, Barry). Later when, by the yardstick of France, the time would seem to have arrived for classicism to become the prevailing style and increasingly realistic, we are presented with a completely different phenomenon. History painting was either baroque (Reynolds and his school) or, where classicist at all, was so frequently intermixed with irrational, mannerist elements that the resulting style had almost no resemblance with the current French brand of classicism. If we except Blake, who was sixteen years his junior and to whom it came much later, no one represented this strange, expressive style more characteristically throughout his long life than Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), one of the most interesting artists ever to have worked here in England.

In these brief studies I make no attempt to give an all-round systematic picture of Fuseli's complex style, but I hope to demonstrate the general line of its long evolution. One of my aims will be to elucidate some of his sources and stylistic relationships, by selecting for discussion a certain number of his works<sup>1</sup> throughout his career. While the obvious ally of the new classicism was the powerful Raphael-Poussin tradition, and that of the neo-baroque painting was the Correggio-Rubens current, it was only natural that mannerism of the 16th century should have made the greatest appeal to Fuseli,



## INTRODUCTION

whose own art was unrealistic and to some extent irrational.<sup>2</sup> But the range of mannerism is wide and I shall pick out some features and exponents which closely corresponded to Fuseli's requirements at given phases of his development.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, since his knowledge of the art of the past was unusually extensive,<sup>4</sup> it not infrequently happened that other works of quite different stylistic character also aroused his interest. By following the creative process of his pictorial imagination and tracing the kind of associations and intermediaries through which he evolved such a very intense style in each of his different periods, I hope to be able to show Fuseli's stylistic development more clearly than has been done before. This, taken together with an appreciation of his general outlook,<sup>5</sup> will make it easier to judge the meaning of his style within the context of English, and of European, art. What was Fuseli's place within English and European intellectual and artistic life? Was he merely an interesting individual or a representative European? And a representative of what? The question has been asked<sup>6</sup> but never really answered.

However, before seeking the answer, I must call attention to the fact that Fuseli's art is fashionable nowadays because of its kinship with tendencies in the art of the last few decades. The same is true, and for the same reason, of mannerism of the 16th century. Yet this book has been written not because, but in spite, of this present conscious predilection for Fuseli and for mannerism. An historical approach should give us a certain balance and prevent our being swept away in too one-sided a manner by our natural penchant for tendencies in art of the past sympathetic to contemporary art. Although I consider Fuseli to be a most spirited artist, this book has not been written in the vein of hero-worship but as an attempt to clarify his place within his own epoch.<sup>7</sup>

## Notes to Introduction

- 1 Many of the works I am discussing are illustrated in one or other of the three following volumes: A. Federmann, *Johann Heinrich Füssli* (Zürich, 1927), containing pictures and drawings; P. Ganz, *The Drawings of Henry Fuseli* (Eng. trans., London, 1949), containing drawings only; N. Powell, *The Drawings of Henry Fuseli* (London, 1950), containing only drawings in England. When I do not reproduce a work myself, I will indicate in which of these books it is illustrated. In dating Fuseli's works I have generally followed Ganz and the catalogue of the Bicentennial Exhibition of Fuseli's Works in the Zürich Kunsthhaus in 1941. Occasional mistakes as to what is an original work by Fuseli and what that of an imitator are still unavoidable: we shall only be able to make accurate distinctions when English art of Fuseli's time is better known than at present.
- 2 The theme of Fuseli's relation to mannerism is almost inexhaustible and only chosen aspects of it are treated here. I have included also a few observations on mannerism itself which seemed to me to shed light on some of its features.
- 3 In the case of an artist as receptive and as cultured as Fuseli no point would be served by dwelling upon each of his innumerable borrowings. But it is useful to understand the types of art from which he borrowed.
- 4 Few artists have written so much about art as Fuseli did; his most important works are *Lectures at the Royal Academy* (1801, 1810), *A History of Art in the Schools of Italy*, *Aphorisms* (these three were published in J. Knowles's *The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli*, London, 1831) and his contributions to Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists* (1805, 1810). Yet when he writes about individual artists his views, particularly those expressed in the Academy lectures, must be taken with a grain of salt. Generally speaking, he preferred not to praise artists without reservation, in whom he took a special interest and from whom he borrowed: partly because it was not in his egocentric nature to do so and he liked to show off his critical



## INTRODUCTION

faculties, partly because through vanity (and rightly feeling himself to be very original) he liked to cover up his tracks. He was more sincere when he painted than when he wrote; when he bought drawings or engravings by certain artists (see the catalogue of his sale at Sotheby's in 1825) than when he lectured on them.

- 5 Though more of his writings and letters have survived than those of artists in general, the opinions he held in his late years on many contemporary questions are not well known to us. Nor does the rather conventional book by his friend, Knowles, reveal enough of this. A. Mason, *The Mind of Henry Fuseli* (London, 1951), is a very good anthology of Fuseli's views, accompanied by useful commentaries. Mason is right in pointing out not only the complexity of Fuseli's world of ideas but also certain contradictions within it. Even if some of his views, strongly held at first, were apt to be replaced by others as time went on, the earlier do not disappear entirely but tend to crop up again. Different layers seem to have existed in his structure of thought. Frequent descriptions of the 'eccentricity' of Fuseli's character (as a rule helped by the same ever-recurring anecdotes) obviate the necessity of amplification here.
- 6 By W. Wartmann, in his introduction to the Zürich catalogue previously quoted.
- 7 Impossible without a knowledge of the social background of Fuseli's art. But, since the social history of this period is generally well known, I have not devoted a separate section to it.

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## I

# The Early Years

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FUSELI, the German-Swiss, born and bred in Zürich, began as a poet and writer and only later, in England, took up painting professionally. It is all the more necessary to remember that the cultural background of his youth was the incipient Storm and Stress<sup>1</sup> (also called early romanticism or pre-romanticism), a movement which originally started in criticism, mainly in Switzerland; it soon expanded, chiefly in Germany, into poetry, novels and drama, and played a great part (forerunners and late-comers included) between the 1750s and '80s.<sup>2</sup> Short as was its duration, it represented the first intense romantic movement in Europe (more intense than the scattered romantic features present at the same time in the intellectual life of other countries) and, as such, was the forerunner of other great romantic waves in various countries, which began to set in generally around 1800. Although emotion and fantasy were the principal features of Storm and Stress, observation of both the outer and inner worlds also formed part of its mental climate in Germany; the impulse of a return to nature was, in fact, a manifestation of this interest in the outer world. Yet its principal feature remained a quest for intensity, originality and freedom of self-expression. The feelings, instincts, passions of the individual, especially of the genius, the favourite concept of the movement, should be allowed unfettered expression; frequently also, particularly in Swiss criticism, the unfamiliar, the terrible, the wonderful, was exalted. This trend was in many ways opposed to rational analytical Enlightenment, the main



exponent of which was Lessing; yet both were middle-class movements directed against rococo artificiality and they had various points of contact with each other. Though not in quite the same way, each used suggestions which came from England as well as ideas from Rousseau (capable of very different interpretations): indeed Rousseau was one of the main sources of Storm and Stress.

The German middle class, which, like the Swiss, was retarded in its development, had no real possibility of evolving at this moment and no means of achieving political reforms.<sup>3</sup> Consequently Germany was the appropriate field for the rise of the emotional movement of Storm and Stress with its uprooted intellectuals, isolated even within the middle class, its doctrine of the aristocracy of genius and its vague, inarticulate political ideas. The more rational, democratic and sober movement of Enlightenment needed different soil.<sup>4</sup> So too, though Storm and Stress had a more revolutionary outward appearance than had Enlightenment, it possessed, in contrast, many inherently reactionary traits. Naturally this complexity of Storm and Stress was not without relevance for Fuseli. Furthermore, his way of thought and his art were profoundly affected by the fact that he experienced only the beginnings of Storm and Stress on the Continent (which he left as early as 1764) and saw only the confluence of its cultural sources in Switzerland. Bearing this in mind, it can better be understood why, startling and astonishing though he strove to be in his art and daring as he was, he remained throughout his life largely an illustrator of literary themes and wished to be regarded as such. Fuseli stood aloof from Storm and Stress at the time of its climax in the 1770s in Germany. Significantly he never participated in the occasional highly subjective, emotionally uncontrolled manifestations of this movement; nor could he have approved of them. It is in this sense that Fuseli's relation to Storm and Stress must be continuously before us.<sup>5</sup>

How, then, did the young Fuseli stand in relation to the component ideas of this movement when it was on the point of starting? The house in Zürich where he grew up, the house of his father, a painter and antiquarian, was a meeting-place for those whose ideas were preparing the ground for Storm and Stress. Outstanding among them was Bodmer, the spiritual father of the whole movement and a great English scholar, for whom Fuseli had a strong feeling of sympathy. He gave this visible embodiment on two occasions. Soon after 1760 he made a drawing of himself with Bodmer; later, in 1779, when back in Zürich for a short spell, he did a double portrait (Zürich, Kunsthhaus) of the eighty-year-old Bodmer and himself, forty-three years younger. I reproduce a self-portrait drawing (Plate 11) which was probably executed in connection with this double portrait: the artist



is seated upon a chair, in relaxed contemplative mood, gazing at a bust of Homer, whilst beneath appears the caption in Greek: 'For the Cure of the Soul'.<sup>6</sup>

Owing mainly to Bodmer, Zürich was, for a while, one of the most important places, intellectually, in the German-speaking world. Bodmer was surrounded by a dazzling array of disciples in Lavater, Pestalozzi and Fuseli—it is by this standard that we must measure Fuseli's art. Many of Bodmer's ideas and literary discoveries (mostly new for the Continent and particularly fruitful for Germany) and much of the inspiration for the whole movement and, of course, for Fuseli himself came from England, the model in every respect of the continental middle classes and their intellectuals: from Milton, whose *Paradise Lost* Bodmer translated as early as in the first half of the 1720s, and an understanding for whose imaginative and emotional powers was fostered by Addison's articles in the *Spectator*<sup>7</sup>; from Shakespeare, now in process of idealisation as the most original dramatic genius in world literature<sup>8</sup>; from the enthusiasm of Shaftesbury and his exaltation of the artist's creative genius; last but not least from the contemporary emotional trend in English poetry just emerging, for instance, in Young's *Night Thoughts*, which were translated into German as early as 1751.

All this, however, did not preclude the presence, within Bodmer's aesthetics, of a great amount of rationalism. But since Switzerland, with its less developed middle class (even less developed than the German), had not so thorough a rational-realist culture as had England in the first half of the 18th century, the irrational elements in ideas coming from England were given, on the Continent, a formulation towards more extreme anti-rationalism than in their country of origin. Most of Fuseli's other views and propensities which he held for large parts of his life and which determined his art were already present in Bodmer and his circle. Bodmer greatly esteemed Rousseau and the elemental powers of Dante, whom he was studying as early as 1730 and about whom he wrote as early as 1749; he rediscovered (no mean feat this) the *Nibelungenlied* and in the 1750s translated Homer, the predilection for whom also came from England. In Bodmer these English seeds fell upon very fertile ground. He not only translated Blackwell's *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*, dating from 1735, but it was, in fact, through Blackwell's interpretation of Homer as the great poet of the dawn of history that Bodmer became interested in the literature of the German Middle Ages itself and in the *Nibelungenlied*.<sup>9</sup> Bodmer interpreted the poets, who were to become Fuseli's principal themes, in an exceptionally intense way as harbingers of passion and original geniuses. He not only believed that the good and agreeable should be themes of poetry and painting



but also the sad and terrible, and he claimed that the painter's task was to portray the passions of his figures in their movements and features.<sup>10</sup> Here already were the main ideas behind Fuseli's art.

Fuseli's friend and mentor, Breitinger, the other outstanding figure of the Zürich circle, stressed, perhaps even more than Bodmer, the role of the bizarre, the horrifying and the miraculous in poetry and art, in his book, *Critische Dichtkunst* (1740). He held, more consistently than Bodmer, that the miraculous and the reasonable should be combined, just as later Fuseli was to combine them in practice in his art. Fuseli's *Aphorism* No. 168 is a vivid commentary upon his own art: 'Dignity gives probability to the impossible.' The significance of the aesthetics of the Zürich circle for Fuseli's art should always be borne in mind.<sup>11</sup> Even Fuseli's dislike of French culture, and consequently of French art, which he felt to be decadent, derived from the Bodmer circle. The new classicist movement, revolutionary at its outset, found an adherent in Fuseli's father, who was averse to the contemporary rococo, translated Mengs and—an important point—was an admirer of Winckelmann and a helpful friend to him at a time when he was but little recognised.<sup>12</sup> Early Swiss romanticism was mildly liberal, Bodmer being more outspokenly so than the rest; it was patriotic in spirit and conscious of the national past. While Bodmer taught Swiss history, Fuseli's father, a descendant of an old family of artists, wrote a book on Swiss painting and (just as Lavater was to do later) formed a large collection of old drawings and engravings, mainly Swiss of the 16th and 17th centuries. He also owned many casts and engravings after antique statues. If to this we add his interest in Rembrandt, the result is certainly not the average taste of the times.

As a precocious child, the young Fuseli was inspired to copy a great number of these Swiss mannerist and mannerist-baroque drawings and engravings, besides a few German and Flemish ones, from his father's collection.<sup>13</sup> These early drawings, done between the age of ten and sixteen, most of them in a single volume now in the Kunsthau in Zürich, are a unique, almost incredible collection. Though they belong, particularly the earliest ones, to the history of psychology rather than to that of art, they also deserve to be considered from the artistic point of view. The boisterous, impetuous child, experiencing the violent, crude Swiss art of the 16th and 17th centuries, lived in an uncanny dream-world. He mostly chose to copy gruesome, brutal scenes, with many figures, with strong light and shade contrasts:<sup>14</sup> murders, battles, assaults, shootings, butcherings (the very mildest were hunts). To such an extent did he live in this world that he was not content only to copy these drawings (which, I think, were often pictorial chronicles of the early 16th century) and



engravings but, even more amazing, he invented scenes of his own in the same spirit. In fact it is sometimes impossible to decide whether a particular drawing is an original work from his hand or a copy after a Swiss mannerist.

The stylisation of his drawings at first showed a striking but adept mixture of provincial, often popular, mannerism with features of children's drawings. On account of their childish character, the very early drawings of battle-scenes lack perhaps sufficient interest for publication. I illustrate instead an astonishing, more mature *Fall of the Titans* (Basel Museum) (Plate 1), an original composition of his which he made in 1752 at the age of eleven. It seems to me inspired rather by Rubens or a derivation from Rubens than by Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*. But in a very short time, though retaining much of their childish character, Fuseli's hatched, trembling pen-strokes, a result of his frequent copies after engravings, remind us in a general sense of drawings by Orsi imitating engravings of Heemskerck; just as his heavy, clumsy, somewhat cubic figures, which move in an atmosphere of strong contrasts of light and shade, appear to give us unconsciously a glimpse of Cambiaso.<sup>15</sup> Some of the Swiss drawings and engravings he copied, such as those of Stimmer or Ringli, were of a mythological, Italianising character (Plate 2a). Later, when a professor at the Royal Academy, Fuseli referred, in his *2nd Lecture*, to Swiss art around 1600—the works of Stimmer, Murer, Amman and Ringli—as 'mines of invention'; while no one at the time knew his early copies after, and imitations of, these artists, he himself was well aware how much he owed to them. Here, in these copies or in those of Landsknechte, derivations of the Urs Graf style (whose uncanny shadow always seems to haunt Fuseli's early work) or in a copy of Goltzius' *Standard-bearer*, there already appears a tendency towards monumental, summarised figures. In his early teens, as his strokes were acquiring greater firmness and elasticity, the themes of his copies began to vary slightly; but even if he copied Swiss works of a rather later date than works of the 16th century, he remained within the same orbit, since in a country so little urbanised as Switzerland very much of popular mannerism lingered on. The conditions which allowed for the continuation of a mannerist tradition in Switzerland, allowed also for the easy and early growth of the irrational tendencies of Storm and Stress in a backward country like this.

As in Swiss mannerism itself, for instance in Urs Graf or Nikolaus Manuel Deutsch, it was only a small step for Fuseli from the macabre to the erotic, as well as to the burlesque and satirical. Characteristic of this new phase are his copies after Rudolf and Conrad Meyer's *Narrenbuch*, a series of drawings of human foolishness of 1640.<sup>16</sup>



Lively, grotesque mannerist-baroque scenes of this kind are frequently found in Rudolf Meyer, who was much affected by Callot, whose *Gobbi* he copied; I reproduce here Fuseli's copy (Plate 4a) after one of Meyer's *Narrenbuch* compositions imitating Callot. Fuseli was not to forget later in life the grotesque sleeping figure in the mannerist, somewhat obscene pose which he copied when he was about fourteen years old. We meet it, slightly altered and monumentalised, as, for example, sleeping Bottom, in the 1790s, or as sleeping Sly in the *Taming of the Shrew* (Rivington's Shakespeare edition of 1805). Meyer's graphic *œuvre*, much of which was certainly known to Fuseli, also contains, besides caricatures, renderings of expressive heads or hands—motifs soon to become so important for Fuseli. There is no longer anything parrot-like in these copies by Fuseli, the originals of which must have appealed strongly to his sense of fantasy. One of the scenes of foolishness he copied is that of a woman lording it over her husband (Plate 2b), a kind of Phyllis and Aristotle, which, even at this early stage, gave him an opportunity to render, or perhaps better to discover, his favourite type of a haughty, sensuous, modishly-dressed woman, who was soon to be frequently repeated and varied. Associated with this, a growing tendency now appeared in him to make the fashions of his day erotic (interpreted expressionistically) or grotesque (with a sophisticated slant to it): entirely his own conception, for instance, is a water-colour portraying a fashionable rococo lady, whom he calls *Adelheide* (Plate 4b), with a perverse face and coiffure, contemplating herself in a mirror.<sup>17</sup>

How did Fuseli's penchant for this refined eroticism and the almost evil-minded propensity for violence and brutality, displayed in his drawings, fit in with his cult of Rousseau, which even at the age of eighteen was strong in him, towards virtuousness, kindness of heart and simplicity? As early as 1760 Fuseli wrote in a letter that he had been much occupied for more than a year with Rousseau's *Discours sur l'Inégalité*. He was convinced at that time that poetry and philosophy, the subjects then uppermost in his mind, should be useful to humanity. The development of this dualism will become clearer in the sequel. From the copies after Meyer's burlesque baroque stories, we can easily trace the route to his own series of grotesque drawings of the deeds of Till Eulenspiegel, done about 1755–7. They are in a crisp, archaising, 'old-German', agitated mannerist-baroque style,<sup>18</sup> in which a decided inclination for expressiveness is combined with a certain amount of realism (Plate 3b). To a slight extent Bentley's illustrations of 1753 touched by mannerism, of Gray's poems, printed for Horace Walpole in the atmosphere of Strawberry Hill and the Gothic Revival, can be considered English parallels to these. Compare, for instance, Fuseli's drawing, *Till Eulenspiegel before the*



*Priest*,<sup>19</sup> with Bentley's comic illustration of Gray's *Long Story* (Plate 7a), showing the ghosts of horrified old ladies in 16th-century dress peeping over a gallery. Both illustrations are proto-romantic to an astonishing extent for these years; but Bentley's, as one would expect, is more realistic and therefore an obvious precursor of the romantic history painting of the 1820-30s onwards, that of Fuseli more consistently mannerist.<sup>20</sup> It is mainly the two tendencies—towards expressiveness and towards realism—which characterise Fuseli's numerous drawings from the same period, of vehement genre scenes and figures of contemporary, often peasant, life which at first appear in 17th-century disguise: scuffles, tugs-of-war (Plate 6b), skittle-playing, harvesting. The realism of these peasant scenes, so unlike the famous sentimental peasant idylls of his godfather, Salomon Gessner, is earlier than, though not quite dissimilar to, the realism of the peasant representations of Storm and Stress, in art as well as in literature.<sup>21</sup> A fashionable family at breakfast (Plate 5a) offers a highly animated version, on a reduced scale, of Hogarth's *Levée of the Countess* from the *Marriage à la Mode*,<sup>22</sup> and even the curtains have become agitated.<sup>23</sup> The climax of Fuseli's early Swiss drawings seems to me to be a murder scene, in the National Art Collection at Weimar (Plate 6a). Here, in this mannerist-baroque drawing, Fuseli is already master of his means in rendering an uncanny shooting episode and an uncanny interplay of shadows; and perhaps for the first, though certainly not for the last, time we feel something in Fuseli's art of Delacroix's romanticism to come. This drawing belonged, in Goethe's time, to the Grand Duchess of Weimar. But it is quite possible that it was Goethe who had originally bought it from Lavater in Switzerland. When in 1831 he acquired some early drawings by Fuseli, he called them 'extraordinary beginnings of an extraordinary man'.

A consistent evolution can be traced, through the drawings of this boy, from his beginnings onwards, and it is only when seen against the background of these unusual prerequisites that we can understand his further development. His early connection with the tradition of Swiss mannerism cannot be strongly enough emphasised. For not only did this passionate style with its stress on violence and eroticism<sup>24</sup> strike a chord in him to which his personal temperament, turbulent and extravagant, his preference for seeing the tragic and exciting side of things, responded, but—and this reveals the mentality of his generation—the predilection for Swiss mannerism fused in him with the Storm and Stress world of intense ideas now in process of formation. These youthful impressions were largely to dominate his future art.

It is not without importance that the young Fuseli, driven on



admittedly by his father, became a Zwinglian clergyman and, in fact, practised this profession in Zürich for a short while. Characteristically, in this field he was influenced—an indication of the same dualism which stamped his whole early mentality—by the new, emotional theology, particularly in sermons, just as was another Zürich clergyman, his best friend, Lavater, as well as by the new enlightened Bible criticism. In later times, however, he could no longer be called Christian in the orthodox sense (in his opinion, the religion of Christ perished with him, even before Paul); but he was sincerely religious to the end, believed, as Knowles put it, in the benevolence of the Deity, the immortality of the soul, and he hated free thinkers. In art he always tried to avoid representing the Deity, and wrote to Lavater, who wished him to make a drawing of the head of Christ for his book on physiognomy: 'It is just as impossible to depict Jesus Christ for a Christian as it is to depict God for his worshippers.' He was later to write, in his *4th Lecture*, that he did not think 'the Supreme Being, the eternal essence of incomprehensible perfection, ought ever to have been approached by the feeble efforts of human conception'.

In a pamphlet of 1763, written jointly with Lavater, another outstanding partisan of Storm and Stress, Fuseli vented his moral indignation upon a corrupt member of the oligarchic-conservative Zürich government. This government was so firmly against innovation of any kind that it sharply censured Bodmer's non-political periodical (an imitation of the *Spectator*) and it even for some time prevented the publication of his Milton translation. Fuseli's attitude must be considered against the background of the profound reaction then prevailing in Switzerland, the condemnation of Rousseau by the government of Geneva in 1762, the philosopher's flight and the ensuing ferment among Swiss liberals in Zürich, in particular in the Bodmer circle. As a result of the pamphlet both Fuseli and Lavater found it prudent to leave the town. Fuseli first went to Germany, not as an artist but as a writer and poet, as a kind of connecting link between the Swiss and the German Storm and Stress movements.<sup>25</sup> All his poems at that time were written in this vein, of which they represent very early documents.<sup>26</sup> The writer to whom the young Fuseli was at first the nearest in his poems was Klopstock, who was recommended to him as a model by Bodmer; with his *Messias*, inspired by Bodmer's Milton translation, and his *Odes*, a new emotional poetry was commencing in Germany. As one of the early initiators of Storm and Stress, which rated him highly, Klopstock played a role in poetry similar to Bodmer's in criticism. Though Fuseli much admired him and visited him in 1764, his own poems, perhaps under the influence of Young, were soon to become, even before Goethe's, more lyrical, more directly experienced, less



Klopstockian. In 1774 Lavater compared Fuseli, both as a writer and poet, with the young Goethe and considered him in some respects even superior. For a while, in fact, in those years an occasional parallelism existed between the poetry of the two.

Fuseli met many kindred intellectuals, wrote and translated (from English), painted and drew only occasionally.<sup>27</sup> In 1763 he stayed for a while in Barth, in the house of the liberal Provost Spalding, one of the earliest exponents in Germany of an emotional theology, and one of the first translators of Shaftesbury. On the walls of Spalding's summer-house he executed two paintings, now lost, illustrating religious works of his host. Spalding's *Bestimmung des Menschen* (Destiny of Man) was represented allegorically by the upright figures of Virtue and Religion hand in hand pointing out Immortality to Man with, at their feet, the insignia of the Arts and Sciences: Time cuts the wings of Desire. A portrayal of the theologian teaching his children illustrated Spalding's *Belehrungen an meine Tochter* (Instructions for my Daughters) with its near-Christian sentiment. Thus at this juncture Fuseli was much preoccupied with the ideas of the moral and religious utility of art. Klopstock, the religious poet, had of course laid great stress upon the moral purpose of poetry. Some of the main concepts of Fuseli's rhapsodies in prose called *Klagen* (Complaints, a title taken from Young's *Night Thoughts*) written at that time, in 1763, were virtue, liberty and fatherland.

Among the few drawings Fuseli did at this time in Berlin is one of 1764, in its way just as unusual and revealing if less primitive than his earlier drawings. It portrays a scene from the Seven Years' War, built up from figures with cadaverous expressions, a doctor, an old woman in tears and companions arranged round the death-bed of an Hungarian Hussar (Zürich, Kunsthau) (Plate 5b). Even more than the genre scenes from contemporary life dating from the end of his Zürich stay, this drawing represents stylistically a skilful transfusion of realism into his early, mannerist-baroque style; apart from a probable dash of Poussin's *Death of Germanicus*, it again contains, as did the *Family-Breakfast*, obvious suggestions from Hogarth, in this case from the *Death of the Harlot*. The child seated on the floor, playing happily in the presence of death, derives from this scene (while the other child could be a reminiscence of Poussin), as also the old woman, rocking a cradle, from the one robbing the Harlot's chest; the realistic heaping-up of motifs also comes from Hogarth, from the realism of baroque. Thus Fuseli used Hogarth, with whose art he was very familiar, in this, almost his only, work of a contemporary historical event; it is equally typical of him at this stage that he should have combined death scenes of such different character as these by Poussin and Hogarth. We even have literal proof that Fuseli



was thinking of Hogarth precisely at the time he was making this drawing; while the drawing is dated January 1764, a few days earlier, on 22nd December, 1763, in a letter to Bodmer he used the term of his own invention '*verhogardiseren*'; thus Hogarth's name came so easily to him that he substituted it, as a verb, for 'to satirise'.

It is easy to appreciate why Fuseli decided to go from Berlin to England, where his first visit was to extend from 1764 till 1770, the country from which he had obtained so much spiritual nourishment, just as Storm and Stress itself did, and from which source derived the greater part of his culture. That England, with her civic liberties, was the lodestar and envy of all the middle classes of Europe, certainly played a part in Fuseli's determination to come here. In conformity with Storm and Stress as well as with Enlightenment, he disliked all forms of tyranny and particularly complained of Frederick the Great in Prussia. Yet, considering Fuseli's personality, I do not think the political factor should be exaggerated.

Sir Charles Mitchell, the British Ambassador to Berlin, brought Fuseli over to England, introduced him to Thomas Coutts, the richest man in this country, banker to George III, as well as to a large part of the aristocracy; through intentionally well-timed commissions, Coutts was to make possible Fuseli's Italian journey and was later to become his special patron. In his letters to his Swiss friends (written in the heated manner of Storm and Stress, yet always intellectually controlled) Fuseli frequently boasted of his meetings, on more or less equal terms, with numerous aristocrats, and also with literary people (Smollett, Falconer, Armstrong) but it is very seldom that he mentioned politics seriously. When in his letters he referred to Wilkes, the only consistently liberal-minded politician of those years, he adopted his usual, rather scathing tone. In his *Ode an das Vaterland*, however—characteristically, in a poem—he sided with him. In common with many English intellectuals, the publisher, Johnson, in whose house Fuseli lived during the last two years of his first visit to England, had liberal sympathies, which were shared at least partially by his guest, though Fuseli appears to have been more interested in liberal theology than in liberal politics. In his letters Fuseli mentioned Priestley's *Essay on Government*, published by Johnson, which he sent to Lavater, and of which he himself owned a copy. What must now have caused a real change in his outlook was his sudden contact with the grand, elegant, refined society of the British capital. Provincial as he was, and acquainted only with the Swiss world of ideas, this new environment must have brought him wider horizons and bolder standards, from which he drew the courage to arrive at fresh and daring personal conclusions. On the whole, Fuseli remained even now, though to a lesser extent



than previously in Germany, a writer and scholar rather than an artist. Yet this early disciple of Rousseau was very far from being the political radical such as he is usually described in the literature of our day.

In 1767 he produced a pamphlet, *Remarks on the Writings and Conduct of J. J. Rousseau*. Published anonymously, it was taken by many in England to be written by Sterne or Smollett. Sterne was held to be its author by that very original and sensitive representative of Storm and Stress, Hamann (Fuseli's senior by eleven years), who had been to England before Fuseli and was well acquainted with English literature; the abrupt aphoristic style of the pamphlet has, in fact, a slight resemblance with that of Sterne; Fuseli admired him, not only for *Tristram Shandy* but, characteristically, also for his dramatic and emotional *Sermons*, one of which he even translated, was probably influenced by his style and frequently referred to him in letters. The young Fuseli was flattered by this attribution of his work to a great writer. Nothing, incidentally, better characterises Fuseli's egocentricity than his having written a review, equally anonymously, praising his own work (a procedure he was later to follow for his own pictures too). Having met Rousseau shortly before in Hume's company, in Paris, Fuseli now defended him, an exile in England, against Voltaire: this attitude conformed to the usual liberal line in Switzerland, including Bodmer's; considered more moderate, less aggressive than that of Voltairean Enlightenment, it was an attitude sympathetic to English intellectual circles.<sup>28</sup> But the pamphlet was more than a defence of Rousseau, under whose deep influence Fuseli remained at this time.<sup>29</sup> It also betrays, as becomes clear from some of his remarks, a certain deviation from him, characteristic of the change coming over Fuseli in recent years—a change possible not only because of the new easy-going, worldly milieu in which he found himself but also because it brought out another, even more important, side of his early tendencies.

The huge crisis of conscience into which Rousseau's ideas had plunged humanity, namely, that civilisation had corrupted mankind, now appeared to be solved, so far as Fuseli's own case was concerned, in a way most unusual for those years and in contrast to the prevalent European middle class optimism with its urge for social and political reform. It was a solution, at the same time pessimistic and escapist, which was to have far-reaching consequences for his art. The pessimism, or perhaps, more accurately, tragic attitude, of Storm and Stress, with which Fuseli's type was linked, must be viewed against the German background. Lacking the essential basis of a strong middle class, Germany was in a hopelessly backward social position and incapable at that time of any serious improvement. Hence Rousseau's



ultimately optimistic views, as expressed not so much in his early combative works as in those of the 1760s, on the possibility of a reconciliation between society and the individual, could not take deep root here; nor is it mere chance that the conflicts in the literature of Storm and Stress between the individual, however titanic, and society were insoluble: either a one-sided emphasis was placed on the inner life, on the inner energy of the individual, or else action was idealised—and here we cannot help thinking of Fuseli—for action's sake.<sup>30</sup>

It is not for us to consider here how far and in what quarters Rousseau inspired pessimism and even amorality, in spite of the fact that his own views were, in the last resort, affirmative and, of course, moral. Within the history of ideas the various forms that romanticism was to take can all ultimately be traced back, if we so wish, to one or other of Rousseau's theories: he was certainly of the greatest importance for the intellectuals of the next generation.<sup>31</sup> Fuseli's inclination towards escapism and pessimism, which was thus undoubtedly connected with the non-political, individualistic character of Storm and Stress, had already shown itself when he was only twenty-two; in 1763, in conflict with Rousseau as well as with Enlightenment, he wrote to Lavater that he had 'pondered much on the limits beyond which a nation cannot be improved'.<sup>32</sup>

In view of Fuseli's earliest violent and erotic drawings, it should be no surprise that, following his personal inclinations, he seems to have acquiesced in Rousseau's judgment, however condemnatory and challenging in its intention, that our present society was depraved and thus our art not really moral; and to have implied that the man of culture, the artist, had better accept this situation. While Rousseau's belief in man's original, natural goodness was partly a reaction against Calvin's pessimism, against his belief in man's depravity, Fuseli, who had been not only a Rousseau follower but also a Zwinglian clergyman, again reverted to this pessimism. Fuseli's temperamental preference for the tragic vision of mankind was possibly reinforced by a theological residue in him. At the back of his outlook was not so much indifference to morality as a kind of inverted, ineradicable puritanism. In fact Fuseli's former ideas on virtue and liberty inherited from Rousseau and Bodmer were never entirely lost but receded into the background, into a less topical layer, as it were. Partly through belief, partly through perversion, Fuseli placed morality on such a high level that it became illusive.<sup>33</sup> Though in his *Remarks* Fuseli tried to defend Rousseau's attitude to art, he could not, of course, in the last resort, accept his contempt for it. Even in this pamphlet he was already criticising Rousseau's protest, on grounds of moral corruption, against the establishment of a theatre at Geneva and he asserted that the task of the stage was not to be 'a



school of morals'. The elderly Bodmer, on the other hand, turned away from his earlier esteem for the merely artistic values and for artistic genius and accepted Rousseau's puritanical, pedagogic standpoint.<sup>34</sup> Thus disciple and teacher, each faced with the same challenge from Rousseau, took different turnings, and Fuseli, in some respects, returned to Bodmer's earlier, pre-Rousseauesque views. Such views the adherent of Storm and Stress linked to a fervent belief that art was the privilege of genius. In the Rousseau pamphlet Fuseli went so far as to allow higher education in art and science only to genius. The contrast between his relatively liberal (even if increasingly concealed) opinions concerning society and his bold, aristocratic ideas concerning art (or, for that matter, culture in general) can be explained, historically, as an outcome of Storm and Stress mentality. We may grant that Fuseli's art, like the whole tendency of Storm and Stress, was, in many ways, a projection of Rousseau's new emphasis upon the emotions. Yet, although Rousseau advances the liberation of the instincts and passions for moral purposes, this same liberation engendered in Rousseauism, and even in Rousseau's person himself, potentialities which impelled Fuseli all the more in the direction of a forceful, refined, original amoral art. Thus Fuseli's subjective passionate art was a mixture of progressive and reactionary tendencies. Though originating in the newly-found emotionalism of the middle class, it tended, at the same time, to direct itself to the happy few, to a cultured escapist *élite*, living in a world of esoteric beauty.

Fuseli's greatest inspiration in England for his art was to have reached the sources of his own Shakespeare-Milton cult and what made the deepest impression on him here were the Shakespeare performances. In 1765, in a letter to Sulzer, he wrote that, for a man with a soul, the London theatre was alone worth the journey. The new appreciation of Shakespeare which had come to him from the England of the 1730s and '40s was still mainly based, in the England of the '60s, upon Shakespeare's realism, upon his faithful delineation of character.<sup>35</sup> It was Garrick who, supplanting the former declamatory school, gave expression to this conception by means of his new realist, character-creating acting.<sup>36</sup> Yet something still newer in the interpretation of Shakespeare was approaching and gaining ground, not in direct contradiction to the prevailing notion but combining with it to give it a slightly different slant. Young's conception, set forth in his *Conjectures on Original Composition* of 1759, which was translated into German immediately it appeared, of the inspired genius who creates out of passion and is above rules,<sup>37</sup> was already applied by Young himself to no one with more fervour than to Shakespeare. It is a conception which was received with much enthusiasm and was greatly elaborated by the Swiss and German Storm and Stress. In other



literary fields, too, the rational-realist trend, which had dominated English intellectual life during the first half of the century, no longer held the upper hand, and the new, romantic trend in this country towards the emotional and the original followed the same lines as those along which Bodmer transposed the early inspirations coming from England<sup>38</sup>: for example, Gray's and Young's poetry, the re-discovery of the Scottish ballads by Percy (Fuseli sent a copy of Percy's *Relics* to Bodmer, who translated them), their imitation in Macpherson's *Ossian*, the novels of horror, ushered in by Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, Burke's *Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful*, etc. Fuseli seems to have particularly liked Gray's poems; those of Thomson and Young, whose *Night Thoughts* had much influenced him at an earlier date, were now too tame for him. I think that Fuseli's pessimism went much beyond the melancholy of most poetical products of early English romanticism. Thus not only was the English cultural atmosphere congenial to Fuseli but he also had the power in himself of heightening in intensity and leading in the direction of the irrational, the new, more imaginative features of the England of those years.<sup>39</sup> For the Shakespeare performances of his friend, Garrick, inspired Fuseli in the spirit of Storm and Stress.

In his drawings Fuseli tried to bring out the passionate in Shakespeare, though, of course, in his own personal, sophisticated way, just as he was attracted towards the bizarre, gruesome situations in Shakespeare's plays, in their turn, and by no means by chance, often connected with mannerism. In one of his *Aphorisms* (No. 200) Fuseli was later to write: 'Consider it as the unalterable law of nature that all your power upon others depends on your own emotions. Shakespeare wept, trembled, laughed first at what now sways the public feature.' We can perhaps also risk the remark that the way in which the neo-mannerist Fuseli illustrated Shakespeare, with a penchant for the cruel and, later on increasingly, the erotic, can be roughly compared with the manner in which the Jacobean-mannerist playwrights transposed Shakespeare. While still in Switzerland, Fuseli had translated *Macbeth* into German—the choice of this particular drama with its uncanny atmosphere and display of terrible passions was most characteristic of him.<sup>40</sup> The macabre drawings he did in England<sup>41</sup> of Garrick as Duke of Gloucester at the death-bed of Henry VI<sup>42</sup> and as a terrifying Macbeth after the murder of Duncan<sup>43</sup> (both in Zürich, Kunsthau, the first dated 1766) grew largely out of the style of his earlier drawings made in Switzerland and surpass in their imaginative character all contemporary English art. At the same time, the wide differences between these two Garrick drawings demonstrate the various, still tentative tendencies within Fuseli at this formative stage. The first drawing, an historical scene rather than an impression of



the theatre, retains marks of the heavy, somewhat unbalanced Swiss-German mannerist-baroque style of the Eulenspiegel drawings. The Macbeth drawing, on the other hand, though probably exaggerating, in an expressionist sense, the features of the acting,<sup>44</sup> shows accurately Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard on the stage in their actual costumes. Like the murder scene in Weimar and the *Death of an Hungarian Hussar*, it is connected with the realism of the baroque, but in Fuseli there is greater stress upon exactitude. Thus, although the drawing is very different in temper, say, from Zoffany's sober, anecdotal pictures of the 1760s showing performances of the same actor, a certain relation with English contemporary realism is plainly visible,<sup>45</sup> just as in Fuseli's few illustrations for Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*. I am illustrating, as an example, the scene with *Peregrine Pickle*, an English painter, an English physician and a Swiss attendant in front of the pictures in the Palais Royal in Paris (Plate 3a). The frontispiece of Fuseli's Rousseau pamphlet, which shows Voltaire riding Humanity (with Justice and Liberty on the gallows), but unmasked by Rousseau, is close in style to that of the Smollett illustrations and only slightly less realistic.

But what pointed more to the near future than the slight connection of a few works of Fuseli with English realism was the appearance at the same time in Scotland of expressionist tendencies rather similar to Fuseli's. Nothing could be more characteristic, since 'backward' romantic Scotland, like Switzerland and Germany, was more receptive soil than England for a very early romanticism. This was the time when Scotland was rediscovering her ancient folk ballads and Macpherson was writing his *Ossian*—works which had a resounding effect upon 18th and 19th-century romanticism throughout the whole of Europe.<sup>46</sup> It follows quite naturally that it was the Scotsman John Runciman's tempestuous picture of *King Lear in the Storm* (1767, Edinburgh) with its Salvator Rosa streak, and his tender emotional Biblical paintings, reverting to Dürer, which are the nearest parallels to Fuseli's art. Runciman's picture of the *Flight into Egypt* (Edinburgh) can also be regarded as foreshadowing, in a general way, the tendency towards abstraction which was to lead to Blake's portrayal of the same theme (Tate Gallery). And—to anticipate for a moment—it is no surprise that John Runciman's surviving brother, Alexander, the painter of Ossianic themes, was soon to come under Fuseli's direct influence in Italy when both were living there<sup>47</sup>; characteristically, he also wrote an introduction to the *History of Poetry in Scotland*, dedicated to Fuseli.

And in this 'Scottish-romantic' context, one of Fuseli's own early romantic experiments during his period in England, may be cited: his drawing dating from 1769 of an unknown, apparently northern



subject, the harp-playing Scald!, showing a banquet and a betrothal (Plate 8). Features from Rembrandt and Salvator Rosa combine with mannerism in this, one of the most interesting of 18th-century drawings, with its attempt to express, in a somewhat topical way, early romantic sentiment. The Salvator Rosa features might be said to constitute a stylistic continuation of Fuseli's early imitations of Swiss baroque artists; but, of course, the 'savage' art of Salvator Rosa was, in any case, one of the most fashionable in England at that time (not only as regards garden designing)<sup>48</sup> and so was, to some extent, among collectors of engravings, that of Rembrandt. However, the way in which Fuseli has entirely transposed them, in a neo-mannerist sense, leaving only the slightest trace of their style, was new and radical. Remarkable in this drawing are the two curiously-dressed women attendants, with bands wrapped round their chins and the backs of their heads, which remind us at once of Pontormo's and Bandinelli's hooded mourners with their medieval flavour (Plate 9). Whether Fuseli had seen Italian drawings of this variety or not in England, at any rate his English work, apparently starting from a northern-romantic subject, already pointed in the direction of his future drawings in Italy. In one of Fuseli's most impressive drawings, done in the same year, 1769, representing *Arthur's Dream* from Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (Oberhofen, Private Collection<sup>49</sup>), there would seem to be an echo from Caraglio's famous engraving after Rosso's *Mars and Venus* (the shooting Amor, the disengaged sword, Arthur's type, etc.).

Nor, during his stay in England, did Fuseli neglect the illustration of antique poetry, in which he was exceptionally well versed: it was precisely his wide intellectual culture, reflecting, as in the young Bodmer, the formation of Storm and Stress on the Continent and ultimately, of course, in contradiction with Rousseau's rejection of culture, which gave his passionate, intense art such a very personal, distinct character. It is possible that his illustrations of the antique at this early stage have a stronger classicist tinge than his other works, but the difference is not great. Fuseli's representation, say, of Spenser and Shakespeare on the one hand,<sup>50</sup> and his no less unusually imaginative, tempestuous renderings of the antique on the other,<sup>51</sup> certainly did not strike him as contradictory. Still less, since, owing to his moderate attitude towards Storm and Stress and contrary to the enthusiastic approach of German and English 18th-century romanticism, he found gothic art decidedly antipathetic. Unlike Blake, he never really participated in the Gothic Revival, but only skirted its boundaries; numerous shades were possible in this respect in early romanticism. Fuseli liked the fantastic, feudal world of chivalry which Spenser evoked but not the 'primitive barbarism' of *Ossian*. This



#### THE EARLY YEARS

anti-gothic, anti-mystic bias was to remain characteristic of him throughout his life, and fundamentally separate him from Blake in spite of so many points of contact. When at this period, in 1765, he translated Winckelmann's first book (only ten years after its appearance) he would not have felt a violation of his romantic principles<sup>52</sup>; he was thus instrumental in infusing severer, more scientifically classicist features into the vague official baroque-classicist art theory prevailing in England.

If there was as yet no consciousness in those years in England, with its wide stream of tradition, of an acute contrast between classicism and romanticism,<sup>53</sup> neither was there even in Germany or Switzerland. Lavater and other representatives of Storm and Stress took up a similar, rather positive attitude towards Winckelmann<sup>54</sup>: his books, after all, were products of Enlightenment and seemed, as regards their social outlook, quite compatible with Rousseau's world of ideas. Return to the Greeks and return to nature could, in many ways, be equated (for instance, by Diderot) just as Winckelmann equated the former with opposition to tyranny and rococo. Winckelmann's outlook and culture were based on progressive English and French middle class thought of the 18th century (e.g. Shaftesbury, Addison, Montesquieu) to an extent scarcely realised today.<sup>55</sup> Taken all-in-all, during his first period in England, Fuseli's literary as well as his artistic propensities were still in the melting-pot. He certainly had not yet found his style, which continued to be wavering. The world of early German-English romanticism was not, of course, 'straight-forward' or clearly definable, and in his initial attempts at expressing it in art, Fuseli was naturally apt to stress one of the often contradictory factors at the expense of another, all the more since he was himself such a complex and self-contradictory personality.



## Notes to Chapter I

- 1 Instead of giving a summary of the vast German literature on Storm and Stress I refer to two English books dealing with the subject, H. B. Garland, *Storm and Stress* (London, 1952) and R. Pascal, *The German Sturm und Drang* (Manchester, 1953), which list a certain number of the relevant German books. Pascal's book is itself an excellent guide; it gives a balanced analysis of the problems of the fully developed German Storm and Stress.
- 2 The chief exponents of the German movement in its heyday were Herder, the young Goethe (*Götz von Berlichingen*, *Werther*, the *Faust* fragment), and the young Schiller (*Die Räuber*, *Kabale und Liebe*).
- 3 G. Lukács (*Goethe und seine Zeit*, Berne, 1947) and Pascal (*op. cit.*) have already pointed this out as a fundamental factor in the interpretation of Storm and Stress.
- 4 Yet, in spite of this distinction, we must remember that the two movements were closely interlocked and fundamentally represented the two aspects of German middle-class mentality at the time.
- 5 In present-day German literature, however, where the degree of irrationalism in Storm and Stress is, at any rate, much exaggerated, Fuseli is unreservedly considered not only a typical but even an extreme representative of the movement. See page 67.
- 6 Although Fuseli was in general left-handed, upon occasion he drew with his right hand, as in this case, which may account for the slight clumsiness in execution. See also page 58, n. 32, page 27, n. 12 and page 144, n. 9.
- 7 Bodmer's translation of *Paradise Lost*, finished in 1725, was published in 1732 (it had been translated once before into German but it was Bodmer's translation which caused a deep stir). In 1740 and 1741 Bodmer wrote two essays on the *Miraculous in Poetry*, mainly on Milton (but also on Homer and Ariosto). Bodmer, as an old man, influenced by Rousseau in a puritanical sense, was also attracted by Milton because of the moral-didactic effect of his poems. Both these



# THE EARLY YEARS

aspects of Milton, as bequeathed to him by Bodmer, had a bearing on Fuseli's art. Bodmer's epic on *Noah* (1765) which Fuseli illustrated is an imitation of Milton and is influenced by Young's *Night Thoughts*.

- 8 Bodmer became acquainted with Shakespeare in 1724 and most of his own dramas were written in imitation of him. He was also instrumental in initiating through Wieland, who as his disciple lived in Zürich for seven years, the first large-scale German translation of Shakespeare (published in Zürich in 1762-6).
- 9 See M. Wehrli, *Johann Jakob Bodmer und die Geschichte der Literatur* (Leipzig, 1936).
- 10 In his book, *Einfluss der Einbildungskraft* (1727).
- 11 See an analysis of the relation of the rational and irrational components in the aesthetics of Bodmer and Breitinger in E. Ermatinger's *Dichtung und Geistesleben in der Deutschen Schweiz* (Munich, 1933).
- 12 When Winckelmann was living, almost destitute in Italy, the elder Fuseli, though unacquainted with him, collected money for him among his own circle. The elder Fuseli also had Winckelmann's portrait painted in Rome by Angelica Kauffmann and our artist's cousin received instructions from Winckelmann in Rome. After his death, in 1778, Fuseli's father published many of Winckelmann's letters to his Swiss friends.
- 13 Fuseli's father also had Italian engravings. According to A. Cunningham (*Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters*, London, 1828), he owned a number of prints after Michelangelo, which his son copied. This is quite possible, but no copies by the boy Fuseli after Michelangelo have come down to us.
- 14 The violent chiaroscuro, which certainly accorded with his own predilections, in fact largely derives from copies after, or imitations of, Swiss artists, as, for instance, Amman.
- 15 E.g. his *Butcher's Shop by Night* (Zürich, Central Library; repr. Ganz, pl.2).
- 16 Rudolf Meyer died in 1638 and his brother Conrad finished the series.
- 17 Characteristic of his frivolous themes at this time, as derived from literature, is a drawing illustrating Boccaccio's well-known *novella* and shows a cooper working inside a barrel, while his wife and a young man are making love.
- 18 The young Fuseli's liking for Dürer was shared by Lavater, the young Goethe and other partisans of Storm and Stress; in Fuseli this particular penchant was relatively the weakest though the earliest to appear among the three.
- 19 Repr. Ganz, pl. 4.



- 20 When much later (c. 1798) Blake illustrated Gray's *Long Story*, his stylisation, of course, went far beyond that of the young Fuseli, yet elements of Bentley are still recognisable even behind this degree of abstract style.
- 21 See Appendix V.
- 22 Hogarth's engravings were most famous and widespread on the Continent. Fuseli's and Lavater's early interest in physiognomy (when still students in Zürich) linked them up with a movement of a general nature, which had been largely initiated in England by Hogarth and Fielding.
- 23 A contemporary work of a comic character from the 1760s, which has also drawn upon Hogarth for agitated-expressionist effects and shows stylistic resemblances with the young Fuseli, is a gouache representing a *Fête rampante*, done by the Dutchman, Jacob Xavery (London, Roland, Browse and Delbanco Gallery) (Pl. 7b): a very baroque composition touched by mannerism. Motifs from Hogarth's *Chairing of the Member* combine with Dutch and French features to give an expressionist caricature-like impression. The atmosphere is that of the young Fuseli, and some of the types, in particular the erotic, whimsical women on the left and the quizzical upright 'Renaissance' figure of the Bramarbas, dominating the right foreground (e.g. compare *Till Eulenspiegel visiting the Barber*; repr. Federmann, pl. 34). At the same time, the composition already points towards Rowlandson, while the Bramarbas figure even looks like a grotesque distortion of the early Delacroix's *Faust* lithographs, which were to appear sixty years later; this is all the more revealing if we remember that the young Delacroix imitated Hogarth and copied Rowlandson. As in Bentley's quaint 'Renaissance' illustrations, we get a glimpse here of the line leading from the romanticism of the 18th to that of the 19th century and of the varied sources on which this development fed; most of the drawings by the young Fuseli were still too raw to form real links in this chain but there were soon to appear works by him which would amply fulfil this role.
- 24 Early Swiss mannerism was largely that of Landsknecht artists and consequently more intense and wilder than the German, which was at first urbane and thus less pronounced, and later courtly. Compositions of Urs Graf often seem forceful and grotesque popular caricatures of works by Dürer and Holbein.
- 25 When in Berlin, Fuseli was befriended by, and lived in the house of, the Swiss aesthete, Sulzer, who had been called to the Prussian capital by Frederick the Great. Sulzer elaborated Bodmer's and Breitinger's aesthetics into a systematic compendium and Fuseli certainly profited by his wide learning.
- 26 For analysis of his by no means ungifted poems, see Federmann, *op. cit.*, and Mason's two books already quoted.



# THE EARLY YEARS

- 27 At the beginning of his journey, in Augsburg, he admired paintings by Tintoretto and his German imitator, Rottenhammer—thus his taste for mannerism was continuing.
- 28 That Rousseau, for his part, had a penchant for English culture and literature and was strongly under their influence is well enough known. See, in detail, J. Texte, *J. J. Rousseau et les Origines du Cosmopolitisme au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1885).
- 29 On Fuseli's relation to Rousseau's ideas, see, in detail, Mason, *op. cit.* My interpretation of this relationship perhaps takes the significance of Fuseli's art more into account.
- 30 See, in detail, Pascal, *op. cit.*
- 31 See, for instance, I. Babbitt, *Rousseau and Romanticism* (Boston, 1928), and A. Cobban, *Edmund Burke and the Revolt against the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1929). But which of Rousseau's ideas was more to the fore in which country and in which generation depended, of course, on the actual historical circumstances. See also page 136.
- 32 It would be interesting to compare such views of Fuseli of the 1760s with the similar pessimism of Herder's *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte* of 1774, which is also influenced by Rousseau and which Lavater sent to Fuseli; in it Herder denied that society can be improved by education. Fuseli also knew the other, more optimistic book of Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–91).
- 33 See Mason, *op. cit.*
- 34 See Wehrli, *op. cit.*
- 35 See D. Lovell, *Shakespeare as a Poet of Realism in the Eighteenth Century* (*Journal of English Literary History*, II, 1935).
- 36 Hogarth was perhaps the first artist to render this aspect of Shakespeare and Garrick.
- 37 Young appealed to all poets to develop their originality. His own development from his early works, where only hints of it occur, to this revolutionary theory of genius, written at the age of seventy-five, is remarkable and characteristic of the times. Joseph Warton's anti-rationalist *Essay on Pope*, exalting the creative, imaginative genius, dates from as early as 1756.
- 38 In 1764, in London, Fuseli was still feeling such close solidarity with Storm and Stress that he composed an Ode to Bodmer. While in London he also wrote a history of German poetry, the manuscript of which was burned in 1769 in Johnson's house, where he was living.
- 39 On the other hand, since he was only a 'moderate' follower of Storm and Stress, Fuseli was well capable of appreciating and genuinely incorporating English suggestions, which by German standards



# THE EARLY YEARS

- were relatively moderate in character. So, altogether, a certain adjustment of balance took place in him between the two movements.
- 40 *Macbeth* remained Fuseli's favourite Shakespeare play (see *Farington Diary*, Vol. II, under date 1804).
  - 41 Fuseli only began to paint towards the end of his first English visit but no paintings from this period have come down to us. Even the surviving drawings from these years are very scarce, since all his works were burned in 1769.
  - 42 Repr. Ganz, pl. 5.
  - 43 Repr. Ganz, pl. 6.
  - 44 We know that Garrick's acting itself, mainly his cadence, had slightly expressionist features. See, on these, E. Wind, 'Humanitätsidee und heroisiertes Porträt in der Englischen Kultur des 18 Jahrhunderts' (*Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, 1930-1).
  - 45 The edition of *Peregrine Pickle*, containing Fuseli's illustrations, was not published. As Federmann rightly suspected, some engravings by Grignion in the Print Room of the British Museum, which are obviously based on Fuseli's drawings, must have been part of these. They show a high quality within English book illustrations of those years and very distinct stylistic features: a neat Hogarthian realism, a concentrated composition made interesting through a combination of layers and lively diagonals, a stressing, but not over-stressing, of expression.
  - 46 See page 18.
  - 47 Fuseli was to call him, in a letter from Rome (in 1777 to Mary Moser), 'the best painter of us in Rome'.
  - 48 While, in his *Anecdotes of Painting*, Horace Walpole linked Salvator Rosa's savagery with Piranesi (though it seems to me the *Carceri* were slightly too much even for the author of the *Castle of Otranto*), nowadays it is quite usual to associate the *Carceri*, which date from as early as c. 1750, with Fuseli's mentality (see J. Andersen, *Giant Dreams*, in *English Miscellany*, Rome, 1952, and M. Praz, *Fuseli*, in *Sele-Arte*, 1952). Rosa's landscapes and bandits and, even more so, Piranesi's *Carceri*—dreams of prisons and torture-chambers—found favour among cultured, 'decadent' members of the aristocracy. This penchant of the aristocracy for the horrifying and the macabre and the emotional revolt of the middle class were to fuse in early romanticism; in this sense the vogue for Rosa and for the imaginative, and increasingly anti-realist, Piranesi was, in fact, a preliminary of Fuseli's art.
  - 49 Repr. Ganz, pl. 9.
  - 50 Milton and Spenser, both of whom served Fuseli as thematic sources, had an increasing influence, amounting to a vogue, on English early romantic poetry.



# THE EARLY YEARS

- 51 Characteristic of the view taken of antique poetry in England in these years was Robert Wood's *Essay on the Original Genius* (1769); though a rather confused book, it had a certain impact on the young Goethe of Storm and Stress.
- 52 Winckelmann (out of gratitude for the timely financial aid which Fuseli's father had procured him) gave Fuseli letters of recommendation when he went to England. Fuseli translated Winckelmann's book with the title *Reflections on the Paintings and Sculptures of the Greek*. He dedicated his translation to Lord Scarsdale; this peer was one of the earliest patrons of Robert Adam, his chief architect at Kedleston.
- 53 How much classicist tradition there is, for instance, in Gray's poetry. C. Ceste (*La Revolution française et les Poètes anglais*, Paris, 1906) rightly stresses the strong formal classicist elements in English early romantic literature. So far as nomenclature has any importance at all, he is correct in calling this poetry classic-romantic. Somewhat analogous to his own position was Fuseli's description (in his *11th Lecture*) of Gray's *Bard*—for which he made an illustration—as having been inspired both by the figure of the Lord in Raphael's *Vision of Ezekiel* and by Parmigianino's *Moses* in the Steccata.
- 54 Herder admired and, at the same time, criticised Winckelmann. Even Blake owned Winckelmann's book mentioned above, in Fuseli's translation, and learned much from it.
- 55 This, however, is not the fault of his great biographer, C. Justi (*Winckelmann und seine Zeitgenossen*, Leipzig, 1866-72), who thoroughly investigated and laid bare Winckelmann's sources.



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## II

### Fuseli's Italian Style and Mannerism

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AFTER he had definitely made up his mind to become a painter, Fuseli, from 1770 to 1778, lived and studied in Italy, mainly in Rome. He gave himself up entirely to his art and concentrated upon it more than ever before; as he moved among great works of art, studied, though not under a master, met many artists, he tried gradually to hammer out his own style as if obsessed. Sharing, as he did, the intellectual predilections of Storm and Stress, however much he may have adapted them to his own requirements, his themes in Italy continued to be taken almost exclusively from literature.<sup>1</sup> The kind he particularly favoured was poetry of an imaginative or of a visionary character, which he chose to interpret in a highly personal manner, occasionally even altering the original theme, which the classicist artists would never have done. In his *2nd Academy Lecture*, in justification of the artist's right to represent purely imaginary incidents, Fuseli adduced Michelangelo's cartoon of Pisa and Raphael's *Fire in the Borgo* as examples of conscious deviations from history.

Even in Rome he illustrated not only antique authors, as was usual among classicist artists, but also Dante, and, at least as frequently, scenes from Shakespeare, Milton and Gray—themes scarcely any painter before him had ever thought of there.<sup>2</sup> He searched increasingly in them for terrifying, breath-taking scenes at their highest moment of



tension, where the violent passions of forceful personalities could be portrayed. With his pessimistic views and tragic vision—a fusion, as we have seen, of Rousseau, Storm and Stress and his own temperament—he had little faith in human nature, a strong consciousness of evil and sin.<sup>3</sup> As a result of this psychological make-up, somewhat unusual for the times, he was attracted, for purposes of composition, not only by the horrifying but sometimes even, though the borderline is naturally imprecise, by evil, by the demoniac. This, again, was very different from the customary type of theme of artists of a classicist persuasion.

His first dated work from Rome, a drawing<sup>4</sup> of 1772, which he sent to the exhibition of the Royal Academy in London in 1774, already has a terrifying theme from Shakespeare, the *Death of Cardinal Beaufort* (Liverpool<sup>5</sup>). It is in an agitated, jerky, slightly classicist, not quite unrealistic style, with mannerist elements carried over from the Shakespearean illustrations, done in England. The composition contains some suggestions from Poussin's solemn *Death of Germanicus*, one of the most famous pictures in Rome at the time, and an engraving after which Fuseli had probably used before in his early composition of 1764, the *Death of an Hungarian Hussar*, though the genuinely realistic influence of Hogarth is less evident in the later work. Another version of the *Death of Beaufort*, also done in Rome but probably earlier, (Roman sketch-book, British Museum; Gilbert Davis Collection) (Plate 12b) and likewise showing slight elements from Poussin's composition, indicates a development along the same lines as the *Death of an Hungarian Hussar*, in an heroic vein, and the *Banquet and Betrothal* drawing from 1769; further this version can be considered the culmination of the fantastic, archaising drawings with their streak of baroque, dating from his earliest youth. With its pseudo-historical types, its slight indications of setting and dress and the help of a wash much stronger than in the other version, it again displays traces of Salvator Rosa and of Rembrandt, whose chiaroscuro here takes on a strident note; there is even an affinity, not so much in the pattern of the composition as in the conception and expression, with the 'romantic' drawings of the young Van Dyck.<sup>6</sup> Here, art-historically speaking, Fuseli has drawn upon the expressionist possibilities of the baroque rather than of mannerism, thus foreshadowing, even more than in the murder scene at Weimar, the early Delacroix. We have here, as in the case of *Banquet and Betrothal*, one of the most interesting, literally romantic drawings of the 18th century with its faintly historical flavour, quite isolated in its peculiar complexity in European art. It was probably the upraised arm of the warrior, standing nearest to Germanicus, in Poussin, which attracted Fuseli and he has accentuated this vertical, in both versions, into the wild diagonal of the outstretched arm of the woman standing beside



the dying Beaufort; yet, though the suggestion from Poussin is recognisable in both versions, the transposition (Fuseli fundamentally disliked French classicism and all it stood for, in art as well as in literature<sup>7</sup>) could scarcely be further from the original composition.

Like these two, most of Fuseli's drawings, done in Rome about the mid-'70s, were of a transitional character in which moderate baroque, rather than classicist, features, still tended to play a certain part. Some rather empty drawings, particularly in the Roman sketch-book in the British Museum, probably belonging to the earliest done in Rome, could almost be called baroque-academic, were it not for some emphatic facial expressions: for example, *Oedipus discovering the Riddle of the Sphinx* (there is, however, a version of this drawing made earlier in London in 1768, Zürich, Kunsthau<sup>8</sup>). Far more characteristic of Fuseli is the mannerist-baroque line which led from the Rembrandtesque second Beaufort version to some drawings, lacking perfect equilibrium but very bold in conception, mostly from 1772-4, taken from the *Divine Comedy* and mainly, of course, as we should expect of Fuseli, from the *Inferno*<sup>9</sup>. These marked another interesting attempt to express in art something of his own turbulent character and that of Storm and Stress, now through the terror of Dante, the preoccupation with whom came earlier and with greater intensity in the Swiss movement than in English 18th-century romanticism.<sup>10</sup> These drawings—among which is one of the most grandiose Fuseli ever did, *Dante and Virgil in the Icy Hell of Cocytus* (1774, Zürich, Kunsthau<sup>11</sup>)—formed a short, impetuous, very original stage in Fuseli's stylistic development.<sup>12</sup>

But in one or two of these Dante drawings Fuseli can already be seen evolving a definite idiom, the almost uniform style he arrived at during the second half of his stay in Italy. Compared with his earlier, more heterogeneous artistic attempts in England and at the beginning of his stay in Italy, his art had now become clearly formulated.<sup>13</sup> This newly-evolved style was imbued more noticeably with mannerism than that of the first Beaufort version, though it has also assumed some stricter classicist features; on the other hand, it was less Rembrandtesque, less baroque, less realist than the second version. It was a style more monumental, more summarised and concentrated, more severe but also more schematic than that of any of his previous works. It has turned away decidedly from realism, even from the somewhat baroque realism of his own youth, and has assumed more abstract features. Fuseli reached this highly imaginative style at a very early period (before Blake, incidentally) and it is significant that he did so in Italy, shut up in his own self-absorbed world, and not in England, the consistently realist tradition of which could only with difficulty be discarded. He sought to create vehemence, expressive attitudes and



striking compositional patterns, resembling streaks of lightning, which would be adequate to his startling themes and motifs. It was only natural that such a bold and original artist as Fuseli, the enemy of conventional baroque and rococo, whose compositions were based on outline and who was the translator of Winckelmann, should have had close stylistic contacts with classicism, the style of the most progressive artists of those decades<sup>14</sup>; and furthermore, the classicist features of his art acquired greater consistency in Rome than they ever had before.<sup>15</sup> Yet his own brand of classicism differed, in themes as well as in forms, from the usual contemporary type, which was subdued, hardly ever at all dramatic, and not even particularly realistic—that is to say, the type of Mengs and Angelica Kauffmann.<sup>16</sup> Not only was his classicism far more dramatic, more severe; his passionate apprehension of life, his emotionalism, his relative subjectivity, in short, one may well term it, his romanticism, tended to deflect his style towards the irrational.

It was the inevitable result of Fuseli's particular world of ideas that classicism in itself should not satisfy him and he preferred to combine it with Michelangelo and with mannerism.<sup>17</sup> Nothing could be more characteristic of his own personal interpretation of Storm and Stress mentality than that he was perhaps the first painter since the 16th century to single out Michelangelo as his favourite artist. Michelangelo now represented for him the genius *par excellence* in art, just as Shakespeare did in literature. At the same time in England admiration for Michelangelo developed rather slowly, though helped on by Burke's theory of the Sublime.<sup>18</sup> It is characteristic of Fuseli's rapid evolution in Italy that, in an ode on art, which he must have written shortly before going there, he attacks Michelangelo for deviating from nature; and again, in the *Remarks on Rousseau*, from 1767, Fuseli admits that he purposely omits Michelangelo from among the outstanding painters. Leaving aside the many well-known eulogies of Michelangelo in Fuseli's later lectures or *Aphorisms*, it is sufficient to recall his summary appraisal from his *2nd Lecture*: 'Sublimity of conception, grandeur of form, and breadth of manner are the elements of Michael Angelo's style. By these principles he selected or rejected the objects of imitation.' Later he tended to judge the whole of post-antique art by the yardstick of Michelangelo.

The Bolognese and even Raphael, on the other hand, who till then had been the supreme heroes even for the classicists of those years, receded into the background for Fuseli (or at least took second place). Fuseli modified some of his own classicist traits as he veered towards Michelangelo and frequently made use of his art, in which various trends combined: classicism, mannerism and even early baroque. In searching for his own artistic solution he went even beyond



this, interpreting what he took from Michelangelo in the spirit of mannerism, with which he was now becoming intimately acquainted.<sup>19</sup> One of his early, not yet quite successful attempts, to combine classicism and mannerism, and before he achieved his uniform style, is the drawing of the *Madhouse* (Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>20</sup>) in which the starting-point from the first Beaufort version is still clear. Though he was too much of a classicist to become a genuine adherent of the Gothic Revival in its literal sense, he was increasingly attracted, in a wider sense,<sup>21</sup> to mannerism with its irrational-gothicising tendency. Fuseli's leaning towards mannerism, persisting since his youth when he made copies after, and imitations of, Swiss mannerists, now, with Michelangelo as his guardian angel, became more conscious than ever.

Fuseli's new attitude, as shown in his exceptional partiality for Michelangelo and in a more sustained interest in mannerism, was bound to bring him into opposition with the views not only of Mengs but also of Winckelmann, whom he had but recently so much admired. Naturally Fuseli never lost his esteem for Raphael, Titian and Correggio, who were held by Mengs to be the greatest artists; he even went on to appreciate the analysis of these three, particularly of Correggio, made by Mengs whom, as a theorist, he preferred to Winckelmann. But that he placed Michelangelo, an artist out of favour with both Mengs and Winckelmann, above this canonical trinity, implied a bold reversal of the entire previous scale of values. In spite of their common respect for contour, Fuseli had no further use for Winckelmann's tranquil art from which expressiveness was excluded; Fuseli gave a novel, passionate interpretation of the heroes of antiquity. His opinion on the importance of facial expression as indicative of character and soul came near to that of his friend, Lavater, the physiognomist. Since he believed in the interdependence of soul and body, Lavater claimed, in a manner which is both dogmatic and intuitive, to recognise good and evil in a flash in a man's face. He urged Fuseli, when in Rome, to make illustrations for his *Physiognomische Fragmente*. However, since Fuseli disagreed strongly with Lavater on the choice and manner of these illustrations, scarcely any appeared in the German edition (1775-8). After Lavater gave in to him, however, quite a number of them came out in the French edition (1781-6). It seems likely that Fuseli did most of these drawings in Rome. In the English edition (1789-99), in the preparation of which Fuseli had an important say, the same illustrations by him appeared as in the French one, but with slight additions. The differences between Lavater's and Fuseli's views are characteristic. Despite his love of originality and expression Lavater, who was more religious, more kind-hearted and simpler than Fuseli, was mainly



interested in 'noble' characters; hence his favourite artists were Raphael, Reni, West and Mengs. Under the influence of Winckelmann, he disliked Michelangelo, and he was hostile towards Rembrandt. Some of these opinions provoked Fuseli to upbraid him violently in letters from Rome. Enthusiasm, simultaneously, for the genius of Rembrandt, particularly for the expressiveness of his composition, and for Michelangelo is significant of the penetrating instinct of the young Fuseli. Only sporadically in *Storm and Stress*, which was on the whole less concerned with art than with literature, was either of them put beside Shakespeare.<sup>22</sup>

In practice in his drawings Fuseli's attitude produced an emphatic but usually a generalised expression, so that his faces appear at once agitated and mask-like. It was this expressive and at the same time generalised character which Fuseli further aimed at rendering in his figures by means of very pronounced attitudes and gestures. In fact his long stay in Italy could almost be regarded as a search for attitudes which would most typically express the figures he illustrated in his scenes. Even when he only sketched individual figures as working studies, they assumed incredibly tense attitudes, as if on the look-out for tense scenes in which to fit themselves. But this was only one side of Fuseli's creative process, which should not be exaggerated or looked at in isolation. For Fuseli's approach to art was essentially a literary one. He was, above all, an illustrator to whom invention, the choice of subject, was of primary importance. Moreover, this is immediately apparent in his *3rd* and *4th Lectures*, where he gave the most elaborate explanation of the meaning of invention in art: 'Each work of art should fully and essentially tell its own tale.' 'The choice of subjects is a point of great importance to the artist; the conception, the progress, the finish, and the success of his work depend upon it'; and in *Aphorism* No. 94: 'Invention, before it attends to composition, group or contrast, classes its subject and ascertains what kind of impression it is to make on the whole.'

True, Fuseli was so fascinated by certain of his formal solutions, when he found them expressive enough, that he quite frequently repeated them with, or sometimes almost without, variations in different scenes. But considering the generalised character of his figures and often the correspondingly tense atmosphere of his scenes, this is no cause for astonishment.<sup>23</sup> With the same intention, namely, of rendering the figures as expressive as possible, Fuseli elongates, twists and stylises; and here again, in a rather monotonous way. Moreover, his figures are not just solidly plastic as in classicism but exaggeratedly so; in consequence there arises a tendency to run almost in the opposite direction, towards abstraction, towards evanescence. Whether he was treating themes of English or German, of Italian or of antique



literature, Fuseli divorced them from the accidents of time and in this way broke with his previous practice, as shown in his pseudo-historical romantic drawings like the *Death of Beaufort*. Now he allows his figures to act in complete isolation, without realist accessories or local colour. His men are portrayed almost nude, his women with clinging draperies. His few and imprecise indications of space and perspective, which would be quite insufficient from a classicist point of view, the low horizons and the violent projection of the figures in the direction of the sky only serve to underline the simplified, fantastic and, at the same time, generalised character of his scenes.<sup>24</sup> Fuseli rated this manner of presentation so highly that he wrote in his *4th Lecture*: 'This art of giving to the principal figure the command of the horizon, is perhaps the only principle by which modern art might have gained an advantage over that of the ancients.' Yet the classicist in him exacted a clear, unified action and, for the sake of greater concentration, usually few figures in contrast to his earlier drawings.<sup>25</sup> But his actions are not actions in the sense of a conventional classicism; they are passions at war with one another. Take his *Lear embracing the dying Cordelia* (1777, Zürich, Kunsthhaus, and Roman sketch-book, British Museum) (Plate 18a): the group of six figures, the characters of the last scene of the play, is built up into a pyramid; yet it is a construction not of perfectly balanced realist figures but of violently interlocked stylised creatures.<sup>26</sup> Further, the space in which the action takes place is not logically defined but is indicated by a series of flat planes, and the execution is sketchy, merely hinting at a real situation, features which give the group an unreal appearance, as though ghosts and not real people were taking part.

The effect is less uncanny in the case of a more elaborate drawing, where two groups, each in itself closely knit, hold each other in balance, assisted by motifs which link them up: *Meleager in the arms of his wife refuses to defend Calydon* (Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>27</sup>). The elaboration, which is frequent in the drawings at this period, approaches here a certain classicist, almost realistic formal idiom. However, this does not compensate for the lack of spatial clarity in which the relief-like groups stand. In fact in Fuseli the action is frequently confined to a narrow stage in the foreground or takes place in layers. The dynamic way in which, in his drawings, long diagonals usually strike right across and dominate the composition, is also uncharacteristic of classicism. The man in both these drawings who throws himself diagonally crosswise, in the one to grasp hold of Lear, in the other, Meleager, is fundamentally the same figure.<sup>28</sup> The diagonals and, even more so, the horizontals and verticals—no longer the customary, uncomplicated properties of



classicism—are sometimes straight almost to the point of exaggeration, sometimes slightly rhythmically curved; and through the extreme linear rigidity of repetitive often motionless attitudes, Fuseli produces an impressive monotonous rhythm,<sup>29</sup> for instance, in the grave scene from *Hamlet* and in *Richard III visited by Ghosts*, both in the Roman sketch-book of the British Museum, the latter of 1777.<sup>30</sup> The dramatic themes and the surprising attitudes are sustained by very abrupt contrasts of light and shade, which have nothing to do with classicism and little with baroque; the background is often entirely dark, thus throwing the agitated figures with their wavering contours into silhouette. Fuseli evoked these strident effects by vigorous use of ink and wash, the usual medium of his drawings done in Italy.

It is not difficult to follow Fuseli's relation, partly negative, partly positive, to such a logical and easily defined style as classicism and its forms. But how can his relation be defined to Michelangelo, the most complex of all artists, and to mannerism, that most variable of all styles during its long duration?

Fuseli's Italian drawings are generally characterised in literature as imitations of Michelangelo. In fact countless suggestions deriving from Michelangelo, in particular from the various parts of the Sistine Chapel, leap to the eye. Yet their mere existence does not fully explain Fuseli's relation to Michelangelo, let alone his own style. No doubt, however, the stylistic complexity of the Sistine frescoes, particularly as regards the combination of classicist and mannerist elements, appealed to him. No contradiction to this was implicit in Fuseli's special predilection, shared by the 16th-century mannerist artists themselves, for the potentially or more than potentially mannerist parts, such as the later Prophets and Sibyls, the stories of the four corner-spandrels, the Ancestors in the spandrels, and particularly those in the lunettes, which he found conformed most closely to his own stylistic aims. We obtain a good idea of the way in which Fuseli viewed Michelangelo if we look through the reproductions of the drawings attributed to Michelangelo in W. Y. Ottley's publication of drawings from his own collection, *The Italian School of Design* (1805–23). Ottley, an intimate friend of Fuseli and at first a pupil of Fuseli's imitator, John Brown, studied Italian art intensively in Italy ten years after Fuseli, between 1791–8. He became an authority on taste in English cultural life, a famous collector of Italian pictures and drawings, an advisor to other collectors, in particular Lawrence, who bought his collection of drawings to form the nucleus of his own, and later Keeper of the Prints in the British Museum. Ottley's taste was almost identical with that of Fuseli, whom he admired and frequently quoted, and for him also Michelangelo constituted the climax of art.



Many of the drawings, published by him as Michelangelo's, are today considered copies by mannerists after him or in some cases originals of Franco, and it is characteristic how closely the drawings chosen follow the line of Fuseli's art—wild nudes, expressive heads, copies after the Ancestors. From the attributions to Michelangelo of another somewhat earlier publication of drawings, C. M. Metz, *Imitations of Ancient and Modern Drawings* (1798), which contains, for instance, many drawings which belonged to West and Payne-Knight, we also get the impression that English collectors and artists of the time read more mannerist features into Michelangelo than we are accustomed to do today.

Fuseli very rarely copied or used whole compositions of Michelangelo but usually individual figures or motifs. Reminiscences, however transformed, from the corner-spandrels, where the figures are moving forcefully in an unreal, occasionally illusory, space, as on the stage, appear quite frequently in Fuseli's compositions, when the subject is of a very *mouvementé* character. Though he frequently borrowed single motifs of movement from the Prophets and Sibyls, the character of these figures was perhaps, on the whole, too specific to be used in Fuseli's stories as consistently as the more varied, less defined Ancestors or even the Slaves. Even so, it is mainly among Fuseli's figure studies that many variations and combinations are to be found of the bold motifs of the Slaves. The Ancestors, figures with little space around them and almost frozen into blocks, seem at least to have besides their strong mannerist potentiality for a more or less summary cubic treatment a nearness to classicism and a combination in endless variations of monumentality, expressiveness, statuesqueness and reality which undoubtedly attracted Fuseli. He often praised the Ancestors in his writings; perhaps he came the nearest to expressing what he admired in them when, in his *11th Lecture*, he spoke of their 'patriarchal simplicity'. At any rate, from his Italian stay onwards, throughout his career, when he was concerned with seated or cowering figures dumbly brooding, the experience of the Ancestors was inextricably interwoven into his own mood. True there is among the Ancestors such a variety of seated poses that it is possible to see derivations from them in subsequent works of art which may be mere coincidence. Yet there can be little doubt that Fuseli particularly loved these figures of Michelangelo.

Even the very few careful literal copies that he did in the Sistine Chapel were, characteristically, chiefly after the Ancestors<sup>31</sup>: some of these are dated as late as 1776 and 1777, that is, from the end of his Italian residence, which shows how lasting was their fascination for him. It is interesting that he copied the man writing (Plate 10a), of the Josaphat lunette among the Ancestors, not only literally (Roman



sketch-book, British Museum) but also in a slightly altered version (Zürich, Kunsthaus) (Plate 10b). Here the Ancestor seems transformed into a gloomy, brooding figure of Dante, in the spirit of Fuseli's new romantic fervour for the *Divine Comedy*. Though this is a rather timid pencil drawing,<sup>32</sup> probably done at an early stage of his Roman visit, Fuseli has attempted a massive, block-like structure with greater horizontal expanse and an increase in the width of the cube on which the figure is placed.<sup>33</sup> He has tried to create an emphatically plastic unification of drapery and body giving, though not quite successfully, an independent life to the edges of the folds, cast in light, while he has kept the shaded parts, formed by close parallel hatchings, in an almost uniform tone. In short, like many mannerists, in particular Rosso and Bandinelli, Fuseli has increased through simplification the mannerist-cubic tendencies, already inherent to some degree in Michelangelo's Ancestors themselves.<sup>34</sup> A comparison of this Dante drawing by Fuseli with a red chalk drawing by Rosso in Frankfurt (Plate 13a) which combines three of the Ancestors (the woman of the Eliud lunette, the man holding a book in the Eleazar lunette and the stooping man in the Manasseh lunette) in a kind of free copy, demonstrates the similarity of their relation to Michelangelo in this respect, though Rosso's treatment is more assured and at the same time more abstract and more plastic. This particular, incipiently cubic handling of the draperies is only visible in Fuseli during a short early phase of his Italian development. Even so, when discussing Fuseli's stylistic relation to Michelangelo, it is essential to include also his relation to the mannerists. This holds good not only of copies which he made after Michelangelo but also of most of his original compositions.<sup>35</sup> Fuseli's copy (Bryson Collection)<sup>36</sup> of Michelangelo's *Madonna Doni* (made after an engraving) tends, more markedly than does his copy after the man writing of the Josaphat lunette, beyond the original towards an abstract, sculptural summarising of body and drapery, and is near to Rosso, Bandinelli, Parmigianino and Beccafumi.

Having mentioned some of Fuseli's characteristic many-figured drawings from the Italian period, it will be convenient now to add scenes with few figures, for instance, the four sketches of 1777 for a series of frescoes from Shakespeare of *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest* and *Twelfth Night* (Zürich, Bollag Collection<sup>37</sup>) or another more elaborate drawing from the same year, also for the Shakespeare frescoes, showing two statuesque girls on steps, leaning towards a pedestal (Victoria and Albert Museum<sup>38</sup>). The former sketches follow in many respects the division of the Sistine ceiling and many of the individual motifs (only extracts from scenes are represented, consisting of a small group or of a single figure) derive from figures



there, the Ancestors again being particularly favoured. Thematically Fuseli has transformed Michelangelo's motifs almost as the mannerists had done, in the direction of the bizarre, the wild, the fantastic, the erotic. Among other episodes he portrays Lear lamenting over a bare-breasted Cordelia, while from the slumbering Ancestors have grown such different figures as a weird Caliban, the three sinister witches from *Macbeth* and a sensuous Miranda in a garment similar to Cordelia's which foreshadows the Directoire style. From a formal point of view—and this comes out more clearly in Fuseli's crowded scenes—his vehement contrasted movements, his elongated rhythmical shapes, his slightly curved or almost straight unbroken lines remind us in some ways of certain tendencies of Michelangelo touching upon mannerism, which are displayed more frequently and more distinctly in some of his drawings of complete scenes, particularly those of about or soon after 1530, than in his paintings. I have in mind, for instance, the resemblance of a Fuseli figure, conceived in a violent, striking diagonal such as Hamlet jumping into the grave, with a Michelangelo figure such as, say, Christ rising from His grave, in the Windsor drawing of the Resurrection.<sup>39</sup> The mannerist artists of whose general figural idiom we are mostly reminded in these drawings of Fuseli are Bandinelli, Rosso and Parmigianino, the first two largely when they are closest to Michelangelo<sup>40</sup>; while, all three artists have, in one way or another, strong classicist elements in their art which gave Fuseli a certain feeling of affinity.

For it was Bandinelli above all who, while keeping relatively close to the originals, transformed in his drawings the character of Michelangelo's figures into the weird, savage, unrealistically statuesque. This conception suited Fuseli, and it is significant that he owned several engravings after Bandinelli, for instance, the well-known design of skeletons. In his *3rd Lecture* he analysed another that he owned, the famous *Massacre of the Innocents*. In Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists* he describes Bandinelli as 'the greatest sculptor of his time, after M. Angiolo' and adds 'he was a great designer and his compositions of the *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence* and the *Massacre of the Innocents* show exuberance of fancy'.<sup>41</sup> Take the resemblance, in Fuseli's sketches for the Shakespeare frescoes, of the seated or squatting female figures from *Macbeth*, such as the brooding Lady Macbeth or the Witches, with many figures by Bandinelli or his followers in similar positions, with similar expressions, all more or less inspired by Michelangelo's Ancestors or Sibyls. Fuseli's drawing in the Victoria and Albert Museum of two girls on steps is reminiscent, for example, of a Bandinelli drawing in Turin, representing two women with staring expressions, standing side by side, perhaps Judith and her female servant (Plate 14a); or of another more elaborate one in



the Louvre, where several women in tightly-fitting dresses, such as are to be found in Fuseli, are posed round cubes,<sup>42</sup> producing the impression of erotic statues or statue-like ghosts.<sup>43</sup> Through similar forceful pen-handling, again with close parallel strokes often extending to the background on the one hand and empty spaces on the other, Bandinelli and Fuseli achieve the effect of a strange fusion between body and drapery, heighten the abstract plasticity of the figures, and accentuate the contrasts between light and shade, thus adding to the unusual, almost menacing character of their drawings.

The effective, though conventionalised handling of the forms by Bandinelli had already influenced his closest, though much greater, contemporary, Rosso, an influence clearly perceptible but more sublimated in Rosso's statuesque copy after the Ancestors, with which we have compared a similar one by Fuseli.<sup>44</sup> However, Rosso, both in his nudes and in his draperies, schematises in a less primitive and brutal way than Bandinelli. It was, I think, the young Michelangelo's slight schematising potentialities in the pen drawings of nudes in and round the Battle cartoon which served as starting-points for Bandinelli's vigorously schematising tendencies: Michelangelo's pre-mannerism from about 1501-3 became the basis for general mannerism. During the early part of his Roman stay Fuseli, in an experimental mood in an effort to be strikingly plastic yet somewhat unreal, occasionally used in his compositions a delicate technique so near to Rosso that a direct influence is possible. This manner with thin contours and large empty spaces, partly unshaded, partly very finely so, can be seen, for instance, in the women in the background of his drawing, the *Madhouse*, done for Lavater (Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>45</sup>). Even when Rosso's cubic-plastic tendency is as pronounced as in his painting of the *Descent from the Cross* in Volterra, we can find parallels for it, if only partial ones, in individual motifs of Fuseli at this particular stage. Some of the figures in his composition, *Lear embracing the dying Cordelia*, of 1774 (Plate 18a) give the impression, as in the Volterra picture, of being carved out of wood, with sharply-edged facets, each differently lighted; and the man to the right, diagonally posed, appears like an 18th-century revival of the Magdalen in the earlier picture (Plate 18b). But later too, when Fuseli's Italian style was more stabilised, as in the sketches for the Shakespeare frescoes, he and Rosso can reasonably be linked together, though the comparison must not be pressed, as regards the general spirit, the conception of the figures and particularly the way in which each, while keeping much of Michelangelo, slightly shift the emphasis away from him and make use of potentialities in him to create a new style. Fuseli's picture of the *Three Witches*, painted soon after his return from Italy and exhibited in 1783 (Zürich, Kunsthaus), as well



as many of his other works, suggest a well-known Rosso type (Plate 16a) rather than the Cumaean Sibyl. It is sufficient to think of Rosso's drawing in Chatsworth, the uncanny old woman in a coif<sup>46</sup> or of Salviati's picture, the *Three Fates* in the Pitti, executed under the influence of Rosso, a picture which Fuseli knew and the current attribution of which to Michelangelo he refuted in Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists*.

I reproduce a red chalk drawing by Rosso of a mythological scene with three female figures in the foreground (formerly London, Koch Collection) (Plate 13b); the one on the left is inspired by the woman of the Eliud lunette, and partly also by the Libyan Sibyl, the eternal starting-point for the eroticism of mannerism and the neo-mannerism of Fuseli, that in the centre by the Judith of the spandrel, while the third, the bending figure, is Rosso's own personal invention, beyond the Sistine lunettes and spandrels.<sup>47</sup> Michelangelo's female figures are here elongated, more bizarre, more sinuous in their bearing, the drapery often clings quite close to the body and ends, just as in Fuseli, below the breasts, this latter device being, however, a motif already present in Michelangelo. In Fuseli's sketches for the Shakespeare frescoes of 1777 the same scene of Lear and Cordelia appears as in his independent portrayal of the episode drawn in 1774, but the stress is now less on the cubic than on the rhythmic and erotic. We might perhaps say that, whereas in the earlier Lear scene Fuseli touched upon features in Rosso, which had affinity with Bandinelli, in the later he used those which were nearer to Parmigianino.<sup>48</sup> For when, in his new interpretation of Michelangelo, Fuseli fused body and drapery and used caressing, close parallel pen-strokes he was assisted by Parmigianino's seductive eroticism, a fascination for which he seems to have acquired mainly during the second part of his Italian visit and which he was never to lose. Fuseli was particularly attracted by the sensuous, though on the surface frigid, expressions of Parmigianino's not unclassical female profiles.<sup>49</sup> The linear rhythm in some of the gently curved, elongated figures, mainly females, in the sketches for the Shakespeare frescoes equally recall Parmigianino. Fuseli had a few drawings by Parmigianino as well as engravings after him. He also owned quite a large number of drawings and etchings by Schiavone, imitating Parmigianino. In Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists* Fuseli wrote: 'The etchings of Parmigianino, model of freedom, taste and delicacy, are universally known.' 'The ruling features of this style are elegance of form, grace of countenance, contrast in attitude, enchanting chiaroscuro and blandishments of colour. When these are pure, he is inimitable.' Still more pronounced is the elegant Parmigianinesque linear rhythm of the figures, sometimes languid, sometimes exuberant, in scenes with more obviously erotic themes,



for instance, in *Timon of Athens*, showing Alcibiades and his two mistresses (Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>50</sup>) or *Perseus and Andromeda* (Roman sketch-book, British Museum, and Zürich, Kunsthhaus, 1778<sup>51</sup>). The more forceful linear rhythm of Fuseli's figures in dramatic scenes, if comparable, speaking in art-historical terms, with that of Michelangelo's drawings from the early 1530s, seems occasionally to fuse with the Parmigianinesque.

But in either case, whether he is nearer to Parmigianino or to Michelangelo, the rhythmic character of Fuseli's figural idiom, when rhythmic at all, is nearly always of a moderate, not really of a decorative, kind. In his lectures, when discussing the art of the past, Fuseli frequently criticised figures, which he considered too ornamental. In fact it is only in a very small number of Fuseli drawings, done after his visit to Venice, that the striking rhythm of the figures hovering in the air reminds us of Tintoretto, whose style was closely related to that of late mannerism, an art current which at another moment was to become of some importance for Fuseli: *Moses praying on Mount Sinai*, 1776; *Carrying off the body of Sarpedon*, 1778, both Zürich, Kunsthhaus.<sup>52</sup> However, here Tintoretto's sweeping rhythm of masses is only applied to a few figures, is translated into more lucid, more linear terms, is combined with more classicist formal language and is used in a fundamentally very different, more concentrated kind of composition. What is more, all Fuseli's points of contact with mannerism which we have selected, whether with Parmigianino, Rosso or Bandinelli, resulting from a common desire for expressiveness, refer only to certain general moods, individual motifs and formal means. Revealing as are these similarities, Fuseli's relation to these same artists appears rather different when we compare their compositions as a whole. Like the classicists, Fuseli started from an action; and though he had a greater preference for violent motifs than they,<sup>53</sup> he would never have gone so far as these mannerists who entirely subjected action to an abstract-formal pattern. In Parmigianino, for instance, the rhythm not only dominates the whole composition (particularly in drawings of many figures), but is of a much softer, more flowing character, leading over to the decorative playfulness of late mannerism at the end of the 16th century. In Fuseli, on the other hand, the composition, usually restricted to a few figures, is always dominated by the character of the subject. Or again, compared with Rosso's often extremely subjective compositions, or even more with Bandinelli's crowded drawings, Fuseli's appear rational, unified, almost classicist. His *Lear and Cordelia* drawing from 1774 may be compared not only with the hieratic grandiosity of Rosso's *Descent from the Cross* (only details of which can be cited for comparison) (Plate 18b) but also with the arbitrary intricacy of *Moses*



*defending Jethro's Daughters*. Though in Fuseli repetition of lines also plays a part, it is tempered by a more deliberate equilibrium in the figures and even the lack of spatial clarity is less evident.

And yet this same weird, abstract-cubic Fuseli drawing has served us as evidence to show that his classicism lacked genuineness. But quite apart from the fact that abstract-cubic tendencies seem to have been characteristic only of his relatively early or of his more sketchy drawings,<sup>54</sup> Fuseli's composition, from a mannerist point of view, is more concentrated and even more spatial, his effects are less unreal. This is the other side of the medal presented before. Moreover, 16th-century mannerist artists were, of course, from every point of view, organically far closer to Michelangelo than was Fuseli in their world of ideas, their themes, their style. Fuseli, the 18th-century late-comer, in whom was so much of the new classicism of his day, even if in him it was only a kind of abstract classicism, was bound ultimately to make something quite different out of the Sistine frescoes from what the mannerists did. When he took from Michelangelo individual figures which interested him, he used them in his historical compositions not, as did the mannerists, for their own sake or in order by means of them to enrich the composition or make it more complicated, but as material for the creation of an entirely new style. When availing himself of a Michelangelo figure in repose like one of the Ancestors, Fuseli was quite capable of creating a scene apparently near to classicism. Take, for instance, his composition of *Achilles mourning over the Body of Patroclus* (Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>55</sup>). In the figure of the seated Achilles, Fuseli has again used the same Ancestor, from the Josaphat lunette, which he has now combined with slight reminiscences from other Ancestors (for instance, from the Amon lunette and the Rehoboam spandrel). At the same time Fuseli's tectonic, block-like Achilles is the centre of a new scene, of a dramatic episode from the *Iliad*; it is part of a bigger, unified, stylistically homogeneous composition and the necessary thematic and formal link between the prostrate corpse of Patroclus and the rhythm of the riding phantoms in the sky. An example of the other kind, where Fuseli dramatises a Michelangelo figure still further, is his *Prometheus rescued by Hercules* (British Museum) where Prometheus, though lying upside down, is ultimately derived from the Tityus.<sup>56</sup>

Other aspects of Fuseli are revealed in his use of Michelangesque motifs in drawings, frequently limited to one or two figures which seem at least to have been made more or less after nature. A drawing of an Italian girl done in Rome in 1773 (Roman sketch-book, Zürich, Kunsthau<sup>57</sup>) (Plate 19) still has much of the vibrating charm of a direct study after the model. But, as a rule, Fuseli genuinely disliked



drawing from nature.<sup>58</sup> A curious drawing, probably also dating from the earlier part of the Roman stay, which shows Fuseli's friend, the Swedish sculptor Sergel, working in his studio in Rome (Stockholm, Nationalmuseum) (Plate 20), points, in some ways, towards Géricault's realist-classicist genre scenes to come. But, at the same time, the man to the left, characteristically seated on a cube, is basically a cubic-plastic stylisation, in everyday dress, of one or two of Michelangelo's Ancestors (in particular of the seated man on the right in the Naason lunette); and the two upright figures on the left also reveal a touch of Bandinelli's and Rosso's rigidity. A little later, but still in Rome, when he made a full-length seated portrait of himself (Roman sketch-book, Zürich<sup>59</sup>), the mark of the Ancestors, particularly of the seated man in the Aminadab and Amon lunettes, and of the woman in the Jesse spandrel, is even more arresting. Although he has given a slender, elegant portrayal of himself in a tight-fitting suit, the figure is very monumental and the Michelangel-esque influence obvious in the whole pose, in face, arms and legs. In another very similar self-portrait done a few years later in 1783 (London, Oppé Collection<sup>60</sup>), that is, after he left Italy, though the face is still shown front view the general pose is more in profile so that the direct impact of the male figure in the Amon lunette is still stronger. For it is increasingly apparent that almost all Fuseli's drawings, primarily suggested by effects of nature, came to be seen automatically through Michelangelesque motifs, though here, too, as in his drawings of historical compositions, the cubic tendencies yielded gradually to a greater fluidity. This is even true of a drawing as spontaneous in appearance as that of a lady writing perhaps of Magdalena Hess (Roman sketch-book, Zürich<sup>61</sup>), done in Zürich (1778-9) on his return journey from Italy. In spite of this spontaneity, it is quite close to Fuseli's figure of Viola from *Twelfth Night* (in one of his sketches for frescoes from Shakespeare's plays) and while the pose of both is derived from the Erythrean Sibyl, in the *Lady Writing* the position of the knees is further modified by that of the Slave on the right of Ezekiel.

Almost all his compositions with two or three figures when originally inspired by nature—an expression which increasingly acquires a very relative sense—now take on varying degrees of idealisation. Greatly idealised, for instance, is the well-known impressive drawing of the artist himself reading to two ladies, most probably the Hess sisters (Zürich, Kunsthau<sup>62</sup>). The outstanding feature of this drawing is the entirely generalised character of Fuseli's quasi-nude body and of his face (the dominating figure of the composition). His long, outstretched legs reflect those of the Slave to the right of the Persian Sibyl, while the upper part of his body is posed like the Sibyl's. The



women listening, unlike the simple Italian girl, drawn five years earlier, take on the character, or rather the mask, of *femmes fatales*, a mixture of the heroic, tragic, demoniac and erotic. We are inevitably reminded here of the role of beautiful, demoniac women in the literature of Storm and Stress, beginning with Goethe's *Adelheid*, in *Goetz von Berlichingen*, a copy of which, incidentally, Lavater sent to Fuseli in Rome. The really big role, however, of the *femme fatale* was only to set in at a relatively late phase of French romanticism, and Fuseli can be said to have anticipated it to some extent. The over-emphasis on expression, particularly the exaggerated wide-eyed look which Fuseli was constantly to make use of from this time onwards, is characteristic of his female portrait—drawings done at the same time in Zürich in Lavater's circle.<sup>63</sup> The result is a simplified but impressive monumentality. Quite 'true to nature' is the equally well-known drawing of two girls gazing from a cabin window (Basel Museum<sup>64</sup>), which he did in Ostend while awaiting the boat. It is one of his most charming elegantly stylised drawings. The girl to the left derives, despite, or perhaps because of, her enormous coiffure, from the Libyan Sibyl<sup>65</sup>; her arm hangs limply like that of the sleeping man in the *Abias* lunette (among the Ancestors), while the sharply oblique placing of the shoulder reminds us of Rosso.

How does Fuseli's procedure compare with mannerists of the Rosso-Bandinelli type, when they drew more or less from nature? Undeniably a certain similarity is evident in their projection of Michelangelo motifs into their own figures. In Rosso's well-known Louvre drawing of two seated, two standing women and a man standing (Plate 16b), the starting-point from the Ancestors is obvious enough, particularly in the principal figure, the large seated woman seen from behind, who derives from the female of the *Eliud* lunette. Yet this drawing, which has an unusually organic coherence for Rosso, is also unusually realistic for him; it almost gives the impression of having been done directly from nature, though in fact I do not think it was. In Fuseli's drawing, however, of the young man reading to two women, the attitude of the reader is more generalised and unrealistic than Rosso's women.<sup>66</sup>

The use of Michelangelesque motifs is equally evident in 'genre' drawings by Bandinelli with one or two figures, for instance, a mother and child (Plate 14b), when he stylises and summarises to attain greater monumentality. Yet when Bandinelli, whose anti-realist stylisation could be so close to Fuseli's, wished to be realist, he could almost outdo Fuseli. Two compositions of Bandinelli, one engraved by Agostino Veneziano (1531), the other, a later one, by Enea Vico in an engraving which Fuseli himself owned (Plate 21), represent his own academy of pupils, engaged upon drawing statues.



Fuseli's drawing of Sergel's studio (Plate 20) naturally possesses realistic features impossible in a 16th-century artist, yet the abstract, almost fantastic role of the artificial lighting is extremely similar. But on the whole Bandinelli's compositions, though 'arranged', are less expressionist, less visionary in character than Fuseli's, in spite of a certain marked foretaste of Géricault in Fuseli, and the Bandinelli workshop is shown, particularly in the engraving by Agostino Veneziano, in a relatively sober way.

This seems an almost paradoxical situation. For it is precisely because Fuseli's general style was opposed to the realism of much of the art of his century that he had such close relations, in his schematising and stylising tendencies, with the mannerists. And that is also why he used Michelangelo quite instinctively, though again, as in his historical compositions, in his own homogeneous style with his own types and proportions, when he gave a study 'after nature', that is, when he monumentalised nature. Mannerism, however, though in the last resort anti-realist, contained organically, even in its typical religious compositions, its own inherent, very intense realism,<sup>67</sup> often evident in astonishing details.<sup>68</sup> From this point of view, Fuseli who would not stoop to realistic details—he was now far from the realism of baroque—stylised, schematised more than the mannerists. Since he had to combat—we might almost say to counteract—a more widespread and broader realist development in art than had the mannerists, his anti-realism was more self-conscious than theirs. He was aware that realist art existed side by side with his own but consciously looked down upon it as of inferior rank. Bandinelli drew a donkey (Uffizi); Fuseli would never have condescended to so 'low' a theme. That Fuseli, the historical painter *par excellence*, despised portrait painting scarcely needs to be said. The realism of mannerism, on the other hand was—to exaggerate slightly—almost all that existed of realism in the 16th century; thus, in their drawings after nature, as well as in their portraits—which, in contrast to Fuseli's, are usually strongly objective—this realist element could make itself, for a short time, we might say, independent.<sup>69</sup>

In addition to the drawings of Rosso and Bandinelli, mention should be made, in passing, of those of Franco and Cambiaso, with whom Fuseli also had a certain degree of affinity, and those of Bandinelli's clumsy, but vigorous imitator, Passerotti. Though he stopped short of the extremes of Cambiaso's cube-like figural simplifications a pronounced tendency towards them can be detected in many of his Italian drawings. The violent chiaroscuro which he used for the articulation of his compositions was also somewhat in Cambiaso's line. When about to sell or give away his drawings in Italy, Fuseli was in the habit of making rapid, summary copies of them for



his own use and in many of these rather sketchy works the figures and shading remind us of Cambiaso. In a number of Fuseli's drawings a similarity can be observed with the tempestuous movements and contours of Franco, who was also at times Michelangelesque.<sup>70</sup> It is no mere chance that all these four 16th-century artists had more or less close stylistic contacts with each other. In one way or another it is even possible to notice some relation to classicism, while with it and in spite of it all four artists display in their forceful drawings something *genialisches* which must equally have made its appeal to Fuseli. Besides works by Bandinelli and Rosso, Fuseli, in fact, owned some by the other two, especially many engravings by Franco. We are not by any means the first to compare drawings of Fuseli with those of Franco, for Franco's name, much in favour with English collectors, came quite easily to mind to men of taste round Fuseli. Metz, in his publication of drawings, called Franco a great draughtsman, and Lawrence wrote jokingly to his friend, Ottley, who was, as we know, an imitator of Fuseli, that his drawings were more delicate than those of Battista Franco.<sup>71</sup>

The relation between Fuseli and the mannerists of the Bandinelli type, in the attitudes of the figures and in the treatment of the body, can be further explored art-historically if the immediate ancestors of these mannerists in Quattrocento Gothic are brought into our field of vision. Gothic, of course, always taken in its widest, spiritual sense, not in its literal meaning, as, say, in the trend running from Botticelli to Pontormo, which was too extreme for Fuseli, and from which he derived nothing.<sup>72</sup> For, significantly, when looking for works which served Fuseli for inspiration at this time, we find ourselves moving almost automatically not only among the mannerists but, despite Fuseli's dislike of the Quattrocento, which was on the whole either too barbarous or too pretty for him and not sufficiently monumental, just as much in the pre-mannerist orbit.<sup>73</sup> Signorelli, with his almost *ecorché*-like emphasis upon muscles in his statuesque figures, was one point of departure for the schematic yet effectively summarising technique in which Bandinelli, in his drawings of super-heroic male nudes, transposed Michelangelo.<sup>74</sup> Fuseli, too, must have stood for a while strongly under the spell of Signorelli<sup>75</sup>. Quite a number of his drawings, made in Rome, usually showing male nudes seen from the back as the dominant figures, are so close to him that they might almost be taken for copies from some of the figures in the Orvieto frescoes.

As might be expected of him, Fuseli much preferred to work after *ecorchés* than to make laborious anatomical studies or even to draw after living models.<sup>76</sup> In these Signorellesque drawings the body is treated as if without skin with the muscles exposed; they are,



however, more summarised into a dynamic pattern than in Signorelli so that the technique sometimes approaches Bandinelli. Yet it is equally characteristic of Fuseli that these Signorellesque figures should be placed in monumental, uncomplicated, expressive poses: that is to say, Fuseli was enough of a near-classicist to prefer the simple rather than the complicated poses in Signorelli. In his *2nd Academy Lecture*, Fuseli said of Signorelli: 'He seems to have been the first who contemplated with a discriminating eye his object, saw what was accident and what essential; balanced light and shade and decided the motion of his figures.' In his *Schools of Italy*, he described him 'as the founder of that which distinguished the succeeding epoch'. The idea of giving interesting elaborations to the body was far less important to Fuseli than to Bandinelli. It is not impossible that when, in the *Carrying off the body of Sarpedon* (1778, Zürich, Kunsthaus), Fuseli portrays the body spread flat upon the ground receding into the distance, with legs sprawling, he had in mind the poses used by Signorelli in the fresco of the *End of the World* at Orvieto. The Italian mannerists of the early 16th century, when representing bodies on the ground, scarcely ever used such an entirely prostrate attitude, since it would have been too simple, too natural for them. Again, as a near-classicist, Fuseli sought for a certain correspondence between inner life and gestures. But he also delighted in terrifying subjects. Consequently he is apt to emphasise the dramatic possibilities in the attitudes of the figures in the Orvieto frescoes and to pick out unusually startling themes, such as executioners and gladiators, in which to use the Signorelli nudes (Plate 15b), for instance, in the famous drawing, portraying an execution, in the Goethe Museum at Weimar (Plate 15a). Fuseli, the artist of violence, was much interested in the forceful poses of executioners. He owned Caraglio's engraving of the *Execution of St. Peter and St. Paul* after Parmigianino and that of Domenico Campagnola of the *Execution of St. Catherine*; and we can see in his drawings such as, for example, the one in Weimar or another of two executioners (Zürich, Private Collection<sup>77</sup>) the hesitation between the more mannerist poses of these prints—in the latter drawing he gives a free variation of Parmigianino's two executioners—and the more classicist ones of Signorelli.

In Fuseli's portrayal of the famous scene, so often rendered in art, of Richard III sleeping in his tent and haunted by the ghosts of his victims (1777, Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>78</sup>), the king lies nude, outstretched upon a slab, parallel to the picture plane<sup>79</sup>; this again is an expressive pose, and yet a very simple one, less frequently found among the mannerists themselves than among their Quattrocento predecessors. It may well have been suggested by such a climax of pre-mannerist Quattrocento Gothic as the late Donatello's



chancel reliefs in S. Lorenzo in Florence: in the *Entombment*, the outstretched body of Christ also hovers horizontally over the sarcophagus; in the *Deposition*, it lies upon Mary's lap. The various 'northern' Pietà groups of Italian Quattrocento painting and sculpture where Christ also lies horizontally upon Mary's lap were probably too decidedly gothic for Fuseli's taste. But he may have felt sympathetic—and it is not impossible that he knew it—towards Pollaiuolo's so-called *Lamentation over Gattamelata* (copied in a drawing, Wallace Collection, and in an engraving by A. Claess, 1515), which is a transposition with nudes of the Donatello composition; in Pollaiuolo we find the same tautness of the corpse lying on a slab as in Fuseli.<sup>80</sup> The impact on Fuseli of details in Donatello's 'expressionist' reliefs in S. Lorenzo is all the more probable since, in his drawing, the weird, gaunt, dematerialised figures of the victims, grouped around Richard, have the appearance of late-Medieval, hooded weepers, and Donatello's weepers, likewise with faces scarcely visible, placed round Christ, in both these reliefs, are motifs seldom to be met elsewhere in Italian art—apart from Pontormo's Passion frescoes in the Certosa. Fuseli has turned the weepers of Quattrocento Gothic into romantic ghosts.

In the same spirit in which Fuseli borrowed from Donatello's works in S. Lorenzo, Bandinelli imitated and even copied figures, mainly weepers, from them in his drawings<sup>81</sup>; and in the same spirit, he, in his turn, influenced Fuseli. The incorporeal character of Fuseli's ghost figures was also partly anticipated in a formal sense in the Bandinelli workshop in the dematerialised yet statuesque figures of Giovanni dell'Opera, a pupil and collaborator of Bandinelli. And again it is characteristic that Ottley should have published such drawings by this artist as works of Donatello.<sup>82</sup> While the motif of the hooded figures in Fuseli, just as in Bandinelli, was probably inspired by Donatello, the impressive repetition of these figures in Fuseli's drawing, though slightly classicist in pattern, had antecedents in the hieratic mannerism with which Bandinelli, in various drawings of a religious character, grouped such figures. It is enough to recall Bandinelli's *Lamentation* in the Uffizi or his *Entombment*, influenced by Pontormo, in the Casa Horne.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, even this particular *Richard III* scene of Fuseli has almost the character of action, compared with Bandinelli's rigid, one might say theological, *Lamentation*; that is to say, the result of such a comparison is approximately the same as that between works of Fuseli and Rosso's *Descent from the Cross* in Volterra.<sup>84</sup> Bandinelli drawings of this kind form a stylistic link between Donatello and Fuseli, pointing with equal intensity backwards to the former and forwards to the latter.<sup>85</sup> The important idea in his *Richard III* drawing of showing some figures



cut off at the waist and slowly disappearing downwards, could have been taken from other works by Donatello in S. Lorenzo (e.g. the roundels with the life of St. John the Evangelist in the Old Sacristy) just as well as from the mannerists, who in this respect too followed in the late Donatello's footsteps. When, in his *History of Art*, Fuseli wrote of Taddeo Zuccari's 'half-figures emerging from his foregrounds', and connected the motif with 'a principle of imitating his more remote predecessors', it is very probable that Fuseli had Donatello in mind.<sup>86</sup>

How did Fuseli use Raphael, who at the time was usually regarded as a far greater artist than Michelangelo, as regards style and borrowings?<sup>87</sup> It is characteristic of Fuseli, whose over-dramatic, unrealistic style was just forming itself, that he made less use of Raphael than of Michelangelo. And it is equally characteristic that it was Raphael's late, near-mannerist works which alone really appealed to him,<sup>88</sup> for instance, the kneeling woman in the *Transfiguration*.<sup>89</sup> However, it was not often that complete figures interested him in Raphael, as they did in Michelangelo, but details only: sometimes a head, sometimes some minor part of the body. When he made copies of heads from Raphael, he chose either entirely Michelangelesque ones like that of God the Father in the first scene of the Loggie (*God separating Light from Darkness*) or else he altered them in the direction of the expressive, like the weeping woman from the *Fire in the Borgo* (both in the Roman sketch-book, Zürich<sup>90</sup>). A good example of a further stage in his process of work can be seen in his macabre and sensuous reinterpretation of the fresco by Pierino del Vaga, a pupil of Raphael in the Castel S. Angelo, *Psyche watching Amor at Night* (Plates 23a and b) (Roman sketch-book, Zürich<sup>91</sup>): in Fuseli's drawing, Vaga's cautiously crouching Psyche, inquisitive but innocuous, has become a menacing murderess, not only with a lamp but also with a dagger in her hand,<sup>92</sup> while the bodies of both are now self-consciously nude and summarily rhythmical. The linear rhythmic character of the figure of 'Amor' brings him closer to the man lying to the right in Michelangelo's *Resurrection* drawing than to the sleeping Adam in the Sistine fresco. But Fuseli naturally felt nearer to Raphael's other pupil, Giulio Romano, than to Vaga, since he was inclined to transpose his master's style into something more violent and erotic. Fuseli owned numerous engravings by Marcantonio, with compositions which led Raphael's style towards Giulio Romano. He also had many prints by various members of the Ghisi family, in the manner of Giulio Romano. Fuseli not only liked Giulio's types and movements but the whole atmosphere of his scenes. It was, in particular, his representation of the *Fall of the Giants* in the Palazzo del Te at Mantua, that is, a scene of terror at the moment of greatest



tension,<sup>93</sup> which made so great an impression on Fuseli shortly before he left Italy; and he was never to tire of praising Giulio's powers of invention.

Fuseli studied the antique in Italy almost as exhaustively as 16th-century paintings. Though he copied quite a large number of antique reliefs, it would seem that statues, which he could transform more easily than whole scenes, attracted him even more. Following his inclination for the remarkable, his attention was usually attracted by huge dimensions and violent poses in statues. Characteristically, one of the first and most intense artistic experiences on his journeys was the enormous statue of *St. Michel defeating the Devil* on the façade of the Zeughaus in Augsburg, by the late mannerist sculptor, Reichel, who, in his work, kept closer to the transforming spirit of Giulio Romano than to Raphael's composition. Among antique statues, the colossal forceful *Horse Tamers* on the Monte Cavallo, which are copies of 4th-5th century originals but which he thought to be by Phidias, appealed most to Fuseli. Besides these, a favourite throughout his life was the powerful Farnese Hercules, whose muscles he exaggerated. But, as his writings show, he also greatly admired the most generally acclaimed antique statues: the *Apollo Belvedere*, the *Medici Venus* and the *Vatican Torso*. He shared appreciation of the *Horse Tamers* with the mannerists but treated them more arbitrarily. The mannerists copied them fairly faithfully, retaining the horse, and used the group in their compositions as a favourite secondary motif outside the main action, for instance, in the *Adoration of the Magi*, or the *Conversion of St. Paul*. Fuseli used the *Horse Tamers* in the way he used Michelangelo's figures, that is, entirely transposing them. When he copied one of them (Roman sketch-book, Zürich), he omitted the horse altogether and showed the figure from below to give a more overpowering appearance (the muscles are somewhat in the Bandinelli vein) and purposely exaggerated the impetuosity of the pose by sharpening the angle of the leg that is thrust forward and emphasising the unbroken diagonal of the other.

From copies of this kind there emerged, greatly altered (far more so than, for instance, Michelangelo's Ancestors) and in most cases with the source scarcely recognisable (the horse is usually left out so that the original physical action is lost), Fuseli's most familiar and most frequently repeated figure, the strong, super-human young hero of his histories, standing fearless against adversity or the victim of terrifying apparitions<sup>94</sup>: legs wide apart, one arm raised, arms and legs increasingly simplified, conventionalised, in almost straight horizontals, verticals or diagonals. The *Horse Tamers* now seem (and this is true of his other antique sources too) at the same time near and far away. Reminiscences of the Monte Cavallo statues often





inextricably fuse in Fuseli with near-mannerist motifs from Michelangelo, for instance, with the Haman. Fuseli also combined other antique figures revealing expressive poses with Michelangelo. In a drawing, done in Rome as early as 1772, representing *Dante in Hell watching the Thieves tortured by Serpents* (Basel, Private Collection<sup>95</sup>), Fuseli used motifs from two such impetuous compositions as Michelangelo's *Brazen Serpent* and the *Laocoon* group. From the famous antique group of *Menelaos carrying the dead Patroclus* Fuseli sometimes used the latter figure (e.g. in the two relevant drawings, for the figure of Saul fainting when the ghost of Samuel appears to him), since he liked the way in which the body falls diagonally, forming an angle against the straight descending arm. This latter motif Fuseli was, of course, also able to find in the sleeping man of the Abias lunette among Michelangelo's *Ancestors*. During his activities of these years, Fuseli's art was still tinged with baroque features and he aimed to surpass the originals in wild, twisted, almost decorative effects.

Fuseli was perhaps one of the first artists, though at approximately the same time as Flaxman, to draw from Greek vases for creative purposes, not only for purposes of reproduction. When in Naples in 1775 he saw the collection of Sir William Hamilton and made many copies after figures of the Meidias vase (end of the 5th century, now in the British Museum).<sup>96</sup> As Fuseli's copies (Roman sketch-book, Zürich, Kunsthau) show, he must have been greatly attracted by the erotic gracefulness of the female figures.<sup>97</sup> And the influence of this vase can also be seen on Fuseli's male figures. In a drawing of a young man, standing in profile, his left foot raised on a slab (Heath Collection) (Plate 24a), from towards the end of his Italian stay, Fuseli combined suggestions from Michelangelo's Naason lunette from the *Ancestors* (the upright figure to the left) (Plate 25a) with others from a 4th-century statue, *Mercury binding his sandal*,<sup>98</sup> and from a rather similar figure, on the Meidias vase (Plate 25b). In this latter figure, which represents Klytius in the scene of *Hercules in the Garden of the Hesperides*, not only is the man's body in profile but, unlike the Mercury statue, his head is seen from the same point of view. The young Ingres, too, very probably copied this particular figure of the Meidias vase from one of the publications of the Hamilton collection and developed out of it his Oedipus, in the *Oedipus and the Sphinx* of the Louvre (1808) (Plate 25c). Fuseli's figure, dating from more than thirty years earlier, can be roughly compared stylistically with that of Ingres, who at the time was particularly under the influence of Flaxman's simplified contour style, which in its turn was mainly inspired by antique vases. But whereas a latent, uncanny force animates Fuseli's figure, we are conscious in Ingres of a tendency



towards academic smoothness which was equally derived from Flaxman.<sup>99</sup> In Fuseli the result is a severely incised nude in complete profile, of a plasticity at once faceted and block-like, thrown into strong relief by a dark background,<sup>100</sup> a figure which brings out the mannerist potentiality of the Ancestors in a much bolder way than Fuseli's earlier Dante-Josaphat drawing. With all its suggestions from Michelangelo and the antique, it is one of the most typical Fuseli figures, in a tense mood, all of a piece.

The combined roles of antique art and of mannerism in evolving Fuseli's most homogeneous idiom can be seen, perhaps most characteristically, in his extremely free 'copy' of the famous Roman relief from early Imperial times, *Perseus liberating Andromeda*, in the Capitoline Museum (1778, Zürich, Kunsthau, and Roman sketch-book, British Museum<sup>101</sup>). Both Andromeda and Perseus lose their serenity, their severe classical poise: they eagerly approach each other and form a fluctuating 'Parmigianinesque' play of lines into which are swept up the wild horse (added by Fuseli) and the dragon's head and body, which are far bigger, more ferocious and more tortuous than in the relief. In place of the severe drapery of the original, Andromeda acquires Fuseli's usual clinging variety, her breasts are left uncovered, while the folds become more decoratively summarised, combining the neo-Attic types, so dear to mannerism and to Quattrocento Gothic, with those of Parmigianino. Not only do the bodies, vibrating yet smooth, differ from the original, but the types with their sharper features, long pointed noses, quivering nostrils do so too. This different conception of the body and the new types point, if we seek in mannerist art a reinforcement of Fuseli's own conception, even beyond Parmigianino, to the figural idiom of about the mid-16th century, for instance, to Tibaldi (e.g. the frescoes in Castel S. Angelo, from the story of Alexander the Great and Roman history). Tibaldi in his turn must have picked it up from Salviati (cf. the lascivious type of his *Charity*, in the Uffizi, which also foreshadows Fuseli) and have further evolved it. Although Tibaldi's style is only taken here as an example, Fuseli certainly knew these frescoes, since they were in the big central hall (Sala di Giustizia) of the Castel S. Angelo, next to the room in which he copied one of Vaga's Cupid and Psyche stories. The former are long, narrow-shaped scenes in *grisaille*, containing few figures, chiefly large ones in the foreground, pressed close together. The formal idiom of the figures, usually young warriors, is striking: they are fierce and sensuous, with profiles similar to those of Fuseli's figures and in armour which makes the body appear nude. They are defined much in the same way as Fuseli's warriors by forceful, slightly curved lines. Yet, however much he was impressed by these frescoes, Fuseli could not have known they were



by Tibaldi; in his time, if attributed at all, they were given to Vaga or Marco da Siena.

To complete this account of Fuseli's main artistic interests in Rome—Michelangelo, the mannerists, the antique—one or two minor ones should be added, since they slightly echo the taste of early English romanticism for Salvator Rosa. From an engraving, Fuseli copied the group of the struggle for the flag from Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari* (1777, Roman sketch-book, British Museum) (Plate 22b): the classicism, here so agitated that it tends towards baroque, while in details containing strong pre-mannerist elements, naturally attracted him. As was his habit, he copied the group rather freely, drawing quasi-nudes which recall, say, the mannerist Franco, while the expressions and helmets of the warriors point to the then so fashionable Salvator Rosa's romantic fury.<sup>102</sup>

Bearing also upon this particular side of his taste is an apparently strange association between him and Hogarth. When in Rome Fuseli not only kept in mind the subjects of English poetry, but also—he had an excellent memory and never forgot a picture he had once seen—English pictures which represented these subjects. Yet this particular recollection, though not a deep impact, is curious and, in its way, quite characteristic. When in 1776 he drew *Satan and Death separated by Sin* from *Paradise Lost* (Zürich, Bollag Collection<sup>103</sup>), his thoughts must have gone back to Hogarth's unfinished painting of the same subject which he had seen at Garrick's. Though the identity of subject alone necessitates some similarity in arrangement, it cannot be a mere coincidence that the attitudes of the three figures bear a decided resemblance.<sup>104</sup> This is not quite so astonishing as at first sight appears,<sup>105</sup> since Hogarth, in his late picture, known to us only in a weak engraving, participated in his own way, perhaps in an effort to be fashionable, in the pre-romantic atmosphere of the Gothic Revival. His composition is apparently an imitation of some historical picture of Salvator Rosa, one of his favourite artists.<sup>106</sup> In Fuseli's Miltonic scene, the clumsy and artificial features of Hogarth's work vanish, only little remains of Rosa, and we have one of his organic, powerful, macabre compositions in his familiar mannerist-classicist style.

But although the influence of Rosa had much weakened since Fuseli left England, certain features of the fierce, temperamental Neapolitan artist seem to have interested him even within the context of his new style and occasionally later: for instance, the taut, declamatory gestures in Rosa's historical compositions and especially his striking, overwrought types. Though in Rosa the sharply chiselled mannerist types have become somewhat academic and generalised, they are not so regular and expressionless as in the incipient classicism around



Fuseli, but intentionally rather savage: hence they represented just the right combination for Fuseli. In Fuseli's heads representing expressive types, influences from Rosa mingle with those from Leonardo and often result in resemblances with, say, Passerotti. To take two specific examples of the way in which Fuseli's impressions from Rosa fused with others: in a drawing of a prophet writing (Zürich, Bollag collection; done probably in Rome, since a variation of it was published in the French edition of Lavater's book<sup>107</sup>), while the attitude shows a certain derivation from the Sistine prophets, the fierce head appears to come from Rosa; in another drawing with busts of two warriors (*c.* 1780-2, Oberhofen, Private Collection<sup>108</sup>) the face to the right, tensely gazing, reflects 19th-century realism; that to the left suggests Rosa's eruptive emptiness. That, in his writings, Fuseli spoke rather disparagingly of Rosa, whom he probably considered a kind of competitor in the 'savage' manner, is only what we should expect of him.

To summarise: after the initial domination of the heavy Swiss mannerism and baroque in the early work and a period of hesitation in England, there then followed in Italy, from contact with Michelangelo, Italian mannerism and antique sculptures, a mannerist-classicist style, flowing easily and homogeneously, yet more intricate in its make-up than might appear. In his historical compositions Fuseli changed certain features of his classicism in the direction of Michelangelo and certain features of his Michelangelism in the direction of mannerism. And in those of his compositions suggested by effects of nature he carried anti-realism even further than the mannerists. But it is also true that Fuseli felt himself nearest to those more 'moderate' mannerist and pre-mannerist works, which bear some relation to classicism: Michelangelo's Ancestors, certain figures and motifs of Rosso, Bandinelli, Parmigianino, Signorelli. Fuseli's fundamental stylistic divergence from the mannerists, particularly from the more extreme, irrational, subjective ones, arose largely from the classicist strain in him.<sup>109</sup> His position, therefore, between classicism and mannerism is striking from whichever angle we survey it.



## Notes to Chapter II

- 1 Fuseli inherited Bodmer's conception of the close relationship between painting and literature. W. Watzoldt (*Deutsche Kunst-historiker*, Leipzig, 1921) has rightly pointed out the affinity of Bodmer's views with those which Winckelmann was to hold later, namely, that the possibility of interpreting Homer's language in visual terms should be made use of in art. In Fuseli the two trends met. See also page 110, note 47.
- 2 The exception to which I allude was John Runciman, who in 1767, three years before Fuseli's arrival, painted in Rome the *King Lear* picture mentioned above (page 19).
- 3 We may recall Mason's opinion that this sentiment, in a perverted form, remained in Fuseli, as a survival from his theological period. In a letter to Lavater from Rome, as late as 1770, Fuseli still showed an interest in theology. Not till 1777, in another letter, did he declare himself no longer interested.
- 4 Fuseli's Italian work can be judged only from his drawings, since no paintings from this period have survived.
- 5 Repr. Powell, pl.2.
- 6 Only a distant relationship exists between this drawing by Fuseli and those by Fragonard for the *Orlando Furioso*, which are in a more superficial baroque-rococo vein; yet these, too, foreshadow certain features of French 19th-century romanticism.
- 7 However, in his *Remarks on Rousseau*, he wrote with approval of Poussin 'who could not live under the French sky, and may be considered as an Italian'. Later, in his *2nd Lecture*, he also praised Poussin, within certain limits, claiming that he had 'renounced the national character'.
- 8 The exact chronology of drawings in the sketch-book having more or less baroque features is by no means clear; some of the pages have apparently been stuck in later and do not belong to the Italian period, which makes it all the more difficult. It is much to be desired that a thorough page-by-page description as well as an art-historical appreciation of the whole album should be undertaken.



- 9 See, for example, *Dante and Virgil contemplating the Sinners tormented by Serpents* (1772, Basel, Private Collection; repr. Federmann, pl.33), which still shows traces of both Beaufort versions.
- 10 In early English romanticism, interest in Dante began in a very hesitant manner with the two Warton brothers; in Thomas Warton and in Blake's patron, Hayley (characteristically), it was mixed with a taste for Salvator Rosa. Attention at first was mainly concentrated on the episodes of Ugolino (painted by Reynolds in 1773) and Paolo and Francesca. See R. Marshall, *Italy in English Literature, 1755-1815* (New York, 1934), and O. Doughty, 'Dante and the English Romantics' (*English Miscellany*, II, 1951, Rome).
- 11 Repr. Federmann, pl. 31; Ganz, pl. 17; Powell, pl. 25 (version in the Roman sketch-book, British Museum).
- 12 A detailed analysis of the development of those few important years would be most rewarding.
- 13 It is not intended to imply that, in drawings of the second half of the Italian stay, baroque features, such as had occurred in the second Beaufort version, do not occasionally crop up. See note 8 above.
- 14 See, on the social background of classicism, my article, 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism', I (*Burlington Magazine*, 1935).
- 15 David's development towards classicism, at a slightly later date (1775-81), equally took place in Rome. He returned there in 1783, conscious that it was only in Rome that he could carry out such a consistently classicist picture as the *Oath of the Horatii*.
- 16 When in Leipzig in 1763 Fuseli still thought Mengs the greatest living painter.
- 17 See, on the historical meaning and the increasingly reactionary social background of mannerism, my article, 'Observations on Girolamo da Carpi' (*Art Bulletin*, 1948). It would be interesting to follow up and analyse the survival, continuation and revival of mannerist features, their fusion with other styles, say, from the late 17th century onwards. Heterogeneous mannerist features have been taken up in various ways, at diverse times, according to the particular historical situation, according to the particular public. How different are the mannerist traits, for instance, in the baroque art of Magnasco or in the book illustrations of the 17th and early 18th centuries throughout Europe, where they are combined sometimes with popular conservatism, sometimes, at the other extreme, with elegance. Sometimes a mannerist streak 'still' lingers in a certain style which is evolving towards classicism, sometimes one 'already' crops up because the style is evolving away from classicism.
- 18 For the various stages of this development, see Marshall, *op. cit.*, and G. Melchiori, *Michelangelo nel Settecento Inglese* (Rome, 1950).
- 19 Fuseli had a large collection of engravings and a smaller one of drawings, nearly all works of the Italian 16th century. Besides the usual



copies after Raphael and Michelangelo, the engravings—and also the drawings—were mostly of a mannerist character.

- 20 Repr. Powell, pl. 35.
- 21 F. Landsberger, who, in his useful book, *Die Kunst der Goethe-Zeit* (Leipzig, 1931), draws a distinction between the various German artistic currents of the Goethe period, according to their classicist or their gothicising persuasion, rightly counts Fuseli among the latter. However, this is true only in a general way, and the particular nuance of Fuseli's art can only be understood by also taking into account its nearness to classicism and the artist's aversion to gothic art. At the same time, I think it is also true that Fuseli's liking for mannerism was a substitute for gothicism, a kind of latent gothicism. For mannerism originated as a continuation of Quattrocento Gothic, though a continuation which first had to break through the immediately preceding classicism of the first years of the 16th century, assimilating as much of the achievements of that style as suited it. See, on this, in detail, my articles: 'Gedanken zur Entwicklung der Trecento—und Quattrocento Malerei in Siena und Florenz' (*Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft*, 1924-5), 'Studien zur Gotik im Quattrocento' (*Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen*, 1925) and 'Observations on Girolamo da Carpi'.
- 22 See also page 144, note 8. On Lavater's artistic views, see C. Steinbrucker, *Lavaters Physiognomische Fragmente im Verhältnis zur Bildenden Kunst* (Berlin, 1915).
- 23 Fuseli's repetitions can certainly not be used as an argument for the thesis, usual in German art-historical literature of our day, that he developed his compositions from an exclusive preoccupation with form.
- 24 He was later to write (e.g. *4th Lecture*, *Aphorism* No. 91) that the artist should not try to express terror through an accumulation of detail.
- 25 It speaks for Fuseli's appreciation of the unity of composition that, in spite of his generally low opinion of 15th-century art, he greatly esteemed that quality in Masaccio.
- 26 I think Fuseli, in his heart, applied to himself what in his *2nd Lecture* he wrote of Michelangelo: 'To give the appearance of perfect ease to the most perplexing difficulty, was the exclusive power of Michael Angelo.'
- 27 Repr. Powell, pl. 18.
- 28 See, in this connection, page 33.
- 29 Fuseli wrote (in *Aphorism* No. 77): 'Repetition of attitude and gesture invigorates the expression of the grand.'
- 30 Repr. Powell, pl. 14 and pl. 9.
- 31 Moreover, Fuseli did not use pen here, as he was in the habit of doing at that time, but pencil or red chalk to give greater accuracy.



However, he generally emphasised the expression more than was done in the originals.

- 32 This timidity, coupled with the fact that—unlike most of Fuseli's—it is not a left-handed drawing, raises the question whether or not it is by Fuseli's own hand. But it is quite possible the weakness of this drawing is due precisely to Fuseli's having used his right hand here. For the time being (until we are better acquainted with the Fuseli imitators than we are at present) I am inclined to consider the drawing a work of Fuseli.
- 33 On the other hand, here, as well as in his literal copy after this Michelangelo figure, Fuseli has omitted the enveloping drapery to the left. In an otherwise literal copy after the Esaias (Zürich, Kunsthau) he has also cut away something of the drapery, which apparently protruded too much for his taste. The drawing of a Sibyl (Zürich, Kunsthau) (Pl. 27), fundamentally a free variation of the Erythrean very forcibly pressed into a triangle, dates from as early as 1771.
- 34 See Appendix I.
- 35 However, when comparing a work by Fuseli with one by a mannerist, the question must frequently be left open—and a decisive answer is not of vital importance—whether Fuseli knew the particular mannerist composition or whether it is just a question of general stylistic parallels.
- 36 Repr. Powell, pl. 11.
- 37 Repr. Ganz, pl. 22 and 23; Powell, pl. 10.
- 38 Repr. Ganz, pl. 24; Powell, pl. 6.
- 39 See Appendix II.
- 40 In his *11th Lecture*, Fuseli called even Parmigianino a Michelangelo imitator.
- 41 The previous edition of the dictionary, in which Fuseli had no hand, had taken a much more critical view of Bandinelli, dubbing him no more than 'a good sculptor'.
- 42 The resemblance between this Bandinelli drawing and Fuseli's has already been noted by F. Saxl and R. Wittkower in *British Art and the Mediterranean Tradition* (London, 1947).
- 43 Or to adduce a usual male type from Fuseli's Shakespearean illustrations, done in Italy: the small-headed athlete with a cruel expression, who is reminiscent of Bandinelli's brutal, muscular young men.
- 44 As the catalogue of his sale mentions, Fuseli owned 'a curious Incantation scene in the manner of Rosso'. Rosso, particularly in his youth, had a partiality for macabre scenes and figures. But, from a formal point of view also, it is largely in his early Florentine and Roman phase—all Rosso's works which we cite are from this period—that Rosso lends himself most suitably for comparison with Fuseli.



# FUSELI'S ITALIAN STYLE AND MANNERISM

- 45 Repr. Powell, pl. 35.
- 46 Copied, for example, also by Franco: this copy, now in the Ashmolean Museum, belonged, in Fuseli's time, to his fellow Academician, Cosway.
- 47 Rosso used her in his engraved composition, *Hercules and Acheloos*, from the series of *Deeds of Hercules*—a series so important for the formation of late mannerism.
- 48 On the close stylistic relationship between Rosso and Parmigianino, see my article, 'Un Capolavoro inedito del Parmigianino' (*Pinacoteca*, I, 1928).
- 49 The affinity is so close that some of Parmigianino's drawings of female heads in profile look like imitations from the end of the 18th century.
- 50 Repr. Powell, pl. 8.
- 51 Repr. Ganz, pl. 25; Powell, pl. 24.
- 52 Repr. Ganz, pl. 19 and 26. It is obviously the linear rhythm of the goddesses in Fuseli's Sarpedon drawing of 1778 which determined that of the nymphs in Banks's outstanding relief of the same year, also made in Rome, *Thetis and her Nymphs rise from the Sea to console Achilles* (Victoria and Albert Museum). So, when R. Wittkower (*British Art and the Mediterranean*, London, 1948) suggests that the rhythm of these figures of Banks foreshadows that of Blake, it is to Fuseli we have to trace back the original motif. Equally the figure of Achilles in Banks's relief is almost certainly derived from another Roman work of Fuseli, namely, from the fainting Saul in the drawing of the *Witch of Endor evoking Samuel's spirit* (Zürich, Kunsthau; repr. Federmann, pl. 49). Banks lived between 1772-9 in Rome, was a close friend of Fuseli and much under his influence.
- 53 However, when Fuseli found a particularly dramatic motif in classicist art, he used it. In his drawing, *Moses praying on Mount Sinai* (1776, Zürich, Kunsthau; repr. Ganz, pl. 19), he was perhaps inspired as regards the prostrate horizontally stretched-out figure of Moses by Poussin's *Christ lying in the Garden on the Mount of Olives*, a figure in a quite similar pose, and similarly on a rock. Fuseli could have known some copy of this Poussin drawing which is now in Windsor.
- 54 How different, for instance, is Rosso's well-known drawing in the Uffizi, for the St. John of the Volterra picture, with its thorough, detailed cubist treatment of the draperies.
- 55 Repr. Powell, pl. 21.
- 56 Repr. Powell, pl. 17.
- 57 The most important drawings of this sketch-book have been published by M. Fischer *Das Römische Skizzenbuch von Johann Heinrich Füssli* (*Neujahrsblatt der Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft*, 1942).
- 58 His famous utterance, 'Damn nature—she always puts me out', was certainly very sincere.



- 59 Repr. Ganz, pl. 15.
- 60 Repr. Powell, pl. 23.
- 61 Repr. Ganz, pl. 32.
- 62 Repr. Ganz, pl. 31.
- 63 To take an example of the manner in which, in those years, the expressionist conception of the portrait held sway in Lavater's and Bodmer's circle in Zürich: Wilhelm Tischbein, the classicist painter (who soon afterwards was to paint the famous classicist formal portrait of Goethe in Italy), while in Zürich from 1780-1, was asked by Lavater to paint Bodmer's portrait (Zürich, Kunsthau); Tischbein seems to have based this picture largely upon the double portrait which Fuseli had done in Zürich, one or two years earlier, though he has tried to outdo it in expressiveness (even its brushstrokes are more impulsive).
- 64 Repr. Federmann, pl. 64; Ganz, pl. 36.
- 65 The complicated coiffures of Quattrocento Gothic pass through Leonardo's late Leda to the Libyan Sibyl, from whence derive the refined female heads of Parmigianino, Salviati and Tibaldi. Fuseli was even addicted to hair-fetishism.
- 66 Some of Fuseli's portraits of Martha Hess (Zürich, Kunsthau; Weimar, Schlossmuseum; repr. Federmann, pl. 26; Ganz, pl. 34 and 35) with thin pencil contours, big empty spaces and patches of faint shading, look uncannily like Rosso's, had he lived in the 18th century and made portraits (I apologise for this unscientific analogy). For the similarity of expression, compare, for example, Martha Hess full face (repr. Ganz, pl. 35) with Rosso's *Madonna* in the Hermitage.
- 67 Not to mention, of course, Michelangelo himself, whose occasional anti-normative tendencies come out, far more fundamentally than in the case of the mannerists, of an immensely detailed anatomical knowledge. It is characteristic of Fuseli's anti-realist propensity that, in spite of his unique attachment to Michelangelo, he severely censured him (in *Aphorism* No. 19) for what he considered a misuse of anatomical knowledge: 'Misconception of its own powers is the injurious attendant of genius. . . . Michel Angelo perplexed the limbs of grandeur with the minute ramifications of anatomy.' In providing an excuse for his own aversion to anatomical studies, Fuseli also adduced Michelangelo's experience in having become infected while dissecting corpses.
- 68 See, on this subject, R. Longhi, 'Un San Tommaso del Velasquez e le congiunture italo-spagnole tra il '5 e il '600' (*Vita Artistica*, II, 1927), my review of this article (*Kritische Berichte zur Kunstgeschichtlichen Literatur*, I, 1928-9) and my article, 'Observations on Girolamo da Carpi'.



- 69 I speak here exclusively of mannerists of the Rosso-Bandinelli type. Comparatively un-Michelangelesque mannerists, like Polidoro with more Flemish contacts, did realist drawings even more frequently and consistently than they.
- 70 See Appendix II.
- 71 See D. E. Williams, *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Thomas Lawrence* (Vol. II, London, 1831). T. H. Reveley (*Notices Illustrative of the Drawings and Sketches of the Most Distinguished Masters*, London, 1820) mentions the preference of connoisseurs for drawings of Michelangelo, Bandinelli, Parmigianino, Franco and Cambiaso (also Giulio Romano, Polidoro and Vasari).
- 72 On the Filippino-Rosso line, see Appendix II.
- 73 Fuseli owned a large number of engravings by and after Mantegna, whose monumentality and whose archaising manner, combined with slightly pre-mannerist features, found some favour with him.
- 74 Michelangelo's early drawings of nudes, from about 1501-3, while still loosely linked to Signorelli (e.g. the nude man, seen from the back, in the British Museum drawing for the Bruges Madonna) also point towards Bandinelli (see page 39). Even a few Raphael drawings belong to this early mannerist *milieu*, important for Fuseli, mainly battle scenes made up of nudes fighting (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum), where the emphasis is upon expressiveness of contour and the muscles are summarised in a way rather different from his usual realistic modelling of the body, and obviously done (in 1508, when on his way from Florence to Rome) under the influence of the frescoes in Orvieto. The Raphael drawings in Oxford are almost equally close both to Signorelli and to the young Bandinelli (while those in Windsor, of the *Deeds of Hercules*, of probably slightly earlier date, are closer to the latter). It is significant that Ottley, in his publication, reproduced the most mannerist of these Raphael drawings, the *Battle for the Standard*, now in Oxford, with the figure of the corpse being borne along, simplified *à la Ingres*, and that certain drawings by Fuseli of scenes of fighting resemble it surprisingly.
- 75 Long after his Italian visit, Fuseli in his *History of Art*, described Signorelli as 'the founder of that which distinguished the succeeding epoch'.
- 76 See note 67 above.
- 77 Repr. Federmann, page 136.
- 78 Repr. Powell, pl. 9; Ganz, pl. 7.
- 79 How far is this unreal representation of a Shakespearean play from Fuseli's original experience of Garrick's acting as he used to portray it in London!
- 80 The chief motifs of this Fuseli drawing—the rigidly stretched-out corpse and the weepers—are further developed in an even more



abstract, geometrical sense in various works of Blake (e.g. in one of the illustrations for Young's *Night Thoughts* (1794) or in a water-colour of the *Entombment* (1808) in the Tate Gallery).

- 81 See E. Wind and F. Antal, *The Maenad under the Cross* (*Journal of the Warburg Institute*, I, 1937). Bandinelli's drawing of the *Entombment*, which I published there, was attributed by Ottley to Donatello. See Appendix III.
- 82 See Appendix III and U. Middeldorf, 'Drawings by Giovanni dell'Opera' (*Art Quarterly*, 1939).
- 83 Published in the *Burlington Magazine*, LVII, 1930.
- 84 Since only the cumulative effect of several works by Donatello and Bandinelli would show, convincingly, the stylistic antecedents of this Fuseli drawing, there is no object in bringing one selected illustration.
- 85 See Appendix III.
- 86 I cannot enlarge upon the complex development of this compositional motif (e.g. in Pontormo's Certosa frescoes; the sources, to mention only the most important, are the late Donatello as well as Dürer). In Fuseli's drawing, *Dante and Ugolino in the Icy Hell of Cocytus* (1774, Zürich, Kunsthaus) (repr. Federmann, pl. 31; Ganz, pl. 17) the enormous feet of the giants appear at the top: this particular motif, characteristic of the early part of Fuseli's Italian visit, is far more impetuous and *genialisch* than the figures in motion, cut off half-length, in the later *Richard III* drawing which is quieter and more stable.
- 87 As in the case of Michelangelo so in Raphael's, we have no need to quote any of Fuseli's commendations, since he held him second only to the former.
- 88 This has been noticed by Fischer, *op. cit.* The attributions to Raphael in the publications of drawings by Metz and Ottley show that English collectors already viewed not only Michelangelo but even Raphael in a rather mannerist light.
- 89 Later when he used the figure of the youth climbing the wall from the *Fire in Borgo*, he was to combine it with that of the climbing bather from Michelangelo's battle cartoon.
- 90 Here again, when copying Raphael's Vatican frescoes, even 16th-century mannerist engravers were slightly exaggerating the expressiveness of the faces.
- 91 The fresco itself (as well as all the others in this Amor and Psyche cycle) was, I think, executed by the young Taddeo Zuccari, then in Vaga's workshop.
- 92 However, in a picture (Winterthur, Private Collection) done c. 1780 (that is, immediately after his period in Italy), Fuseli represented the same theme in the usual mythological terms, without any hint of murder. Fuseli was inclined to treat a subject either in the



generally accepted vein or to give it (usually in his drawings) a very different interpretation by a definite twist towards the macabre and erotic.

- 93 Fuseli would certainly have objected to the word horror and replaced it by terror; he also liked to speak of the middle moment, the moment of suspense (which he claimed had been caught, apart from his own works, in the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel).
- 94 In his *7th Lecture*, Fuseli made the point that antique statues must be used appropriately to their original character.
- 95 Repr. Federmann, pl. 33.
- 96 It was perhaps exactly in the same year, 1775, when beginning to work for Wedgwood, that Flaxman did his first drawings from Greek vases in the British Museum, by which time the first section of the Hamilton vases had been acquired. Fuseli made his drawings between the publication of one part of the Hamilton vases by d'Hancarville in 1766-7 and that of the other by Tischbein in 1791.
- 97 A free copy by Fuseli after the well-known fresco from Herculaneum, *The Selling of Cupids* (Naples Museum), lends added grace and elegance to the original by being brought, so to speak, up to date (Blunt Collection, London; repr. Powell, pl. 13).
- 98 The relation of the Fuseli figure to this Mercury statue (the Lansdowne Hermes, now in Copenhagen) has been noticed by Powell; equally that a version of this statue (in the Vatican), in its turn, had also served Michelangelo as an inspiration for *his* figure.
- 99 For the derivation of this Ingres figure, see D. Rózsaffy, 'Ingres Oedipusa és a British Museum Meidias Hydrája' (*Year Books of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts*, II, 1919-21).  
In connection with the sources of the young Ingres, it should be remarked that, for a short time, there appears in the neo-mannerism of his very early style a strong similarity with Rosso's types and draperies, such as we found in Fuseli, but coupled with the impact of Flaxman (e.g. in a drawing of Philemon and Baucis, in the Museum of Le Puy). However, the influence of Flaxman soon entirely gained the upper hand and rendered Ingres' mannerism cooler, more precious.
- 100 The attitude and treatment of Fuseli's figure recalls a Rosso drawing (Uffizi) (pl. 24b), a copy done in Rome after an antique statue in a similar pose, which, in scintillating red chalk, gives an even more abrupt, more over-plastic and certainly more cubist effect.
- 101 Repr. Ganz, pl. 25; Powell, pl. 24.
- 102 See Appendix IV.
- 103 Repr. Ganz, pl. 18; Federmann, pl. 37. Fuseli was later to use the composition in a picture of the Milton Gallery, preserved only in an engraving.



- 104 When the theme arrived as far as Blake (two water-colours in the Huntingdon Library, c. 1807-8), a certain resemblance with Fuseli's composition which he certainly knew (at least through the picture of the Milton Gallery) can still be seen, in the expressionist classicism of his scenes; but, although it is probable that Blake also knew Hogarth's composition, the baroque reminiscences from Hogarth have, by now, been lost. M. Peckham ('Blake, Milton and Edward Burney', *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, XI, 1950) discusses only the very slight relation of this Blake composition with the corresponding Milton illustrations of Burney, whilst ignoring that with Fuseli and Hogarth.
- 105 Even in Italy, Fuseli imitated Hogarth's caricatures: in the Roman sketch-book of the British Museum there is a caricature of two men smoking a picture; one is using a pipe, the other candles, which are inscribed 'beauty' and 'sublime'. The style of this drawing is something of a distorted contraction of Fuseli's early illustration of *Peregrine Pickle*.
- 106 The figure of Death in Hogarth possibly harks back to the skeleton in Rosa's picture of the *Witch of Endor evoking Samuel's spirit before Saul* (Louvre). And it is likely that Fuseli, when treating this same subject in two drawings (Zürich, Kunsthau, probably done in Rome, engraved in the French edition of Lavater's book, repr. Federmann, pl. 49; Victoria and Albert Museum, repr. Powell, pl. 34) was impressed by the hooded figure of Samuel's spirit in Rosa's composition.

Most English artists of Fuseli's generation—artists much younger than Hogarth—were more or less influenced by Rosa, the taste for whom harmonised well with Burke's theory of the Sublime, but none more so than Fuseli's exact contemporary, Mortimer, who was temperamentally, in his extravagant behaviour, rather like Fuseli. Some of Mortimer's works, pre-romantic in the Rosa sense, and apparently from the 1770s, form, in a broad way, a certain parallel to Fuseli's slightly baroque illustrations of Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes*, from 1770 (Dresden; repr. Federmann, pl. 36). However, the impact of Rosa is of a more generalising baroque character in Mortimer than in Fuseli and the realist tendency is more pronounced in him; in some of his works, Mortimer, who was much influenced by Hogarth, brought the Salvator Rosa quality out of Hogarth's *Don Quixote* illustrations and accentuated it. A keen interest in physiognomy, so apparent in Mortimer's half-length figures of Shakespearean characters (1775), equally related him to Fuseli. But what differentiates the two is again the more generalised character of these baroque expressive heads, as well as (in other works) a strong tendency towards caricature. No research whatsoever has been done on this interesting artist who, incidentally, was one of the very few whom Blake esteemed.

- 107 Repr. Federmann, pl. 60.



108 Repr. Ganz, pl. 40.

109 I think H. Schrade, in his review of Landsberger's book, 'Kunst der Goethe-Zeit' (in *Kritische Berichte zur Kunstgeschichtlichen Literatur*, 1931-2) and, even more so, W. Hofmann, in 'Zu Fusslis geschichtlicher Stellung' (*Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 1952), have laid too much stress upon the anti-classicist features in Fuseli's art. They impute features to Fuseli which he himself disparaged in Blake (see page 85.)



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### III

## Fuseli's Style in its European Context

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To what extent can a style be original, given such points of contact with the art of the past? Do Fuseli's borrowings reveal a lack of originality? Certainly not in Fuseli's own view. In one of his *Aphorisms*,<sup>1</sup> he gave his 'official' opinion of the purpose of his borrowings: 'Genius may adopt but never steals'; and it was in this sense, namely, that borrowing does not impair originality, that he gave a detailed explanation of the same subject in his lectures. In his *3rd Lecture* Fuseli wrote: 'An adopted idea or figure in a work of genius is a foil or a companion to the rest. . . . We leave him (the borrower) with the full praise of invention, who by the harmony of the whole proves that what he adopted might have been his own offspring though anticipated by another. If he takes now, he soon may give.' Fuseli then appended, perhaps in justification of his own procedure, a list of borrowings made by Michelangelo and Raphael. It was the main principle of Storm and Stress that the hall-mark of genius is originality by any means and Fuseli was convinced, not without reason, that he was a genius and could afford these borrowings because they accorded with his own spirit. In a letter to Herder, Lavater said that Fuseli was incapable of writing or drawing a line which was not original. In fact in all his own writings, including his private letters, Fuseli did his utmost to convey this impression by every word. I can well imagine that he believed himself the



#### FUSELI'S STYLE IN ITS EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Michelangelo of his time<sup>2</sup>; yet, however exaggerated his self-esteem, he was consistent and sincere in his art. What Fuseli's borrowings really imply can only be appreciated if the significance of his 'unusual' mannerist-classicist style is first understood in its European context.

Fuseli was the genuine exponent of a new style which expressed the feelings of a rather isolated group of sensitive, middle-class intellectuals of those decades throughout Europe, call them, as we may, early romantics or classicists tinged with romanticism. The designations are irrelevant; no irreconcilable contrast between classicism and romanticism was yet felt in the 18th century, hence no clear line of demarcation could be distinguished.<sup>3</sup> It was precisely this blend of classicism and romanticism which determined Fuseli's style, as it did that of the whole European movement. He was but little involved in the sometimes extremely subjective, volcanic eruptions of the short-lived Storm and Stress, a movement deserted even by its own exponents after a few years, but had only adhered to it in its preparatory stages, remaining, after its collapse, faithful to many of its principles, formulated at that early period. That is why he was capable of feeling and expressing something of the essence of consecutive waves of romanticism in Europe. Bodmer, though one of the chief initiators of Storm and Stress, considered it, when fully developed, barbarous, while Lavater identified himself with it entirely. Fuseli was somewhere between his tutor, Bodmer, and his best friend, Lavater. While on the whole he stood apart from the movement when at its peak, he may well have felt something of its atmosphere, even during his relative isolation in Italy; indeed this was even literally true, since Lavater kept him informed about the current works of Storm and Stress when he was in Rome, and presumably later too, when he was again in Zürich for a short while.

However, his views on art were in many respects opposed to those of Goethe, the most authoritative mouthpiece of Storm and Stress. At that time Goethe approved of every kind of art, provided it was really 'creative', provided it had 'inward form'. In this sense he approved just as much of the portrayal of the most trivial subjects (one of his poems, bearing upon this, was directed against Fuseli because of his contrary views) as he did of the gothic and, with the exception of Michelangelo, of the great masters, such as Raphael, Rubens and Rembrandt. Thus he gave entirely free rein to the artist of the day to borrow where he chose. It was in the nature of the fully developed German Storm and Stress that it could not be expressed unequivocally in art. When, during the second half of his Italian visit, Fuseli found the formula for his art, his discovery almost coincided in time with the break-up of Storm and Stress; and this was to remain, more or less,



his style for the rest of his lifetime, surviving not only Storm and Stress but even Goethe's long, very different classicist period which now supervened.

Not only Lavater, but all the leading intellectuals of Storm and Stress, such as Herder, Hamann and Merck, praised Fuseli's works produced in Rome, though they knew most of them only through Lavater's letters. The young Goethe, however, and Lenz, Lavater's collaborator in his book on physiognomy, knew works by Fuseli well. As early as 1774 Goethe asked Lavater to procure for him drawings by Fuseli. An unusually wild drawing by Goethe of three witches of about 1776-80 is very near in spirit to Fuseli, and it seems that Goethe even copied Fuseli. In 1779 Goethe so much admired Fuseli's drawings, which had been left behind in Zürich on the artist's journey from Italy to England, that he acquired them from Lavater; they are still in Weimar in the Goethe Museum. In 1780 Goethe tried, again through Lavater, to procure drawings from Fuseli for a monument to be erected in Weimar commemorating the Grand-Duke's journey in his own company to Switzerland. Soon afterwards, when he had himself become a classicist, Goethe's esteem for Fuseli lessened, though during his closing years it revived.<sup>4</sup>

The various waves of romanticism in the different countries, like Fuseli's own outlook and art, combined progressive and conservative features. They arose from widely separated social and ideological causes and displayed various facets, yet the same tempered undertone persisted: a tendency, far beyond sentimentalism, towards emotionalism, articulate and not merely vague,<sup>5</sup> towards imagination and a degree of irrationalism which yet avoided the borderline of mysticism and, in art, a literal gothicising. The clergyman, Lavater, breaking even more radically than Fuseli with what rationalism there might be in Bodmer, adopted an entirely mystical religious interpretation of genius. He retained, even after the collapse of Storm and Stress, his romantic-expressionist views, which were echoed in the mysticism of German 19th-century romanticism. Fuseli explicitly rejected the exaggerated belief in magnetism expressed in some of Lavater's late writings. In fact Fuseli was perhaps the only European artist old enough and intense enough to sense and follow up this steady undertone in the various romantic trends, at least in those of a secular character, from the earliest onwards: in merely chronological terms it would be almost true to say that Fuseli created this new style in art. Certain necessary reservations have already been made as regards the closeness of Fuseli's association with the extremely emotional Storm and Stress movement, among the exponents and adherents of which madness, frenzy and suicide were not at all uncommon. However, Fuseli's personal 'unbalanced' disposition, the outward manifestation



of which his contemporaries usually called eccentricity, was undeniably in keeping with early European romanticism. This was even more true of Blake, for whom visions were the only reality. It is one reason why both could express in art earlier than others and in such an intense way much of the mentality of this trend. Pioneers and forerunners of new irrational, expressionist styles frequently possess abnormal 'unbalanced' dispositions, in conformity with the nature of the new style itself: e.g. the mannerists Pontormo and Rosso; the early romantic expressionists Fuseli and Blake; Van Gogh and Munch, forerunners of 20th-century expressionism. The second generation of expressionist artists, whether of the 16th, 18th or 20th centuries, could already afford to be perfectly normal.

It was in the nature of the sophisticated new style, which corresponded most closely to the German or Germanic mentality of those decades, that the differences between the various countries, and even more so the personal differences between the artists, were very great. It might perhaps be said, if with some exaggeration, that the artists who were younger than Fuseli usually represented only one particular phase or aspect of this style: for instance, the Dane Abildgaard (1743-1809), the Germans 'Maler' Müller (1749-1825)<sup>6</sup> and Runge (1777-1810), the Italian Giani (1758-1823)<sup>7</sup>, the Frenchman Girodet (1767-1824), whilst most of them were more moderate, nearer to classicism and of a less mannerist persuasion than Fuseli. On the other hand, in England Blake (1757-1827) was later to carry this style to further, more subjective, more emotional, more mystical extremes.<sup>8</sup> The style was rarefied and precarious, adopted by only a relatively small number of artists, and it lacked the wide general appeal that realist classicism had for the progressive French middle class, or neo-baroque for the more conservative British middle class. Consequently Fuseli's individual role and the significance of his artistic solutions were far more important than those of exponents of styles which corresponded to artistic needs more generally experienced. It is customary in art-historical literature to dwell upon Fuseli's influence on his fellow artists, but it is not of primary importance to isolate the cases in which his direct personal influence is evident from those which merely reveal a similar tendency in the same direction. However, Fuseli undoubtedly had a strong impact upon foreign artists working in Rome at the same time: e.g. on the Scotsmen Alexander Runciman and John Brown (the closest personal imitator Fuseli ever had), the Englishmen Romney, Banks and Prince Hoare, who can be identified with the so-called 'Master of the Giants', the author of a sketch-book of mythological compositions, stylistically dependent on Fuseli, and done in Rome in 1779,<sup>9</sup> the Scandinavians Sergel and Abildgaard, on both of whom, but particularly on Sergel,



Fuseli's influence acted in a classicist direction, leading away from rococo.

Since Fuseli was at first not so much intellectually as artistically isolated,<sup>10</sup> he had to grope his way, particularly in his formative years, and to look out more sharply for predecessors in art with somewhat kindred features<sup>11</sup> than would have been necessary for an adherent of a style which had a long organic tradition and development behind it. But when a style with a long tradition has become over-ripe, the artist, who practises it, borrows without imagination. That is why the late classicist Ingres, who was much less imaginative than Fuseli, kept very close to antique models throughout his life<sup>12</sup>; and the same could be said of David, who belonged to an earlier generation when classicism was far more topical. A certain 'return' to Michelangelo and to mannerism was not merely an archaising process, an imitation; it was also a very bold break with tradition. At the same time this 'return' which, like that of the 16th century, can be described as lying between classicism and mannerism, followed from Fuseli's own 18th-century position between classicism and romanticism. This accounts historically for certain general similarities between Fuseli and 16th-century art, sometimes conscious, sometimes probably unconscious as far as his borrowings from it are concerned, which, apart from those from Michelangelo, were at this time few in number.

Fuseli's points of contact and borrowings reflect the nature of the very original current he represented. No style, of course, is entirely original or entirely eclectic and even Reynolds's neo-baroque was never entirely the latter. Yet we are entitled to regard Fuseli's style, as a whole, as original, certainly far more so than Reynolds's, which was largely the expression of a rather conventional, conservative outlook. Reynolds's style was more eclectic, more 'acceptable' because it kept so close to the unbroken baroque tradition, adding relatively little new to it. And the conscious eclecticism of the style is corroborated by his personal method of work. He consistently picked out motifs from old masters from his travel notebooks and used them as the dominant note in his historical compositions and even in his more elaborate portraits. The well-known method of borrowing which Reynolds, in his *15th Discourse*, recommended to his pupils—that each should thoroughly familiarise himself with Michelangelo's style by taking over his figures and adding others in the same idiom—must have been quite contrary to Fuseli's attitude. The same is true of Reynolds's dictum that borrowings were not derogatory to genius but, according to his personal and well-known conviction (*6th Discourse*), arose from the necessity of imitation, without which even genius could not subsist; it should be possible to learn from all schools, even from what he termed contrary qualities in them.<sup>13</sup> And we may



add the case of another great early romantic artist, Blake, whom no one would accuse of lack of originality,<sup>14</sup> in spite of the fact that he leant even more obviously than Fuseli upon mannerism and borrowed equally obviously from it.

It is no argument against Fuseli, whose knowledge of works of art was far greater and more thorough than that of any artist of his period, that he learned and borrowed from other artists. His method of borrowing consisted in transposing individual motifs, in which he felt a kindred sentiment,<sup>15</sup> into his own style, often, though by no means always, in an almost unrecognisable variation of the originals. Firm in the belief of his own originality and thus convinced he could afford them, Fuseli could risk making his borrowings more blatant and literal than those of Reynolds who, in his smooth eclectic style, was apt to conceal them more carefully. Like many cultured intellectuals, Fuseli was receptive and original at the same time. In Fuseli's Swiss literary *milieu* receptivity and originality were not regarded as in the least contradictory, provided the borrowing appeared to be linked with originality. His master, Bodmer, went to far greater extremes than Fuseli as regards borrowings, and in several of his plays he incorporated lines from Shakespeare and others, only slightly altering a few words to make them more striking. Nothing could be more original than Fuseli's early Swiss style; the style of his first English period showed wide differences from that of most other artists working here and it is, I think, true to say that, during his years in Italy, he was the boldest and most original European artist. Just as his borrowings from Michelangelo must be regarded as a reinforcement of his own early romantic style, so too his points of contact with 16th-century art are merely very useful commentaries upon his own art but do not, in the least, exhaust its range.

One of Fuseli's most important compositions, done in Zürich in 1779, on the way from Italy to England, provides a concrete example of his style within the international setting of those years. Times had slightly changed since he was forced for political reasons to leave the town fifteen years previously, and now he obtained the commission to paint the *Oath on the Rütli*, the famous scene from Swiss medieval history in which representatives of the three original cantons of the Federation swore to liberate themselves from Austrian subjugation. Another picture which springs to mind is the *Oath of the Horatii* (Plate 29a), painted between 1782 and 1784 by David, an artist seven years younger than Fuseli, whom he met in Rome: three Roman warriors, like Fuseli's austere Republicans, are swearing a live patriotic oath. Fuseli's composition, of which the drawing (Zürich, Kunsthaus) (Plate 28) dates from 1779, and the painting



(Zürich, Rathaus<sup>16</sup>) was carried out somewhat later in London, portrays, more or less, the customary features of his mannerist classicism. Doubtless because of the patriotic non-literary theme and the destination of the picture for a public building, the composition is simpler, nearer to classicism than usual. Three quasi-nude, statuesque figures, one in the centre full face, the two others in profile symmetrically placed to either side, clasp their left hands, and raise their right arms high above their heads as they swear. The figures form a strictly balanced group in Fuseli's customary abstract formula; violent poses are expressed by means of simple contraposto and repeated rhythmical lines carried through the whole composition; the large-scale nudes fill the space, and there is no clear indication of the third dimension, no background, no scenery. David's picture, on the other hand, exemplifies a realist classicism if ever there was one.<sup>17</sup> It portrays a concrete event, sustained tectonically by very realistic solid means. To the left the three warriors are taking the oath, in the centre their father holds the swords, while the three weeping women and the two children to the right almost completely fill the other half of the scene, which is located in a Roman hall with arches and columns carefully designed and spatially calculated. How different is the gesture of oath taking in the two pictures: ecstatic and fervent in Fuseli, subdued and wrapt, though of course declamatory, in David. To define it in terms of anti-realism and realism, whereas each of Fuseli's symmetrical figures is fully in view and takes the oath with upraised arms with consciously parallel movements, in David, where the grouping grows out of real poses, the warrior in the foreground almost obscures the two behind him so that only parts of them are visible and the outstretched arms of the three are deliberately out of alignment.<sup>18</sup> However, seen from the point of view of the prevailing baroque-rococo style, even the symmetry and parallelism in David is rigid, the architecture simple. In spite of great differences between mannerism and realist classicism, the turning away from the baroque-rococo style, in both Fuseli and David, is equally original and definite.

In some ways Fuseli's *Oath on the Rütli* is a precursor of David's *Oath of the Horatii*, and in some ways not. It all depends how far a composition can be termed classicist which, however balanced it may be, contains anti-realist features. The two pictures reflect the mentality of their respective painters and the political developments both past and future in their countries of origin. Preceded by widespread political and social unrest and the teachings of the Encyclopedists, the *Oath of the Horatii* was intended to signify the liberation not only of Rome but of France from tyranny. Only four years after the *Oath of the Horatii*, the Revolution broke out in France; and within



David's *œuvre* followed the *Oath of the Tennis Court*. Although it is as classicist as the *Oath of the Horatii*, it is even more realistic since it portrays an actual event in the French Revolution. Fuseli's attitude in Switzerland differed somewhat from David's radical political tendency and straightforward rationalism. In Switzerland patriotic feeling, even among partisans of Storm and Stress, who can be said to have represented Enlightenment there and as exemplified in Fuseli's *Oath on the Rütli*, concentrated rather upon the past whereas, in France, it was directed towards the present.

It was the patriotism of the Bodmer circle which inspired Wilhelm Tischbein, during his visit to Zürich in 1781, that is, two years after Fuseli had left, to paint one of the very first pictures of the German national past: *Konradin of Swabia listening to his Sentence of Death in Prison*. A rather sentimental picture, it was vaguely directed against tyranny and modelled upon Reynolds's *Ugolino*. At precisely the same time Tischbein sketched scenes not only from *Goetz von Berlichingen*, a characteristic Storm and Stress theme, which was to be taken up again by French romanticism of the 1820s and '30s (e.g. by Delacroix) but also from the story of Tell, which was closely associated with Fuseli's theme of the *Oath on the Rütli*. In late 18th-century France the story of Tell overcoming the tyrant Gessler was considered a significant incident in the fight for freedom and as such worth representing in an historical composition. Vincent, who to an astonishing degree foreshadows 19th-century romanticism in his historical pictures,<sup>19</sup> portrayed Tell's famous leap from Gessler's ship (Toulouse). Fuseli showed the same scene from the past history of his country in a composition which was engraved in Paris in 1787 and was provided with a French and German text describing the Swiss struggle against Austrian tyranny. Fuseli certainly enjoyed rendering, in this scene, his favourite moment of suspense, but it cannot be denied that the whole make-up of the print, with medallions of Tell shooting and of the *Oath on the Rütli*, suggests patriotic, republican tendencies, even if these were inserted by the French publisher rather than by Fuseli. The date of Vincent's picture is apparently unknown, but should it have originated, as I believe, shortly before or during the French Revolution, it was probably done under the influence of the engraving after Fuseli. As regards the present, the feelings of the Swiss patriots were rather vague, detached from concrete political ideas.<sup>20</sup> Their creed was that the state should rejuvenate itself, but in a sense by retrogression towards the example of their virtuous, simple peasant ancestors.<sup>21</sup> It was in this sense that they interpreted Rousseau, in contrast to the reading not only political but revolutionary put upon the *Contrat Social* by Robespierre, whose close follower David was to become. Even so, the appeal to patriotism and



#### FUSELI'S STYLE IN ITS EUROPEAN CONTEXT

virtue in Fuseli's picture of the *Oath on the Rütli* was a very temporary upsurge of past convictions, which were to remain but a short episode in his life and art. Yet his patriotic preoccupation with Tell led to Schiller's use of the theme for his well-known drama; Goethe, who saw Fuseli's picture in Zürich, and also owned a sketch of it, suggested to Schiller the Tell story as a subject for his play.



## Notes to Chapter III

- 1 Aphorism No. 50.
- 2 In a letter to Lavater, Fuseli communicated what he claimed to be Reynolds's opinion of him, namely, that if he went for a few years to Italy he would become the greatest painter of the time. However, as Knowles makes clear, Reynolds (never very enthusiastic) had used far more moderate terms. But Lavater, as his letters show, now took it for granted that Fuseli was the greatest living artist.
- 3 As the expression 'romanticism' will be with us for ever, we are obliged to use it though, like all generalising nomenclature, it is apt to lead to confusion. By attempting a precise definition of each individual romantic current, we can at least reduce this and hence be less disturbed that, in art, 18th-century romanticism was closely connected with classicism, was in fact frequently a variation of this style.
- 4 See page 129, note 22 and page 137. On the relation of Goethe's and Fuseli's views on art, and on Goethe's views on Fuseli, which changed in accordance with his own development, see F. Denk, 'Goethe und die Bildniskunst des Sturm und Drangs' (*Deutsche Vierteljahrschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, VIII, 1930), H. Schrader, 'Die Romantische Idee von der Landschaft' (*Neue Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, 1931), E. Beutler, 'J. H. Füssli' (*Goethe, Viermonatschrift des Goethe-Gesellschaft*, IV, 1939) and L. Muenz, *Goethe's Zeichnungen und Radierungen* (Vienna, 1949). See Appendix V.
- 5 In a letter of 1775 to Lavater, Fuseli attacked Klopstock: according to Fuseli, most of Klopstock's odes contained only spurious, merely particular and private emotion (e.g. eternal variations on the invocation 'Lord! Lord!'), not genuine, universal, vital emotion which could be expressed through images.
- 6 See Appendix V. Carstens and Genelli were too classicist to fit easily into this current.



# FUSELI'S STYLE IN ITS EUROPEAN CONTEXT

- 7 Compared with those of Fuseli's Italian period, Giani's works of some 20-30 years later were belated, rather weak and far more conventional. Some of them linked up closely with the baroque-rococo tradition of the Bolognese Settecento and only occasionally showed a slight suggestion of mannerism; others were entirely classicist. What they chiefly resembled in contemporary English art were Nollekens' terra-cotta *bozzetti*, with figures of a mythological or allegorical character.
- 8 Apart from Blake, Goya was perhaps the only European artist at that time—taking the period as a whole—whose style was intensely original, 'different' throughout his life. True, his far more penetrating style (and, indeed, only understandable when seen against the background of Spain) had, on the whole, a significance different from Fuseli's, in themes as well as in form; yet in the sphere of imagination various points of contact existed between them. To elaborate these points would be a task well worth undertaking. T. Hetzer 'Francisco Goya und die Krise der Kunst um 1800' (*Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, XIV, 1950), while rightly contending that it was the new concepts which determined the art of Goya as well as of Storm and Stress, of classicism and of romanticism, does not develop this theme beyond Goya himself and even then only in a rather generalising, though often very understanding, manner.
- 9 Now in the Roland, Browse and Delbanco Gallery.
- 10 Literature, not art, was the obvious, the most direct medium of the emotionalism of early romanticism; I am convinced that not all early romantics, let alone all admirers of Rousseau, mostly sentimentally inclined, admired Fuseli's art. Moreover, through egocentricity and jealousy, Fuseli liked to feel himself even more isolated than he really was.
- 11 Even Michelangelo used, e.g. for the greater part of the Sistine Slaves, suggestions from antique models, however transformed.
- 12 See on his borrowings from the antique as well as from Flaxman, A. Mongan, 'Ingres and the Antique' (*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, X, 1947).
- 13 See on Reynolds's borrowings, E. Wind, 'Humanitätsidee und heroisiertes Porträt in der Englischen Kultur des 18 Jahrhunderts' (*Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, 1930-1), C. Mitchell, 'Three Phases of Reynolds's Method' (*Burlington Magazine*, LXXX-LXXXI, 1942) and E. Gombrich, 'Reynolds's Theory and Practice of Imitation' (*Burlington Magazine*, LXXX-XXXI, 1942).
- 14 See on Blake's borrowings, A. Blunt, 'Blake's Pictorial Imagination' (*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, VI, 1943).
- 15 We ought not to be astonished at Fuseli's off-the-record remark: 'Blake is damned good to steal from.'
- 16 Repr. Federmann, pl. 2.



FUSELI'S STYLE IN ITS EUROPEAN CONTEXT

- 17 See my article, 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism, I' (*Burlington Magazine*, 1935).
- 18 In Fuseli's picture of the *Three Witches*, of earlier date than David's picture, the three arms are horizontally outstretched as in that of the French artist. But again, in contrast to David's realist *mise-en-scène*, this parallelism is rigid, as is the placing of the heads. Rigidity and repetition in pose and gesture was to be carried to the furthest extremes in Flaxman, whose mentality was the most conservative of the three artists.
- 19 See my article, 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism, II' (*Burlington Magazine*, 1935).
- 20 Even so, the Swiss Storm and Stress (in particular Bodmer and including Fuseli) was relatively more politically-minded than the German.
- 21 Such were the views of the Helvetic Society (founded in 1762), to which the Swiss intellectuals belonged, among them Lavater, who procured Fuseli the commission for the picture. It is characteristic that, even before the Swiss-born Rousseau, ideas on the virtuous peasantry contrasted with corrupting civilisation were advanced in Switzerland as early as 1729 by the scientist and poet, Haller (his poem, *Die Alpen*), whom the young Fuseli appreciated. See, on the ideological situation in Switzerland in those years, G. Guggenbühl, *Geschichte der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft* (Vol. 111, Zürich, 1948).



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## IV

### Fuseli's English Style and Mannerism

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THERE can be no doubt that, even judged by the yardstick of his own youth, Fuseli, after his return to England in 1779, became less and less politically-minded, while his art, increasingly detached from reality, acquired more and more the character of an ivory tower. True he still lived for a while in the liberal atmosphere pervading the intellectual circle of his friend, the publisher, Johnson, of which coterie he was the talkative and witty centre, as far as literature and art were concerned.<sup>1</sup> True also that, with the advent of the French Revolution, his former liberal views revived for a short while. But after 1792, as the more extreme elements predominated, his sympathy for the Revolution ceased even earlier and changed more radically than was the case with other members of his circle, and in any case, as a German, he was from the start less politically-minded than the English. And in time the intellectual attitude of the whole group took on a more equivocal and neutral character.<sup>2</sup> Reaction and fear of the Revolution then reached such dimensions<sup>3</sup> that even Johnson, who had refused to publish, as too radical, Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*,<sup>4</sup> found himself in prison in 1798.

Fuseli's relations with the English radicals were at no time, I think, particularly intimate and even in the early period he was interested in radicals of the Godwin and Tom Paine type less as politicians than as intellectuals with whom he could converse. Now



his attitude towards them became increasingly distant. Never very keen on political discussion, he came to dislike and avoid it. So far as he then had any coherent political views at all, he could probably be called a kind of liberal-conservative. It is symptomatic that in 1804 Fuseli became Keeper of the Academy in place of Smirke, whose election George III did not confirm on the grounds that he was a democrat. In 1805 the very conservative Flaxman regretted that Fuseli was no longer lecturing at the Royal Academy but instead of him, Opie, who spoke in a democratic spirit.<sup>5</sup> It is also significant that Fuseli generally disliked even to talk about his early radical pamphlet, written jointly with Lavater, and on account of which they had been obliged to leave Zürich. He now remarked that, in view of their own situation and that of their families, it evinced 'want of knowledge of the world'. However, something of his previous liberal outlook remained in Fuseli, as is shown by the pronouncement, though probably exaggerated, of his conservative-minded intimate, Knowles: 'No man was a greater stickler for civil and religious liberty than Fuseli, and no man had a deeper horror of the slave trade, or a greater dislike to impressing seamen.'

Fuseli moved, as suited his mentality and his art, among cultured, sophisticated people, connoisseurs of antique poetry<sup>6</sup> and historians like Roscoe, who was also one of his patrons.<sup>7</sup> However, his special patron was the banker, Thomas Coutts, whose almost unlimited generosity and friendliness to Fuseli, till his own death in 1822, was the determining factor in the artist's whole career.<sup>8</sup> Fuseli was completely at home in Coutts's house, was on most friendly terms with all the members of his family, above all with his eldest daughter Susan, Countess of Guildford, who kept up and, if possible, enhanced her father's liberality and in whose house Fuseli died.<sup>9</sup>

It was this small, rather aristocratic circle, cultured and refined, which bought Fuseli's works, bought indeed almost anything from him, so that it would be true to say he painted only for his friends. One may say that he practised his theory that art was only for an *élite*. Not that Fuseli's art lay entirely outside official English art. On the contrary, it had close contacts with it; so close indeed that he had no difficulty in becoming first an Associate (1788), then an ordinary member, of the Royal Academy (1790), and after a short time Professor of Painting (1799) and later (1804) Keeper for life.<sup>10</sup> He was the intellectual, so to speak, of the Academy, and the lectures he gave there were highly esteemed. He could very skilfully reconcile, in his lectures, his individual dislike of academies ('symptoms of decay of taste') with their continuation ('necessary and useful institutions for the decadent times') because of his financial dependence upon them. Fuseli dedicated his lectures to William Lock the



younger, a rich amateur-artist and an assiduous purchaser of his pictures. Despite his fierce temperament, of which so much is made in literature, Fuseli certainly knew how to treat rich clients. Through the papers of the Lock family<sup>11</sup> we learn how Fuseli curried favour with the young Lock, at their first meeting, by calling one of his drawings divine, and by praising his gifts he captivated the whole family. Lawrence, President of the Academy during Fuseli's last years, was a very close friend of his,<sup>12</sup> bought his pictures and, after his death, all his drawings.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, Fuseli was renowned in international academic circles as well. When he went to Paris in 1802 David, whom Fuseli hated for having sided with the Jacobins, and Gérard treated him most courteously. Canova, after a visit to England in 1816, made Fuseli, Flaxman and Lawrence members of the *Accademia di S. Luca* since, in his view, they were the three greatest English artists.

How should we define Fuseli's place within English art of the period? His art certainly seems to have been what the times required. His fundamentally non-political disposition, or rather the generally acquiescent nature of his reaction, dating from his youth ('a nation cannot be improved') and the non-political, reactionary tendency of the times—non-political as far as the public, reactionary as far as the government was concerned—found a common meeting-ground. Times of frustrated revolutions such as these are apt to find an outlet in the 'interesting', the macabre, the fantastic and particularly the erotic.<sup>14</sup> It was precisely these which Fuseli could supply. But he supplied them on rather too high a level. Ever since his first visit to England, Fuseli had tended more than any of his contemporaries except Blake to stress the unrealist, irrational and imaginative features and possibilities of English art to an extent which did not suit the general public.<sup>15</sup> It is true that by the 1780s and particularly the 1790s early romanticism was very widespread in English cultural life but, as in every country, very varied aspects and gradations of it came to the surface. However much Fuseli was appreciated among intellectuals, his style was too extreme and sophisticated for the average spectator who, on the whole, preferred other artists.

It is not easy to define English art of the period. English painting of the end of the 18th and the early 19th century constituted a complex and interesting phenomenon full of variety.<sup>16</sup> Because of the fundamentally unrevolutionary character and the ideological vacillation of the English middle class, which accompanied the reaction, and in spite of its very early burgeoning, no consistent rational middle-class art, that is, no steady realistic classicism, could develop here at that time, as it did in France.<sup>17</sup> Yet in England, even as early as 1746, it was possible to produce such a picture as Hogarth's *Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter* (Foundling Hospital), which in its classicising



tendency preceded by twenty years that of Vien, David's master. Given the greater strength of the English middle class in its heroic, most self-confident period, the first half of the 18th century, English classicism, in spite of the main baroque-rococo artistic tradition of the country, necessarily manifested itself earlier than in France.<sup>18</sup> One of the very few exponents of a realistic classicism in Fuseli's time was an almost unknown artist, S. W. Reynolds, whose excellent, almost Chardin-like picture, *Interior of a Windmill*, of 1806 (Southill Park, Whitbread Collection) (Plate 26b), painted characteristically for the solid middle-class brewer family, Whitbread, hung unnoticed in the exhibition, 'The First Hundred Years of the Royal Academy' (London, 1951-2).

A moderate baroque seems to have been the prevalent style, but it combined in innumerable variations classicist and mannerist features. Fuseli's rarefied mannerist-classicist art in this particular alloy was, in a sense, unique. But as a rarefied taste, Fuseli's art was appreciated to some extent and its flavouring of other styles and artists went far beyond a mere 'personal' influence since it responded to a general need. Some explanation should perhaps be given as to why Fuseli's art, with its background of German Storm and Stress, succeeded in England in this way. Since in Germany conditions were not favourable for the weak middle class to achieve an organic social and political development, in early German romanticism of the 1760s and '70s attention was concentrated upon the inner liberation of the individual and of his passions, upon the desire to be original, often also to be exceptional. Strange to say, in England, where the middle class had entrenched themselves so firmly in the economy of the country after the two revolutions of the 17th century and had so far outstripped, in strength and power, the less advanced middle classes of the Continent, a streak similar to that previously seen in Germany developed in English romanticism, particularly after the French Revolution. This was due to the entry of the English middle class upon a period less politically conscious. So well established themselves, they felt little sympathy with the Revolution of the French middle class, particularly after their violent swing to the left. Moreover, the increasingly close economic, social and political *rapprochement* between the English middle class and the aristocracy largely accounted for their inconsistency in the cultural field—inconsistent, that is to say, from a bourgeois point of view compared with their greater consistency in the first half of the 18th century. Hence the pleasure which the middle class as well as the aristocracy derived from the exciting, the 'interesting', the eccentric, the out-of-the-ordinary, for its own sake, a tendency which had been gathering momentum in England in the preceding decades.



Fuseli, whose style originated in middle class romanticism, showed an increasing bias towards the taste of the aristocracy and of those who imitated it, and thus comes within this orientation.<sup>19</sup> This is why it is possible to see in many artists and not only as is generally said, in Blake and Flaxman, certain connecting links with Fuseli.<sup>20</sup> Or rather, if we start from Fuseli and the mannerist elements in his art, we can detect in other artists qualities which might otherwise easily be overlooked.<sup>21</sup> It is, at the same time, characteristic of the stress laid upon the erotic in these decades<sup>22</sup> that, while the outstanding painters, as Academicians, officially professed to admire Michelangelo<sup>23</sup> in practice, that is to say, in the works of these artists, in particular the more fashionable ones, the mannerist features were usually Parmigianinesque rather than Michelangelesque.<sup>24</sup> Even in an artist like Reynolds, who is baroque and sentimental in his general attitude, a certain Parmigianinesque morbidity is not infrequently to be observed.<sup>25</sup> And even in some works of the next president of the Academy, the sober West, whose general development went from classicism to baroque, we can detect an inclination towards erotic expression, the fantastic and mannerism, while certain violent poses are reminiscent of Fuseli. West, like Fuseli, was frequently influenced by Rosa, whom he slightly classicised. When in 1777 he painted the *Witch of Endor and Saul* (Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, U.S.A.), he kept even closer than Fuseli, in his two drawings of this theme, to the composition of Rosa's picture in the Louvre. Some of West's pictures, again like Fuseli's, resemble the Italianising Rubens.

Romney, whose period in Italy (1773-5) coincided with Fuseli's, must have come entirely under Fuseli's spell and remained so till the end of his life. His vast number of drawings for historical compositions, almost unknown to his contemporaries and usually, like those of Fuseli, illustrations for Shakespeare (Plate 12a), Milton and Dante, are really little more than superficial variations on Fuseli's art quickly jotted down. They often strike us as shallow and unsolved only because we are familiar with the much higher standard of Fuseli's elaborately thought-out compositions. For the same reason, Romney's many Lady Hamiltons in dramatic or erotic poses, often sketches and drawings, seem to us only elegant, fashionable popularisations of Fuseli's renderings of elemental passions. The fashionable, typical art of the period, that of William Hamilton for instance, which generally illustrates scenes from Shakespeare and was frequently done for Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, lies somewhere between Reynolds and Fuseli, in a baroque or classicist-baroque style<sup>26</sup> and, even in the case of West, appears early romantic only in a superficial sense through the free use of Medieval and Renaissance costumes and accessories. Not dissimilar are Stothard's illustrations which,



from the point of view of Fuseli, are banalities in a conventionally graceful and sentimental vein.<sup>27</sup> Even Opie, who can be said to have made Reynolds's art more realistic by means of a touch of Caravaggism, sometimes imitated Fuseli's forceful poses, though in simplified form, in his near-classicist historical compositions.

Lawrence, the third president of the Academy, the most sincere and faithful admirer of Fuseli's art,<sup>28</sup> imitated him closely in his historical pictures. Lawrence's most important historical composition, the large picture of *Satan calling up his Legions* (1797, Royal Academy), was so close an imitation of him that Fuseli took it amiss. Contemporary critics also brought up Fuseli's name in connection with it and declared it to be a mixture of Michelangelo and Goltzius, which shows an intelligent awareness of the true origins of the style.<sup>29</sup> Lawrence's taste is well revealed by the fact that the two most important sections of his collection of drawings were those by Michelangelo and Parmigianino, the two aspects, one might say, of Fuseli's art. Lawrence's art, taken as a whole, carried on the Reynolds tradition towards a more elegant, languid romanticism; and nothing could be more characteristic of the manner in which Fuseli's art was regarded by his colleagues than the fact that the two painters of elegance *par excellence*, Romney and Lawrence, thought so highly of it. Of Lawrence's well-known portrait of Mrs. Maguire, the Marchess of Abercorn's mistress, and her small son (Duke of Abercorn Collection), which was shown at the Academy in 1806, Fuseli said 'it exhibited the most exquisite ideas of pleasure without exciting any vicious feeling', while Northcote judged that the woman looked like a courtesan and the boy 'as if he had been bred among the vices of an impure house'. So Fuseli's idea of the erotic in a picture differed from that of more conventional, less elegant painters of exclusively heroic themes. Fuseli not only thought this picture by Lawrence better than all the Reynolds and Gainsboroughs put together but also that 'it was so refined that no one but a gentleman could have painted it'.<sup>30</sup> Such was the evolution, intelligible when seen against the background of Fuseli's complex views and of the changed times, of the once fiery follower of Rousseau, now an adorer of elegance. It is significant that there is a Fuseli drawing also portraying a mother and her son (Victoria and Albert Museum) very close in character to Lawrence's picture.

The consciously unrealistic reduction of classicism to contours without light and shadow as it appears (after 1793) in Flaxman's illustrations of antique authors and of Dante was, of course, an important parallel phenomenon to Fuseli's unrealistic tendency.<sup>31</sup> Flaxman's art, however, originating in a more conservative period and from a more conservative mentality than Fuseli's, stood for something quite new:



a simplification of Fuseli's early-romantic style, so alive and full of *élan*, towards the undramatic, schematic and academic. Moreover, but few Michelangelesque elements remained in him; and further, the manner in which Flaxman used Greek vases was more servile and monotonous than Fuseli's. But it is, in fact, enough to compare the Dante illustrations of the two artists. Flaxman's, the latest among his illustrations done in Rome, were already turning into a rather insipid neo-gothicism. Perhaps the main stylistic differences between Flaxman and Fuseli might be formulated thus: on the one hand Flaxman began in a more severe classicism than Fuseli, though neither then nor later did his portrait sculptures lack realism if he so wished; on the other hand he acquired his romantic flavour at a time when this stood for a more reactionary tendency than it had in the time of Fuseli.

Just as Flaxman's belief that art must become Christian was growing so, during his work on the *Divine Comedy* (1792-7) from the *Inferno* through the *Purgatorio* to the *Paradiso*, his style changed towards an ever more primitive simplification, and the illustrations for the *Paradiso* can be said to foreshadow the style of the German Nazarenes. It is no wonder that A. W. Schlegel, later to become one of their theorists, enthusiastically praised Flaxman's illustrations as early as 1799. It follows quite naturally that no English artist of his time was so decisively important as Flaxman in formulating a fashionable, conservative style which was easy to imitate and which would acquire a general European character. While in the mythological book illustrations of Girodet and in the mythological pictures of the young Ingres (c. 1802-5), which were strongly influenced by Flaxman as well as by Greek vases, some vitality is still apparent, though tempered by an archaising, sensuous preciousness, in the religious compositions of the Nazarenes, particularly from c. 1815 onwards, as the reaction in Germany grew, Flaxman's style was transformed often with the addition of detailed realism into something harder, even more schematic, wooden and lifeless.

Finally there was the superhuman and breath-taking art of Blake. He, of course, also simplified but his simplification was an intense one, far more bent upon expressiveness and usually having much more to do with mannerism than with classicism. So in spite of occasional contacts with Flaxman, he came nearer to Fuseli's idiom; in fact Fuseli was the only contemporary artist whom Blake, albeit the greater of the two, really admired. Intellectually, Blake learned much from Fuseli but, of course, only so far as his deeply anti-intellectual outlook permitted. Blake esteemed Fuseli so highly that, like, for example, Opie, Lawrence, Ottley and Wainwright, he put his draughtsmanship on the same level as Michelangelo's (Rossetti



MS.). In his unpublished *Publick Address* (1810) he mentioned as the greatest representatives of painting and poetry Fuseli and Michelangelo, Shakespeare and Milton. He wrote of Fuseli that he 'is a hundred years beyond the present generation'. They influenced each other, though, during the period in which they were in contact, Blake was more under Fuseli's influence than the other way round. Since so few concrete borrowings by Blake from Fuseli are known, it is worth drawing attention to the close association of Fuseli's illustration of the *Vision of Queen Katherine* (Henry VIII), engraved by Bartolozzi in 1788 (Plate 31b), and Blake's drawing of the same theme (1807, Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum<sup>32</sup>) (Plate 31a).

Partly following Mortimer, Blake began in a more moderate style than Fuseli, in a general way caught up with him about the middle of the 1790s and later was unique in becoming even more extreme, more irrational and more unrealistic. This change in Blake in the 1790s is closely associated with the altered political situation. Up till then he had been an active and extreme political radical but, living in an emotional world of his own and interpreting the American and the French Revolutions in his very personal and irrational way, he was able to reconcile his political ideas with a moderately expressionist art. This style lasted as long as the ideas and hopes of a political revolution were not frustrated in England. As a result, however, of his political disillusionment, Blake gave up all interest in politics and retired into an inner, imaginative world, but it was his early disposition to mysticism which made possible this retirement and the resulting extreme and arbitrarily abstract late style. In contrast to this late religious, visionary style of Blake, Fuseli's art, always secular in character, remained that of an intellectual, capable of keeping his art well under control. Some features in Fuseli's style, such as his tendency towards the expressive and the stylised (repetition of attitudes, anti-realistic proportions, undefined space, linear rhythm), are exaggerated still further in Blake. Others, which Fuseli would have regarded as too primitive (precise repetition of each half of the composition) were employed by Blake. Fuseli considered Blake's themes too mystical, his formal language too extreme. He said of him (in 1796) that 'fancy is the end and not a means in his design. He does not employ it to give novelty and decoration to regular conception but the whole of his aim is to produce singular shapes and odd combinations.'<sup>33</sup> It seems to have been chiefly this difference between them that led to their permanent estrangement soon after 1805.

It is curious but in some ways true that the Englishman Blake, growing out of the Gothic Revival and deeply inclined to mysticism (Boehme, Swedenborg), stood nearer to the more extreme trend of Storm and Stress (Hamann) as well as to the original, enthusiastic



and mystical theorists of German romanticism of the 1790s (Wackenroder, Tieck) than did the relatively more rationalist, half-German Fuseli. Historically speaking, Blake embraced the extreme line of English-German romanticism, not the moderate version adopted by Fuseli. It is not surprising that a parallel has been drawn<sup>34</sup> between Blake and the great mystic poet of late 18th-century German romanticism, Novalis, his junior by fifteen years. Blake's art, deriving from the Gothic Revival of the 18th century, which was related to the passionate early romanticism of that century, led on to a personal, unconventional, nearly visionary 19th-century romanticism. This, however, was not the mild conventional, archaising Catholic-conservative art of the Nazarenes, who were equally but in a more literal sense more gothicising in their tendency. The only German artist who can be mentioned as in any way parallel to Blake is the outstanding religious-expressionist painter Runge (a pupil of Abildgaard in Copenhagen), who was also close in mentality to the early German romantic theorists. Not only can his religious paintings such as *Christ on the Sea* (1807) be compared with Blake but even his works of a secular character with nudes. Compare, for example, his various versions of *Morning* (1803-8) (Plate 32b) with Blake's illustration to Milton's *L'Allegro*<sup>35</sup> (1817) (Plate 32a).

Needless to say the mannerist features in Blake, as far removed as possible from Parmigianino, are those of Michelangelo and of the Rosso-Bandinelli type. Fuseli, standing midway between Blake and the fashionable artists, combined both types of mannerist relationship but, in the period with which we are about to deal, with a tendency towards the fashionable, the erotic traits. Certainly Blake could never have become an Academician; yet, considered from the point of view of Fuseli and given the degree to which Fuseli's manner affected English painters, he was by no means out of touch with the rest of English art. Not only Fuseli but Romney, Flaxman and, to some extent, Lawrence also admired Blake's art. Even West, the most sober and classicist among English painters, and such conventional Academicians as Cosway and Humphry, still spoke well of his illustrations to Young's *Night Thoughts*. The average opinion, not quite wrong in itself, was summed up in the comment made in connection with these illustrations by Stothard, a companion of Blake's youth, namely, that he knew who had led Blake into extravagance, meaning of course Fuseli.<sup>36</sup> Even from the second half of the 1790s, when Blake's style acquired such an extremely personal idiom, something of his previous stylistic contacts can still be observed.

Fuseli's art was just possible as official art but was outside the average type which caught on quite generally, like Reynolds's—though even Reynolds's historical paintings were much less popular



than his portraits—or, somewhat later, Flaxman's. As regards style as well as popularity, Fuseli stood between the two extremes, Reynolds and Blake. West, through the art-historical book of his adviser, the Rev. R. Bromley, attacked Reynolds as well as Fuseli for being too visionary and fanciful. Reynolds, in his turn, probably rebuked Fuseli for the same reasons, and Fuseli himself certainly considered Blake in this light. The gamut of English painting ran from West through Reynolds and Fuseli to Blake. In some more conventional traits Fuseli does not seem far from certain historical compositions of Reynolds; in others, he is exactly the opposite in character, not far from Blake.<sup>37</sup> In consequence he was to a great extent acceptable to both. The style of all three was reflected in their public: Reynolds like Romney and Lawrence in portraiture, Flaxman in tomb monuments, covered the whole of high society; Blake, who was relatively little known even among intellectuals and then more as an engraver than as an artist in his own right,<sup>38</sup> touched almost none; Fuseli, who was greatly appreciated among intellectuals, was admired by a small wealthy esoteric circle. The intellectuals belonging to this circle tended to look down on the average art of their period as too conventional. Roscoe, who admired Fuseli, wrote to him in 1799: 'nor to say the truth, have I any very high opinion of the taste of the present day's'; and this was on the whole, I think, Fuseli's opinion too. Fuseli certainly suffered from what he felt to be lack of general appreciation, but I think this sentiment was due to vanity rather than to a real desire for contact with the general public.

Fuseli's general views on art,<sup>39</sup> as expressed in his *Academy Lectures* and *Aphorisms*, also stood between those of Reynolds and Blake, though on the whole inclined rather towards Reynolds. *Aphorisms* were particularly appreciated in Storm and Stress because they were considered the spontaneous self-expression of temperamental genius. In 1788 Fuseli translated a book by Lavater with the title, *Aphorisms on Man*, and announced in this that his own *Aphorisms on Art* would soon come out. They were, in fact, not published till after his death. Blake, who especially approved of those *Aphorisms*, which dwelt upon inspiration, heavily annotated Lavater's book, for which he also engraved the frontispiece after Fuseli, and shortly afterwards, in 1790, wrote under its influence his own aphorisms, *Proverbs of Hell*. Sometimes it was only the vehement, original manner in which Fuseli presented his opinions that sounded revolutionary, whereas the essence of them was not, particularly not when he was expressing them as the official lecturer of the Academy,<sup>40</sup> a position he greatly cherished. His views on art, at many points close to traditional classicist art theory, enlighten us if not about all, at least about some, important aspects of his art. His theories certainly bring home



to us the necessity of not overlooking the close relation between his mode of thought and his art and certain principles of classicism. For instance, though Shaftesbury contributed so much to the intellectual atmosphere around the young Fuseli, the latter was to tone down Shaftesbury's notion of art as creation to the more conventional idea of art as invention. Not only was the mannerist component of his art inextricably interwoven with classicism but, further, his whole structure of thought was too clear-cut, too disciplined to allow him to adopt a less classicising art theory, relying more on intuition. Indeed the difference of degree of irrationalism in Fuseli's and Blake's art and even more in their general outlook, particularly as regards the relation of art to religion, was such as to impel Blake to follow, especially in his late phase and on many important points, a very different art theory of a more visionary, fundamentally neo-Platonic character.<sup>41</sup>

In a sense Fuseli's ideas were more strictly classicist, more in favour of the antique,<sup>42</sup> closer to Winckelmann's in spite of all divergencies from, and gibes at him, than Reynolds's eclectic 17th-century world of ideas.<sup>43</sup> But, in another sense, Fuseli's attitude was less classicist than the official. In an attempt to justify his own art he adjusted the traditional theory at many points, sometimes even changing it out of recognition, to suit his own practice.<sup>44</sup> He stressed for instance, more than was customary—and here he was more in line with Blake—the role of expression, even at the expense of beauty, and the importance of genius in art. Yet on some points the late Reynolds himself, however suspicious of innovations—it was rather a sign of the times than a question of influence—approached, willy-nilly, the point of view that Fuseli was to adopt. This was apparent in the new worship of Michelangelo and the fact that in an anonymous review of Reynolds's last *Discourse* Fuseli indicated that the praise given to Michelangelo was not sufficiently unqualified showed only a difference in degree. In his last *Discourse* Reynolds also seems to allot a larger part than before to imagination. Equally Reynolds, cautious though he was regarding the role of genius, showed in the *11th Discourse* that he was slightly influenced in this by Young.

But Fuseli's most personal opinions, which were just as much at variance with official art theory as with Blake's, such, for instance, as his view that art had nothing to do with morality but was a product of luxury, could usually be found only in his anonymous reviews. Something similar occurred in his *10th Lecture*—at the age of eighty-four, he was probably less cautious when expressing an opinion in an Academy lecture—but in his anonymous reviews, particularly in 1793 (the date, following his disillusionment with the French Revolution, is important), he had already pronounced such



views very forcefully, even more so than in the Rousseau pamphlet of 1767, also published anonymously. In one of these reviews in the *Analytical Review* of 1793 Fuseli poked fun at West's theory, delivered in his Presidential Discourse to the Academy in 1792<sup>45</sup> on the moral purpose of art.

Finally it must not be forgotten—nor is it unconnected with his work as a painter—that he was the most learned art-historian of his time in England. He had a wide knowledge of the material and was extremely well read, particularly as regards the numerous Italian sources. He also kept up with the latest art-historical research abroad. He used, for example, the German-Italian Fiorillo's important and painstaking *Geschichte der Zeichnenden Künste*, published 1798–1808. His own unfinished *History of Art in the Schools of Italy* was written scientifically after the pattern of Lanzi and Fiorillo. It represented the first full account in English of the history of Italian painting,<sup>46</sup> much fuller and more systematic than those of his friend and patron, Roscoe and of Bromley. His views on the development of Italian art and on the various schools were inherent in 17th and 18th-century historiography. His contributions on individual artists in Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists*, where his anonymity was retained and his authorship can only be discovered by comparing the 1805 and the 1795 editions, were of a more historical and systematic nature and kept closer to the facts, as also did his *Schools of Italy*, than did his *Academy Lectures* where he indulged in loftier ideals and more pretentious wording. Nevertheless it is clear from his lectures that Fuseli—the art-historian was as strong in him as the painter—had more intense feelings than anyone else of his time for the greatest artists, not only for the great Italians but also for Rubens and Rembrandt, neither of whom, as he admits, was bound by established rules but had his own. All the same, when analysing famous works of art of the past, Fuseli generally had his own art in mind. By his method of distributing favour and blame he revealed and implicitly commended his own principles of invention, composition, design and colour. His estimate of smaller artists, when dissociated from his subjective, egocentric bias, appears frequently to have been based on Vasari and Lanzi.

Fuseli produced his most important paintings during the first three decades after his return to England. He called them poetical paintings<sup>47</sup> to distinguish them from the historical paintings of others which he considered more conventional and more realistic. But apart from pictures, his fantasy still found an outlet in innumerable drawings.<sup>48</sup> Only occasionally did he invent his subjects,<sup>49</sup> though it was not unusual for him to make certain changes in the literary themes of others. And even amidst the upheavals of the world around



him, he still preferred to draw on the same literary sources as before. In the '80s and '90s appeared numerous illustrations from Shakespeare, largely because the second half of the '80s was the time of Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, which could almost be called Fuseli's own idea and in which he took part. The '90s were the time of the Milton Gallery, which was entirely his own work and consisted of forty-seven pictures. The general public did not like the Milton Gallery but many intellectuals admired it and the critics treated it respectfully. Some of the pictures were bought by Fuseli's regular patrons, who also supported him financially during the years he was painting them. The largest buyer, who was also the largest contributor, was Coutts.

In the first decade of the 19th century, when his drawings increased slightly at the expense of his pictures, his choice fell, among others, upon Homer,<sup>50</sup> the *Nibelungenlied*, Wieland's epic *Oberon*, an early romantic imitation of chivalrous poetry, Cowper's poems. Shakespeare, of course, never ceased to be a favourite source, and the year 1805 marks the appearance of Chalmer's Shakespeare edition with thirty-seven illustrations,<sup>51</sup> engraved after Fuseli. His illustrations to the *Nibelungenlied*, the first in modern times, were suggested to him by Bodmer's rediscovery of the poem in 1755. Fuseli was one of the very few, even in Bodmer's circle, who was almost immediately to express appreciation of this epic, which had been practically unknown until then. Cornelius's well-known illustrations, on the other hand, were done under the influence of the translation of the *Nibelungenlied* into modern German in 1810, which made it known to a wider public. Fuseli's intense preoccupation with the *Nibelungenlied* was characteristic of his particular cultured type of early romantic mentality, always quick to spot affinities, while his manner of treating the poem is significant of his anti-gothic tendency.<sup>52</sup>

As earlier in Italy he now liked to portray grand, terrifying, uncanny themes, with an increasing emphasis upon the demonic and the satanic. However, from about 1790 onwards another tendency just as characteristic begins to appear. Though he never really gave up scenes of heroic type and though, particularly during the '90s, he was occupied with the sublime illustrations to Milton with their high moral tone, at the same time—and to understand Fuseli it is essential to understand these contradictions—the erotic element became increasingly evident. He suddenly began to draw on Shakespeare's comedies, particularly on *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, for numerous compositions in this vein. Besides these Fuseli now produced a quantity of drawings of a predominantly erotic character from contemporary life. This shift of interest towards the satanic, the perverse,



the erotic and associated with it the elegant was in part the result of an inherent proclivity in Fuseli's personal make-up, but was also essentially characteristic of the changed times which were largely responsible for bringing it more to the surface than it had been in Italy.<sup>53</sup>

It is quite impossible to reduce Fuseli's stylistic development in these decades to a common denominator. Though his style was based on that which he had formed in Italy, he now added to it interesting enrichments and variations and it displayed great variety within itself. We gain the impression of a greater flexibility; he was more liable to changing moods, was readier to accept thematic and, consequently, formal innovations. In the second half of the '90s and particularly in illustrating themes from Milton, the classicist element in whose work perhaps exerted some influence on him, Fuseli showed a predilection for quieter and more compact scenes, often reduced to a single large figure. While this manner was, of course, still remote from a realistic classicism, an approach to a tranquil monumentality is undeniable. Again in compositions of an erotic character, as in his illustrations to Shakespeare's comedies, he allowed himself an easier, lighter, richer idiom, not without a certain coquettish charm. However the wild impetuosity of his early Italian period had passed away.<sup>54</sup> In some of the innumerable drawings, and even more in the pictures, the composition, as well as the attitudes of individual figures, tends to repeat rather monotonously certain fixed formulae. Unrealistic artists necessarily schematise in their compositions more than those whose art is continually fed and rejuvenated by studies after nature.<sup>55</sup> Fuseli's anti-realism is apt to lend too great a facility, a certain conventionality, to his contours: for instance, in his more conventional drawings, the hero, who frequently continues to have some distant relation to the Monte Cavallo statues, has one arm raised vertically (e.g. Macbeth to whom the witches appear or Hamlet when he sees the ghost) or stretched out horizontally (e.g. the pose of the archers, Tell or Winckelried).<sup>56</sup>

On the other hand greater outward freedom obtains from the original models, whether mannerist painting or antique sculpture. We need only compare his picture of *Theseus bidding farewell to Ariadne* (1787, Zürich, Kunsthaus<sup>57</sup>) with a drawing of a similar theme from the Italian period, which is a free copy of the *Perseus and Andromeda* relief in the Capitoline Museum. The composition of the painting undoubtedly developed out of the drawing made some ten years earlier; yet, without a knowledge of it, it would scarcely have been supposed that the antique relief had given the original suggestion for the picture since the two figures now form a close block-like group.



As regards colour, many of Fuseli's pictures seem superficial and schematic.<sup>58</sup> Only very few offer a complete solution to the problem of colour and the prevailing impression is that of the avoidance of colour, sometimes by using grey-brown only, sometimes only cold and chalky tones.<sup>59</sup> While the principal heroic figures are frequently painted smoothly and conventionally, some secondary figures and isolated passages are very interesting and lively from a pictorial point of view, and in his late phase become extremely loose.<sup>60</sup> Generally speaking, he gives the impression of having been rather casual about colour, a failing of which he himself was well aware. And in the drawings, in which he increasingly used pencil and chalk rather than pen and wash, the violent chiaroscuro, so frequent in the past, was now subdued.

Apart from his usual narrative-literary compositions of this period, soon after his return from Italy Fuseli was increasingly occupied with renderings of actual nightmares, bad dreams and effects of fear in scenes entirely of his own invention<sup>61</sup>—perhaps the first artist to do so consciously. As an example of a very original composition of this kind, I reproduce a drawing which might be called *Fear* (c. 1780–2, Zürich, Kunsthau) (Plate 17) and which represents three girls with terrified expressions squatting on the ground. While the contours of the figures are merely sketched in to suggest blocks, the faces are worked out in such a way as to heighten the weird character of the whole. It seems improbable that there is any particular literary theme behind this composition, which points towards 20th-century expressionism, especially Munch's lithographs. Fuseli's best-known picture of about the same time, *The Nightmare* (Frankfurt-am-Main, Goethe Museum) (Plate 34), which caused a great sensation at the Royal Academy exhibition of 1783 and made his fame all over Europe through engravings, is just as original and belongs to the same world of feeling as the drawing. It is as if Fuseli had drawn back a curtain further than usual and had given us, and in a large picture at that, some insight into the psychological background of his haunted art, a more personal explanation of it, free for once from the literary inventions of others.

Naturally for the full understanding of this picture it would be necessary to go more thoroughly into Fuseli's psychological make-up and his individual brand of imagination.<sup>62</sup> But if we search for the probable art-historical source of inspiration and associations for the uncanny incubus character of the monsters which have appeared to the dreaming woman and confine ourselves to Fuseli's favourite art, Italian mannerism, as far as he knew it, one of the first works which comes to mind is Giulio Romano's fresco of *Hecuba's Dream* in the Castello in Mantua (Plate 36a). In this painting the half-nude



Hecuba, with one knee raised, is lying on a couch, at the head of which projects a weird horse's head; a youth appears to her holding the torch which would reduce Troy to ashes. Further we may recall Marcantonio's engraving, the so-called *Dream of Raphael*, where two nude women asleep are approached by fantastic Bosch-like monsters<sup>63</sup> (Plate 35b). It is also not too far-fetched to cite as a possible source Agostino Veneziano's engraving after Giulio Romano, *Il Stregozzo* (Plate 35a), which Fuseli equally owned and of which he wrote very characteristically, in one of his *Aphorisms*, that it was 'an association of ideas big with the very elements of dreams'<sup>64</sup>; or Tibaldi's *grisaille* in the Castel S. Angelo, with two monkeys squatting in the foreground<sup>65</sup> (Plate 36b). The ancestry of Fuseli's 'mad' horse in the *Nightmare*, which is already to be found in his free copy of the *Perseus and Andromeda* relief, can be traced to Leonardo's ferocious *Battle of Anghiari* as well as to its mannerist and early baroque derivations.

A very interesting parallel exists between Fuseli's composition and Goya's famous title-page of the *Caprichos*, *The Dream of Reason produces Monsters*, of fifteen years later<sup>66</sup>; the subject is so unusual and so exactly characteristic of these two artists that it suggests the possibility that Goya knew this work of Fuseli through an engraving. But there is, I think, a difference of intention in the two works. That of Goya, under the influence of Addison and of Enlightenment, was not initially directed against reason but implied that the monsters of superstition, prejudice and so on could be defeated. Fuseli, however, loved his monsters. According to Ganz, the *Nightmare* picture, like the *Three Witches* or *Lady Macbeth*, has a political and social implication.<sup>67</sup> I agree, of course, as to the tension in the atmosphere of the 1780s, but I do not think that Fuseli was sufficiently politically-minded to have consciously wished to convey in this picture (any more than in the *Three Witches* or in *Lady Macbeth*) a political or social warning—certainly far less so than Goya in the *Caprichos*. The motif of dreams, mostly bad ones, and nightmares, usually haunting nude women, was to continue to absorb Fuseli, but he generally brought it within the framework of mythological stories.

Another almost entirely unknown work of Fuseli, possibly from the same period, in which a prostrate female figure occurs similar to that in the *Nightmare*, bears a certain message, perhaps echoing ideas of Milton. It is an unfinished proof—the engraving is probably by Fuseli himself but, characteristically he never used it—showing *Religious Fanaticism, attended by Folly, trampling upon Truth, chained to the Ground* (Plate 39b). In fact religious liberty was much nearer to Fuseli's heart than political. The striking composition, though of



course more classicist than any Goya, has something of the vibrating motion of the *Caprichos*.

Even if at this period the relation of Fuseli's historical compositions to motifs in mannerism was not literally so close as it used to be, the general connection remains obvious enough. With more diversified themes, and a more flexible style, his relation to mannerism, too, was of a more varied kind. Fuseli was variously interested, according to the nature of his themes, in dramatic or unusual poses, in serene monumentality or in light airy motifs. All this was reflected in his preoccupation with, or sometimes in an unconscious parallel with, very diverse mannerist trends. Whereas in Italy Fuseli was mainly attracted by mannerist-like motifs in Michelangelo and by mannerists more or less close to Michelangelo, he now formed points of contact with almost the whole range of mannerism, including the later international mannerism of the late 16th century. Speaking in terms of Italian art it might be said, if only in a general and simplified way, that Fuseli in his Roman period was more Michelangelesque, and on his return to England, with the increasing erotic tendency of his works, more Parmigianinesque.

The spell cast by Michelangelo on Fuseli of course never ceased and Schiavonetti's engraving from the 1790s after the Battle cartoon in Holkham Hall even opened up a new source of motifs for him. In particular the simple monumentality of the big vertical figure fastening up his garments greatly fascinated Fuseli, as shown in his drawings. His thoughts now went back to Michelangelo's Ancestors,<sup>68</sup> especially in compositions of a single grandiose seated figure in his Milton illustrations. One of his outstanding paintings, *Solitude in Twilight* (c. 1795-1800, Zürich, Private Collection) (Plate 44), an illustration to Milton's *Lycidas*, represents a young shepherd slumped down, half asleep, with long outstretched legs, a wide expanse of sky above him. The pose is a muted composite version of motifs from the Sistine chapel, a combination, as it were, of the Ancestors, Asa and Naason, the seated figure in the lunette to the right. A drawing by Fuseli for another picture for the Milton Gallery, *Silence* (c. 1800, Zürich, Kunsthhaus<sup>69</sup>), showing a crouching woman full face, her head bent low upon her arms, contains features from Asa and Aminadab, the man seated in the lunette to the left. Here again is one of Fuseli's most monumental, compact and, in spite of the borrowings, most original figures.<sup>70</sup> It is near to Flaxman at his best but instilled with life and more forceful. Its radiations towards later continental art, not only towards the Nazarenes but also towards genuine classicism, are obvious.<sup>71</sup> Compositions like *Solitude* and *Silence*, Milton illustrations though they are, are also personifications of sentiments—they must be considered together with the drawing,



*Fear*, for instance—and as such entirely novel and art-historically very important.

One further example should be mentioned, that of the borrowing of a dramatic, tense pose from Michelangelo. In Fuseli's Italian work there occurred many similarities with individual motifs from Michelangelo's various versions of the *Resurrection of Christ* and these continued after his return from Italy. Some of them, from the later period, may have been actual borrowings and one case seems to me almost demonstrable: a drawing in which two men exert themselves to raise the lid of a sarcophagus, from which the spirit of a woman is ascending to heaven, while two others watch with gestures of surprise (c. 1820, Zürich, Kunsthhaus).<sup>72</sup> It is a kind of secular Resurrection which, contrary to Fuseli's usual practice, appears, even in its general pattern of diverging diagonals, to be almost a concentrated extract from Michelangelo. And individual motifs seem to be related to similar motifs in Michelangelo's *Resurrection*. For instance, the man kneeling in the foreground, conceived in an almost unbroken diagonal, is connected with the kneeling and the large upright man, both seen from the back, on the right side of the Windsor drawing, or with the semi-prostrate man at the left of the British Museum drawing, which belonged to Lawrence and which Fuseli certainly knew. The very motif of the violent effort to lift the lid of the sarcophagus, which also occurs elsewhere in Fuseli's drawings, is perhaps a reminiscence not only of Michelangelo but also of Lodovico Carracci's slightly Michelangelesque altar-piece *The Apostles at the Tomb of the Virgin* in Corpus Domini at Bologna.<sup>73</sup>

Coupled with the impact of Michelangelo, that of Tibaldi now became particularly effective. Fuseli frequently spoke of him with deep respect—precisely, I think, because he was only partly dependent on Michelangelo—as the most important follower of the master and 'the artist who appears to have penetrated deepest to Michelangelo's mind'.<sup>74</sup> In his review of Roscoe's *Lorenzo de' Medici* Fuseli called Tibaldi the greatest imitator of Michelangelo and placed him on a level with Virgil, the greatest imitator of Homer. And in Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists* he devoted an unusually long and enthusiastic eulogy to Tibaldi, entirely rewriting and amplifying the Tibaldi article of the previous edition. He named him, among other things, 'the greatest designer of the Bolognese and Lombard schools', who 'often connected energy of attitude and grandeur of line with sublimity of conception and dignity of motive'. Yet, since he obviously borrowed from Tibaldi, Fuseli tried on the whole to distribute equal praise and blame upon him.<sup>75</sup> On his way back from Italy Fuseli was apparently much impressed by Tibaldi's frescoes from the *Odyssey* in the Palazzo Poggi at Bologna. In the *Dictionary of Artists* Fuseli



wrote of these frescoes that they were 'in a kind of monumental style, which it would be improper to judge by the established rules of the established history'. This is an important passage, since Fuseli, the classicist art-theorist, here explicitly exempts a mannerist 'artist-genius' from the rules. It calls to mind the revolutionary part played in literary criticism since Addison by the admission that a genius like Shakespeare could not be submitted to rules, and Bodmer's theory that rules should not be deduced from the intellect but from the works of the great poets themselves.<sup>76</sup>

Tibaldi was perhaps the only artist who about the mid-century kept much of the intensity and originality of early mannerism and at the same time made the style more flexible and more suited to the telling of lively stories, heroic as well as erotic. In his works Fuseli found interesting monumental figures and forceful and imaginative attitudes, movements and gestures, which helped to characterise or determine the action. From the point of view of vehement direct participation in the action, an idea which interested Fuseli, the attitude and gesture of the downward-sweeping angel and of the figures accompanying him in Tibaldi's fresco of the *Conception of the Baptist* in S. Giacomo, Bologna, go even beyond those of the Christ and the accompanying angels sweeping down in Michelangelo's *Conversion of St. Paul* in the Cappella Paolina, from which they derive stylistically.<sup>77</sup>

Mention may here be made of a few direct, if well assimilated, borrowings from Tibaldi by Fuseli, some of them again in his most important works. He was so taken with the unconventional attitude of Odysseus lying on a raft, face downwards with one foot raised, in Tibaldi's *Odysseus and Ino* in the Palazzo Poggi, that he used it quite frequently, for instance, in one of the bathers in his drawing the *Fall of Icarus* (c. 1795, Zürich, Kunsthau<sup>78</sup>) or in another, containing figure studies, where this particular figure is the centre of the composition (c. 1810, Zürich, Kunsthau<sup>79</sup>). Fuseli undoubtedly admired the monumental, seductive, super-Parmigianinesque, Salvati-esque figure of Tibaldi's Ino, which so closely resembles his own female types. Ino, whose dress melts into her body, is, within Tibaldi's *œuvre*, the female counterpart of the figure of Alexander the Great in the Castel S. Angelo, which Fuseli also knew, whose armour fuses with his body in a similar manner. These female types of Tibaldi, those in Bologna as well as those in Rome, almost appear to be more monumental realisations of Fuseli's own *Perseus and Andromeda*, done in Italy from the relief of the Capitoline Museum. Incidentally Fuseli was able to rediscover in Tibaldi's fresco of the *Shipwreck of Odysseus*, also in the Palazzo Poggi, one of his favourite motifs, the man lying flat on the ground facing inwards. In Fuseli's



picture, *Achilles snatching at the shade of Patroclus* (c. 1805, Zürich, Private Collection<sup>80</sup>), for Cowper's translation of Homer, the figure of Achilles repeats and further develops the grandiosity of the curved pose of Tibaldi's *Polyphemus when blinded by Odysseus*. Since Tibaldi himself, however original, is unthinkable without Michelangelo, elements from the two artists are frequently fused in Fuseli: in this case it is Michelangelo's Adam from his Creation scene which is to be found in Tibaldi as well as in Fuseli. When writing in Pilkington's *Dictionary of Artists* of this figure by Tibaldi, Fuseli noted this particular borrowing from Michelangelo. In a Fuseli drawing of 1806, portraying *Althaea praying for the death of Meleager* (London, Oppé Collection), the body of Meleager suggests a knowledge of both Tibaldi's Polyphemus and Raphael's Heliodorus influenced by Michelangelo.

Another of Fuseli's pictures for the translation of Homer, one of his most famous and impressive works, *Odysseus escaping from Polyphemus* (c. 1805, Zürich, Ulrich Collection<sup>81</sup>), shows both in the composition and in the gestures an association with Tibaldi's rendering of the scene. In his *11th Lecture*, as in the *Dictionary of Artists*, Fuseli described Tibaldi's Polyphemus at length, characterising it as 'a self-invented being, a form than which Michelangelo himself never conceived one of more savage energy, provoked by sufferings and revenge, with expression, attitude and limbs, more in unison'. This painting is a typical example of Fuseli's preoccupation at that time with the problem of building up the composition, which is inexplicably restrained in spite of the terrifying theme, by means of a single towering seated figure.<sup>82</sup> Fuseli's composition is more summary than Tibaldi's and the pose of Polyphemus, an astonishingly monumental and block-like figure, is no longer violent.<sup>83</sup> It seems to me certain that Fuseli's source here is not Tibaldi's motif, but rather the quiet, watchful, groping, massive giant (Plate 29b) from the other major Odysseus cycle of mannerist painting, namely, Primaticcio's frescoes in the Galerie d'Ulysse at Fontainebleau which can have been known to him only through engravings. Furthermore, Fuseli's Polyphemus also reflects the brooding, motionless attitude of one of Michelangelo's Ancestors in the Sistine spandrels, Jesse,<sup>84</sup> posed crouching, seen full face combined with that of the Prophet Jeremiah. Fuseli's rendering of the sheep with the Greeks beneath them is also quite close to this composition of Primaticcio. Fuseli undoubtedly had a partiality for Primaticcio's cycle. It was seldom that the cautious and suspicious Fuseli gave himself away to such an extent as he did in describing, in his *3rd Lecture*, the Galerie d'Ulysse as 'a mine of classic and picturesque materials: they are destroyed, and we may estimate their loss, even through the disguise of the . . . etchings of



Theodore van Thulden'. In fact these frescoes of Primaticcio, though more crowded than Fuseli's works, often show close similarity with Fuseli's style: concentration on action, the diagonal *élan* of the composition, the dynamic movements, the layer-like arrangement, a not unclassicist formal language.<sup>85</sup>

Fuseli also frequently recalled, in his paintings and drawings, Tibaldi's Slaves from the Palazzo Poggi, those bold, turbulent elaborations of the movements of the Sistine Slaves. But since their poses as those of isolated figures were too formalistic for him, he used them mainly as participants in actual scenes. In late mannerism which was even more formalistic than Tibaldi, his Slaves are generally used in a way little connected with the action. Yet it occasionally happened that Tibaldi's Slaves acquired a real content, just as they did in Fuseli, in dramatic compositions in that style, sometimes confined to a single figure: e.g. in the falling Icarus of Cornelis van Haarlem (engraving by Goltzius) (Plate 30). The artist has caught a much more tense moment in the fall through the air of this enormous solitary figure than did Giulio Romano with his falling giants in the Sala dei Giganti. No wonder its conception (and even its type) remind us at once of Fuseli, who liked to represent figures in the air falling to their death.

Stimulated by contemporary romantic literature, Fuseli even accentuated the intensity of such a moment of terror in his painting, illustrating a scene from Wieland's *Oberon*, in which Amanda-Rezia while embracing Hüon throws herself from the ship (c. 1795-1800, Wadenswil, Blattmann-Ziegler Collection). Fuseli's favourite figure in Tibaldi's repertoire was, I think, the Slave with crossed legs<sup>86</sup> (Plate 33b); the arm curled round the head is generally adapted by Fuseli as a gesture of despair. Such a gesture, rationalising Tibaldi, had already appeared in Lodovico Carracci's fresco, *The Death of Enceladus*, in the Palazzo Sampieri at Bologna. Fuseli admired the late mannerist Lodovico and took every occasion to praise him in his writings. When in Bologna at the same time as the Tibaldi he saw Lodovico's frescoes from the *Life of St. Benedict* in S. Michele in Bosco, he was particularly enthusiastic and characteristically placed them above Annibale Carracci's Galleria Farnese. They are somewhat unconventional stories, executed, as Fuseli observed, under Tibaldi's influence, but they modify his violent mannerism in the direction of a still violent classicism, in which there is less of early baroque than in Annibale. Notice, for instance, in one of these frescoes the dominating 'Fuseli-like' figure of the devil, which Fuseli himself praised in his lectures, lying on a block of stone, which he prevents the builders from moving.<sup>87</sup>

Late international mannerism of the end of the 16th century



developed in great part from the intensification of certain features in early mannerism, particularly the tendency towards the erotic and the violent and towards a certain schematism in the formal build-up, such as was to be found in embryo in such artists as Rosso and Parmigianino and was transmitted to later artists mainly through Salviati and Tibaldi. Even when he was in Italy Fuseli's art already reflected suggestions from precisely those artists of early mannerism from which late mannerism developed, and it is possible to follow through Fuseli's own development a line roughly parallel with the evolution of 16th-century mannerism itself. As an art-historian, too, Fuseli showed a fairly clear conception of late mannerism when he remarked with some simplification, in his *2nd* and in his *11th Lectures*, that Tibaldi's and Ghisi's engravings carried Michelangelo's style to northern artists such as Goltzius and Spranger. In this phase, however, Fuseli's relation to late mannerism was not so consciously close, as it had been in Italy to early mannerism. Even if he now acquainted himself as far as he could with late mannerism, he knew it far less well than the older style which he had experienced and studied in Italy.

The treasure-house of forms of late mannerism, particularly the Dutch (Goltzius) and the Rudolphine artists (Spranger), was derived not so much from Tibaldi as from Rosso's various cycles, engraved by Caraglio, many of which Fuseli knew. I refer to the *Gods*, the *Loves of the Gods*, done in collaboration with Vaga, and the *Deeds of Hercules*. Fuseli owned many engravings by Caraglio as well as Marco Dente's print after Bandinelli's *Massacre of the Innocents*, one of the main sources of violent poses for Dutch mannerism.<sup>88</sup> In Fuseli's drawing of *Achilles sacrificing his Hair at the Funeral Pyre of Patroclus* (c. 1795–1800, Zürich, Kunsthaus) (Plate 38a) the principal figure, now become the centre of a dramatic scene from the *Iliad*, is a version of Rosso's *Mars* (Plate 38b), from his series of *Gods*, with the body more sinuous, the step more lithe. It was with a similar tendency towards the agitated and the violent that Goltzius, whose work Fuseli knew well, transposed Rosso, for instance in his own *Mars* engraved by Matham<sup>89</sup> (Plate 39a); but Fuseli's unrealistic simplification of the figure goes not only beyond Rosso but even beyond Goltzius. In Fuseli the scene is built up in layers from the violently protruding foreground soldier-spectators—half-length figures deriving from mannerism, drawn up in dramatic parallels—by way of the gigantic figure of Achilles which forms a layer in itself, and leading finally to the funeral pyre of Patroclus which recedes a further stage. With its monumentalisation of the different layers, with its striking combination of tectonic and rhythmic features, this is one of Fuseli's most powerful and original compositions. Compared



with it Goltzius' transposition of Rosso has resulted in a very schematic scene.

The many-figured scenes of late mannerism are more schematic, more playfully zigzagging than Fuseli's compositions of an heroic nature. Nothing could be further from Fuseli than the device frequent in late mannerism where it was carried to greater extremes than in early mannerism by which the principal subject and action, placed in miniature somewhere in the background, are lost behind a show of formalised gestures and attitudes. It was only to certain rather concentrated compositions of late mannerism that Fuseli sometimes came near, particularly in scenes of an heroic character and even then in parts only. I deliberately reproduce a fairly obvious case of formal similarities which characteristically only affect a single group, namely, one half of a picture by Uytewael of *Joseph and his Brethren* (Utrecht Museum), where Joseph is seated with his retainers standing round him (Plate 41a). The left half, where the brethren are asking for Joseph's clemency, is quite unlike Fuseli, in the uniformly repetitive, almost ornamental overall pattern; but between the more solid right half and a painting by Fuseli for Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery *Hotspur's and Glendower's Conspiracy* (Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery) (Plate 41b) a certain resemblance is undeniable in the compositional arrangement and in individual attitudes and even types. Yet, in spite of a superficial forcefulness, the movements and even the types in the northern mannerist painting are more effeminate and more precious, compared with the deliberately heroic vigour and the more impetuous, bolder lines of Fuseli.

Fuseli, of course, often schematised too, not only in his figures but at this period particularly in the compositional patterns. Good examples of his various types of oft-repeated figure-schemes are his numerous illustrations for Chalmer's Shakespeare edition (1805), where he was obliged to adopt a narrow high compositional shape with space for very few figures.<sup>90</sup> Perhaps the most impressive scheme is that in which one large stylised, simplified figure, often in profile or in lost profile, is placed in a foreground corner and from it a sharp diagonal leads, within Fuseli's customary undefined space, to other figures similar but smaller in the opposite rear corner. In these Shakespeare illustrations Fuseli has again used Rosso's *Mars*, this time as the Ghost in *Hamlet* and likewise dominating the scene. The Mars has, of course, a distant affinity with Fuseli's favourite Monte Cavallo *Horse Tamer* and both of them are frequently met here in combination. But in the *Hamlet* the rest of the composition is taken up by a simple diagonal leading straight back to Hamlet, then to Horatio and finally in steep perspective to the columns. This construction is more schematic, simpler and less original than the



drawing in which Fuseli used the same Rosso figure for his Achilles. Even so it is effective and in its simple monumentality more tectonic and forceful than the compositions of late mannerism, as indeed are most of Fuseli's other illustrations in this volume. It is as if the motif, sometimes occurring in late mannerism, of the violent contrast between a protruding foreground figure, placed diagonally, and a small background figure far in the distance, had been reduced almost to a classicist essence.

In some of these Shakespeare illustrations Fuseli has invented a figure scheme which has a certain resemblance to Salviati's in his similarly-shaped, monumental frescoes of the *Life of Mary* in S. Marcello al Corso in Rome. Compare, for instance, Fuseli's illustration of *Love's Labour Lost* (the King and Biron watching Longaville reading a love letter) with Salviati's *Birth of the Virgin*. But the resemblance is merely formal. If Salviati's frescoes, in which the big foreground figures take no part in the action, do not possess the strong classicist element nor the simplification of Fuseli's patterns, figures and attitudes, yet they have these elements to a greater extent than late mannerism; on the other hand, these particular works of Salviati, the compositional scheme of which falls between Fuseli and late mannerism, already contain in germ those trembling contours which were to be spun out into the schematic ornamentality of the late 16th century style.

Fuseli's degree of proximity at this phase, in spirit as well as in concrete features, to late mannerism can only be understood in connection with its predilection for erotic subjects. For this subtle, precious style was largely a reactionary court art, more so than in the case of early mannerism. And from the 1790s onwards Fuseli's style, with its decided leaning towards the erotic, in which it was greatly influenced by the new hedonistic 'non-political' times, also bore some marks of being reactionary and related to earlier court art. In Italy he had already drawn much upon those artists of early mannerism, from which late mannerism evolved, such as Parmigianino, with his erotic overtones, Rosso and Bandinelli, with their erotic undertones. Among the older artists of similar tendency it was particularly Primaticcio, Rosso's successor as court painter at Fontainebleau, who now appealed to Fuseli.<sup>91</sup> Primaticcio's moderate mannerism, composed from Giulio Romano, Parmigianino and Rosso, and sometimes even coming near to classicism, produced many qualities of a voluptuous, refined courtly art.

When Fuseli used motifs from Michelangelo it is possible also to sense in him a sympathy for Primaticcio's subtle erotic, restrained but expressive, formal language. Compare, for instance, the languid tranquil figure of *Solitude*, described earlier, with Primaticcio's figure



of Apollo in the Galerie d'Ulysse. Along with other Italians, Primaticcio had his share in creating the luscious formal language of late mannerism. It is not surprising that, in a mythological composition like Fuseli's drawing of the *Fall of Icarus with women bathing* (c. 1795, Zürich, Kunsthau) and even more so in his various studies of sensual female nudes, associated with this composition,<sup>92</sup> a relation to Primaticcio's (or Tibaldi's) nudes can be felt, as well as to those of Goltzius.<sup>93</sup> Another characteristic transposition occurs in Fuseli's picture of a *Nude Woman listening to a Girl who plays upon a Spinnet* (c. 1800, Chicago, R. Ganz Collection) (Plate 42) in which Titian's Renaissance Venus from the *Venus and the Organ Player* (Plate 43) has been changed into a voluptuous, slender ideal beauty, long-legged and high-bosomed—a conception of beauty very near to that of late mannerism.

Within this style it was to Spranger, the court artist *par excellence* of late mannerism, and to Goltzius, both of whose works he knew well, that Fuseli was the most closely related. In his *7th Lecture* Fuseli wrote: 'Even the extravagant forms, and if you will, caricatures of Goltzius seduced by Spranger are preferable to those of Albert Dürer or Caravaggio . . . for though eccentric and extreme, they are eccentricities and extremes of the great style.' This sentence, coupled with the lengthy discussion of the two artists in *Aphorism* No. 151, is high praise for Fuseli, the more so since the strictures put on Goltzius and Spranger for 'distorting of Michelangelo' seem to have been a commonplace in art-historical literature at the time.<sup>94</sup> In Fuseli's lovers, as for instance in the picture of *Theseus and Ariadne* (1787, Zürich, Kunsthau),<sup>95</sup> we quickly sense a certain derivation from the well-known nude couples of Spranger<sup>96</sup>: the contrast between thoroughly virile men and their counterparts, very voluptuous women, is accentuated even more in Fuseli, just as from the formal point of view Fuseli's attitudes are less sinuous, less affected. A direct connection with late mannerism is quite clear in a drawing of a *Nightmare*, showing two nude women lying on a bed (1810, Zürich, Kunsthau) (Plate 45b), in which the artist has clearly drawn for poses as well as for formal idiom, upon Goltzius' famous, heavily erotic *Venus and Mars* engraving which Fuseli owned (Plate 45a).

Sometimes in Fuseli we are even reminded of the precious female type of Bellange, for instance, in a drawing of the half-length figures of two girls (1816, Zürich, Kunsthau) (Plate 40a). This, too, is more than an evident parallel coming from kindred attitudes of mind: astonishing as it may seem, Fuseli really knew Bellange. But even more astonishing than his knowledge of him, in particular of the etching of the *Three Marys* which he mentions (Plate 40b), was his abuse of him in the fragmentary poem, *Dunciad of Painting*. Here he flies into



a passion against the artificiality of precious fashions as he had seen them portrayed by the Lorraine mannerist.<sup>97</sup>

It is perhaps in his gay representations dating from the 1790s of mildly erotic fairylands, in particular the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, that Fuseli's works can be compared, in a strictly art-historical sense, with the erotic scenes of late mannerism and their airy, highly evolved compositional schemes, in which numerous diagonals thread playfully in and out of an unreal space, creating layers which are connected ornamentally and not logically. The best known but the least elaborate among these compositions is Fuseli's picture of Bottom being kissed by Titania, surrounded by fairies and wearing the ass's head (1793-4, Zürich, Kunsthaus<sup>98</sup>). The large central group is still rather compact and it is only among the fairies, of the most varying sizes and certainly more fanciful than anything produced by late mannerism, who stand, fly and dance in rows on the perimeter, that the composition tends to dissolve, as it were, in air.

The picture, with its gay, lively theme, is so interesting and revealing as an example of Fuseli's methods that a short analysis of the origins of its individual motifs is perhaps not out of place. Titania nestling up to Bottom is surely an erotic-mannerist transposition of Correggio's famous St. Catherine fondling the Christ Child in the *Madonna with St. Jerome*: but it is a transposition which, though starting as a Parmigianinesque version of the Libyan Sibyl of the Sistine ceiling, does not end in the usual schematic half-nudes of late mannerism but becomes a typical, provocative Fuseli figure.<sup>99</sup> Even more original are the two female attendants standing on the left, a combination of court ladies and courtesans. Here, in the same way as in some other of Fuseli's Shakespearean illustrations of an erotic-comic character, such as the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, some of the women wear small fantastic caps at a rakish angle, far back or far forward on their heads. Perverted rococo fashions are made to combine with inspirations from northern mannerists (compare, for instance, the obliquely and coquettishly placed hat of Joseph in the picture by Uytewael mentioned earlier). The seated Bottom is a droll counterpart of the seated Polyphemus: here the source is not Jesse, but another of the Ancestors, Aminadab, also seated frontally who has been transformed, comically clasping his knees in his arms. And the small grotesque figure dancing in the lower left corner shows one of Callot's dancers as a winged insect. This strange figure in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* exerted so great a fascination that Fuseli's 19th-century imitator, von Holst, later made a separate etching of it. It also seems to me probable that Goethe, who knew an engraving after Fuseli's composition, used this figure in the second part of *Faust* in the presentation of Oberon and Titania's



Golden Wedding.<sup>100</sup> Callot had attracted Fuseli in his youth by his grotesque qualities<sup>101</sup> and he now served him as a means of stressing the fantastic element in his art.<sup>102</sup>

While in this composition only a very distant affinity with the pattern of late mannerism can be felt, in other more elaborate illustrations of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Fuseli came rather closer to the ornamental rhythm of that style<sup>103</sup>, for instance in the picture for the Boydell Gallery (now in the Tate Gallery), representing the same scene,<sup>104</sup> and even more so in that of *Oberon awakening Titania* (Winterthur Museum) where the fairies surrounding Titania, greatly increased in number, all partake in an undulating, playful, graceful rhythm with Bottom more conspicuous than before. This pattern reached a climax in a drawing from another fairyland, Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, which apparently portrays the 'senseless' dream of Guyon (Albertina<sup>105</sup>) (Plate 46). The original starting-point of this drawing within Fuseli's *œuvre* was the figure of *Solitude* for Milton's *Lycidas*, (Plate 44) now become the dreamer, and the *Nightmare*, the dream having now lost its frightening character but retained some of its grotesque features.

These spirited many-figured compositions, astonishingly rich in the invention of various kinds of fairies and gnomes, half classical and half fantastic<sup>106</sup> show a complex series of swirls on the ground and in the air, darting in all directions, bewildering and graceful at the same time. But it is a rhythm only occasionally ornamental and very much Fuseli's own, and the principal action always remains clear in contrast to the 16th-century style. Nor is there, as in late mannerism, any violently unreal movement in and out of space, though the space remains, as always in Fuseli, vague and undefined. Another portrayal of a dream, *The Appearance of the Fairy Queen to the dreaming Arthur* (1769, Oberhofen, Private Collection<sup>107</sup>), from the late-mannerist Spenser imitating Ariosto, evoked from Fuseli the first emergence of a fantastic whirl of figures, comparable to the style of late mannerism. And it is equally significant that, in this early illustration of the *Faerie Queene*, Fuseli should have been inspired<sup>108</sup> by Caraglio's engraving after Rosso's *Venus and Cupid*, one of the sources of late mannerism. In the early Fuseli drawing the spiralling is much tamer, more compact than in the wild later, Albertina drawing, the neat rhythm of the three flying goddesses in the *Carrying of the Body of Sarpedon* of 1778 (Zürich, Kunsthaus) lying midway between these two conceptions.<sup>109</sup> Even if Fuseli's remote art-historical roots stand out clearly—whether in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, in the northern mannerists or in Tintoretto—a glance at his dream-worlds, so different from anything that had existed in art before him, is sufficient to make us realise that they are among his most original and most imaginative compositions.



## Notes to Chapter IV

- 1 The few illustrations which Fuseli did for the *Botanic Garden* (1789–91) of Erasmus Darwin, the progressively-minded scholar of natural science and poet, resulted from contact with this circle. On the mental atmosphere of this poem, which so well expresses the optimism of this circle at the beginning of the French Revolution, see F. D. Klingender, *Art and the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1947).
- 2 In 1792 Johnson, Mary Wollstonecraft and Fuseli planned a journey to France, with whose revolutionary events they still sympathised. However, the well-known break between Fuseli and Mary (brought about by Fuseli's less highbrow wife, previously a model) intervened, so that the joint expedition did not materialise. Mary went alone but, since she had Girondin sympathies, she soon changed her opinion about the Revolution when she got there, on finding it going the way of the Jacobins.  
On the political, philosophical and literary changes in the poets of the Lake school, see Cestre, *op. cit.* German intellectuals who were partisans of Storm and Stress (and most of those of Enlightenment) changed their political views even more radically than the English; so did Klopstock, Fuseli's model for poetry.
- 3 We read in the *Farington Diary* (ed. F. Grieg, London, 1922, Vol. I) that in 1794 even 'the Academy was under stigma of having many democrats in it' and that consequently George III did not wish to see the exhibition. In 1803 the same diarist reported that Banks's model of Oliver Cromwell might be withdrawn from the exhibition as an improper object.
- 4 On the advice of the mathematician, Bonycastle, one of Fuseli's most intimate friends.
- 5 See *Farington Diary*, Vol. IV, page 91.
- 6 Fuseli corrected Cowper's *Homer* translation for Johnson. Fuseli's formidable library of antique authors, both poets and historians, was fit for a scholar.
- 7 Roscoe's encomium on Michelangelo in his *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici* (1795) and still more in his *Life and Pontificate of Leo X* (1805)



# FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

accords with Fuseli's opinion. Fuseli, who was one of the chief contributors to Johnson's literary magazine, *Analytical Review*, wrote a long review of Roscoe's book on Lorenzo in 1796; for an artist he showed here, as in his art-historical writings, an astonishingly wide knowledge of history.

The list of Fuseli's articles for the *Analytical Review* as well as excerpts from them, given by Mason (*op. cit.*), greatly extend and deepen our knowledge of Fuseli's views.

- 8 In his private life Coutts appears not to have been quite conventional and this may partly explain his sympathy for Fuseli's art, which was his sole artistic interest. His first wife was one of his brother's servants; his second, an actress, forty-three years younger than himself, whom he married four days after his first wife's burial, when he was eighty; pamphlets were published about them and Cruikshank caricatured them; after Coutts's death the very wealthy widow married the Duke of St. Albans, twenty years younger than herself.

One of Coutts's sons-in-law was Sir Francis Burdett, well-known champion of Parliamentary reform and liberty of speech: Coutts, as court banker, was cautious enough to dissociate himself from Burdett in a letter to Pitt (see E. H. Coleridge, *The Life of Thomas Coutts*, London, 1920).

- 9 Various members of this extremely rich family, grown into the aristocracy—all three of Coutts's daughters married aristocrats—as Fuseli's intimate friends, followed his funeral procession in their private carriages, each drawn by four horses with servants in state livery.
- 10 So greatly was Fuseli appreciated by the Academy that it even broke its own rules to do this.
- 11 Published in Vittoria, Duchess of Sermoneta, *The Locks of Norbury*, London, 1940.
- 12 He also did Fuseli's portrait for the English edition of Lavater's book.
- 13 Lawrence owned twenty-one paintings by Fuseli. After Lawrence's death, the Countess of Guildford bought up all his Fuseli drawings.
- 14 A similar cultural situation prevailed in France during the Directoire period after the fall of the Revolution. Another example was Czarist Russia after the defeat of the Revolution of 1905.
- 15 Even Horace Walpole, who himself began as an extravagant, and fancied himself in the role, now found Fuseli both extravagant and mad.
- 16 Yet astonishing though it may seem, its problems have never been posed, let alone the period as a whole ploughed through, art-historically, as it should be, particularly in connection with the rich intellectual life in England.



# FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

- 17 The early anticipations of classicism in England from the 1760s and '70s (see page 1) have been indicated by J. Locquin in *La Peinture d'histoire en France de 1747 à 1785* (Paris, 1912) and 'La Part de l'Influence anglaise dans l'Orientation neo-classique de la Peinture française entre 1750 et 1780' (*Actes du Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art*, Paris, 1924).
- 18 On this problem see my article, 'Mr. Oldham and his Guests by Highmore' (*Burlington Magazine*, 1949) and further in my forthcoming book on *Hogarth and his Place in European Art*.
- 19 To some extent the same is true of Girodet, a similar but less intense case, who perhaps, among artists, most nearly characterised the mentality of the Directoire period, with its gravitation towards the aristocracy. See, on him, my article, 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism', II (*Burlington Magazine*, LXVIII, 1936), where the vicissitudes of the early romantic movement in France in the late 18th and early 19th centuries are dealt with in connection with the changing social and political background.
- 20 It is very instructive, from this point of view, to look through the illustrations of the four volumes of Cowper's *Homer* translation of 1810: a part only is by Fuseli and, although the others are less intense and forceful, most of them (e.g. those by Stothard, Westall, Howard) are, stylistically, not at all far from him. The publisher of these volumes, Fuseli's close friend, Johnson, certainly found the illustrations a stylistically coherent whole.
- 21 It was quite in keeping that the architect, Soane, whose mannerist-tinged classicism in many ways ran parallel to Fuseli's art, should have bought one of his pictures.
- 22 For instance, the wild, exuberant baroque of Rowlandson's caricatures is mainly concerned with the erotic. A frustrated period such as this, in which no organic, progressive ideological and artistic development was possible, was the period *par excellence* of English caricature; they were either non-political, like those of Rowlandson, or government-dictated, like those of Gillray.
- 23 The development in English art theory, which ran parallel to Fuseli's artistic evolution, as well as to his opinions, and through which Michelangelo was slowly elevated even above Raphael, can easily be followed in Reynolds's *Academy Discourses* from the fifth in 1772 to the last in 1790. When, in this last *Discourse*, Reynolds contends that, without Michelangelo's assistance, painting would not have been capable of adequately representing Homer, he almost seems to have given the clue to Fuseli's art. The views of a later president of the Academy, Lawrence, on the relation of Michelangelo and Raphael were in line with Fuseli's.
- 24 In France, after the Directoire, Girodet was apt to turn towards the erotic and towards a Parmigianinesque mannerism. See my article quoted above.



# FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

- 25 Reynolds's historical pictures undoubtedly have a certain significance and do not merit the neglect of art-historians to which they are at present subjected in favour of his innumerable portraits.
- 26 William Hamilton's numerous portraits of actors in their famous roles form an interesting parallel to the actual manner of acting which had entirely changed in England since Garrick; it was no longer realist but (e.g. Mrs. Siddons, Kemble) most declamatory. From this point of view, it is instructive to compare Hamilton's rendering of Kemble as Richard III in the tent scene, with Hogarth's portrayal of Garrick in the same episode, of which it is a variation towards a more violent baroque.
- 27 Stothard's lifelong patron, Samuel Rogers, was, like Fuseli's, a banker. Rogers, equally non-political, was a poet of elegance and had far wider cultural interests than Coutts.
- 28 In 1819, in a letter from Rome, after describing his impression of the Sistine Chapel, Lawrence adds: 'Among the imitators of Michael Angelo, I never include Mr. Fuzeli, who, in all qualities of fine composition, is *entirely original*.'
- 29 See D. E. Williams, *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Thomas Lawrence*, London, 1831.
- 30 See *Farington Diary*, Vol. III.
- 31 Among the large collection of Flaxman drawings at University College, London (a treasure-house of English art of the period too little explored), there is a great number of relatively realistic studies after nature, somewhat different from the style of the illustrations, yet also showing a delicate, suggestive tendency towards stylisation and a slightly cubic simplification. A stylistic comparison of these drawings with those of his follower, Ingres, would be interesting.
- 32 As to the relation to Fuseli of the whirl of figures in the upper part of Blake's composition, see page 116, note 109.
- 33 See *Farington Diary*, Vol. 1.
- 34 J. Roos, in his *Aspects Littéraires du mysticisme philosophique* (Strasbourg, 1951).
- 35 Runge was working c. 1800-10, that is, before the Nazarenes, at the time of the German War of Liberation, when progressive and reactionary tendencies were still intermingled. It deserves to be mentioned here that the Nazarenes were the official artists of the various German governments in the Holy Alliance and, even had they known Blake, his style (which had only slight potentialities in their direction) would have been far too extreme, far too powerful for them to have associated with. Blake's style in contrast to Flaxman's could never have become generally accepted in Europe.
- 36 See *Farington Diary*, Vol. I.



# FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

- 37 It is characteristic of Fuseli's position that he tried to serve as intermediary between Blake and the public, writing (probably) the preface for a publication of Blake's illustrations for Young's *Night Thoughts* in 1797 and (certainly) the one for Blair's *Grave* in 1805. However, the response of the public was negative.
- 38 In the course of his life only a few of Blake's drawings were shown at the Academy, while of course most of Fuseli's pictures were hung. However, Fuseli's publisher, Johnson, also made some, though limited, use of Blake as an illustrator. And in spite of his isolation, Blake was associated, for a number of years, with some members of Fuseli's intellectual circle.
- 39 Fuseli's views on art and the contradictions within them are well characterised by Mason. I think the discrepancies within the art theory of the self-centred Fuseli largely reflect a certain discrepancy within his art (which particularly came to the surface in his late phase); all the same, he tried hard in both spheres to achieve a certain balance.
- 40 In his lectures Fuseli purposely praised Reynolds to excess, even as a painter while, in private conversation, he ran him down.
- 41 At first, when he was under Fuseli's stylistic and intellectual influence, Blake shared with him the traditional ideas on art; only in his later period did Blake's views change (for instance, he turned away from the antique). The difference in the outlook of the two artists has been brought out clearly by Mason. The difference between Fuseli's views and those of the more extreme representatives of Storm and Stress, like Hamann, assumed a shape not quite dissimilar from that between Fuseli and Blake (as regards Fuseli and Heinse, see Appendix V).
- 42 After Fuseli came back to England and attended the Academy, his opinion on the superiority of antique art over modern art (even including his idol, Michelangelo) seems to have been more pronounced than when he was in Italy.
- 43 However, since not only Reynolds's but even Winckelmann's views were partly based on the traditional conservative art theory of the Bellori type, they were, on the surface, not greatly opposed to each other.
- 44 For Goethe, in his classicist phase, Fuseli's lectures (which were translated into German) were certainly not classicist enough, being too close to romanticism. See on this subject Denk's and Beutler's articles, already quoted, and Mason's book.
- 45 Perhaps Fuseli's most categorical assertion as regards the amorality of art is to be found in his review of the same year of the Rev. John Bromley's *Philosophical and Critical History of the Fine Arts*. See, however, page 16.
- 46 Incidentally, Roscoe had the intention of translating Lanzi's big work, *Storia Pittorica dell' Italia*.



- 47 The idea goes back to Bodmer, and Bodmer himself, in his turn, was much influenced by Du Bos, *Reflexions critiques sur la Poesie et la Peinture* (1719), where poetry and painting were more closely connected than in previous art theory. As Mason justly remarks, it was very difficult for Fuseli, who seems to have been influenced only reluctantly and as late as the early 1790s by Lessing's *Laocoon*, not to stress the analogy between painting and poetry.
- 48 His pictures, of which he painted far too many, were of very uneven quality, though the best among them were astonishingly good; his position as a self-taught artist, added to quick impatience, was a great impediment to him as a painter and many of his pictures were ruined by indifferent materials. All told, it seems preferable to discuss his drawings more than his pictures, since their greater spontaneity affords a better insight into his artistic intentions.
- 49 See note 61 below.
- 50 See on Cowper's *Homer* translation and Fuseli's large part in it, page 123.
- 51 In contemporary English literature it was precisely the three principal sources of Fuseli's themes, Homer, Shakespeare and Milton, which (besides Ossian) were usually mentioned as parallels to Michelangelo and as examples of the Sublime. See, in detail, Melchiori, *op. cit.*
- 52 Mason has done well to contrast Fuseli's liking for this German epic, which he could treat in his usual linear, 'timeless' way and scenes from which, in fact, occupied him during the greater part of his life with his indifference (apart, perhaps, from a short spell during his first English visit) to Ossian, the mistiness of which did not appeal to him. Blake was under Ossian's influence far more than Fuseli.

It is perhaps characteristic of Fuseli's intellectual position that neither of the two German works he illustrated belonged to Storm and Stress proper but to its outskirts: Bodmer's epic, *Noachide* (published in Berlin in 1765, with illustrations by Fuseli spoiled by the engraver; in 1767 it was translated into English) and the *Oberon* of Wieland, towards whom even the German movement turned a deaf ear, considering his poetry immoral. Fuseli's illustrations to *Oberon* were made for the second English translation published in 1803, the original German edition having come out in 1780. Wieland, who lived in Zürich between 1752-9 (see page 23, note 8), frequented the home of Fuseli's father, particularly during the last two years of his residence, and certainly became acquainted with the son; that Fuseli illustrated *Oberon* may have been due to their early acquaintanceship. Moreover, in his epic inspired by Ariosto's episodes, Wieland portrayed a fanciful, not unsensuous fairyland, which probably appealed to Fuseli. *Oberon* can be considered, as has been done by Walzel, a less profound forerunner of Byron's *Don Juan* and this kinship with Byron was also in keeping with Fuseli's development. Incidentally, the young



# FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

Coleridge thought Wieland the best German poet and even translated passages from *Oberon*. See F. W. Stokoe, *German influence in the English Romantic Period* (Cambridge, 1926).

- 53 When, in the Bromley review of 1793, Fuseli specified the principal themes of antique art, the moral usefulness of which he now almost entirely denied, as 'gods and demi-gods of that ferocious age' and 'incentives to refinement in vice', he unwittingly characterised his own subject-matter.
- 54 Whether for better or worse, the hectic tone of his earlier letters, which were usually written to his old Swiss friends, now became muted.
- 55 Every artist, even Michelangelo, has tried to utilise fully individual motifs once he has invented them and has been apt to come back to them with small variations; here again, the unrealist artists have been more inclined to repeat themselves than the realist.
- 56 Such a repetition of formulae also occurs in the greater, equally stylising artist, Blake.
- 57 Repr. Federmann, pl. 13.
- 58 Needless to say, in his *8th Lecture*, on colour, Fuseli followed the traditional path, subordinating colour to design.
- 59 However, he is generally distant enough from the stone-like colours of some mannerists.
- 60 He understood very well and analysed in his writings the painterly qualities of others.
- 61 In the passage of his *2nd Academy Lecture*, already quoted (page 28), where he defended the right of the artist to invent from his own imagination (the anti-romantic limitations of this anti-classicist idea are discussed by Mason), Fuseli called such subjects, relying on Greek and Roman writers, fantasies and visions. In English usage they were called fancy-pictures, a name Fuseli did not much care for.
- 62 A. M. Cetto (*Schweizer Malerei und Zeichnung im 17 und 18 Jahrhundert*, Basel, 1944) draws attention, in this connection, to a letter of Fuseli from as early as 1765 to his friend, S. Dälliker, describing motifs (monkey, toilet table, mirror) later occurring in this picture.
- 63 In fact Fuseli owned another version of this subject, in the engraving of Giorgio Ghisi, as well as an engraving after the so-called *Dream of Michelangelo*, the main figure of which he used in at least one of his drawings. He must have been much attracted by Italian 16th-century representations of dreams.
- 64 *Aphorism* No. 231, which begins 'One of the most unexplored regions of art are dreams, and what may be called the personification of sentiment'. Fuseli is alluding here to *Il Stregozzo* (which was thought at the time to be a composition of Raphael) as to the *Dream of*



*Raphael*; he calls it a 'visionary subject', 'a characteristic representation of a dream', in contrast to what he terms Michelangelo's dreams—the Prophets, Sibyls and Ancestors—which he considered personifications of sublime sentiments. Apparently Fuseli was not in the habit of talking of his own bad dreams, though he liked to paint nightmares; but, as Cunningham records, 'the dreams he delighted to relate were of the noblest kind, and consisted of galleries of the fairest pictures and statues in which were walking the poets and painters of old'. All this is illuminating and gives some insight into the different layers and contradictions of his mind and, so far as I know, the above passage is the only one where he writes about the significance of dreams in art.

- 65 In a general art-historical sense, it would be even more suitable to cite Orsi, who carried Tibaldi increasingly towards the macabre.
- 66 See F. D. Klingender, *Hogarth and English Caricature* (London, 1944).
- 67 Ganz, *op. cit.*: 'Fuseli was at one with the atmosphere of crisis which pervaded all classes; he knew the anxiety with which many people looked forward to social upheaval such as had already occurred in two continents.'
- 68 However, seldom did Fuseli use one of the Ancestors quite so literally as in the figure of Pericles in Chalmers's Shakespeare edition, the block-like man seated full-face, taken from the Aminadab lunette, one of his favourite motifs, only the face of which he has altered.
- 69 Repr. Ganz, pl. 65.
- 70 Though not in this particular instance, Fuseli, like Blake, used the motif of the hair falling down to give his figures a more block-like appearance in many similar, quietly seated and forward-bending figures from this period (whereas in Italy, he generally utilised it, in such figures, in a more dramatic way like the mannerists).
- 71 In a drawing of the *Creation of Eve* (Zürich, Private Collection, repr. Federmann, pl. 55), for a picture of the Milton Gallery, Fuseli represented the same theme as Michelangelo—an occurrence rare for him. Consequently he tried, but in vain, to dissociate himself from the Sistine fresco and the result was far more 'academic', less dynamic than usual. He probably felt less embarrassed when his subject had been treated by Michelangelo not as a main independent theme but only as a secondary one: a drawing of a naked man carrying a woman on his shoulder (c. 1795–1800, Winterthur, Private Collection; repr. Federmann, pl. 69; Ganz, pl. 66), probably for a painting of the *Vision of the Flood*, also in the Milton Gallery, was obviously inspired by Michelangelo's group of an old man and a youth in the centre background of the Sistine fresco of the Flood. Fuseli's object here has been to render a massive group rather than a real movement.
- 72 Repr. Ganz, pl. 102.
- 73 See page 98.



- 74 *2nd Academy Lecture.*
- 75 Reynolds had admired Tibaldi in Bologna before Fuseli, and equally termed him (in his *15th Discourse*, that is, in 1790) the first and greatest of Michelangelo's followers; he considered his art, like that of Michelangelo, divine, addressing itself to the imagination.
- 76 Fuseli owned the large Venetian publication of 1756 of Zanotti's engravings after Tibaldi's frescoes in the Palazzo Poggi. That Blake very probably used Tibaldi motifs from the same publication is shown in Blunt, *op. cit.*
- 77 The violent way in which, in a drawing, *Saul and the Witch of Endor* (Victoria and Albert Museum; repr. Powell, pl. 34), Fuseli has transposed the famous kneeling woman, seen from the back, from Raphael's *Transfiguration*, is not dissimilar from Tibaldi's treatment of this figure in his other fresco in S. Giacomo, the *Sermon of the Baptist*.
- 78 Repr. Ganz, pl. 50.
- 79 Repr. Ganz, pl. 88.
- 80 Repr. Federmann, pl. 23.
- 81 Repr. Federmann, page 65.
- 82 This Fuseli composition, with the sinister bulk and silhouette of the seated Polyphemus against the sky, naturally recalls Goya's famous etching of the seated giant dwarfing the landscape and towering against the sky. But Goya's figure is a supernatural vision, while Fuseli's is part and parcel of the story.
- 83 A certain restrained monumentality prevails even when Fuseli draws such a violent gesture as a man raising a rock above his head (Basel Museum) (repr. Federmann, page 120, Ganz, pl. 41): here Fuseli has used Rembrandt's late picture, *Moses breaking the tables* (now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum), which he had seen some thirty years previously in Berlin, in the collection of Frederick the Great. Discarding the baroque features of Rembrandt's picture, he has made what is perhaps his most 'Hodler-like' drawing.
- 84 It would be almost more exact to cite Michelangelo's sculpture of the crouching youth in the Hermitage.
- 85 It would be rewarding to work through Primaticcio's cycle and trace Fuseli's borrowings. For instance, while engaged upon a more concentrated scene such as his drawing of *Odysseus slaying the Suitors* (1802, Zürich, Kunsthau; repr. Ganz, pl. 72), Fuseli used some suggestions for the general idea as well as for individual motifs from Primaticcio's composition of the same theme. (Fuseli, I think, has also made use here of Flaxman's much more schematic illustration of this theme).

To close this circle of suggestions and borrowings, it seems to me possible that, when carrying out, partly at the same time, their respective Odysseus frescoes, one or other of the two Bolognese



painters, Primaticcio and Tibaldi, may have been acquainted, through copies, with some of the compositions of his fellow countryman: compare, for instance, in both, the scenes of Odysseus' companions stealing the bulls of the Sun, or the *Dance of the Hours* on the ceiling in Fontainebleau with the dancing genii on the ceiling in Bologna.

- 86 In stories of an erotic nature, Fuseli sometimes transformed this figure into a female. Characteristic of Fuseli's method of work, with its quick alternations between the heroic, the erotic and the grotesque, is the nearness to this of the Callot-like figure with crossed legs, which, as a boy, he copied from Meyer's *Narrenbuch* (pl. 4a). Yet Fuseli's liking for certain formal solutions never really detracted from the importance he attached to the subject.
- 87 Fuseli also owned Malvasia's publication of engravings after these frescoes (both Reynolds and Romney had already admired Lodovico in Bologna; Reynolds often spoke highly of him in the *Discourses*). Many of Lodovico Carracci's paintings remind us of Rubens's contemporary Italian works, which represented roughly a similar stylistic stage: this bears out the stylistic connection between Fuseli's copy of Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari* and the Rubens drawing done in Italy (pls. 22a and b); see Appendix IV.
- 88 See, in detail, on the relation of Italian and Dutch mannerism, my article 'Zum Problem des Niederlandischen Manierismus' (*Kritische Berichte zur Kunstgeschichtlichen Literatur*, I, 1928-9).
- 89 Fuseli had a number of Goltzius' engravings after the *Gods* of Polidoro (an artist whom he esteemed), which, in their turn, were strongly influenced by Rosso.
- 90 Here the spacing was very different from that to which he had previously been accustomed. But Fuseli was no longer quite the same artist who, in Rome, when pressed by Lavater to deliver small illustrations for his book on physiognomy, had answered impatiently: 'I need space, height, breadth, length.'
- 91 Fuseli owned numerous drawings by Primaticcio as well as many engravings after the ceilings at Fontainebleau. See also page 97. It is characteristic of the—at least theoretical—potentialities of Reynolds that (in his *6th Discourse* in 1774) he praised not only Tibaldi but also Rosso and Primaticcio as good followers of Michelangelo.
- 92 Repr. Ganz, pl. 50 and 51; Powell, pl. 39.
- 93 The pattern of the composition, though superficially resembling that of late mannerism, is clearly distant from it: no playful diagonals obscure the action, but a severe vertical arbitrarily separates the two layers—the watchful women and the actual fall of Icarus—each with its clearly defined and tectonically built-up action.
- 94 It is characteristic of the taste of Fuseli's circle that Ottley owned a Goltzius drawing of an allegorical female figure (now in the Witt



# FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

Collection) which in attitude and expression shows decided affinity with Fuseli.

- 95 Repr. Federmann, pl. 13.
- 96 These couples by Spranger, in their turn, largely originate from those of Rosso, Bandinelli, Giulio Romano and Cambiaso.
- 97 Mason, who discovered and published this as well as several other relatively late poems ('Unveröffentlichte Gedichte von F. H. Füssli', *Neujahrsblatt der Züricher Kunstgesellschaft*, 1951) refers to the dualism existing in Fuseli: to his love and, at the same time, hatred of artificiality and misapplied elegance. To appreciate fully Fuseli's anti-Bellange lines we must, perhaps, take into account the date of the poem, the 1780s; at that time Fuseli was less interested in themes of a precious, erotic character than he was from 1790 onwards, when the historical situation and the whole spiritual atmosphere had changed.
- 98 Repr. Federmann, page 24.
- 99 In an heroic vein is the even more rhythmic-decorative woman holding the child Shakespeare in Fuseli's picture, *The Nursery of Shakespeare* (Courtauld Institute) (pl. 37a); here the Madonna dell'Impannata has gone mannerist in the swinging lines of Salviati; Fuseli has almost certainly used here a Salviati Madonna as, for instance, one engraved by Diana Ghisi, whose prints he possessed or his *Charity* (Uffizi) (pl. 37b). Fuseli also had a drawing by Salviati, a *Presentation of the Virgin*.
- 100 Fuseli's compositions have numerous insect motifs of this kind. He had a strange love of insects, took entomology very seriously and had a large entomological library. In certain scientifically-minded mannerists (e.g. Ligozzi, the illustrator of zoological and botanical treatises) scientific interest in animals and love of the fantastic mixed.
- 101 We should recall the tiny monstrous, Callot-like figures in his copy after Meyer's *Narrenbuch*, made as a child (pl. 4a).
- 102 Yet in the same poem he castigated not only Bellange but also Callot for reasons already described; no wonder Salvator Rosa came in for the same treatment. When he made a passing gibe at Angelica Kauffmann and Bartolozzi, both of whom were too sweet for him, he was really sincere.
- 103 He was perhaps the nearest to this style in a drawing of a single figure for one of these pictures, i.e. that of the hovering Oberon, arms and legs rhythmically spread out (c. 1795, Zürich, Kunsthaus) (repr. Ganz, page 39), for the picture, *Oberon dropping flower juice into Titania's eyes* (Zürich, Kunsthaus) (repr. Federmann, pl. 5).
- 104 Repr. Federmann, pl. 4.



FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE AND MANNERISM

- 105 According to W. Hofmann (*Zu Fusslis geschichtlicher Stellung, Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 1952). The drawing cannot date as early as the 1780s, as Hofmann tentatively assumes, but from about the late 1790s.
- 106 Similar creatures of fancy abound in his various illustrations to the *Winter's Tale*. It is characteristic of the way his mind worked that (in his *4th Lecture*) Fuseli equated the antique 'naiads, nymphs and oreads and our sylphs, gnomes and fairies'.
- 107 Repr. Ganz, pl. 9.
- 108 See page 20.
- 109 Repr. Ganz, pl. 26. The rhythmical flow of the figures in Blake's *Vision of Queen Katherine* (1807, Cambridge) (pl. 31a) or in his famous *Circle of the Lustful* from Dante's *Inferno* (1827) probably derived from a Fuseli composition such as the Vienna drawing; but the convolution has now become schematic, ornamental and unspatial.



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## V

# Other Facets of Fuseli's English Style

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FUSELI'S numerous drawings, most of which date from the second half of the '90s, showing scenes and individual figures of elegantly-dressed or half-dressed courtesans, full of insinuations, strikingly realistic in some features, extremely irrational in others, were, of course, beyond the reach of 16th-century mannerism, though not quite dissociated from its erotic atmosphere. It was indeed characteristic of the general mental climate of those years in England that these drawings should have constituted the main contact of Fuseli's art with reality at that time. They are so well known<sup>1</sup> that they may be passed over, all the more since scarcely any studies of women by Fuseli were untinged by such characteristics. Psychologically they appear to have grown out of an erotic world of Fuseli's own; but it is perhaps appropriate to recall that Rousseau, Fuseli's master, was one of the first to unveil in the *Confessions* his personal erotic attitude. Fuseli had been haunted from his early youth by his conception of lascivious, haughty, almost bestial women as well as by the perverse possibilities of contemporary fashion, and these obsessions now greatly increased. Sometimes he actually ridiculed the fashion of the moment by exaggerating it, though, even so, in an erotic sense<sup>2</sup>; more frequently the fascination of it gained the upper hand: but no strict borderline can be drawn between these two types. Fuseli never exhibited these drawings, they were unknown to the wider public



and were probably executed partly for himself, partly for a few select friends.

It is, I think, chiefly on the basis of the obvious irrational features of these 'private' erotic drawings, where he gave expression, far more than in the general run of his compositions, to his hidden wishes and dreams, that the irrationalism of Fuseli's art in general is apt to be exaggerated today. The manner of their presentation is certainly irrational in such cases as, for example, the minuteness of the attendants in relation to the principal female figure. These tiny figures, however, do not appear suddenly, but their evolution can be traced from similar participants in the dream-world representations of *Midsummer Night's Dream* and the *Faerie Queene*. Here they are either 'rationally' motivated as gnomes or they appear as fairies whose different size gives no cause for astonishment. We may glance back still further at the wide difference in scale between the foreground and the background figures of mannerism, which was in some ways a starting-point for Fuseli and which he greatly exaggerated in every sense.<sup>3</sup>

But, however personal is the atmosphere of these drawings, they belong to the personal world of an 18th-century artist and are by no means isolated in spirit from historical compositions within his *œuvre*. They represent the individual, private, concentrated expression of the erotic undertone which pervades so many of his historical compositions. In particular, close links exist between such drawings and some of his often erotic illustrations, dating from the same period, to Shakespeare's comedies, such as *Much Ado about Nothing*. The resemblance is much greater if we compare the erotic drawings with those illustrating Shakespeare, which were made for private use or, perhaps, for individual clients, rather than his engraved illustrations in the large Shakespeare edition of Rivington intended for a wide public. These illustrations are elegant, too, but the erotic note has, in most cases, been toned down. Compare, from this point of view, Fuseli's drawing of *Timon of Athens* in the Roman sketch-book of the British Museum<sup>4</sup> with his composition representing the same scene in the Shakespeare publication. In the former the seated Timon is almost hidden in a far-off cave, while the figures which catch the eye are Alcibiades and his two very alluring mistresses (Fuseli has characteristically selected the only scene in the play where women appear at all). In the published Shakespeare, however, the women have vanished and the solitary figure of the seated Timon fills the composition.

Needless to say, the eroticism of the faces, dresses and bodies and of the preposterous high coiffures of his courtesans had a long ancestry within his *œuvre* from his earliest drawings onwards; and many of his



models at all stages of his life, however much he himself went beyond them, belonged to a similar category, whether grotesque Swiss engravings, female figures on Attic vases, busts of women of Imperial Roman times (Flavian or Antonine) or works of international mannerism.<sup>5</sup> Frequently he combined in his drawings erotic types of the most varied periods in a very personal interpretation and fusion, for instance, antique-archaising types with those of Bellange. And again it was symptomatic of his mentality that he sometimes should have chosen to make playthings out of these same types and combinations.

To the same psychological context belongs a later drawing dating from 1817 (Zürich, Kunsthaus) (Plate 62) of an erotic model with a very refined head-dress. It could almost be a parody of one of his favourite figures, the kneeling woman seen from the back in Raphael's *Transfiguration*. The progeny of these erotic drawings of Fuseli is almost as great as their ancestry. Within English art we naturally think of Beardsley's decorative and decorated females, haughty and sensuous, who often show a surprising affinity with Fuseli's types; Toulouse-Lautrec, fundamentally the artist of the stage, plays a definite if very limited role in this evolution; and the style is ultimately carried on into the early 20th century by the minor artists of a moderate, half-realistic expressionism such as Pascin with his paintings of prostitutes.

Fuseli's rare studies after nature at this time still tended to be viewed through Michelangelo motifs.<sup>6</sup> Behind the summarised monumentality of his drawings of a girl reading (London, Lowinsky Collection<sup>7</sup>) and of a young woman sewing (c. 1790-1800, Dublin, Lord Wharton Collection,<sup>8</sup>) (Plate 48b), we can feel several of Michelangelo's Ancestors. The similarity of the woman doing needlework with a mannerist drawing, Bandinelli's *Woman Sewing* (Louvre) (Plate 48a), is instructive. In both cases the diagonal fold of the skirt extending from the raised knee to the other lower one is obviously inspired by the Solomon lunette among the Ancestors, and the woman of the Jesse lunette also has her part in the pose. But, characteristically, in these Fuseli drawings, more than in his earlier studies of this kind, we are conscious, beyond Michelangelo and Bandinelli, of a certain 'Parmigianinesque' rhythm, gracefulness and flexibility, such as can be seen in Parmigianino's own studies after nature, even though Fuseli's figures are not lacking in a certain monumentality. Fuseli's simple studies of movement, not after nature but inspired by 16th-century works on the one hand, and pointing far into the future on the other, show an astonishing spontaneity. For example, a girl dancing with a tambourine (c. 1795-1800, Zürich, Kunsthaus<sup>9</sup>), which looks as though it were by someone who was anticipating



Beardsley, is a more erotic, more violent version of one of the dancing Maenads, with neo-Attic draperies, in Agostino Veneziano's engraving of 1518, probably after Giulio Romano, showing maenads and fauns. In Fuseli this mannerist figure is combined with Annibale Carracci's famous woman playing a tambourine from the *Triumph of Bacchus* in the Farnese Gallery, who was herself the inspiration of another 'Parmigianinesque' drawing of Fuseli of the same subject in Berlin.<sup>10</sup> In spite of its apparently classicist pose, a woman walking (drawing, Basel) (Plate 52) looks almost like a study of Toulouse-Lautrec for La Goulue. The drawing of a woman in profile, L. de Jrujo, of 1812 (Zürich, Kunsthau) (Plate 47b) has, in its long, expressive almost aggressive line, a similarity with some of Toulouse-Lautrec's portrayals of Yvette Guilbert.

Another group of works, to some extent, if not entirely detached from the rest of his *œuvre*, consist of very impressive, unusually expressionist drawings done in the early '90s with views, actual or imaginary, of landscape; for example, that of a party of young people on the banks of the Thames (Zürich, Kunsthau)<sup>11</sup> (Plate 53a). Many of these, which were conceived when Fuseli stayed at seaside resorts like Hastings and Ramsgate, represent cliffs and caves and introduce either imaginary or real figures, occasionally even himself. They are glorifications and sublimations of the south coast and of its visitors,<sup>12</sup> in the same way as his picture of this kind, *The Women of Hastings* (Zürich, Private Collection) (Plate 50). This remarkable picture, like the *Nightmare*, is one of the very few in which the theme was entirely of Fuseli's own invention. Even in this somewhat realistic painting, mannerist reminiscences and parallels are recognisable. The figure of the 'treasure-hunter', seated below, who serves as a counterpoise to the three women of diminishing sizes walking on the rock, is fundamentally a mannerist river-god, mainly composed of the Slaves and the Ancestors of the Sistine. Even the scheme of the big converging diagonals is theoretically that of late mannerism, though it is characteristically simplified and monumentalised, as is also the grandiose rhythm of the three women. The particular compromise between life and stylisation, as shown here, was only possible in a composition suggested by motifs from nature.

It is probable that fashions and fashion plates also had their part to play in its conception. For instance, a plate entitled the 'Bathing Place: Morning Dresses of 1797' (Plate 51) in Heideloff's *Gallery of Fashion*, shows two women in Directoire dresses flying in the wind, seen from the back standing, as in Fuseli's picture, on a rock with the sea below; this group may well have been the starting-point for the idealised *Women of Hastings*.<sup>13</sup> The rhythm of the composition, though spirited, is at the same time more severe, more monumental



than the fanciful whirl of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* or the *Faerie Queene*; for the rhythmical pattern of the *Women of Hastings* has grown out of a novel, though not quite unreal subject, that of the other out of entirely fantastic fairyland themes. On the other hand, the repetitive rhythm not only of Fuseli's earlier but even of his contemporary compositions, usually drawings, illustrating grim literary subjects appears almost heavy and schematic when compared with the light and lively movement of the *Women of Hastings*.<sup>14</sup>

The pattern of the *Women of Hastings* should also be compared with that of a much earlier drawing of *Richard III and the Ghosts* (1773-9, Zürich, Private Collection<sup>15</sup>). Here Richard stands in a violent pose so that his figure protrudes on the right side while the ghosts, in a row of parallel verticals, recede on the left. Since this drawing has retained something of a baroque undulation, such as was noticeable in the early 1770s, its compositional scheme with the abstract, fundamentally spaceless zigzag displays more than was usual at that early period, something of the decorative juxtaposition of figures typical of late mannerism. But how much more monumental has the undulating rhythm become in the *Women of Hastings*. This monumental picture—it is significant that it is a painting, not merely a drawing—haunting and real at the same time, is among the most fascinating and original works of European art of this period. But even given the fact that Fuseli could produce such a remarkable and exceptional picture, it is senseless to deplore his failure to paint more works of this kind, in place of his innumerable historical compositions. The *Women of Hastings* was a freak in its time; it would have been impossible for Fuseli to have done many of the same kind, because no 18th-century artist could have anticipated the 20th century to such an extent. It is all the more interesting to follow, in this isolated large picture, Fuseli's way of viewing objects and his principles of composition when applied, however remotely, to motifs from nature.<sup>16</sup>

On rare occasions his historical compositions of the '90s also reveal interesting allusions to reality which afford us a glimpse of his creative process. Consider, for instance, his drawing of the *Vision of the Madhouse* (Zürich, Kunsthau) (Plate 26a) for a painting in the Milton Gallery, illustrating *Paradise Lost*.<sup>17</sup> Though in some ways a repetition of one of his earlier compositions of the same subject done in Rome for Lavater's book on physiognomy<sup>18</sup> (British Museum), it is more monumental and richer, though more balanced and rationalist and—what is astonishing—more genuinely realistic. In both scenes the central theme is that of a madman who wishes to free himself from his wardens, but in the later composition the artist has introduced certain more explicitly realistic motifs, such as the lunatic to the right seated apathetically on the floor, and the woman to the left



idiotically counting on extended fingers.<sup>19</sup> It is this latter motif which provides the clue to the composition by which Fuseli was inspired at this time: Hogarth's *Rake in Bedlam*, the first portrayal in art, I think of a madhouse.<sup>20</sup>

It would be unwise to exaggerate the degree of Fuseli's realism in depicting mad people. Looking at these figures in the *Madhouse* and even more at his picture of *Mad Kate*, an illustration to Cowper's *Task* (Zürich, Bollag Collection<sup>21</sup>), it is at once apparent that Fuseli's conception was on the whole literary and somewhat schematic. The full consequences of Hogarth's experiment do not appear till Géricault executed his series of portraits representing mad people, painted for a specialist of mental diseases and based on exact studies. Though it is a more general characteristic of his earliest period, Fuseli's use of Hogarthian realism at this phase, however slight and however much a sideline, should not pass unnoticed.<sup>22</sup> Hogarth now appears in the role of a stimulus to realism, though, as we shall see, not merely as an accidental stimulus, in the background of Fuseli's art.<sup>23</sup> It is, however, characteristic of this period that, within this mannerist-classicist style, it was with the expressive side of Hogarth's art that the link was first made. In fact, as he admitted—and the figures of his *Madhouse* confirm it—Fuseli, with his keen interest in physiognomy, was a great admirer of Hogarth's treatment of facial expression.<sup>24</sup>

About this time Fuseli made himself responsible for the English edition of Lavater's book, for which Blake also worked. Though in his book Lavater represented Hogarth, together with Rembrandt, as the painter of vice and ugliness, he considered him the artist most capable of rendering bad character, which points to the unique position Hogarth's engravings occupied even among those intellectuals of Fuseli's time whom one would have expected to be Hogarth's adversaries.

A very realistic painting of this period (Zürich, Frau von Albertini Collection, engraved 1791) (Plate 54a) is of particular interest in that it even foreshadows Daumier in its expressionism. The subject has not hitherto been identified<sup>25</sup> but it, in fact, illustrates a scene in Ben Jonson's comedy, *Every Man in his Humour*, in which Matthew explains to Bobadill that he has only a shilling or two left. The picture has a certain similarity with the early illustrations of *Peregrine Pickle* but the figures, in conformity with this very different phase of Fuseli, are now more conventionalised.

Some illustrations by Fuseli to a volume of poems published in 1805–6 are also, in certain respects, not far from Hogarth's world of ideas and show a combination of Fuseli's familiar irrational tendencies with features which were for him surprisingly realistic. The poems



are the works of the early romantic Cowper, perhaps the outstanding poet of the 1780s and '90s. On the surface Cowper was a moderate and mild Whig, in whom ideas of Rousseau and of the new Evangelical movement seem to have been happily combined.<sup>26</sup> From his youth Cowper, like Fuseli, was intensely interested in Milton as well as in Homer. The pictures of Fuseli's Milton Gallery were originally intended as illustrations for an edition of Milton's works by Cowper, published by their mutual friend, Johnson. But the edition did not materialise since Cowper went off his head. Not only did Fuseli extensively correct and revise Cowper's translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* which came out in 1810, but he also illustrated it in collaboration with other artists. Cowper's full-length translation of an ancient poet, made characteristically in a Miltonic style, demonstrates, like the entire *œuvre* of Fuseli, that classicism and romanticism were not at that time strictly opposed to each other in England; it is hardly necessary to say that Cowper's classicism is not Pope's, any more than Fuseli's is Poussin's, West's, or David's.<sup>27</sup>

In his illustrations to Cowper Fuseli gave expression to humanitarian and virtuous middle-class ideas and sentiments: for instance, in one for the *Progress of Error*—which represents Virtue redeeming Youth. Such compositions recall the artist who, more than forty years earlier, executed the religious, moralising paintings in the summer-house of Spalding, the theologian; for Fuseli's belief in morality, although kept in the background, never entirely disappeared. But that, of course, was not all of Cowper nor all of Fuseli. The way in which Fuseli now put over virtuous ideas at least in some of his illustrations is slightly unexpected. The emotional, the disquieting, the morbid, even the macabre, were strong in Cowper with his religious mania, his anxiety and his fear of damnation, his ever-recurring fits of madness; and Fuseli, the romantic artist, could not avoid creating here, too, a somewhat mysterious atmosphere. However, here and there, he also gave his scenes a slight twist towards the voluptuous, a feature wholly alien to Cowper. The preparatory drawings, the pictures and the engravings after them differ somewhat from each other and these differences are the outcome of the ever-present dualism in Fuseli: on the one hand, a sympathy with the virile and simple, even, remotely, with the virtuous; on the other, with the precious and perverse.<sup>28</sup> The drawings, in which Fuseli lets himself go more freely, were of a more erotic character than the pictures and the executed engravings, so that the illustrations in the book itself contain nothing 'objectionable'.

The difference between the various versions comes out particularly well in his other illustration of the *Progress of Error*: A dressing-room (London, Brinsley Ford Collection<sup>29</sup>) where the depiction of the



folly of the beauty parlour not only implies a moral satire, as in Cowper, but is also kept, as one would expect, in the vein of Fuseli's usual courtesan subjects.<sup>30</sup> Even when illustrating Cowper's *Retirement* he portrays the happy life of a mother with her family in the country, the drawing (Zürich, Kunsthhaus<sup>31</sup>) and even the picture (Basel, Private Collection) (Plate 55b) have something of his usual tense, erotic-expressionist features. This scene may usefully be compared with an early work of Blake, his frontispiece (Plate 55a) for Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories from Real Life* (1791), a book intended to explain how to educate children to virtue. The frontispiece is in an expressionist realistic style similar to Fuseli's composition but, as one would expect with Blake, the erotic note is absent.<sup>32</sup> In an illustration to *The Task* (picture, Geneva, Private Collection) (Plate 54b), however, Fuseli succeeded in rendering a pleasant, well-to-do family group sitting in the country (with a negro servant) listening to news being read. The painting shows the complexity both of such 'real' scenes and of the artist himself at this stage. The poem is full of Miltonic solemnity which Fuseli must have appreciated. And even in the family group the figures are fundamentally heroic and monumental in Fuseli's customary manner, and the seated woman dominating the foreground is even a variation of the Erythrean Sibyl.<sup>33</sup> Yet the composition is not without features of a realistic classicism: the Erythrean Sibyl is reading a newspaper, and in this relaxed society it is possible to see the way towards realism, though the step from Fuseli to realism is wider than the step from Géricault to realism.

It is certainly worthy of note that in this relatively late phase Fuseli considered Cowper the best English poet of his time.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, he also illustrated, among others, a topical poem of Cowper, *The Negro's Complaint*,<sup>35</sup> directed against the slave trade. It must be remembered that the evangelical movement was occupied solely with humanitarian, and not with political, reforms: abolition of the slave trade was the only liberal idea, so to speak, which could be vented during the Napoleonic Wars and one to which Fuseli was sincerely attached.<sup>36</sup> From all points of view it looked as if Fuseli would take up a kind of fresh contact with reality, and even with middle-class ideas, however hesitatingly. Even his late poems were less exaggerated and *recherché* than the earlier ones.

Fuseli's realistic tendency sometimes showed signs of mingling, at this period, with romantic features. Consequently romantic features became more positively romantic—not so much in the sense of his near-classicist, anti-realistic mannerism but in the sense of his youth and of 19th-century romanticism to come. This, for instance, was the case in Fuseli's illustrations for Allen's *History of England* (1798),



engraved by Blake, particularly in the portrayal of the *Cardinal Legate Pandulph absolving the prostrated King John* (Plate 33a). This scene, with its realistic-romantic features, its generalised local colour, links up to some degree with Fuseli's early romantic-baroque historical compositions, like the second version of *Cardinal Beaufort's Death*. Similar features can also be noticed in some of the engravings after Fuseli in Rivington's 1805 edition of Shakespeare. Thanks partly to the engravers, they have an appearance of greater reality than is usual in Fuseli<sup>37</sup> and to this is added a customary dash of more or less superficial romanticism in the shape of 'Renaissance' settings and dresses.<sup>38</sup> True, Fuseli was obviously making small concessions to the average reading public, but features of this kind cannot be entirely dismissed as just skin deep and fashionable since they tend to carry on certain of his early trends. This propensity also appears in many of his pictures at this time but it is most genuine and most interesting when it crops up in the drawings which he made for private use. Fuseli's copy after Holbein's dagger-sheath, representing *Death as a Drummer with a Landsknecht* (Zürich, Kunsthhaus<sup>39</sup>) dates from about the mid-1790s, but in it Fuseli has again copied, as he did in his youth, a macabre type of 16th-century Swiss art in an expressionist vein. This drawing is naturally of an incomparably higher artistic level than his childish copies, but the renewed stylistic connection with them, just as that with the *Death of Beaufort*, is evident.

Furthermore, as in his youth he copied Dürer, so now in 1801 he made a free copy after Dürer's early engraving, *The Lovers* (Zürich, Kunsthhaus) (Plate 47a). The drawing combines earlier Swiss art of the Nikolaus Manuel Deutsch type with features which suggest Delacroix and yet, at the same time, it is surprisingly close to nature. The copies he made and many of the stylistic features around 1800 should be regarded as only isolated symptoms and not as representing Fuseli's general style, of which classicism was always to remain a strong component; but they cannot be ignored when appraising the many-sidedness of Fuseli's art and the same can be said of still later works about to be discussed, when, on account of his own potentialities, he was to be one of the first to feel the new French romanticism, that of the young Delacroix of the 1820s, before it was fully developed. For there was a line which led from Fuseli's early, relatively realistic romantic history painting, perhaps the earliest of its kind in Europe, through various later stages of his art towards romantic painting as it was to develop in France with the young Delacroix.



## Notes to Chapter V

- 1 Repr. e.g. Ganz, pl. 62, 63 and 81; Powell, pl. 32, 33, 44 and 46.
- 2 E.g. the water-colour of a fashionably dressed lady with inflated bosom and very lengthy gloves, her head-dress a caricature of the milliner's art (Zürich, Kunsthaus; repr. Federmann, pl. 70). Caricatures of an erotic nature of women and women's fashions were very prevalent in those non-political, escapist times; however, these caricatures—not only of the minor caricaturists but even of Rowlandson and Gillray—are generally much coarser than Fuseli's.
- 3 In the much more irrational Blake, the use of different proportions was far more frequent than in Fuseli.  
Some relevant remarks on these erotic drawings as well as on the unpublished ones of a pornographic character, rather cold and cerebral, are to be found in R. Todd, *Tracks in the Snow* (London, 1946). These drawings should really be treated—in connection with Fuseli's complete *œuvre*—by someone versed in both art-history and psychology who could judge how much of the irrationality and perverse eroticism of these works was due to the new, time-bound, irrational style itself, and how much to Fuseli's personal 'abnormal' disposition, tending in the same direction. This kind of analysis was well presented by E. Kris, on the sculptures of Messerschmidt, who became insane and who was approximately Fuseli's contemporary: 'Die Charakterköpfe des Franz Xaver Messerschmidt' (*Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, N.F. VI, 1832). Messerschmidt's expressive heads, in some ways, are parallels to Lavater's ideas: a friend of Mesmer (in his turn, a friend of Lavater), he was close to the mental atmosphere of early romanticism. See also Fuseli's two companion self-portrait drawings in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Powell, pl. 42 and 43), in the Lavater-Messerschmidt vein: the one reposeful, the other agitated and stormy.
- 4 Repr. Powell, pl. 8. On the other hand, something of Fuseli's personal development may be followed in his two illustrations of *Salome with the head of John the Baptist*, both in the English edition



# OTHER FACETS OF FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE

of Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy*. One, described by Lavater as an early work, is much influenced by the antique and relatively empty in sentiment. The other, obviously dating from the 1790s is already, so far as expression goes, in line with Beardsley; it is not described in the text and may have been put in by Fuseli himself because his previous work struck him as not sufficiently psychological.

- 5 Beyond general suggestions from mannerist works of erotic character, Fuseli may have known mannerist drawings (or engravings after them) recording women's fashions with a strong emphasis on the erotic element. I have in mind, for instance, a series of Melchior Lorch's drawings of German and Frisian women obviously under Bandinelli's influence (they belonged, together with some by the same artist of Turkish women, influenced by Parmigianino, to John Evelyn and are still at Stonor Park). The well-known drawing by John Brown, the imitator of Fuseli, of three women in carnival costume seen from the back (Witt Collection) shows in particular close affinities with such drawings by Lorch.
- 6 Fuseli's well-known utterance, 'nature puts me out', applies particularly to this period (yet it would be even more applicable to Blake). At the Academy he posed the models in the attitudes of well-known antique statues. In the 7th Lecture, he wrote: 'The student is admitted to the life to avail himself of the knowledge he acquired from the previous study of classic forms.' He was against drawing from nature, against rendering the individual, when engaged upon works of a serious character.
- 7 Repr. Powell, pl. 36.
- 8 The monumental pose in this study after nature is very similar to that of the seated, more idealised, woman in Fuseli's drawing, *Silence* (British Museum; repr. Powell, pl. 30), for the picture in the Milton Gallery of about the same date.
- 9 Repr. Ganz, pl. 53.
- 10 Repr. Federmann, pl. 54.
- 11 Ganz has pointed out (*op. cit.*) the similarity of some of these drawings with Van Gogh. Expressionism of the late 18th and of the late 19th century meet.
- 12 As Ganz (*op. cit.*) says, these drawings were more or less preparatory ones for historical compositions, such as *Odysseus between Scylla and Charybdis*, from the Milton Gallery. There is a slight resemblance with the impressively summarised landscape drawings of Towne, Fuseli's contemporary, though Towne's, which usually represent an actual locality, are more realistic.

These late drawings of Fuseli lead to the question whether the numerous landscape drawings, done in Italy and also in England, probably soon after his return, contained in the Roman sketch-book at Zürich, are really by him. According to Fischer (*op. cit.*)



they are all by his hand, except perhaps the minutely depicted backgrounds in some of them, which may be by Fuseli's friend, the painter John Cartwright, and perhaps the original owner of the sketch-book. Powell considers the two English landscapes of the sketch-book, which were reproduced by Fischer, to be inferior and probably by Cartwright. In my opinion, many of the landscape drawings of the sketch-book and, in particular these two, one of which shows a quite Seurat-like summarising (pl. 49), are extremely interesting; they may well be by Fuseli and, just as some landscape backgrounds in the British Museum sketch-book for Shakespeare's comedies, can intelligibly lead on to the visionary landscapes of the '90s which are fundamentally reduced to a few main lines.

The relation of Fuseli to landscape certainly needs thorough examination. But, even in his lectures, where he only expressed the most 'elevated' views, he showed no contempt for landscape painting, apart from that of a topographical character; not only did he accept the heroic landscape but even that of Rembrandt. That, among contemporary landscape painters, he preferred Turner, on account of the heroic features of his art, to Constable, is only what might be expected.

- 13 Nor is it quite impossible, in view of the similarity of the compositions, that the designer of the fashion plate was acquainted with Fuseli's picture.
- 14 I mean historical compositions such as, for example, *Richard III and the Ghosts*, 1779; *The Fall of Icarus*, c. 1795; *Achilles at the Pyre of Patroclus* (1795-1800).
- 15 Repr. Federmann, pl. 44.
- 16 Even one of the founders of modern expressionism, Munch, to whom so many threads led from Fuseli, did not often apply his art, at any rate not in his early, most intense period, to 'real' motifs; but when he did so, as, for example, in his *Music in an Oslo Street* of 1889 (Zürich, Kunsthau), he produced one of the most important paintings of recent times.
- 17 The painting itself was the main picture of the Milton Gallery and was bought by Coutts.
- 18 Repr. Powell, pl. 35. Lavater said the drawing was made from the memory of a real scene. Part of the drawing was published in the French edition of Lavater's book in 1782; the complete drawing later still in the English edition of 1792.
- 19 It is characteristic of the most unusual interest which Fuseli took in lunatics that (in 1804) he could give figures to Farington on the types of lunatic in Bedlam (*Farington Diary*, Vol. II).
- 20 Goya's *Madhouse* (Madrid, Academia di S. Fernando) also derives, consciously or unconsciously (probably the former), from Hogarth's *Rake in Bedlam*.



- 21 Repr. Federmann, pl. 20.
- 22 George Steevens, who was co-editor with Nichols of the *Biographical Anecdotes of Hogarth* (which, incidentally Fuseli possessed) and owner of a famous collection of Hogarth engravings, was one of the six who guaranteed Fuseli's livelihood while he was working on the Milton Gallery. So admiration for Hogarth, the original, unconventional artist, and for Fuseli by no means precluded each other (Soane bought pictures by Hogarth as well as by Fuseli). Steevens was also a Shakespearean scholar, connected with Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, and it was from his corrected text that Chalmers's Shakespeare edition, illustrated by Fuseli, was printed. And Lamb, the greatest admirer of Hogarth, even had an understanding for the extraordinary qualities of Blake's art; just as Hogarth was one of the few artists whom Blake esteemed (*Publick Address*, Rossetti MS.). It is not uninteresting that Goethe in his classicist phase—when his judgments no longer coincided with those of his Storm and Stress period—attacked Fuseli, without naming him, as well as Hogarth in his essay, *Der Sammler und die Seinigen*.
- 23 That he predicted the future eminence of the young Wilkie, when his pupil at the Academy, shows that Fuseli had a certain understanding for realism in other artists (as a teacher he was very helpful to his pupils). See also page 139. Even in his Academy lectures, when the subject concerned antique, not modern, art, Fuseli was sometimes quite capable of defending realism. He also appreciated Dutch pictures of historical, Biblical, subjects when the composition seemed to him to be bold enough. He admired not only Rembrandt's early etching of *Christ before Pilate*, which he praised throughout his life, but also—a very characteristic choice in keeping with the expressionist taste of his time and of ours—Lievens' equally early and baroque picture of *Christ raising Lazarus*, which, at that time, belonged to his friend, Knowles, and is now in the Museum at Brighton (pl. 53b). In both cases Fuseli distinguished (in *Aphorisms* No. 76 and 170) between the 'grandeur of the conception' and the 'vulgar material'.
- 24 Fuseli's remarks about Hogarth's expressions were made on the occasion of a conversation on painting with other English artists with whom he was visiting Paris in 1802; in the same conversation Fuseli even admitted that, in parts, the colouring of the *Marriage à la Mode* was excellent (*Farington Diary*, Vol. III). Hogarth, of course, shows much greater powers of observation in his physiognomic studies than Fuseli, who is more schematising.
- 25 S. Sitwell, who also appears to be unaware of it, suggests, erroneously (*Splendours and Miseries*, London, 1943), that the painting was done in Italy.
- 26 Some similarity between the world of ideas of Hogarth and Cowper has often been noted. I should like to add that they knew each other well personally, since they were both, the young Cowper and the



# OTHER FACETS OF FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE

elderly Hogarth, very active members of the Nonsense Club in London.

- 27 See also page 136.
- 28 When Hogarth shows 'immoral' properties while preaching morality, the reasons for it are quite different. The immorality of Hogarth was a survival from the Restoration period, not to be taken too seriously, that of Fuseli was an anticipation, a feature of the new romanticism. See my article, 'The Moral Purpose of Hogarth's Art' (*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XV, 1952).
- 29 Repr. Powell, pl. 51; Ganz, pl. 82.
- 30 Another even more provocative drawing of the same theme, *A Lady seated at her Dressing-table* (Gallery Tooth, repr. Powell, pl. 50), may well have been originally associated with the same Cowper subject but Fuseli doubtless preferred not to have it reproduced.
- 31 Repr. Ganz, pl. 83.
- 32 Published by Johnson, as were also Cowper's poems, Mary Wollstonecraft's book originated in the circle of Johnson and Fuseli, in which Blake also moved.
- 33 In 1828 Leigh Hunt (*Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries*), the representative of a new generation, was objecting to this scene as being insufficiently realistic.
- 34 He rightly placed him above Hayley and Erasmus Darwin (*Farington Diary*, Vol. II). Blake also illustrated, but in his visionary style, Cowper's *Task* (and at the same time, c. 1802, Hayley's Cowper biography); he admired Cowper immensely and considered him to be on a level with Milton.
- 35 The very expressive drawing for it in Dresden (repr. Federmann, pl. 72), just as a few other drawings by Fuseli depicting a 'real' scene, bears a slight resemblance with those of Goya.
- 36 However Blake, who stood far more to the left, gave a more exact portrayal of the sufferings of the negro slaves in his illustrations to Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1792-3) than Fuseli would have done. D. Erdman (Blake's 'Vision of Slavery', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XV, 1952) shows how Blake's attitude towards the negroes was in conscious contrast to that of Wilberforce who, after the French Revolution, was continuously on the alert to prove that he was a good conservative and that his humanitarianism had nothing to do with democracy. Fuseli's friend and patron, Roscoe, another adversary of the slave trade, was closely connected with Wilberforce.
- 37 Strangely enough, just as the realistic aspect of the scene of *Cardinal Legate Pandulph and King John* seems partly a result of its having been engraved by Blake, so among the Shakespeare illustrations the two engraved by Blake (the *Dream of Katherine of Aragon*; *Romeo and the Apothecary*) are far more realistic, in a 19th-century



OTHER FACETS OF FUSELI'S ENGLISH STYLE

sense, than those engraved by others. Perhaps Blake purposely wished to emphasise that Fuseli's style was more realistic than his own.

- 38 It is characteristic that the illustration of Richard III in the tent scene differs greatly in this publication from Fuseli's previous, most original representations of the same episode and, though the ghosts are not omitted, it is closer in spirit to the traditional portrayal of this scene, as created by Hogarth and romanticised by William Hamilton.

- 39 Repr. Ganz, page 13.



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## VI

### The Last Years

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FUSELI'S novel, partially irrational mannerist-classicist idiom fundamentally survived into this last phase. Yet Fuseli's late work, based on a long and elaborate development, had a wide range. For instance, the realistic-romantic features, previously somewhat isolated, increased from about 1810 onwards, until they became an important component; they still form only one side of his art, but it is an organic one which, at this stage, colours his art more than ever. The difference in mentality as well as in style between even the late Fuseli from about 1810 onwards and the young Delacroix of the 1820s—the stages at which they were closest to each other—are too obvious to require emphasis. The neo-baroque art of French 19th-century romanticism, particularly in its early phase that of the young Delacroix, was of course more realistic, more natural, more psychological, more picturesque than that of Fuseli who still generally kept, at least in his historical compositions, to the classicist convention of representing uncomplicated, almost superhuman beings. Yet in the French romantic movement and in its art conservative and progressive tendencies intermingled, even if in its early phase, the 1820s, the more progressive slightly predominated. Compared with the realistic classicism<sup>1</sup> of the more progressive Géricault, which had only few points of contact with romanticism and led to a consistent realism, Delacroix's imaginative romanticism represents a relatively conservative, less realistic trend.<sup>2</sup>

In fact French romanticism of the 1820s stood in many ways for



something similar to Storm and Stress, to the early German romanticism of the second half of the 18th century and carried on certain features of this purely emotional revolt.<sup>3</sup> The chief aim of both movements—and this was true of Fuseli and Delacroix themselves—was the rendering of the human passions: in 18th-century romanticism as a reaction against the artificiality of rococo, in that of the early 19th century as a reaction against the growing lifelessness of classicism. That is why Fuseli, who used the world of the antique throughout his life in a much more imaginative and passionate sense than did the followers of David, could to some extent foreshadow Delacroix.<sup>4</sup> That is also why Delacroix took themes from Storm and Stress (*Faust*, *Götz von Berlichingen*). With their common interest in the portrayal of passion, the literary predilections and sources of artistic inspiration of the young Delacroix and the elderly Fuseli often coincided, and occasionally their themes of the terrifying and macabre type are closely similar. Fuseli even represented a theme which the young Delacroix was later to use in a way very characteristic of him, namely, *Tasso in the Madhouse*. Both artists availed themselves of Dante<sup>5</sup> and Shakespeare, and the young Delacroix, like Fuseli, was much under the influence of the emotional acting of Shakespeare on the English stage.<sup>6</sup>

Delacroix, moreover, drew the subjects of a great number of his pictures from Byron, Fuseli's favourite poet in his old age.<sup>7</sup> For the purpose of portraying passions and emotions, the violent deeds of the Renaissance appear to have offered Delacroix, the history painter, just as fitting an imaginative background as did the picturesqueness of the Middle Ages. Partly for patriotic reasons French pre-romantic 18th-century painting had recourse to the Renaissance and the Middle Ages, but in a somewhat superficial way; and these periods were also evoked in German 18th-century Storm and Stress literature in attempts to portray supermen with intense passions and in violent action. The political bias in the use of the Middle Ages as a theme was much more consistently reactionary in German 19th-century romanticism, which was sharply opposed to the liberal tendencies of the period, than in that of the French 19th century. In the painting of the Nazarenes, which was more archaising and less vital than French 19th-century romantic painting, the role of Dürer was to lead towards a religious, gothicising style. But Fuseli, on account of his aversion to primitive and religious or mystical art, had never really been attracted by the Middle Ages; the passionate deeds of the Renaissance, however, had always appealed to him and now began to interest him not only in the former 'timeless' manner but increasingly, even if less than with the French romantics, as real and picturesque events of a particular period.



A few works of Fuseli may be mentioned as characteristic of this realistic-romantic side of his art in his late years. Though their themes generally do not differ greatly from those of his previous scenes of terror or eroticism, yet there is a slight though distinct tendency towards the romantic. And, from the formal point of view, not only his realism but even his sense of the picturesque is more apparent in these works.<sup>8</sup> One of these is a drawing of 1816 in the Bollag Collection in Zürich, where a 'Renaissance' courtier, wearing a long cock-feather in his hat, is walking insolently down the staircase away from his victim, who is propped up by two friars (Plate 56a). A water-colour of the same period, which also stylistically anticipates French romanticism to an astonishing degree, is that of a young man in a Renaissance dress watching a nude girl combing her hair (c. 1810-20, Zürich, Kunsthaus<sup>9</sup>) (Plate 59). Apart from drawings there are even some paintings from Fuseli's late period, which clearly foreshadow Delacroix. One apparently illustrates a story from Marguerite de Navarre's *Heptameron*, later a favourite source of the French romantic artists: a sleeping woman imprisoned with the skeleton of her lover and watched by her husband, an old man in armour (Zürich, Private Collection) (Plate 58). Another shows a brooding seated man, beside whom lies the corpses of a nude woman and a man in armour, probably her lover whom he has killed (Zürich, Hurlimann Collection<sup>10</sup>). The 19th-century romanticism of this picture harks back to the young Fuseli's own 18th-century romanticism in the second version of the *Death of Beaufort*, from which it was separated by some forty-five years, just as the drawing of the Bollag Collection is nearer in spirit to the very early murder-scene at Weimar.

If in his middle phase he treated an Italian Renaissance theme, such as *Ezzelino Bracciaferro musing over his victim, Meduna* (1779, drawing in the British Museum<sup>11</sup>; picture in the Soane Museum), the conception was more classicist, less realistic and with less romantic stress. This comes out clearly by comparing it with the picture in the Hurlimann Collection, which has an almost identical subject. In the late work the murderer is posed like one of Fuseli's favourite figures, the man seated full face in the Aminadab lunette of the Sistine, but he has now become a terrifying romantic creature with rolling eyes. Fuseli has here shown an interest in the local colour of the past, contrary to his deliberate neglect of it in his middle phase.<sup>12</sup> And in the later water-colours the contrasts of light and shade are better harmonised than in former years and have less abrupt transitions as, for instance, in the water-colour of the young man and the nude girl, where the romantic theme and concept have prompted an iridescent handling of colours usually associated with Delacroix. We can trace a development in Fuseli, beginning with his early realistically pictu-



resque romantic history painting, perhaps the earliest in Europe, and leading, through various manifestations of his art from round 1800 and particularly from 1810 onwards, in the direction of the works of the young Delacroix.

There is an obvious similarity between such paintings and drawings by Fuseli dating from the second decade of the century and those of the young Delacroix of the third decade, executed under Anglo-German inspiration. This similarity, which is one of formal treatment as well as of theme, is most evident in individual motifs and in compositions with few figures, but it can be traced equally in Delacroix's *Execution of Marino Faliero* of 1826 (Wallace Collection)<sup>13</sup> or his Faust lithographs of 1828. Apart from the reasons already noted for their resemblance to one another, certain mannerist-expressionist features in the art of the young Delacroix, sometimes recalling Dürer, connect it with Fuseli, or more accurately with a general tendency in European art of which, in England, Fuseli's style was the outstanding example.

Delacroix's mannerist horses, partly derived from Gros, have those of Ward as contemporary English parallels. The young Delacroix, with his fondness for the Middle Ages, was far more open in his relation to Dürer than Fuseli, in whom this was rather a latent proclivity. Apart from Fuseli's art, there was another romantic and neo-mannerist source, this time German and consciously derived from Dürer, which was available for the young Delacroix, who used it particularly for his Faust lithographs. This source was the engravings made in 1816 by the young Cornelius for the same play which Delacroix saw in Paris in 1824 before going to England. The pan-European character of this mentality was confirmed by its classicist adversary, Goethe's friend the art critic, H. Meyer, who had been, as a painter, a pupil of Fuseli's father, when he stated in an article of 1817 that the romantics combined an admiration for Dürer with an admiration for mannerists such as Spranger and Goltzius.

The expressionist-mannerist element in romantic, or for that matter classicist art, not only in the 18th but also in the early 19th century, was inclined to be too intense, too intellectual, for the taste of the general public and, apart from Fuseli and particularly Blake, was of but short duration in the various artists themselves. The young Ingres kept up his expressionist-mannerist style only for a very brief period, so did the young Delacroix and the young Cornelius, and Runge's whole career had been short. While at this late stage Fuseli resembled Delacroix because he was more realistic and pictorial than he had been in his middle period, Delacroix in the 1820s resembled Fuseli because, with his unrealistic proportions and accentuated expressions, he was more mannerist than later, when he



was to become entirely neo-baroque.<sup>14</sup> It does not astonish us to learn, through the testimony of the friend of his youth, the painter Soulier, that Delacroix, in fact, admired Fuseli.<sup>15</sup>

The late Fuseli's anticipation of Delacroix affords some indication of Fuseli's particular place within the spiritual atmosphere of international romanticism of the early 19th century. So does his predilection for Byron. Fuseli, Byron and the young Delacroix, of different generations and with different backgrounds, naturally did not share a common outlook; but they certainly had many features in common. This is especially true of both Fuseli and Byron and not only because of their propensity for the demoniac.<sup>16</sup> It is characteristic that it was Byron's Venetian tragedies, in particular *Marino Faliero*, that Fuseli appreciated most deeply; he was probably attracted by their violent passions, their inexorable situations, their intellectual character, their unified structure.<sup>17</sup> Byron, in his turn, admired Fuseli. It would naturally be going too far to maintain that Byron, almost fifty years younger than Fuseli, was a corresponding literary phenomenon to the art of the late Fuseli. But I think it is true to say, in a general way, that while on the one hand Byron, like Fuseli, continued much of the early international romanticism of the 18th century, on the other his work contained a great deal of classicism, particularly in the historical tragedies, again like Fuseli. Byron's pessimism, like Fuseli's, was connected with certain aspects of Rousseau; but, while at the time of Fuseli's youth this association was a precocious, rather rare symptom, after the failure of the French Revolution, in the romanticism of the early 19th century, the *mal du siècle* was quite general. It is also characteristic that Fuseli was interested not only in Byron but in the early romantic Chateaubriand<sup>18</sup> who, equally under Rousseau's influence, greatly intensified his pessimistic features and was, in some ways, a Byron *avant la lettre*.

It is significant that Byron disapproved of the struggle, that is, as he conceived it, the artificial contrast, between classicism and romanticism, such as was fostered by contemporary Germans and Italians.<sup>19</sup> Fundamentally Fuseli's standpoint was the same, even if he expressed himself in a different way. Byron admired Dante, Shakespeare and Milton, though in a degree and manner different from Fuseli. Their common belief in the superiority of the antique and even their strong partiality for Pope—Byron also thought highly of Canova—was, further, characteristic of their type of romanticism, not quite fully-fledged but still classicising. Likewise neither had much liking for the more consistently romantic Lake School, Fuseli being presumably averse to its mysticism as well as to its marked realism. It seems that the Lake School, Wordsworth in particular, for its part, did not care much for Fuseli. However Coleridge, the



most 'German' among the Lake School, must occasionally have felt some sympathy with Fuseli, since, in a well-known letter to Southey of 1794, he proposed to write a 'wild ode' illustrating a passage from the song of *Macbeth's* Witches, 'when I am in a humour to abandon myself to all the diableries that ever met the eye of Fuseli'. Even Southey, in a letter to Taylor of Norwich, the first propagandist of German literature in England, wrote of Fuseli's Milton Gallery: 'He has doubled the pleasure I derived from Milton.'<sup>20</sup> Fuseli's intellectual position, reaching from Storm and Stress to the first quarter of the 19th century and to Byron, is thereby well defined.

Seen within the European development as a whole, Fuseli's evolution in his youth and in his old age offers a certain, though very limited, parallel to that of Goethe, who in his closing years to some extent returned to his own early romanticism, again showed a fondness for old German art, which he praised highly,<sup>21</sup> and admired Byron as well as the young Delacroix's illustrations to *Faust*, a taste which reminds us that Fuseli's early murder scene, which to some extent anticipates Delacroix, possibly came to Weimar through Goethe.

Revealing though it is, it is not enough to appreciate the fact that some of Fuseli's late works thus foreshadowed the French romantic painters. The realism of Fuseli's new romanticism described, perhaps too positively, in these terms was only one aspect of his inclination to draw closer to life at this period. This tendency became more and more an organic component of his late art. It was neither fortuitous nor isolated; on the contrary it was a common, if not very consistent or durable, phenomenon, particularly in younger English artists of those years. Towards the end of the Napoleonic Wars, when reactionary tendencies were disappearing in favour of more democratic ones, a stronger realistic note characterised the whole English cultural atmosphere.

Byron also moved in his late phase towards realism as in *Don Juan*. Together with the new realism went, characteristically, an enthusiasm among intellectuals for Hogarth, whose art had been a strong stimulant in this direction to Fuseli in his youth and in whom Fuseli never entirely lost interest throughout his career. Lamb's famous article on Hogarth was written in 1811; the large Hogarth exhibition in the British Institution was in 1814; Hazlitt's article on the artist, based on this exhibition, appeared in the same year. Fuseli's somewhat irrational, mannerist-classicist art would not, of course, have lent itself to any real *volte-face*, yet he seems to have turned, quite naturally in this late phase, towards an imaginative realism. It should not be forgotten that, in his early years, he showed far more interest in realism, in the outer world than, say, Flaxman and that he never



entirely abandoned his early, near-liberal world of ideas. Links of this kind exist between the early and the late Fuseli; and taken altogether his early and late styles were more interesting and varied than the better-known sometimes schematic style of his long middle period which is usually taken as epitomising his art.

Though Fuseli went on painting pictures to the end, it was particularly in his drawings that he revealed his more intimate thoughts and it was in them that these fresh characteristics appeared. The themes for the most part were now different and finished historical compositions became rarer.<sup>22</sup> Even his ghost-like apparitions were, so to speak, more intimately portrayed. His realistic tendency was most strongly shown at this time in his very frequent studies of nudes. In style these late drawings assumed a kind of realistic, monumental, frequently tranquil expressionism, sometimes with a more romantic bias, sometimes with a more classicist tendency. The artist's handling and technique had also altered, partly, perhaps, as a result of age. The drawings were now usually done in quite a weak wash, the nudes with a soft, sensitive pencil. The pictorial qualities of some of Fuseli's late pictures are quite astonishing. *The Fairy* (c. 1822, Basel Museum) has passages reminiscent of the late Titian and the *Release of a Maiden* (c. 1810-20, Basel, Private Collection) (Plate 63) is painted with an audacious verve, in the vein of Tintoretto. The simple and powerful contrast of his diagonals in both his pictures and drawings, though reduced in number, remind us more persistently of the Venetian artist. It is probably no coincidence that Fuseli never acclaimed Titian and Tintoretto more enthusiastically and with less qualification in his writings than in his late, *11th Lecture*, praising them, not only for their colour but, in the case of Tintoretto, also for his composition. In this lecture, when extolling the Venetians, Fuseli also appears to lay special stress upon the imitation of nature. And the same idea is revealed in his comment on Michelangelo, that 'an irresistible bias has drawn off his attention from the modesty and variety of nature' and when he disparaged, not, however, for the first time, his most mannerist works, the frescoes of the Cappella Paolina. He now found more faults than previously in his favourite mannerist artists, Parmigianino and Tibaldi: eccentricity, extravagance, exaggeration. His last three lectures (the 10th, 11th and 12th) delivered in 1825, the year of his death, offered the clearest intellectual parallel to his late style.

An often repeated motif of Fuseli's nudes, in the second decade of the 19th century, was that of an Embrace. Generally the original starting-point was, I think, a literary theme, such as *Romeo and Juliet* or *Troilus and Cressida*, but the character of these drawings of nudes became less and less literary. The comparison of two drawings with



an interval of only six years between them will make this clear. A very carefully finished outline drawing of 1813 represents Chriemhild sitting beside a spinet while Siegfried kisses her (Zürich, Kunsthhaus), the woman being of the Salviati-Vasari type and style with which we are so familiar in Fuseli's work. In 1819 Fuseli made a drawing which portrays the same situation and the same poses—a young man kissing a woman seated at a spinet (Zürich, Kunsthhaus<sup>23</sup>)—but the figures are now almost entirely nude and apparently the drawing is devoid of literary content. Fuseli has approached the subject in a wholly new spirit: he has turned away from mythology towards a purely human conception of the love theme, and has treated it more realistically. The former rigidity of the line has vanished; here Fuseli has drawn pulsating bodies and his pencil has played softly and lovingly over the contours. In his *10th Lecture* Fuseli wrote: 'It is to life we must recur—to warm, fleshy, genial life—for animated forms.' Fuseli, it is true, used this phrase partly in connection with antique art, and admiration for this kind of realism,<sup>24</sup> particularly in connection with Lysippus, occurred in his early writings. But never before was the praise so fervent, all the more since it was coupled with a warning against an exaggerated stone-like classicist painting: 'It will not be suspected, I trust, that I meant to recommend the frigid introduction of that marble style, that pedantic stiffness, which under the abused name of correctness, frequently disfigures the labours of those who . . . content themselves with being the tame transcribers of the dead letter, instead of the spirit of the ancients.'

Fuseli's human rendering of sentiments, no longer represented through their traditional literary themes or allegories, was an interesting development, which is relevant to the whole of European art.<sup>25</sup> Fuseli's art had already shown signs of this potentiality: in drawings like *Fear*, in illustrations to Milton like *Solitude in Twilight*; and now, in some drawings, there is evidence of even greater detachment from concrete literary themes than before.<sup>26</sup> Other good examples are Fuseli's frequent renderings of a standing male and female nude kissing. Here again the origin was probably the clothed, embracing couple, which appear in an almost baroque picture, which portrays a scene of jealousy (Winterthur, Private Collection) probably taken from some specific literary theme. But in a simple and monumental drawing of about 1815, representing the nude couple alone, kissing (Basel) (Plate 57b), Fuseli has concentrated upon the elemental emotions of love, with an obvious delight in the body itself, which in this sense was not noticeable in his earlier work.<sup>27</sup>

A drawing like this, which is of very high quality and epitomises



the complexity of Fuseli's late phase, clarifies his relation with the art of the past and with contemporary art, as well as casting a beam a long way ahead. The Parmigianinesque roots are still visible. There are also contacts with Flaxman's delicate studies after nature,<sup>28</sup> though Fuseli's drawings are more warmly and passionately conceived. Since Fuseli had now become something of a realist without entirely losing his classicism, his art again pointed, as it had in his early Roman period, towards Géricault, his junior by fifty years and perhaps the most progressive artist of his time. I have in mind Géricault's early, that is approximately contemporary, classicist, monumental drawings of mythological lovers which were not yet so consistently realistic as his later works and had even a slight touch of mannerism in the vein of Girodet or the early Ingres. Whenever we feel tempted to compare too closely characteristics of Fuseli with Michelangelo, it is this nearness to Géricault—to make a sweeping statement—that presents the most forceful reminder of the lively 19th-century character of Fuseli's art. Regarded from the classicist angle of his art, we are always aware of certain anticipations of Géricault in him, particularly in individual motifs. This appears, for example, if we compare some of Géricault's drawings done in Italy (c. 1816–17), of men overcoming horses or bulls, with various much earlier drawings by Fuseli, connected, like those of Géricault, with the motif of the horse tamer. At the time of the *Medusa* (c. 1819), moreover, Géricault followed up ideas of Fuseli in certain dramatic sketches of small groups of dying people. Furthermore Géricault understood not only the classicist but also the realistic side and consequences of Fuseli's macabre style.<sup>29</sup> Fuseli's scene of a kiss, again the rendering of an elemental instinct like that of *Fear*, is also strikingly close to the expressionism of Munch, whose favourite theme this was. Munch's etching, *The Kiss*, of 1895, though it has discarded even the remnants of Fuseli's sensuousness, gives a good idea of this similarity of approach in theme as well as in form, whilst his woodcut of the same subject of 1897 (Plate 57a) provides a still closer parallel in the expressiveness of the lines.

Like his love scenes, even Fuseli's renderings of prostitutes from this period have something of the same 'intimate' character and lose their former startling aggressiveness. For the most part these compositions no longer represent scenes but only single figures, and these have almost the appearance of being drawn after nature.<sup>30</sup> Fuseli's genuine studies after nature, while losing nothing of the almost Géricault-like monumentality of the girl reading, in the Lowinsky Collection, have now become more intimate, as, for instance, in the soft delicate drawing of a lightly draped young woman sitting asleep by a window (c. 1816–21, Basel<sup>31</sup>). Something in her pose still



reflects the Erythrean Sibyl but, compared with the young lady writing, done in Zürich some forty years before, which caught the same echo of Michelangelo, this late drawing is much less heroic, far more human. While hitherto in portraiture Fuseli had nearly always confined himself to drawings, about 1820 he produced a painted portrait, that of Miss Otway-Cave (Zürich, Private Collection) (Plate 61). The relative realism of his early portrait drawings of Martha Hess, dating from 1778-9, seems to have come back again, with a sensuous expressionist flavour reminiscent of his drawings of prostitutes. This expression, so astonishing in a portrait, makes Goya's likeness of Queen Caroline seem objective and Girodet's portrait caricature of Mlle Lange as Danaë seem naïve. This portrait is indeed unique in European art at its time.

Though in his late phase borrowings occur less frequently,<sup>32</sup> I should like to conclude Fuseli's stylistic development with a drawing which offers a characteristic symptom of his mentality at this stage. In 1822, three years before his death, he was interested and inspired by a composition of Greuze. This drawing, *Flight from the Family Circle* (Zürich, Kunsthaus) (Plate 60a), obviously derives from Greuze's *The Father's Curse* (Louvre) (Plate 60b), which shows an unhappy family group with the son, cursed by his father and refusing to yield to the tears of his mother and sisters, on the point of leaving the house. Fuseli was familiar with an engraving after this painting of Greuze, since from 1789 it hung in the house of his friend, William Lock.<sup>33</sup> In his accustomed manner he has exaggerated the emotional tension, the attitudes and the gestures. The girl, who replaces the son in Greuze, nearly flies to the door in her efforts to leave the house, while two men, perhaps her father and brother, impulsively throw up their arms, and one of them is actually jumping. Despite vague semi-antique features and an expressionist transposition, unavoidable in a drawing destined for his private use and not for publication, it is fundamentally the representation of a contemporary family scene, as in Greuze. We should again cast our minds back to his earliest drawings of domestic and genre scenes, such as the *Family Breakfast*, where an agitated expressionism predominates, in no way connected with the peaceful subject. Now, in this late drawing, the domestic subject is a quarrel, offering a basis with some motive for his expressionism. Fragments of ideas and of styles whirl about in the air when an expressionist injects a dash of realism into his art. Greuze's composition dates from 1765: it took Fuseli, who in any case did not care for French art, almost sixty years to develop any sympathy for this particular picture of a sentimental middle-class character. However, he eventually reached this point via Hogarth and Cowper. It would be unwise to read too much into this isolated



borrowing from Greuze; yet, considered within the general orientation of Fuseli's late phase, this arrival, determined in point of time by the new liberal atmosphere after the war, marks a certain return to the liberalism pervading the intellectual *milieu* of his own youth. To recall Greuze is, historically speaking, to evoke the memory of Diderot, in whom emotion and sentiment were indissolubly blended with a penchant for realism; and it was precisely this type of pre-revolutionary Enlightenment that came close to the more progressive side of Storm and Stress, the starting-point for Fuseli.<sup>34</sup>



## Notes to Chapter VI

- 1 At the end of the 18th century a most interesting anticipation of Géricault's style took place in England; not, however, through English but—most characteristically—through American artists, such as West and, to a much greater extent, Copley, who had more interest in contemporary events and a less conventional conception of art: See E. Wind, 'The Revolution of History Painting' (*Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, II. 2. 1938-9).
- 2 See my articles, 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism, III, IV, V' (*Burlington Magazine*, 1940).
- 3 Also see a brief account in 'Reflections on Classicism and Romanticism, II' (*Burlington Magazine*, 1936) of French pre-romantic painting of the 1780s as the ancestor of French 19th-century romantic painting. It was, however, rather weak and bloodless compared with the more intense German movement which included Fuseli.
- 4 The subtly expressive way in which, in his early lithographs after antique coins, Delacroix rendered Greek and also archaic heads is strongly reminiscent of Fuseli's transposition of the antique, for example, of his impressive drawing about half a century earlier of an archaic female figure in profile (Zürich, Kunsthau; repr. Ganz, page 58).
- 5 In Fuseli this interest had shown itself very early and it was only in the romanticism of the beginning of the 19th century that admiration for Dante was to become general.
- 6 They both admired Kean, the Shakespearean actor, in the new romantic vein. His manner of acting, which might be termed the realism of romanticism, marked an end of the previous declamatory school and to some extent a return to Garrick. In 1812 Fuseli took up, in a large oil sketch (Lowinsky Collection), the composition of his early realist drawing of about 1765, Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth after the murder of Duncan. The oil sketch is in a different spirit from the drawing: the figures are dematerialised, ghost-like, but it is a ghost scene based, as it were, on palpable reality, due to Fuseli's conscious, however qualified,



return, after half a century, to perhaps his most realistic drawing, that is, to an early stage when realism was an actual possibility. Though Fuseli often reverted to older drawings for use in his pictures, I mention this particular case as of special significance.

- 7 See Appendix VII.
- 8 Fuseli, though much against Rembrandt's 'vulgar' realism, was full of the highest praise in his lectures for Rembrandt's pictorial qualities. He was perhaps the first (in his *2nd Lecture*) to relate Rembrandt and Shakespeare: 'Shakespeare alone excepted, no one combined with so much transcendent excellence so many in all other men unpardonable faults and reconciled us to them.' As W. Watzoldt *op. cit.* has already noted, it was Delacroix who, after half a century, was to express again appreciation of Rembrandt in his *Journal*.
- 9 Although this remarkable water-colour is not a left-handed work, as Fuseli's drawings mostly are, it is, stylistically, quite close to him; it bears the stamp of Baroness North's collection, who owned all Fuseli's drawings left after his death, which also supports its authenticity.
- 10 Repr. Federmann, pl. 24.
- 11 Repr. Powell, pl. 26.
- 12 In writings which mostly date from his earlier years Fuseli always stressed the timelessness of great art and despised local colour.
- 13 Or to mention a less-known picture, but one which expresses still better what I mean, *The Ball at the Capulets*, of 1824.
- 14 In some of his late pictures (e.g. *Fight between English and Orientals*, sketch, Basel, Private Collection, repr. Federmann, pl. 21, *Scene of Jealousy*, c. 1820, Winterthur, Private Collection) Fuseli comes rather close to baroque; the battle-scene, said to have been inspired by Byron, is somewhere between Gros, Girodet and the young Delacroix. However, since Fuseli was never completely baroque, he was never quite close to Delacroix's real ancestors, the baroque Rubens and the baroque-rococo Fragonard. The young Delacroix's art was also obviously influenced by English neo-baroque historical painting, with its Rubens-Van Dyck tradition, the link being, of course, Bonington.
- 15 *Correspondence générale d'Eugène Delacroix* (Vol. I, Paris, 1935). See Appendix VI.
- 16 See Appendix VII.
- 17 But it was the genuine romantic Delacroix who, in his paintings, was to exploit fully Byron's works: not only the dramas such as *Marino Faliero* and *Sardanapalus* (Baudelaire, who understood Delacroix better than anyone, called him 'molocheiste'), but, above all, the exotic-romantic poems. In illustrating these, Delacroix often used English semi-romantic illustrations to Byron (Cruikshank, Stothard) with great ease, as a starting-point; see this material in G. H. Hamilton, 'Delacroix, Byron and the English Illustrators' (*Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 1949).



- 18 See Appendix VII.
- 19 In a letter from Ravenna to John Murray in 1820.
- 20 Blake, on the other hand, was overfond of Coleridge as well as of Southey; it is equally characteristic of the taste of the romantic writers that Coleridge liked Piranesi's *Carceri* and described them to de Quincey, who wove them into his dreams.
- 21 See page 75, note 4.
- 22 The more intimate character of Fuseli's drawings of historical subjects was already anticipated by his book illustrations, owing to their naturally small size.
- 23 Repr. Federmann, pl. 68; Ganz, pl. 97.
- 24 See page 129, note 23.
- 25 The novelty of Fuseli's drawing vanishes if we think of Goya. But if we compare Fuseli's very personal, very human derivation from the *Nibelungenlied*, say, with Cornelius's more pedestrian illustrations of the same epic, done at the same time (1812-17), we realise the great difference between Fuseli's possibilities and those of the general run of art in his day.
- 26 Fuseli well realised the ease of transition from historic to non-historic subjects, provided the human content was identical; he described these types of non-historic subjects, which he called fantasies (see page 111, note 61), 'the simple representations of actions purely human' and 'as elemental as the emotions of nature and the passions by which she sways us'. He asserted that the Madonnas of Raphael or 'Niobe protecting her daughter' owed the sympathies they called forth to their assimilating power, and not to the names they bore: without names, without reference to time and place, they would impress with equal energy, because they 'find their counterpart in every breast, and speak the language of mankind'. Historical compositions, on the other hand, 'have that prerogative over mere natural imagery, that whilst they bespeak our sympathy, they interest our intellect'.
- 27 A comparison of this drawing with an early one done in Rome, *Amor and Psyche kissing* (Roman sketch-book, Zürich), shows how much Fuseli developed towards simplicity, monumentality and a feeling for the body.
- 28 See page 83.
- 29 A few of Fuseli's pictures and drawings from c. 1810-20, often representing Venus with putti or with Amor and Psyche, show undeniable similarity, in types as well as in tender feeling for the body, with Prudhon's well-known pictures and sketches of similar themes from c. 1808; in Fuseli, Prudhon's classicism has naturally been slightly transformed towards mannerism (the English picture which corresponds nearest, stylistically, to Prudhon of which I know, is Hoppner's *Sleeping Venus* at Petworth). That Prudhon himself, as has been suggested in literature, based his *Justice pursuing Crime* on a Fuseli composition does not seem to me convincing.



- 30 In a drawing of a courtesan leaning over a parapet (1810, Zürich, Kunsthaus; repr. Ganz, pl. 90b), Fuseli harks back to his very similar but somewhat grander figure of Maria from *Twelfth Night* or even Miranda from the *Tempest* in the Shakespeare edition of 1805, and now gives a more vivid close-up of them. This observation perhaps affords us some insight into Fuseli's working process and stylistic development.
- 31 Repr. Ganz, pl. 95.
- 32 Of course, reminiscences of Michelangelo do not quite vanish, nor even those of his favourite antique statues. For example, a drawing from 1815, portraying a fight over a woman who has fainted (Zürich, Bollag Collection) (repr. Federmann, pl. 67), calls to mind something of *Menelaus carrying the Corpse of Patroclus* as well as of the *Gaul killing his Wife*. In its broken ductus, the drawing reminds us strongly of the Rosso imitator of the late 16th century, Boscoli.
- 33 We know that Lock bought this engraving, as well as another after Greuze, at that time in London. See Duchess of Sermoneta, *op. cit.*
- 34 Fuseli was much interested in analyses of inner life as undertaken in those two novels which were of vital importance for Enlightenment as well as for Storm and Stress: Richardson's *Clarissa*, which greatly influenced *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, was one of his favourite books throughout his life; and the copy in his library of the *Nouvelle Héloïse* itself, a novel he had known so well since his youth and which he analysed in his *Remarks on Rousseau*, was the 1819 edition, evidently bought shortly before his death to be re-read.



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## VII

### After Fuseli

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WHAT was to be the fate of Fuseli's late style in England after his death? What was to be the fate of his style as a whole? The fate of Fuseli's style, seen in a broader context, was also that of English painting. Though the generation which followed Fuseli owed many features directly to his historical paintings, neither the possibilities, admittedly only slight, in his late style towards a realistic classicism nor the expressionist tendency dominating his whole style could be consistently continued. A genuine realistic classicism in figure compositions followed by a consistent realism, as they appear in the development from Géricault to Courbet in France, was inconceivable in England, since in the 19th century in this country the middle class did not have to fight for its freedom of development in consecutive revolutions as in France and, in consequence, did not have the same revolutionary impetus behind its art. Thus most of the art currents in England, following Fuseli, had a character of make-believe. Many-sided as was his late style, his various pupils made use of it for different purposes. One of them, Haydon (1786-1846), carried on some of the realist-classicist features in West and attached himself more firmly and openly than did Fuseli to Hogarth's realism<sup>1</sup>; but even he did not come within the orbit of Géricault's style. It would be nearer the mark to say that Haydon occasionally experimented in a combination of expressionism and Hogarth. Fuseli had already tried such a synthesis in his earliest as well as in his later days, and Haydon attempted it again on a new, more realistic level, on the level of the late 1820s.<sup>2</sup>



Etty (1787-1849), another pupil of Fuseli and also of Lawrence, was also in a sense realistic, but his realism, as we see it in his slightly obscene, sugary nudes, mainly consisted in making more palpable the eroticism implied in his master's work, carrying on in this obvious sense some part only of the realistic tendency of the late Fuseli. Generally speaking, the eventual emergence of an expressionist painting at this heroic-realistic stage of 19th-century middle-class art was, of course, impossible throughout Europe, and England was no exception.<sup>3</sup> No wonder Hazlitt, the representative of a new, more rational generation, found Fuseli too German and too obscure.<sup>4</sup> In the 19th century the expressionist current, deriving ultimately from Fuseli and Blake, could only constitute an intermittent trickle, never playing a real part in English art; with each generation it took on the shape of the particular new phase of English painting. While Ward still had points of contact, of a general character, with the sinister elements in Fuseli's art, Blake's late followers, Calvert, Linnell and Palmer, already lived in the innocuously idyllic atmosphere of the next generation.

In the agitated, classicist types of the young Watts something has come via Haydon from Fuseli, but as the 19th century went on, certain literary themes originally used by Fuseli and taken up by Watts lost in him every significance. The pictures of John Martin (1789-1854) signified a popularisation, one might almost say an unconsciously low-brow debasement, of scenes of terror taken from Fuseli and also from Turner into pseudo-realistic melodramatic romanticism. It is instructive to observe how in his picture *The Bard* (1817, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) (Plate 64a) Martin used Fuseli's illustration of Gray's poem (Plate 64b) adding to the figure a vast, terrific, panorama-like landscape. He treated other Fuseli themes similarly, such as *Macbeth* and *Paradise Lost*, making schematic and repetitive use of movements in Fuseli's figures. Martin's pictures show what a certain kind of 19th-century romantic mentality could make of the late 18th-century Louthembourg type of representations of rocks, floods and storms, which in themselves were derived from Joseph Vernet and Salvator Rosa. His points of contact with much greater artists, like Turner, frequently reveal their vulnerable facets. Admittedly a few of his simple sketches are not unlike those of Victor Hugo, and Berlioz admired him. Generally speaking, he was a favourite painter with princes, with writers of novels of terror like Bulwer Lytton, with the large number of upper middle-class people who had lower middle-class taste and presumably with the lower middle class itself. He was probably the most internationally famous English painter of his time.

Just as the earliest romantic painters in these islands were Scots



(the Runcimans), so were the last stragglers: the cultivated David Scott (1806-49), a rather lonely apparition, occasionally showed traces of the force and fancy of the Fuseli world. As the notes of his Italian journey show, he also shared some of Fuseli's artistic culture and his predilection for Italian mannerism; he praised, for instance, Parmigianino, Bandinelli, Franco, Tibaldi, Lodovico Caracci; in Naples he was probably unique at that time in looking at Marco da Siena with admiration. Although, apart from Etty's very modest attempt in this direction, no consistent romantic-baroque painting was taking shape in England on a large scale, as it was in France, a certain possibility existed of combining the late Fuseli's art with that of Delacroix, particularly that of the young Delacroix. A close follower of Fuseli, von Holst (1810-44), a rather amateurish artist but a link in a chain of some consequence in English art, tried to fulfil this task.<sup>5</sup> He formed, as did Scott to some extent, a kind of transition between Fuseli's art and that of the Pre-Raphaelites to come. Rossetti, who admired not only Fuseli<sup>6</sup> and Blake but also von Holst, was well aware of this ancestry which remained a more or less concealed haunting undertone of Pre-Raphaelitism.<sup>7</sup>

It was finally to emerge above the surface when, in the '90s with Beardsley, Pre-Raphaelitism was transposed into expressionism and thus represented an English, though less powerful parallel to the great European early expressionist movement of those years. It was in consequence rather of the European than of the English movement, soon interrupted after Beardsley, that Fuseli's style 'arrived'. It is not difficult to trace a path from Fuseli to the early, heroic phase of European expressionism round 1890, particularly to the young Munch. Generally speaking, Fuseli was still expressing himself at the end of his life through traditional literary themes, but in his by-products he was also beginning to emerge from them and to represent elemental passions such as love, fear and jealousy on a purely human level. It was these themes which, in conformity with the increased subjectivism of his day, were to provide Munch's main subjects. In Fuseli's drawings, no less than in Munch's engravings, it is the expressiveness of the line which is the main vehicle of their art.<sup>8</sup> During the 20th century, with the social and ideological crisis of the middle class, weakened in two world wars, with subjectivism and irrationalism becoming intensified, uncontrolled and playful, with the ivory-tower mentality greatly to the fore, expressionism and its various stylistic consequences, later abstract art and surrealism, spread extensively throughout Europe. So Fuseli's style as well as its main source, 16th-century mannerism, also in many ways subjective, irrational, expressionist and unrealistic, were necessarily felt to be relevant. Since England was somewhat behindhand, the importance



of both these styles was realised on the Continent earlier than in England.<sup>9</sup>

But for how long will this sense of their relevance and esteem for it continue? Are we not beginning slowly to look back upon the various styles, fashions and revivals, even of the recent past, the first half of the 20th century itself, in an historical light? All the more useful has it been, I hope, to have considered the historical reasons for the subjectivism of Fuseli's art, the genuine historical meaning of this late 18th and early 19th-century style, poised between the classicism and romanticism of its time.



## Notes to Chapter VII

- 1 Mason rightly draws attention to the characteristic clash between Haydon's and Fuseli's viewing of the Elgin Marbles (in 1808). Expressed in stylistic terms, it was the clash between a realist and unrealist classicism. It was no mere chance that Haydon was well acquainted with anatomy and Fuseli was not.
- 2 I have in mind such pictures as *The Mock Election*, *The Chairing of the Member*, *The Punch and Judy Show*. Haydon's interesting portraits inherited something of the expressionism of Fuseli's.
- 3 But even if before the early 20th century no expressionist painting could develop on a large scale throughout Europe, it was only natural that the few isolated writers of this tendency, like Poe (in his *Fall of the House of Usher*), whom Baudelaire translated, admired Fuseli.
- 4 When Hazlitt took note of the mannerist sources of Fuseli's art, he did so, I think, rather with disapproval. Of Parmigianino's *Madonna col collo lungo* in the Pitti Gallery, he wrote in his *Notes of a Journey through France and Italy* (1825): 'There is a Parmigianino here in which one can see the origin of Fuseli's style.'
- 5 He illustrated *Frankenstein*, a novel of terror on a rather high literary level, written by Mary Shelley, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft.
- 6 In fact Fuseli's late water-colour of a young man in Renaissance dress, watching a nude girl combing her hair (see page 134; pl. 59), not only shows resemblances to Delacroix but also leads to Rossetti.
- 7 Not far from von Holst we must place Wainewright, painter, art critic, dandy and poisoner, an admirer and imitator of Fuseli and probably forger of his obscene drawings. As one would expect, Swinburne appreciated him. Oscar Wilde wove around him the aura of the cultured aesthete, who tried to make his life a work of art (*Pen, Pencil and Poison*) and Mario Praz presented him in *The Romantic Agony* as a perverse malefactor on a grand scale. The best analysis of Wainewright's precious writings on art is to be found in Helene Richter, *Geschichte der Englischen Romantik* (Halle, 1911).



#### AFTER FUSELI

- 8 Another early expressionist, the Swiss Hodler, on seeing drawings by Fuseli, asked who it was who drew so very much like himself.
- 9 The social background of Fuseli's art and the one favourable for his revival have had, of course, certain similar features: in the first case the early ideological weakness of the middle class, in the second its decadence. One result of the Fuseli revival on the Continent has been books such as that by E. Jaloux (*Johann-Heinrich Füssli*, Geneva, 1942), who is interested exclusively in the unrealistic side of Fuseli's art and indiscriminately associated with this everything irrational or fantastic produced in European art and literature during the last two thousand years. Contemporary German art-historical literature, though more scientific, diverges little from this point of view. While Schrade's article of 1932 was undoubtedly historical, even if in an expressionist sense it exaggerated Hoffmann's article of 1913, it already corresponded in its approach to abstract art, as expressed by Kandinsky and Klee (leaving nothing in ecstasy to spare for a Blake revival). The turning-point in favour of an un-historical, entirely anti-classicist interpretation was Beutler's lecture, delivered in 1938 on the occasion of the Fuseli exhibition in the Goethe House at Frankfurt, the first exhibition of Fuseli's works in Germany.



## Appendix I

### Mannerist Features of Michelangelo's Drawings

ASSESSMENT of the degree and manner of Michelangelo's cubic conception and summary treatment of the figures in his various drawings, and their relation, from this point of view, to the mannerists, must depend partly on the stage which a particular drawing represents within his process of work; in consequence the stylistic aspect of this problem is far too complex to be broached in this book and I venture only a few remarks. In early drawings of a detailed character round 1501-3 there occasionally appear suggestions of a block-like relation between body and drapery and of sharp edges to the folds. At the Sistine period we find, in Michelangelo, compressions, abbreviations of a cubic character involving the whole figure, mainly, I think, in his rapidly executed, quite small-scale designs, done as working models, for individual figures of the Sistine ceiling. A plastic-cubic isolation of the figures, in the case of elaborate scenes, is to be found more in drawings of the mannerists of the 1520s, at the climax of the first great wave of mannerism, particularly noticeable in Rosso, who not only builds up the volume of the body cubically but even gives a kind of cubist breaking of the drapery. On the other hand the cubic-monumental figures in Michelangelo's late drawings from the second half of the 1540s and the 1550s and, together with this, the independent, pronounced edges of the folds in some more elaborate drawings of individual figures where drapery and body are entirely fused, are of an entirely unreal, spiritualised, dematerialised character; they are beyond the Rosso of the 1520s, though not quite unconnected with him, I think.

The general run of mannerist drawings which copy the Ancestors



#### MANNERIST FEATURES OF MICHELANGELO'S DRAWINGS

simplify and summarise very markedly. Even the mannerist engravings, which copy the same figures, slightly change the originals in this cubic sense. Blake, who was even more partial than Fuseli to the Ancestors among the figures of the Sistine, on account of their mannerist potentialities, knew them only through these engravings (see Blunt, *op. cit.*).



## Appendix II

### Fuseli and Michelangelo

WHILE extremely well acquainted with Michelangelo's paintings, Fuseli probably knew Michelangelo's drawings in Italy only from copies or engravings; yet it is tempting to suggest that, imbued with the knowledge of Michelangelo's art, the mannerist-inclined Fuseli created from reminiscences of Michelangelo's paintings, figures of his own which, art-historically speaking, often come very close to some of the master's drawings. In these there occur elongated, rhythmic mannerist figures, particularly male nudes, from as early as the time of the Battle cartoon: see, for example, in the British Museum drawing, from c. 1503-4 for the Bruges Madonna, the group of three nude men, individual motifs of which are somewhat Fuseli-like (this group has been wrongly, but characteristically, assigned to some late mannerist follower of Michelangelo from the Rosso or Pontormo circle, while, in fact, it is connected, as others have rightly suggested, with the Battle cartoon). Drawings with strongly marked facial expression heralding mannerism equally appear in this same early period of Michelangelo, such as in the head of a satyr (British Museum). The stylistic derivation of this particular drawing from Filippino seems to me obvious as well as significant, since these early-mannerist drawings of Michelangelo, together with contemporary ones, say, of the young Fra Bartolommeo, the young Granacci and many others, are a continuation of the various waves of late Florentine Quattrocento-Gothic. Equally, when towards the end of the 2nd decade the 'genuine' phase of mannerism began in Florence, it was Filippino who became the decisive influence for Rosso. And when Michelangelo was again in Florence, in the second half of the 1520s and in the early 1530s, it would seem—to mention only his drawings—that the mannerist trend he had helped to set in motion, in its turn, now influenced him. His connection can be felt with the local



mannerism mainly of the type of Rosso—precisely the artist who comes so frequently to mind when discussing Fuseli's drawings—when grotesque expressive faces reappear in his drawings along with erotic female types with elaborate coiffures. Now equally frequently there crop up again in Michelangelo's drawings—e.g. in those of the Resurrection, some figures of which are most evocative of Fuseli—elongated figures of a rhythmic character, sometimes approaching the ornamental to an extent Fuseli was almost never to adopt. And characteristically it was with individual motifs of these Florentine mannerist drawings of Michelangelo's that Franco, for example, an artist whose resemblance to Fuseli in artistic temperament is often striking, would link up.



### Appendix III

## Ottley's View of Donatello and Bandinelli

IN Fuseli's cultural *milieu* in England, the styles of the late Donatello and Bandinelli were later felt to be so close together that drawings by Bandinelli, one among them of *The Entombment*, were thought by Ottley (who, in his own drawings, imitated Fuseli as well as Bandinelli) to be by Donatello and published as such. Apart from what he rightly considered stylistic affinities, Ottley based his attributions on the fact that, in spite of Vasari's encomium on Donatello's sketches, no drawings whatsoever by him were to be found in the Ducal collection in Florence, while he himself discovered, on one of the drawings then attributed to Bandinelli, in an old hand, the name of Donatello.

For Ottley greatly admired Donatello's reliefs on the S. Lorenzo pulpit—written confirmation of Fuseli's partiality for them. By 18th or 19th-century standards this was an exceptional attitude, though characteristic of the Fuseli circle. (In spite of Donatello's great fame, these reliefs were the last to be noticed, while appreciation of them, in art-historical literature, only occurs in recent expressionist times; see my articles of the 1920s on the importance of these reliefs in Donatello's *œuvre* as well as in Florentine art.) Ottley even reproduced the cowering mourner from the *Entombment* relief, placed in front of the sarcophagus and bending forward; characteristically it was these types of figures which attracted him most, just as they did Fuseli.

Ottley also wrote—and here again Fuseli's own experience can be sensed—of the spiritual unity between Donatello and Michelangelo. To support his thesis, Ottley quoted similar mannerist sentiments: namely that, according to Vasari, Vincenzo Borghini purposely



placed works by Donatello and Michelangelo side by side in his book of drawings. In fact the seated mourner shaped like a solid block, which Ottley reproduces, tends, more than any other Donatello figure, to foreshadow Michelangelo's Ancestors. And it is characteristic that Fuseli was aware of this: in a drawing, *The Changeling* (Zürich, Kunsthhaus) (Federmann, pl. 32; Ganz, pl. 39), dating from 1780, soon after his period in Italy, the grandiose figure of the hooded old woman crouching in the right corner is a combination of impressions from the seated Donatello weepers and Michelangelo's Prophets and Ancestors (e.g. Ezechiel, Asa).

Ottley esteemed Bandinelli's drawings not only when he supposed them to be by Donatello but also when he accepted them as by Bandinelli himself; he considered that Bandinelli was, after Michelangelo, 'the greatest designer of the Florentine school of the period' and that the grandeur of some of his drawings resembled ancient Greek art. Such remarks are valuable because they throw light not only upon Fuseli's own views, too, but even upon his art. Ottley, like Fuseli, greatly appreciated the drawings of other early 16th-century mannerists such as Beccafumi, Giulio Romano, Parmigianino, Polidoro and, among later ones, Passerotti, an imitator of Bandinelli. Like Fuseli, he too did not care for the baroque (but he had somewhat greater regard for the primitives).

The art of the late Donatello and that of mannerism, even in our own day, has been open to confusion: it was only some thirty years ago that I recognised the mannerist character of three terra-cotta *bozzetti* of the Passion in the Bargello, then attributed to Donatello and thought to be connected with the reliefs of the S. Lorenzo pulpit; they are now rightly assigned to Vincenzo de' Rossi.



## Appendix IV

### Fuseli and Rubens

APART from the obvious relation of Fuseli's copy of the *Anghiari Battle* to Rosa, its less obvious one with Rubens's Italian style should be noted—a relation which grew out of the similarity of Rubens's and Fuseli's respective art-historical situation at a given stage. When Rubens was living in Italy and his style was vacillating, as a hundred years previously Leonardo's had done, between classicism and baroque, with a dash of mannerism in it, he not only copied this famous group but, inspired by the *Battle of Anghiari*, also drew another group, at whose centre were fighting warriors and two rearing horses, ferociously biting each other (British Museum) (Plate 22a); it is, as L. Burchard has pointed out, an original composition by Rubens, not, as had been assumed, a copy after Leonardo, and since it was at one time in Ottley's collection, Fuseli may well have known it. This Rubens drawing and Fuseli's have similarly transposed Leonardo in the direction of his own mannerist possibilities; Rubens's drawing is naturally more baroque in style than that of Fuseli but, at the same time, is unusually savage for Rubens, with its Salviati-like horses. Elements of Leonardo's agitated early style, that of the *Adoration of the Magi*, close to the late Donatello's S. Lorenzo pulpit, revive at the period of the *Battle of Anghiari* and, in their turn, point the way towards the wild horses (and elaborate armour) of Salviati's Camillus frescoes (or, say, those of Tibaldi). It is quite understandable that it was to this particular phase of Leonardo that Rubens and Fuseli attached themselves, when engaged upon their respective Italian studies, and that they carried on this style in an unconscious parallel, since both were able by this means to make ample use of the intensity of the mannerist artists.

A later picture by Fuseli, dating from after his return to England, *Hüon freeing Babekan attacked by a Lion*, an illustration to Wieland's



#### FUSELI AND RUBENS

*Oberon* (c. 1795–1800, Zürich, Bollag Collection), (repr. Federmann, pl. 32), with its steeply rising group of riders, has grown out of this copy from Leonardo; *mutatis mutandis*, an astonishing stylistic parallel to it is to be found in Rubens's *St. George killing the Dragon* (Prado), painted in Italy, also under the impact of his own studies after the *Battle of Anghiari*, and again showing, in the rearing horse, a strong element of Salviati. For another general resemblance between the Italian styles of Fuseli and Rubens, compare Fuseli's women, in types (also coiffures) and formal idiom, with the Parmigianinesque ones of Rubens of c. 1610–15.



## Appendix V

### Heinse and 'Maler' Müller

OF the Storm and Stress writers, the one whose ideas on art came relatively closest to Fuseli's art, though quite possibly he did not know Fuseli's works, was Heinse. I refer to his *Letters from the Gallery of Düsseldorf* (1776-7) and to his novel *Ardinghello*, about a painter-visionary, written in 1784-6, after a sojourn in Italy from 1780-3, that is, shortly after Fuseli was there. Many of Heinse's views were ultimately based on those of Herder and of the Goethe of Storm and Stress but they were developed and exaggerated into a unified and intensified system. He emphasised far more than Fuseli did, the role of the intuitive genius, the part of emotion in artistic creation, while he did not believe in absolute but only in time-bound beauty. He was even more opposed than Fuseli to the intellectualism and abstract notions of Winckelmann. Heinse regarded the antique from roughly the same point of view as Fuseli, in terms of energy and vibration. For him the greatest artist, on a level with Shakespeare, was Rubens; however, after his Italian journey, his esteem for Rubens somewhat diminished, that for Michelangelo increased (he also liked, as did Fuseli, Giulio Romano's eroticism); but again he took up a more positive attitude towards Caravaggio than did Fuseli. The escapist novel, *Ardinghello*, whose action, characteristically, takes place in 16th-century Italy, features extreme individualism, amorality, force, ruthlessness, beauty, sensuousness, enjoyment of life. So, despite certain differences, Heinse's ideas were on the whole in line with Fuseli's. Heinse started from the Anacreontic eroticism of Wieland, whose *Oberon* Fuseli was soon to illustrate, but developed it far more hedonistically. It is characteristic of Heinse's taste (and not far from Fuseli's) that he translated Petronius and Ariosto. A detailed comparison of his opinions with Fuseli's would be extremely useful and the result would again show Fuseli's relatively moderate attitude within the world of ideas of Storm and Stress.



Though chiefly a writer, more so than Fuseli, the only artist who actually belonged to the German Storm and Stress, Friedrich Müller (called 'Maler' Müller) did works of importance only in his youth, mainly between 1768-78, that is, in the heyday of the movement, and afterwards was left high and dry. This was the characteristic fate of a whole-hearted practitioner of Storm and Stress and very different from that of Fuseli. Müller did landscape drawings and etchings, transposing Pijnacker's Dutch-Italianising style, by means of strong chiaroscuro contrasts, into something more restless and wild; he made use of the baroque of the equally Italianising painters of animals and shepherds of the Berchem and Karel du Jardin type but he endeavoured to change this (thereby overtaking J. H. Roos) into a style uncouthly realistic and, at the same time, with the aid of nervous quivering lines, pulsating, passionate; he portrayed peasants, sometimes earthy and ugly, sometimes expressive, like caricatures, overstepping the bounds of Brouwer and Ostade. These works, like those of Fuseli, were directed against the beautifying tendencies of rococo, as well as of early classicism. Some of them can be compared with drawings by the very young Fuseli, who—up to the *Death of an Hungarian Hussar*, that is, before Müller—occasionally reached a somewhat similar degree of expressive realism. But though Fuseli, in some of these very early drawings, also showed a certain interest in the life of peasants, he was perhaps more grotesque than realistic; whereas Müller, together with various literary partisans of Storm and Stress, was more consciously intent upon seeing the peasants, with whose individualist, simple and direct way of life he sympathised, in a real, unaffected, unsentimental light. After he went to Rome in 1778, where he remained till his death, Müller was attracted to history painting: at first his style (very vaguely comparable to Fuseli's first version of *The Death of Cardinal Beaufort*) was that of an agitated classicism with a slight Michel-angelesque tinge, later that of an extremely dry, weak classicism. At any rate, since the extinction of Storm and Stress in the early 1780s, he scarcely produced anything at all as an artist. Müller differed temperamentally from Fuseli and was a much more insignificant artist, less intense and, at the same time, less disciplined. Taken altogether, his intermittent *œuvre*, apart from an occasional somewhat stronger social consciousness, was a belated, comparatively feeble echo of Fuseli's early development. An objective historical appreciation of Müller's style (its relation to Fuseli has obliged us to deal with it here at some length) would do him, and particularly his interesting early work, much greater service than the confused dithyramb with which he is presented in F. Denk, *Friedrich Müller, der Malerdichter und Dichtermaler* (Speyer, 1930).



## Appendix VI

### The Faust Illustrations

FUSELI's influence on Delacroix has been remarked upon by Federmann and Ganz. But the exact nature of Delacroix's indebtedness to Fuseli is, I think, still obscured by the attribution to Fuseli of two Faust illustrations (*Faust in Auerbach's Cellar*, *Gretchen in the Church*) put forward as dating from c. 1790 or 1800 (repr. Ganz, pl. 68 and 69) and alleged to have influenced Delacroix. Art-historically it is an interesting question whether these drawings are by Fuseli or by Theodor von Holst (1810-44), an imitator of the late Fuseli, that is, whether they are pre-Delacroix or whether they have been influenced by Delacroix, a combination of Delacroix's Faust lithographs and Fuseli. The von Holst material is still very little known and has not yet been consistently disentangled from that of Fuseli yet, as far as can be judged at present, both Faust drawings, somewhat fantastic in their dilettante way, would appear to be by von Holst (this has already been suspected by Woodward and Powell). I should be inclined to add to these, as equally the work of this latter artist, another drawing, of Faust and Gretchen side by side, in the Lowinsky Collection (Plate 56b), which in my opinion is also wrongly attributed to Fuseli. The particular point of interest is that von Holst, for his figure of Faust, has made almost literal use of the figure of the 'Renaissance' murderer in the Fuseli drawing from 1816 (Plate 56a); sensing, at this particular period, the possibility of combining these two artists, he has made the whole composition more picturesque, more like Delacroix, at the same time cheaper and more conventionalised. So all the Faust drawings attributed to Fuseli would seem to be by von Holst (just as is a picture signed by von Holst, *Faust in his Study*, exhibited at the Academy in 1834 and now in the Spink Gallery); the theory that Fuseli was the author of these illustrations is based largely on the shaky assumption that Lavater



would have sent to him Goethe's first version of *Faust*, the fragment of 1790; but there is no reason to conclude that Lavater had acquainted Fuseli with any new German books after his second period in Switzerland, and, moreover, from motives of jealousy, according to Mason, Fuseli would have been inclined to ignore Goethe.

But even if the *Faust* illustrations were not by Fuseli and could not have influenced Delacroix, it remains true that England contributed her share in suggestions for Delacroix's *Faust* lithographs: namely, an impressive performance of *Faust* as an opera, romantic in spirit, which he saw in London in 1825. It was under the immediate impact of this performance that he called *Faust*, somewhat in Fuseli's vein, 'la plus diabolique pièce qu'on puisse imaginer'.



## Appendix VII

### Fuseli and Contemporary Literature

ONE of the few points on which I disagree with Mason is his failure to stress sufficiently the importance of Fuseli's relation with Byron. Their contemporaries, too, must have sensed this relationship. In 1814, in his diary, Byron recalls that 'the Princess of Wales has requested Fuseli to paint from the *Corsair*—leaving to him the choice of any passage for the subject'. We do not know whether this commission materialised but there certainly must have been some factual truth in it since Byron had it from his friend, Locke, an intimate of Fuseli.

In 1821 Fuseli praised *Marino Faliero*, Byron's favourite play (see *Farington Diary*, Vol. VIII). We know that he read every work of Byron's immediately it was published. There is no writer by whom Fuseli had so many individual works in his library as Byron: apart from *Don Juan*, he possessed among the dramas, *Manfred*, *Sardanapalus* and *Werner*, which he must have bought two years before his death.

These examples alone would suffice to disprove Mason's contention that from the '90s onwards Fuseli, so far as literature was concerned, lost contact with contemporary thought. But in other ways too his choice of reading confirms his awareness of events around him in literature. German literature was relatively little known in England up till 1813-15 (see Stokoe, *op. cit.*) yet Fuseli's library contained, for example, such disparate but important works as Herder's *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (which Fuseli praised, in his 1st Lecture, for its analysis of Greek culture), Goethe's classicist epic, *Hermann und Dorothea*, and also Chateaubriand's *Itineraire de Paris à Jerusalem*, a book full of interest for the nascent romantic movement.



Fuseli's late poetry shows the same sort of combination as his choice of literature. There is certainly a classic influence from Horace. Though in 1792 Fuseli translated a few passages from Klopstock's *Messias* and it is perhaps true that even his late poems retain a flavour of Klopstock's *Odes* (a writer whom, from as early as 1765, he had also very severely and justly criticised), this does not prove him to have been old-fashioned but again shows that he kept to the undertone running right through the consecutive romantic movements. In fact Klopstock's fame passed over into the later phase of romanticism in England: he was revered by the young Wordsworth, and Coleridge went to see him in 1798, and in 1803 Hayley read his *Messias* to Blake, who painted Klopstock's portrait for him, among those of the great poets.



# Index

- Abildgaard, Nikolai Abraham, 69, 86  
 Adam, Robert, 27<sup>52</sup>  
 Addison, Joseph, 7, 21, 93, 96  
     *Spectator*, 7, 12  
 Allen, Charles, *History of England*,  
     124 [Pl. 33a]  
 Amman, Jost, 9, 23<sup>14</sup>  
*Apollo (Belvedere)*, 50  
 Ariosto, 22<sup>7</sup>, 104, 110<sup>52</sup>, 161  
 Armstrong, John, 14  
 Bandinelli, Baccio, 20, 37-41, 43-8,  
     50, 54, 58<sup>41</sup>, 42, 43, 61<sup>69</sup>, 71, 74,  
     62<sup>84</sup>, 86, 99, 101, 115<sup>96</sup>, 119,  
     127<sup>5</sup>, 149, 157  
     Academy of Pupils, 44-5 [Pl. 21]  
     A Donkey, 45  
     Deposition, 20 [Pl. 9]  
     Design of Skeletons, 38  
     Entombment, 48, 62<sup>81</sup>  
     Judith and attendant, 38 [Pl. 14a]  
     Lamentation, 48  
     Martyrdom of St. Lawrence, 38  
     Massacre of the Innocents, 38, 99  
     Mother and Child, 44 [Pl. 14b]  
     Woman Sewing, 119 [Pl. 48a]  
 Bandinelli Workshop: Free copy of  
     Figure from Michelangelo's  
     Naasan Lunette, 51 [Pl. 25a]  
 Banks, Thomas, 69, 105<sup>3</sup>  
     Thetis and her Nymphs rise from  
     the Sea to console Achilles, relief  
     of, 59<sup>52</sup>  
 Barry, James, 1  
 Bartolommeo, Fra, 155  
 Baudelaire, Charles, 144<sup>17</sup>, 151<sup>3</sup>  
 Bartolozzi, Francesco, 85, 115<sup>102</sup>  
 Beardsley, Aubrey, 120, 127<sup>4</sup>, 149  
 Beccafumi, Domenico, 37, 158  
 Bellange, Jacques, 102, 115<sup>102</sup>, 119  
     The Three Marys, 102 [Pl. 40b]  
 Bellori, Giovanni Pietro, 109<sup>43</sup>  
 Bentley, Richard, illustrations to  
     Gray's poems, 10, 11 [Pl. 7a],  
     23<sup>20</sup>, 24<sup>23</sup>  
 Berchem, Nicolaes, 162  
 Berlioz, Hector, 148  
 Blackwell, Thomas, *Enquiry into the  
     Life and Writings of Homer*, 7  
 Blair, Robert, *The Grave*, 109<sup>37</sup>  
 Blake, William, 1, 19-21, 24<sup>20</sup>,  
     27<sup>54</sup>, 30, 56<sup>10</sup>, 59<sup>52</sup>, 64<sup>104</sup>, 106,  
     65<sup>109</sup>, 69, 71, 76<sup>8, 15</sup>, 80, 82,  
     85-8, 108<sup>35</sup>, 109<sup>37</sup>, 38, 41, 110<sup>52</sup>,  
     111<sup>56</sup>, 112<sup>70</sup>, 126<sup>3</sup>, 127<sup>6</sup>,  
     130<sup>31, 36</sup>, 135, 145<sup>20</sup>, 148-9,  
     152<sup>9</sup>, 154  
     Circle of the Lustful, 116<sup>109</sup>  
     Entombment, 62<sup>80</sup>  
     Frontispiece to Mary Wollstone-  
     craft's *Original Stories from Real  
     Life*, 124 [Pl. 55a]  
     Illustrations to Milton's *L' Allegro*:  
     Mirth and her Companions, 86  
     [Pl. 32a]  
     to Milton's *Paradise Lost*: Satan  
     and Death separated by Sin,  
     64<sup>104</sup>  
     to Stedman's *Narrative of a Five  
     Years' Expedition against the  
     Revolted Negroes of Surinam*,  
     130<sup>35</sup>  
     to Young's *Night Thoughts*, 62<sup>80</sup>  
     *Proverbs of Hell*, 87  
     Vision of Queen Katherine, 85,  
     116<sup>109</sup> [Pl. 31a]  
 Boccaccio, Giovanni, 23<sup>17</sup>  
 Bodmer, Joh. Jak., 6-8, 12, 14-18, 20,  
     22<sup>7</sup>, 23<sup>8</sup>, 11, 24<sup>25</sup>, 25<sup>38</sup>, 55<sup>1</sup>,  
     60<sup>63</sup>, 67, 68, 71, 73, 90, 96, 110<sup>47</sup>  
     *Noachide*, 110<sup>52</sup>  
 Boehme, Jacob, 85  
 Bonington, Richard Parkes, 144<sup>14</sup>  
 Bonnycastle, John, 105<sup>4</sup>  
 Borghini, Vincenzo, 157  
 Boscoli, Giovanni di Tommaso, 146<sup>32</sup>  
 Botticelli, Sandro, 46  
 Boydell, John, *Shakespeare Gallery*, 82,  
     90, 100, 104, 129<sup>22</sup>  
 Breitingner, Joh. Jak., 23<sup>11</sup>, 24<sup>25</sup>  
     *Critische Dichtkunst*, 8  
 Bromley, Rev. R., 87, 89, 111<sup>53</sup>  
     *Philosophical and Critical History of  
     the Fine Arts*, 109<sup>45</sup>



# INDEX

- Brouwer, Adriaen, 162  
 Brown, John, 35, 69, 127<sup>5</sup>  
 Burdett, Sir Francis, 106<sup>8</sup>  
 Burke, Edmund, *Treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful*, 18, 31, 64<sup>106</sup>  
 Burney, Edward, illustrations to Milton, 64<sup>104</sup>  
 Byron, Lord, 110<sup>52</sup>, 133, 136, 144<sup>14</sup>, 165  
     *The Corsair*, 165  
     *Don Juan*, 110<sup>52</sup>, 137  
     *Manfred*, 165  
     *Marino Faliero*, 136, 144<sup>17</sup>, 165  
     *Sardanapalus*, 144<sup>17</sup>  
     *Werner*, 165  
  
 Callot, Jacques, 103–4, 115<sup>102</sup>  
     Gobbi, 10  
 Calvert, Edward, 148  
 Calvin, John, 16  
 Cambiaso, Luca, 45–6, 61<sup>71</sup>, 115<sup>96</sup>  
 Campagnola, Domenico, 47  
 Canova, Antonio, 80, 136  
 Caraglio, Gian Jacopo, 20, 47, 99, 104  
 Caravaggio, Michelangelo Merisi, 102, 161  
 Carracci, Annibale, 98  
     Triumph of Bacchus, 120  
 Carracci, Lodovico, 114<sup>87</sup>, 149  
     Apostles at the Tomb of the Virgin, 95  
     Death of Enceladus, 98  
     Life of St. Benedict, 98  
 Carstens, Joh. Asmas, 75<sup>6</sup>  
 Cartwright, John, 128<sup>12</sup>  
 Chalmers's *Shakespeare edition*, 90, 100, 112<sup>68</sup>  
 Chateaubriand, François Auguste, 136, 165  
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 111<sup>52</sup>, 136, 145<sup>20</sup>, 166  
 Constable, John, 128<sup>12</sup>  
 Copley, John Singleton, 143<sup>1</sup>  
 Cornelis van Haarlem, Icarus, 98 [Pl. 30]  
 Cornelius, Peter, illustrations to *Nibelungenlied*, 90, 145<sup>25</sup>; illustrations to *Faust*, 135  
 Correggio, Antonio Allegri da, 1, 32, 103  
     Madonna with St. Jerome, 103  
  
 Cosway, Richard, 59<sup>46</sup>, 86  
 Courbet, Gustave, 147  
 Coutts, Thomas, 14, 79, 90, 106<sup>8</sup>, 9, 108<sup>27</sup>, 128<sup>27</sup>  
 Cowper, William, 90, 122–4, 129<sup>26</sup>, 130<sup>30</sup>, 32, 34, 141; and see Fuseli, illustrations to  
 Cromwell, Oliver, 105<sup>3</sup>  
 Cruikshank, George, 106<sup>8</sup>, 144<sup>17</sup>  
  
 Dälliker, S., 111<sup>62</sup>  
 Dante, Alighieri, 7, 28, 30, 37, 56<sup>10</sup>, 82–4, 116<sup>109</sup>, 133, 136, 143<sup>5</sup>; see also Fuseli, illustrations to  
 Darwin, Erasmus, 130<sup>33</sup>, *Botanic Garden*, 105<sup>1</sup>  
 Daumier, Honoré, 122  
 David, Jacques Louis, 56<sup>15</sup>, 70–3, 77<sup>18</sup>, 80–1, 123, 133  
     Oath of the Horatii, 71–3 [Pl. 29a]  
 Delacroix, Eugène, 11, 24<sup>23</sup>, 29, 73, 125, 132–6, 143<sup>4</sup>, 144<sup>8</sup>, 14, 17, 149, 151<sup>6</sup>, 163  
     Execution of Marino Faliero, 135  
     *Faust* illustrations, 137  
     Tasso in the Madhouse, 133  
     The Ball at the Capulets, 144<sup>13</sup>  
 Dente, Marco, 99  
 Deutsch, Nikolaus Manuel, 9, 125  
 Diderot, Denis, 21, 142  
 Donatello, 47–9, 62<sup>81</sup>, 84, 86, 157, 158  
 Du Bos, 110<sup>47</sup>  
 Dürer, Albrecht, 19, 23<sup>18</sup>, 24<sup>24</sup>, 62<sup>86</sup>, 102, 133, 135  
     The Lovers, 125  
 Dyck, Sir Anthony van, 29, 144<sup>14</sup>  
  
*Elgin Marbles*, 151<sup>1</sup>  
 Etty, William, 148, 149  
*Eulenspiegel, Till*, 10, 19 [Pl. 3b]  
 Evelyn, John, 127<sup>5</sup>  
  
 Falconer, William, 14  
 Fielding, Henry, 24<sup>22</sup>  
 Fiorillo, Johann Dominicus, *Geschichte der Zeichnenden Künste*, 89  
 Flaxman, John, 51–2, 63<sup>96</sup>, 99, 76<sup>12</sup>, 77<sup>18</sup>, 79–80, 82–4, 86–7, 94, 108<sup>31</sup>, 35, 113<sup>85</sup>, 137, 140  
     *Philemon and Baucis*, 63<sup>99</sup>  
 Fragonard, Jean Honoré, illustrations to *Orlando Furioso*, 144<sup>14</sup>



# INDEX

Franco, Battista, 36, 45-6, 59<sup>46</sup>,  
61<sup>71</sup>, 149, 156

Frederick the Great, 14, 113<sup>83</sup>

Fuseli, Caspar (Fuseli's father), 6, 8,  
12, 23<sup>13</sup>, 110<sup>52</sup>

Fuseli, Henry:

## WRITINGS,

*Academy Lectures*; 41, 87, 89,  
128<sup>12</sup>

*2nd Lecture*: 28, 47, 55<sup>7</sup>, 57<sup>26</sup>,  
95, 99, 111<sup>61</sup>

*3rd Lecture*: 33, 38, 97

*4th Lecture*: 12, 33, 34, 57<sup>24</sup>,  
116<sup>106</sup>

*7th Lecture*: 63<sup>94</sup>, 102, 127<sup>6</sup>

*8th Lecture*: 111<sup>58</sup>

*10th Lecture*: 88, 139

*11th Lecture*: 36, 58<sup>40</sup>, 99, 138

*Aphorisms*: 87

*Aph.* 19, p. 60<sup>67</sup>

*Aph.* 50, p. 66

*Aph.* 76, p. 129<sup>23</sup>

*Aph.* 77, p. 57<sup>29</sup>

*Aph.* 94, p. 33

*Aph.* 151, p. 102

*Aph.* 170, p. 129<sup>23</sup>

*Aph.* 200, p. 18

*Aph.* 231, p. 111<sup>64</sup>

*Analytical Review*, 89, 106<sup>7</sup>

*Dunciad of Painting*, 102

*History of Art in the Schools of  
Italy*, 47, 49, 54, 61<sup>75</sup>, 89

*Klagen*, 13

*Ode an das Vaterland*, 14

*Ode to Bodmer*, 25<sup>38</sup>

*Pilkington's Dictionary of Artists*,  
38, 40, 89, 95

*Remarks on the Writings and Con-  
duct of J. J. Rousseau*, 15, 16,  
19, 31, 55<sup>7</sup>, 146<sup>34</sup>

## DRAWINGS AND PAINTINGS,

'Adelheide', 10 [Pl. 4b]

Allen, Charles, illustration to  
*History of England*, 124, 130<sup>36</sup>  
[Pl. 33a]

Aeschylus's *Seven against Thebes*,  
illustration to, 64<sup>106</sup>

Amor and Psyche kissing, 145<sup>27</sup>

*Battle of Anghiari*, copy of  
Leonardo's, 53, 159 [Pl. 22b]

Boccaccio, illustration to, 23<sup>17</sup>

Bolio, portrait of Caterina, 42  
[Pl. 19]

Cowper, illustrations to:

*Progress of Error*, 123

*Negro's Complaint, The*, 124;

*Task, The*, 124 [Pl. 54b];

*Mad Kate*, 122; *Retirement*,

124 [Pl. 55b]

Dante, illustrations to:

Dante in Hell watching the  
thieves tortured by Serpents,  
51, 56<sup>9</sup>; Dante and Virgil  
in the Icy Hell of Cocytus,  
30, 62<sup>86</sup>

Death of an Hungarian Hussar,  
13, 19, 29, 162 [Pl. 5b]

Embrace, The, 139 [Pl. 57b]

English Suburban Garden, 128<sup>12</sup>  
[Pl. 49]

*Eulenspiegel*, illustration to, 10  
[Pl. 3b]; Till before the  
Priest, 10; Till visiting the  
Barber, 24<sup>23</sup>

Executioner, 47 [Pl. 15a]

Ezzelino Bracciaferro musing  
over his victim, 134

Fairy, The, 138

Fall of Icarus, 96, 128<sup>14</sup>

Fall of the Titans, 9 [Pl. 1]

Family Breakfast Scene, 11, 13,  
141 [Pl. 5a]

'Fear', 92, 139, 140 [Pl. 17]

Flight from the Family Circle,  
141 [Pl. 60a]

Fuseli reading to two Ladies, 43

Girl combing her hair, 134 [Pl.  
59]

Girl dancing with Tambourine,  
119

Gray, illustration to *The Bard*  
148 [Pl. 64b]

Harp-playing Scald, 20, 29 [Pl. 8]

Hess sisters, Magdalena writing,  
43, portraits of Martha, 60<sup>66</sup>,  
141

Homer illustrations to:

Achilles mourning over body  
of Patroclus, 42; Achilles  
sacrificing hair at funeral pyre  
of Patroclus, 99, 128<sup>14</sup> [Pl.  
38a]; Achilles snatching at  
the Shade of Patroclus, 97;  
Althaea praying for Death  
of Meleager, 97; Carrying  
off body of Sarpedon, 41, 47,



# INDEX

- 104; Meleager in arms of Wife refuses to defend Calydon, 34; Odysseus escaping from Polyphemus, 82, 97, 113<sup>82</sup>; Odysseus slaying the suitors, 113<sup>85</sup>
- Horse-Tamer, copy of *Monte Cavallo Statue*, 50
- Josaphat, copy after Michelangelo's lunette (detail), 36, 52 [Pl. 10b]
- Jrujo, portrait of Lavinia de, 120 [Pl. 47b]
- Jonson, Ben, illustration to *Every Man in his Humour*, 122 [Pl. 54a]
- Lady seated at her Dressing-table, 130<sup>29</sup>
- Lavater, illustrations to:  
*Physiognomische Fragmente*, 32; Madhouse, 39; Witch of Endor evoking Samuel's Spirit, 59<sup>52</sup>, (another version), 113<sup>77</sup>; Salome with Head of John the Baptist, 126<sup>4</sup>
- Lovers, free copy of Dürer's, 125 [Pl. 47a]
- Mars and Venus, copy after Ringli, 9 [Pl. 2a]
- Meyer's *Narrenbuch*, copies after, 10 [Pls. 2b and 4a]
- Milton, illustrations to, 90-1, 94  
*Paradise Lost*: Creation of Eve, 112<sup>71</sup>, Vision of the Madhouse, 121, 122 [Pl. 26a], Naked Man carrying Woman on Shoulder (Vision of the Flood?), 112<sup>71</sup>, Satan and Death separated by Sin, 53; *Il Penseroso*: Silence, 94; *Lycidas*: Solitude in Twilight, 94, 101, 104, 139 [Pl. 44]
- Moses praying on Mount Sinai, 41, 59<sup>53</sup>
- Murder Scene, 11 [Pl. 6a]
- Nibelungenlied*, illustration to:  
 Chriemhild sitting beside spinet while Siegfried kisses her, 139
- Nightmare I, 92-3, 104, 120 [Pl. 34]
- Nightmare II, 102 [Pl. 45b]
- Nude Woman listening to Girl playing upon Spinet, 102 [Pl. 42]
- Oath on the Rütli, 71-4, 91 [Pl. 28]
- Oedipus discovering riddle of Sphinx, 30
- Otway-Cave, portrait of Miss, 141 [Pl. 61]
- Perseus and Andromeda, 41, 52, 91, 93
- Prometheus rescued by Hercules, 42
- Prophet writing, 54
- Psyche and Amor, free interpretation of Pierino del Vaga's fresco, 49 [Pl. 23b]
- Release of a Maiden, 138 [Pl. 63]
- Religious Fanaticism, attended by Folly, trampling upon Truth, 93 [Pl. 39b]
- Standing Figure of Man, 51 [Pl. 24a]
- Self-portrait, 6 [Pl. 11]
- Selling of Cupids, 63<sup>97</sup>
- Sergel in his Studio, 43, 45 [Pl. 20]
- Shakespeare, illustrations to, 37, 40, 58<sup>43</sup>, 90, 91, 101, 130<sup>36</sup>  
*Hamlet*, Grave Scene, 35; *Henry VI*: Hotspur and Glendower's Conspiracy, 100 [Pl. 41b]; *Henry VI*: 18; Death of Cardinal Beaufort, 29, 30, 32, 34, 125, 134, 162 [Pl. 12b]; *Henry VIII*: Vision of Queen Katherine, 85, [Pl. 31b] 130<sup>36</sup>; *Lear* Embracing dying Cordelia, 34, 39 [Pl. 18a], 37; *Love's Labour's Lost*, 101; *Macbeth*, 18, 19, 37, 93, 143<sup>6</sup>, 148, Three Witches, 39, 77<sup>18</sup>, 93; *Merry Wives of Windsor*, 103; *Midsummer Night's Dream*, 90, 103, 104, 115<sup>103</sup>; 118, 121, *Much ado about Nothing*, 118; Richard III visited by Ghosts, 35, 47, 48, 62<sup>86</sup>, 121, 123<sup>14</sup>; *Romeo and Juliet*, 130<sup>36</sup>, 138; *Taming of the Shrew*, 10; *Tempest*, The, 37, 146<sup>30</sup>; *Timon of*



# INDEX

- Athens*, 41, 118; *Troilus and Cressida*, 138; *Twelfth Night*, 37, 146<sup>30</sup>; *Winter's Tale*, 116<sup>106</sup>  
 Shakespeare, Nursery of, 115<sup>99</sup> [Pl. 37a]  
 Sibyl, A, 58<sup>33</sup> [Pl. 27]  
 Spenser, illustrations to *Faerie Queene*, 118  
     *Arthur's Dream*, 20, 104;  
     *Dream of Guyon*, 104 [Pl. 46]  
 Smollett, illustrations to *Peregrine Pickle*, 19, 26<sup>45</sup> [Pl. 3a]  
 Theseus bidding farewell to Ariadne, 91  
 Tug-of-War, 11 [Pl. 6b]  
 Two Girls gazing from a Cabin Window, 44  
 Two Women, 102 [Pl. 40a]  
 Victim of a Dagger Wound, 134 [Pl. 56a]  
 Wieland, illustrations to *Oberon*:  
     Hun freeing Babekan attacked by lion, 159; Amanda-Rezia embracing Hun, 98  
 Woman seen from the Back, 119 [Pl. 62]  
 Woman Sewing, 119 [Pl. 48b]  
 Woman Walking, 120 [Pl. 52]  
 Women of Hastings, 120-1 [Pl. 50]  
 Young People on Banks of Thames, 120 [Pl. 53a]  
 Young Woman asleep by Window, 140  
 Young Woman imprisoned, 134 [Pl. 58]  
 Gainsborough, Thomas, 83  
 Garrick, David, 17-19, 25<sup>36</sup>, 26<sup>44</sup>, 53, 61<sup>79</sup>, 108<sup>26</sup>, 143<sup>6</sup>  
 Genelli, Bonaventura, 75<sup>6</sup>  
 George III, 14, 79, 105<sup>3</sup>  
 Gérard, François, 80  
 Gericault, Théodore, 43, 45, 122, 124, 132, 140, 143<sup>1</sup>, 147  
     *Medusa*, 140  
 Gessler, Hermann, 73  
 Gessner, Salomon, 11  
 Ghisi, 49, 99  
     *Diana*, 115<sup>99</sup>  
 Giorgio, 111<sup>63</sup>  
 Giani, Felice, 69, 76<sup>7</sup>  
 Gillray, James, 107<sup>22</sup>, 126<sup>2</sup>  
 Girodet Triosan, Anne Louis, 69, 84, 107<sup>19</sup>, 24, 140, 144<sup>14</sup>  
     *Mlle Lange*, 141  
 Giulio Romano, 49, 50, 61<sup>71</sup>, 98, 101, 115<sup>96</sup>, 120, 158, 161  
     *Fall of the Giants*, 49  
     *Hecuba's Dream*, 92 [Pl. 36a]  
     *Il Stregozzo*, 93 [35a]  
 Godwin, William, 78  
 Goethe, Joh. Wolfgang, 11-13, 22<sup>2</sup>, 23<sup>18</sup>, 27<sup>51</sup>, 44, 57<sup>21</sup>, 60<sup>63</sup>, 67, 68, 74, 75<sup>4</sup>, 103, 109<sup>44</sup>, 129<sup>22</sup>, 135, 137, 161, 164  
     *Faust*, 133  
     *Goetz von Berlichingen*, 44, 73, 133  
     *Hermann und Dorothea*, 165  
 Gogh, Vincent van, 69, 127<sup>11</sup>  
 Goltzius, H., 83, 99, 100, 102, 114<sup>89</sup>, 94, 135  
     *Icarus*: Cornelis van Haarlem, engraved by, 98 [Pl. 30]  
     *Mars*, 99 [Pl. 39a]  
     *Mars and Venus*, 102 [Pl. 45a]  
     *Standard-Bearer*, 9  
 Goulue, La, 120  
 Goya, Francisco, 76<sup>8</sup>, 94, 130<sup>34</sup>, 145<sup>25</sup>  
     *Caprichos*, (*Dream of Reason produces Monsters*), 93, 94  
     *Giant, seated*, 113<sup>82</sup>  
     *Madhouse*, 128<sup>20</sup>  
 Granacci, Francesco, 155  
 Gray, Thomas, 10, 18, 27<sup>53</sup>, 28  
     *The Bard*, 27<sup>53</sup> [Pls. 64a and b]  
     *Long Story*, 11, 23<sup>20</sup> [Pl. 7a]  
 Greuze, Jean Baptiste, 142, 146<sup>33</sup>  
     *The Father's Curse*, 141 [Pl. 60b]  
 Grignion, Charles, 26<sup>45</sup>  
 Gros, Jean Antoine, 135, 144<sup>14</sup>  
 Guilbert, Yvette, 120  
 Guildford, Susan, Countess of, 79, 106<sup>13</sup>  
 Haller, Albrecht, *Die Alpen*, 77<sup>21</sup>  
 Hamann, Joh. Georg, 15, 68, 85, 109<sup>41</sup>  
 Hamilton, Emma, Lady 82  
 Hamilton, Gavin, 1  
 Hamilton, Sir William, 51  
     *Hamilton Vases*, 63<sup>96</sup>  
 Hamilton, William, 82, 108<sup>26</sup> 131<sup>38</sup>



# INDEX

- Haydon, Benjamin, 147, 148, 151<sup>1</sup>  
 Chairing of the Member, 151<sup>2</sup>  
 Mock Election, 151<sup>2</sup>  
 Punch and Judy Show, 151<sup>2</sup>  
 Hayley, William, 56<sup>10</sup>, 130<sup>34</sup>, 166  
 Hazlitt, William, 148, 151<sup>4</sup>  
 Hogarth, article on, 137  
 Heemskerck, Marten van, 9  
 Heideloff, *Gallery of Fashion*, 120  
 [Pl. 51]  
 Heinse, Wilh., *Letters from the  
 Gallery of Düsseldorf, Ardinghello*,  
 161  
*Hercules (Farnese)*, 50  
*Hercules in the Garden of the  
 Hesperides* (Meidias vase), 51  
 [Pl. 25b]  
 Herder, Johann Gottfried von, 22<sup>2</sup>,  
 25<sup>32</sup>, 27<sup>54</sup>, 66, 68, 161  
*Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte  
 der Menschheit*, 165  
 Hess, Martha, 60<sup>66</sup>, 141  
 Hoare, Prince, 69  
 Hodler, Ferdinand, 152<sup>8</sup>  
 Hogarth, William, 14, 24<sup>22</sup>, 23, 25<sup>36</sup>,  
 29, 64<sup>104</sup>, 105, 106, 122, 129<sup>22</sup>,  
 24, 26, 130<sup>28</sup>, 131<sup>38</sup>, 137, 141  
 Chairing of the Member, 24<sup>23</sup>  
 Death of the Harlot, 13  
*Don Quixote*, illustrations to,  
 64<sup>106</sup>  
 Garrick in the tent scene of *Richard  
 III*, 108<sup>26</sup>  
 Levée of the Countess, 11  
 Marriage à la Mode, 129<sup>24</sup>  
 Moses before Pharaoh's Daughter,  
 80  
 Rake in Bedlam, 122, 128<sup>20</sup>  
 Holbein, Hans, 24<sup>24</sup>  
 Death as a Drummer with a Lands-  
 knecht, 125  
 Holst, Theodor von, 149, 151<sup>7</sup>  
 Faust and Gretchen, 163 [Pl. 56b]  
 Homer, 7, 22<sup>7</sup>, 55<sup>1</sup>, 90, 95, 97, 110<sup>51</sup>;  
 see also Fuseli, illustrations to  
 Hoppner, John, *Sleeping Venus*,  
 145<sup>29</sup>  
 Horace, 166  
 Howard, Frank, 107<sup>20</sup>  
 Hugo, Victor, 148  
 Hume, David, 15  
 Humphry, Ozias, 86  
 Hunt, Leigh, 130<sup>33</sup>  
 Ingres, Jean -Auguste Dominique,  
 61<sup>74</sup>, 63<sup>99</sup>, 70, 84, 108<sup>31</sup>  
*Oedipus and the Sphinx*, 51 [Pl. 25c]  
 Jardin, Karel du, 162  
 Johnson, Joseph, 14, 25<sup>38</sup>, 78, 105<sup>2</sup>,  
 106<sup>7</sup>, 109<sup>38</sup>, 130<sup>32</sup>  
 Jonson, Ben, *Every Man in his  
 Humour*, 122 [Pl. 54a]  
 Kandinsky, Wassily, 152<sup>9</sup>  
 Kauffmann, Angelica, 23<sup>12</sup>, 31, 115<sup>102</sup>  
 Kean, Edmund, 143<sup>6</sup>  
 Kemble, John Philip, 108<sup>26</sup>  
 Klee, Paul, 152<sup>9</sup>  
 Klopstock, Friedr. Gottlieb, 12, 13,  
 75<sup>5</sup>, 105<sup>2</sup>  
*Messias*, 166  
*Odes*, 166  
 Knowles, J., 79  
 Lamb, Charles, 129<sup>22</sup>  
 Article on Hogarth, 137  
*Laocoon group*, 51  
 Lanzi, 89  
 Lavater, Joh. Kaspar, 7, 8, 11-14, 16,  
 21, 23<sup>18</sup>, 24<sup>22</sup>, 25<sup>32</sup>, 39, 44, 54,  
 55<sup>3</sup>, 60<sup>63</sup>, 66-8, 75<sup>2</sup>, 5, 77<sup>21</sup>, 79,  
 87, 114<sup>90</sup>, 126<sup>3</sup>, 128<sup>18</sup>, 163; see  
 also Fuseli, illustrations to  
*Physiognomische Fragmente*, 32,  
 121-2, 127<sup>4</sup>  
 Lawrence, Sir Thomas, 35, 46, 80, 84,  
 86-7, 95, 106<sup>13</sup>, 107<sup>23</sup>, 108<sup>28</sup>,  
 148  
 Portrait of Mrs. Maguire and Son,  
 83  
 Satan calling up his Legions, 83  
 Lenz, Jak. Michael Reinhold, 68  
 Leonardo da Vinci, 54, 60<sup>65</sup>, 159  
 Adoration of the Magi, 159  
 Anghiari Battle, 93, 114<sup>87</sup>  
 Copies of, 53, 159 [Pls. 22a and b]  
 Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim, 5, 110<sup>47</sup>  
 Lievens, Jan, Christ raising Lazarus,  
 129<sup>23</sup> [Pl. 53b]  
 Ligozzi, Giacomo, 115<sup>100</sup>  
 Linnell, John, 148  
 Lippi, Filippino, 155  
 Lock, William, 79-80, 141, 146<sup>33</sup>  
 Lorch, Melchior, 127<sup>5</sup>  
 Louthembourg, Philip James, 148  
 Lytton, Bulwer, 148



# INDEX

- Macpherson, James, *Ossian*, 18, 19  
 Magnasco, Allesandro, 56<sup>17</sup>  
 Malvasia, 114<sup>87</sup>  
 Mantegna, Andrea, 61<sup>73</sup>  
 Marcantonio, 49; Dream of Raphael, 93 [Pl. 35b]  
 Marco da Siena, 53, 149  
 Marguerite de Navarre, *Heptameron*, 134  
 Martin, John, 148 [Pl. 64a]  
 Masaccio, 57<sup>25</sup>  
 Matham, Jacob, 99 [Pl. 39a]  
*Meidias vase*, 51  
 Mengs, Anton Raphael, 8, 31, 33, 56<sup>16</sup>  
 Merck, Joh. Heinrich, 68  
*Mercury statue*, 51, 63<sup>98</sup>  
 Mesmer, Franz, 126<sup>3</sup>  
 Messerschmidt, Franz Xaver, 126<sup>3</sup>  
 Metz, C. M., *Imitations of Ancient and Modern Drawings*, 46  
 Meyer (Rudolf and Conrad), *Narrenbuch*, 9-10, 23<sup>16</sup>, 114<sup>86</sup>, 115<sup>101</sup> [Pls. 2b, 4a]  
 Michelangelo, 23<sup>13</sup>, 31-3, 35-46, 49-54, 57<sup>26</sup>, 58<sup>40</sup>, 60<sup>67</sup>, 61<sup>69</sup>, 62<sup>87, 88</sup>, 63<sup>98</sup>, 66-7, 70-1, 82-6, 88, 94-7, 99, 101-2, 105<sup>7</sup>, 155<sup>7</sup>, 107<sup>23</sup>, 109<sup>42</sup>, 110<sup>51</sup>, 111<sup>55</sup>, 112<sup>71</sup>, 113<sup>75</sup>, 119, 138, 140, 146<sup>32</sup>, 153, 155-8  
 Battle of Pisa cartoon, 28, 62<sup>89</sup>, 155  
 Crouching Youth, 113<sup>84</sup>  
 Madonna, Bruges, 155  
 Madonna Doni, 37  
 Nudes, early drawings of, 61<sup>74</sup>  
 Resurrection, 95, drawing of, 49, 156  
 Tityus, The, 42  
*Cappella Paolina*, 138  
 Conversion of St. Paul, 96  
*Cappella Sistina*,  
 Ancestors, 35-9, 42-4, 50-2, 54, 94, 112<sup>64</sup>, 119-20, 153-4  
 Abias, 44, 51; Aminadab, 43, 94, 103, 112<sup>68</sup>; Amon, 42-3; Asa, 94, 158; Eleazer, 37; Eliud, 37, 40, 44; Haman, 51; Jesse, 43, 97, 103, 119; Josaphat, 36 [Pl. 10a], 42, 52; Manasseh, 37, 361; Naason, 43, 51 [Pl. 25a], 52, 94; Rehoboam, 42; Solomon, 119  
 Brazen Serpent, 51; Creation of Adam, 49, 97; Last Judgment, 9, 104  
 Prophets, 35-6, 112<sup>64</sup>  
 Esaias, 58<sup>33</sup>; Ezekiel, 43, 158; Jeremiah, 36, 97  
 Nude Slaves, 36, 43, 76<sup>11</sup>, 98, 120  
 Sibyls, 35-6, 38, 112<sup>64</sup>  
 Cumaeen Sibyl, 40; Erythrean Sibyl, 43-4, 58<sup>33</sup>, 124, 141; Libyan Sibyl, 40, 44, 49, 60<sup>65</sup>, 103; Persian Sibyl, 43  
 Milton, John, 7, 12, 17, 22<sup>7</sup>, 26<sup>50</sup>, 28, 82, 85, 86, 90-4, 104, 110<sup>51</sup>, 123, 130<sup>34</sup>, 136, 137, 139; see also Fuseli, illustrations to  
 Milton Gallery, 63<sup>103</sup>, 64<sup>104</sup>, 90, 94, 112<sup>71</sup>, 121, 123, 127<sup>8, 12</sup>, 128<sup>17</sup>, 129<sup>22</sup>, 137  
 Mitchell, Sir Charles, 14  
*Monte Cavallo statues*, 50, 91, 100  
 Montesquieu, Charles de, 21  
 Mortimer, John, 64<sup>106</sup>, 85  
 Moser, Mary, 26<sup>47</sup>  
 Müller, Friedrich 'Maler', 162  
 Munch, Eduard, 69, 92, 128<sup>16</sup>, 149  
 Music in an Oslo Street, 128<sup>16</sup>  
 The Kiss, 140 [Pl. 57a]  
 Murer, Christoph, 9  
 Murray, John, 145<sup>19</sup>  
*Nibelungenlied*, 7, 90, 145<sup>25</sup>  
 Fuseli, illustration to, 139  
 Nollekens, Joseph, 76<sup>7</sup>  
 North, Baroness, 144<sup>9</sup>  
 Northcote, James, 83  
 Novalis, Friedrich, 86  
 Opera, Giovanni dell', 48  
 Opie, John, 79, 83, 84  
 Orsi, Lelio, 9, 112<sup>65</sup>  
 Ostade, Adriaen van, 162  
 Ottley, W. Y., 35, 46, 48, 61<sup>74</sup>, 62<sup>81</sup>, 84, 114<sup>94</sup>, 157-9  
*Italian School of Design*, 35  
 Paine, Tom, *Rights of Man*, 78  
 Palmer, Samuel, 148  
 Parmigianino, F. Mazzola, 37-8, 40-1, 47, 52, 54, 58<sup>40</sup>, 59<sup>49</sup>, 60<sup>65</sup>, 61<sup>71</sup>, 83, 86, 99, 101, 119, 127<sup>5</sup>, 138, 149, 158



# INDEX

- Execution of St. Peter and St. Paul, 47  
 Madonna col collo lungo, 151<sup>4</sup>  
 Moses (of the *Steccata*), 27<sup>53</sup>  
 Pascin, Jules, 119  
 Passerotti, Bartolomeo, 45, 54, 158  
 Payne-Knight, 36  
 Percy, Thomas, *Relics*, 18  
*Perseus liberating Andromeda*, Roman relief of, 52  
 Pestalozzi, Joh. Heinr., 7  
 Petronius, 161  
 Phidias, 50  
 Pierino del Vaga, 53, 62<sup>91</sup>, 99  
   Psyche watching Amor at Night, 49 [Pl. 23a], 52  
 Pilkington, *Dictionary of Artists*, 34, 38, 40, 89, 95, 97  
 Piranesi, Giambattista, *Carceri*, 26<sup>48</sup>, 145<sup>20</sup>  
 Poe, Edgar Allan, *Fall of the House of Usher*, 151<sup>3</sup>  
 Polidoro, 61<sup>69</sup>, 71, 158  
 Pollaiuolo, Antonio, Lamentation over Gattamelata, 48  
 Pontormo, Jacopo, 20, 46, 69, 155  
   Passion frescoes (Certosa), 48, 62<sup>86</sup>  
 Pope, Alexander, 123, 136  
 Poussin, Nicolas, 1, 30, 55<sup>7</sup>  
   Christ lying in the Garden, 59<sup>53</sup>  
   Death of Germanicus, 13, 29  
 Priestley, Joseph, *Essay on Government*, 14  
 Primaticcio, Francesco, 101-2, 113<sup>85</sup>, 114<sup>85</sup> 91  
   Frescoes in Galerie d'Ulysse, Fontainebleau, 97, 98 [Pl. 29b]  
 Pritchard, Mrs., 19, 143<sup>6</sup>  
 Prudhon, Pierre Paul, Justice pursuing Crime, 145<sup>29</sup>  
 Pynacker, Adam, 162  
 Quincey, Thomas de, 145<sup>20</sup>  
 Raphael, 1, 31-3, 49-50, 57<sup>19</sup>, 61<sup>74</sup>, 62<sup>87-8</sup>, 90, 66-7, 107<sup>23</sup>, 111<sup>64</sup>, 113<sup>77</sup>, 145<sup>26</sup>  
   Battle of the Standard, 61<sup>74</sup>  
   Deeds of Hercules, 61<sup>74</sup>  
   Fire in the Borgo, 49, 62<sup>89</sup>  
   Heliodorus, 97  
   Transfiguration, 119  
   Vision of Ezekiel, 27<sup>53</sup>  
 Reichel, Hans, St. Michael defeating the Devil, 50  
 Rembrandt van Ryn, 8, 20, 29, 33, 67, 89, 128<sup>12</sup>, 144<sup>8</sup>  
   Christ before Pilate, 129<sup>23</sup>  
   Moses breaking the Tables, 113<sup>83</sup>  
 Reni, Guido, 33  
 Reynolds, S. W., Interior of a Windmill, 81 [Pl. 26b]  
 Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 70-1, 75<sup>2</sup>, 82-3, 86-8, 108<sup>25</sup>, 109<sup>40</sup>, 43, 113<sup>75</sup>, 114<sup>87</sup>,  
   *Academy Discourses*, 107<sup>23</sup>  
   Ugolino, 56<sup>10</sup>, 73  
 Richardson, Samuel, *Clarissa*, 146<sup>34</sup>  
 Ringli, Gotthard, 9 [Pl. 2a]  
 Rivington, *Shakespeare edition*, 10, 118, 125  
 Robespierre, Maximilien, 73  
 Rogers, Samuel, 108<sup>27</sup>  
 Romney, George, 69, 83, 86-7, 114<sup>87</sup>  
   Scene from *Henry IV*, 82 [Pl. 12a]  
 Roos, J. H., 162  
 Rosa Salvator, 19, 20, 26<sup>48</sup>, 29, 53-4, 56<sup>10</sup>, 64<sup>106</sup>, 82, 115<sup>102</sup>, 148, 159  
   Witch of Endor evoking Samuel's Spirit before Saul, 64<sup>106</sup>  
 Roscoe, William, 79, 87, 89, 105<sup>7</sup>, 109<sup>46</sup>, 130<sup>36</sup>  
 Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 149, 151<sup>6</sup>  
 Rossi, Vincenzo de', 158  
 Rosso, Giovanni Battista, 20, 37-41, 43-6, 48, 54, 58<sup>44</sup>, 59<sup>47</sup>, 54, 60<sup>66</sup>, 61<sup>69</sup>, 63<sup>99</sup>, 100, 69, 86, 99, 114<sup>89</sup>, 91, 115<sup>96</sup>, 153, 155-6  
   Conversazione, 44 [Pl. 16b]  
   Deeds of Hercules, 99  
   Descent from the Cross, 39, 41, 48 [Pl. 18b]  
   Figure Study, 40 [Pl. 16a]  
   Figure Studies, 37 [Pl. 13a]  
   Figure Studies, 40 [Pl. 13b]  
   Figure Study, 63<sup>100</sup> [Pl. 24b]  
   Loves of the Gods, 99  
   Mars, 99-101 [Pl. 38b]  
   Mars and Venus, 20  
   Moses defending Jethro's Daughters, 41  
   Venus and Cupid, 104  
 Rottenhammer, Jacob, 25<sup>27</sup>  
 Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 6, 7, 10, 12, 15-17, 19-21, 25<sup>28</sup>, 31, 32, 29, 76<sup>10</sup>, 77<sup>21</sup>, 83, 117, 123, 136



# INDEX

- Nouvelle Heloise*, 146<sup>34</sup>  
Rowlandson, Thomas, 24<sup>23</sup>, 107<sup>22</sup>, 126<sup>2</sup>  
Rubens, Peter Paul, 1, 9, 67, 82, 89, 144<sup>14</sup>, 159–61  
Anghiari Battle, copy of, 159 [Pl. 22a]  
St. George killing the Dragon, 160  
Runciman (John and Alexander), 149  
Alexander, 19, 69  
John: Flight into Egypt, 19; King Lear in Storm, 19, 55<sup>2</sup>  
Runge, Friedrich Otto, 69, 108<sup>35</sup>, 135  
Morning, 86 [Pl. 32b]  
St. Albans, Duke of, 106<sup>8</sup>  
Salviati, Francesco, 60<sup>65</sup>, 99, 101, 115<sup>99</sup>, 139, 159–60  
Charity, 115<sup>99</sup> [Pl. 37b]  
Presentation of the Virgin, 115<sup>99</sup>  
The Three Fates, 40  
Scarsdale, Lord, 27<sup>52</sup>  
Schiavone, Andrea, 40  
Schiavonetti, Luigi, 94  
Schiller, Friedrich, 22<sup>2</sup>, 74  
Schlegel, August Wilhelm, 84  
Scott, David, 149  
Sergel, Johan Tobias, 43, 45 (Pl. 20), 69  
Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of, 7, 13, 21, 88  
Shakespeare, 7, 17, 18, 20, 23<sup>8</sup>, 25<sup>36</sup>, 26<sup>40</sup>, 28, 31, 33, 61<sup>79</sup>, 82, 85, 96, 110<sup>51</sup>, 133, 136, 144<sup>8</sup>, 161; see also Fuseli, illustrations to  
Shelley, Mary, 151<sup>5</sup>  
Siddons, Mrs., 108<sup>26</sup>  
Signorelli, Luca, 46, 54, 61<sup>74</sup>, 61<sup>75</sup>  
End of the World frescoes, 47 [Pl. 15b]  
Smirke, Robert, 79  
Smollett, Tobias George, 14, 15  
*Peregrine Pickle*, 19, 26<sup>45</sup> [Pl. 3a]  
Soane, Sir John, 107<sup>21</sup>  
Soulier, Raymond, 136  
Southey, Robert, 137, 145<sup>20</sup>  
Spalding, Provost, 13, 123  
Spenser, Edmund, 20, 26<sup>50</sup>; see also Fuseli, illustrations to  
*Faerie Queene*, 20, 104 [Pl. 46], 118, 121  
Spranger, Bartolomeus, 99, 102, 115<sup>96</sup>, 135  
Steevens, George, 129<sup>22</sup>  
Sterne, Laurence, *Tristram Shandy*, 15; *Sermons*, 15  
Stimmer, Christoph, 9  
Stothard, Thomas, 82, 86, 108<sup>27</sup>  
Illustrations to Cowper's *Homer*, 107<sup>20</sup>  
Illustrations to Byron, 144<sup>17</sup>  
Sulzer, Joh. Georg, 17, 24<sup>25</sup>  
Swedenborg, Emanuel, 85  
Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 151<sup>7</sup>  
Thomson, James, 18  
Thulden, Theodore van, 98  
Tibaldi, Pellegrino, 52–3, 60<sup>65</sup>, 93, 95–9, 102, 112<sup>65</sup>, 113<sup>75</sup>, 114<sup>85</sup>, 114<sup>91</sup>, 138, 149  
Alexander the Great frescoes, 52, 96  
Conception of the Baptist, 96  
Monkeys, 93 [Pl. 36b]  
Odysseus and Ino, 96  
Polyphemus blinded by Odysseus, 97  
Slaves, 98 [Pl. 33b]  
Tieck, Ludwig, 86  
Tintoretto, Jacopo, 25<sup>27</sup>, 41, 104, 138  
Tischbein, Wilhelm, 60<sup>63</sup>, 63<sup>96</sup>, 73  
Titian, 32, 138  
Venus and Organ-Player, 102 [Pl. 43]  
Toulouse-Lautrec, Henri de, 119, 120  
Towne, Francis, 127<sup>12</sup>  
Turner, Joseph Mallard, 148  
Uytewael, Joachim, Joseph and his Brethren, 100, 103 [Pl. 41a]  
Vasari, Giorgio, 61<sup>71</sup>, 89, 139  
*Vatican Torso*, 50  
Veneziano, Agostino: Academy of Pupils: engraved after Bandinelli, 44–5; Il Stregozzo: engraved after Giulio Romano, 93 [Pl. 35a]; Maenads and Fauns: engraved after Giulio Romano, 120  
*Venus (Medici)*, 50  
Vernet, Joseph, 148  
Vico, Enea, 44 [Pl. 21]  
Vien, Joseph, 81  
Vincent, François, Tell leaping from Gessler's ship, 73



# INDEX

- Virgil, 95  
 Voltaire, 15, 19
- Wackenroder, Wilh. Heinr., 86  
 Wainwright, Thomas Griffiths, 84,  
 151<sup>7</sup>  
 Walpole, Horace, 10, 18, 106<sup>15</sup>  
*Anecdotes of Painting*, 26<sup>48</sup>  
*Castle of Otranto*, 26<sup>48</sup>  
 Ward, Edward Matthew, 135, 148  
 Warton, Joseph, *Essay on Pope*, 25<sup>37</sup>  
 Warton, Thomas, 56<sup>10</sup>  
 Watts, George Frederick, 148  
 Wedgwood, Josiah, 63<sup>96</sup>  
 Weimar, Grand Duchess of, 11  
 West, Benjamin, 1, 33, 36, 82, 86-7,  
 89, 123, 143<sup>1</sup>, 147  
 Westall, Richard, illustrations to  
 Cowper's *Homer*, 107<sup>20</sup>  
 Wieland, Christoph Martin, 23<sup>8</sup>, 90,  
 111<sup>52</sup>; see also Fuseli, illustra-  
 tions to  
*Oberon*, 110<sup>52</sup>, 161  
 Wilberforce, William, 130<sup>36</sup>  
 Wilde, Oscar, 151<sup>7</sup>  
 Wilkes, John, 14
- Wilkie Sir David, 129,<sup>23</sup>  
 Winckelmann, Joh. Joachim, 8, 21,  
 23<sup>12</sup>, 27<sup>52</sup>, 54, 55, 31-3, 55<sup>1</sup>, 88,  
 109<sup>43</sup>, 161  
 Wollstonecraft, Mary, 105<sup>2</sup>, 130<sup>32</sup>  
*Original Stories from Real Life*, 124  
 [Pl. 55a]  
 Wood, Robert, *Essay on the Original  
 Genius*, 27<sup>51</sup>  
 Wordsworth, William, 136, 166
- Xavery, Jacob, *Fête Rampante*, 24<sup>23</sup>  
 [Pl. 7b]
- Young, Edward, 12, 18, 25<sup>37</sup>, 88  
*Conjectures on Original Composition*,  
 17  
*Night Thoughts*, 7, 13, 18, 22<sup>7</sup>,  
 62<sup>80</sup>, 109<sup>37</sup>
- Zanotti, engravings after Tibaldi,  
 113<sup>76</sup>  
 Zoffany, Johann, 19  
 Zuccari, Taddeo, 49, 62<sup>91</sup>







1. FUSELI: Fall of the Titans. Pen and ink. Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.



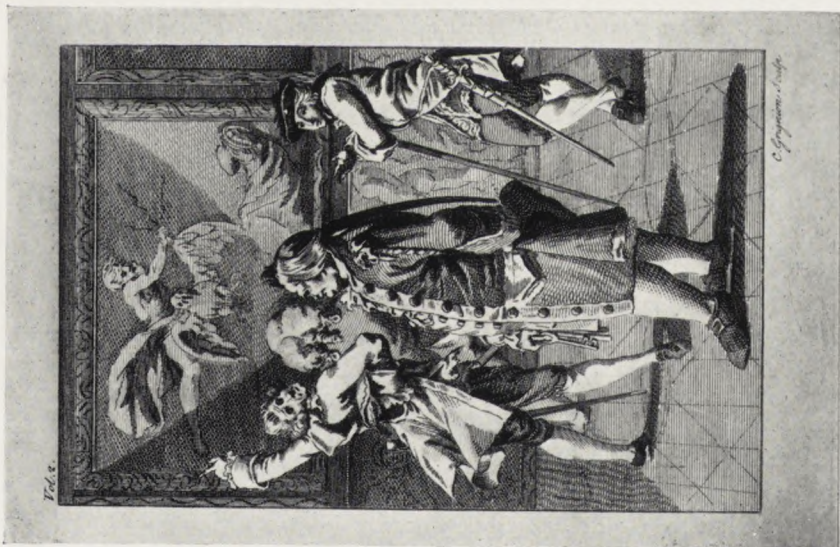


2a. FUSELI: Mars and Venus, after G. Ringli. Pen, ink and wash. Kunsthaus, Zürich.



2b. FUSELI: Copy after C. and R. Meyer's *Narrenbuch*. Pen, ink and wash. Kunsthaus, Zürich.









4a. FUSELI: Copy after C. and R. Meyer's *Narrenbuch*.  
Pen, ink and wash. Kunsthau, Zürich.



4b. FUSELI: 'Adelheide.' Water-colour. Kunsthau, Zürich.





5a. FUSELI: Family Breakfast Scene. Pen, ink and wash. *Kunsthhaus, Zürich.*



5b. FUSELI: Death of an Hungarian Hussar. Pen, ink and wash. *Kunsthhaus, Zürich.*





6a. FUSELI: Murder Scene. Pen and wash. *Goethe Nationalmuseum, Weimar.*



6b. FUSELI: Tug-of-war. Pen, ink and wash. *Zentralbibliothek, Zürich.*





7a. BENTLEY: Illustration to Gray's *Long Story*.  
Engraving.



7b. XAVERY: *Fête Rampante*. Oil. Roland, Browse and Delbanco, London.





8. FUSELI: Harp-playing Scald. Pen, ink and wash. Ballag Collection, Zürich.





9. BANDINELLI: Deposition. Pen, ink and wash. *Uffizi, Florence.*





10a. MICHELANGELO: Man writing from the Josaphat Lunette.  
Detail of fresco. *Sistine Chapel, Rome.*



10b. FUSELI: Copy of the Man writing from the Josaphat Lunette. Pencil. *Kunsthhaus, Zürich.*





11. FUSELI: Self-Portrait with Homer. Chalk. *Hürlimann Collection, Zürich.*





12a. ROMNEY: Bolingbroke and Marjory Jourdain in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.  
Pen, sepia and grey wash. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.



12b. FUSELI: Sketch for the Death of Cardinal Beaufort. Pen, ink and sepia wash. Gilbert Davis Collection, London.





13a. Rosso: Figure Studies. Pencil. *Staedel Institute, Frankfurt am Main.*

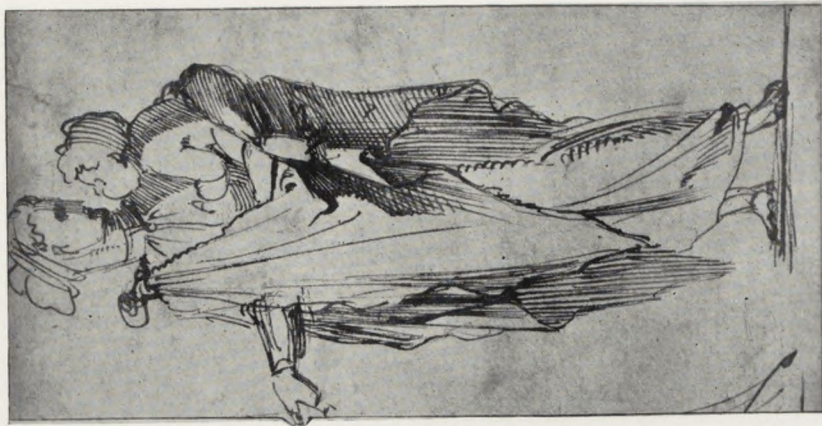


13b. Rosso: Figure Studies. Red chalk. *Victor Koch Collection, London.*





14a. BANDINELLI: Judith and her Attendant.  
Pen and ink. *Biblioteca Reale, Turin.*

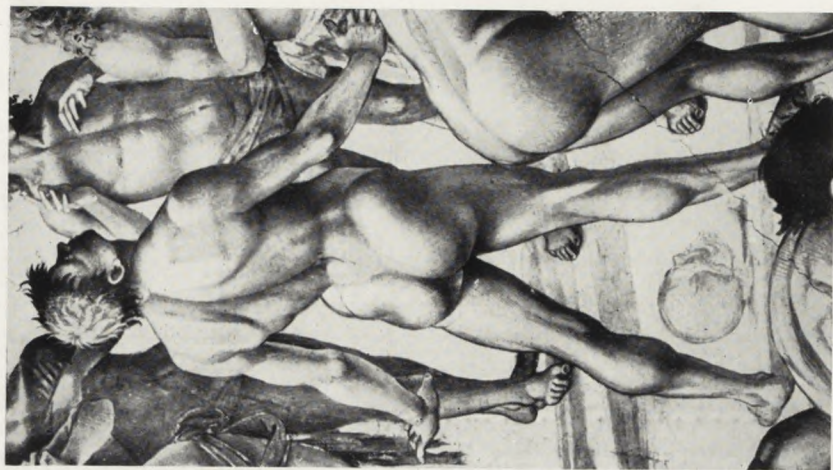


14b. BANDINELLI: Mother and Child.  
Pen and ink.





15a. FUSELI: Executioner. Pen and ink. *Staatliche  
Kunstsammlungen, Weimar.*



15b. SIGNORELLI: Detail of fresco. *Orvieto.*





16a. Rosso: Seated Figure. Chalk.  
*Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.*



16b. Rosso: Conversazione. Pencil. *Louvre, Paris.*





17. FUSELI: 'Fear'. Pencil and chalk. *Kunsthaus, Zürich.*





18a. FUSELI: Lear mourning over the dying Cordelia. Detail. Pen, ink and wash.  
*British Museum.*



18b. Rosso: Deposition. Detail. Oil. *Volterra.*





19. FUSELI: Portrait of Caterina Bolio. Pencil. *Roman Sketch-book*, Kunsthau, Zürich.





20. FUSELI: J. T. Sergel in his Studio. Pen, ink and wash. Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.





21. BANDINELLI: Academy of Pupils. Engraved by Enea Vico.





22a. RUBENS: *Battle of the Standard*. Chalk and wash. *British Museum*.



22b. FUSELI: Copy after Leonardo's *Battle of Anghiari*. Pen, ink and wash. *British Museum*.





23a. PERINO DEL VAGA: Psyche watching Amor at Night. Detail of fresco.  
*Castel S. Angelo, Rome.*



23b. FUSELI: Free interpretation of Vaga's fresco. Pencil. *Kunsthaus, Zürich.*





24a. FUSELLI: Standing figure of Man in Profile. Pen, ink and wash. Mrs. M. C. Heath Collection.



24b. Rosso: Figure of a Man in Profile. Red chalk. Uffizi, Florence.

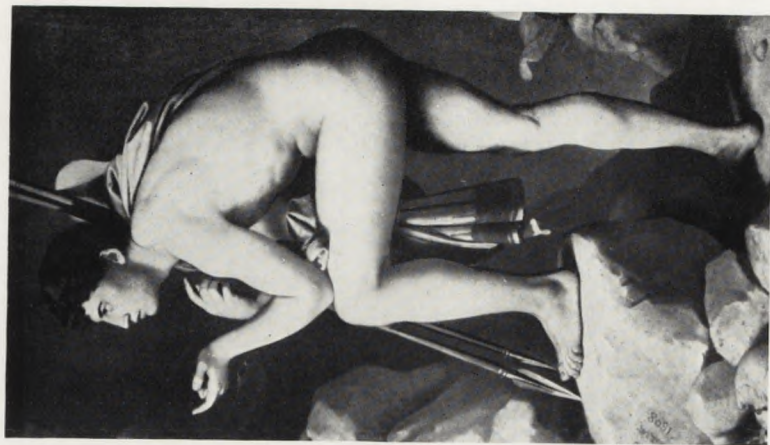




25a. BANDINELLI WORKSHOP: Free copy of left half of Michelangelo's *Naoson Lunette*. Pen and ink.



25b. Figure of Klytius on the Meidias Vase. *British Museum*.

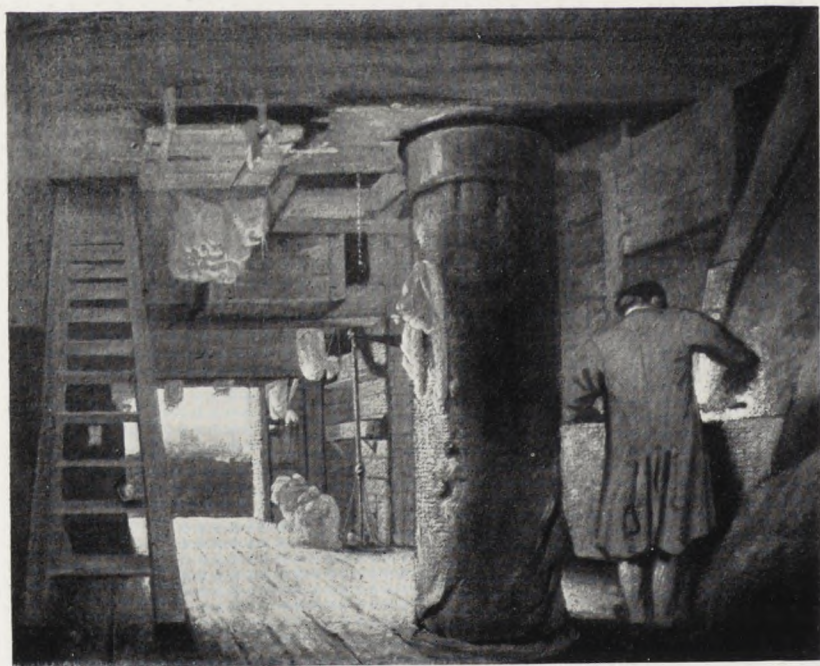


25c. INGRES: Oedipus and the Sphinx. Detail, Oil. *Louvre, Paris*.





26a. FUSELI: Vision of the Madhouse. Pencil and wash. *Kunsthhaus, Zürich.*



26b. S. W. REYNOLDS: Interior of a Windmill. Oil. *Major Simon Whitbread Collection, Southill Park.*





27. FUSELI: A Sibyl. Pencil. Kunsthau, Zürich.





28. FUSELI: Oath on the Rütli. Pen, ink and wash. *Kunsthaus, Zürich.*





29a. DAVID: Oath of the Horatii. Oil. *Louvre, Paris.*



29b. PRIMATICCIO: Odysseus and Polyphemus. Engraved by Van Thulden.





30. CORNELIS VAN HAARLEM: Icarus. Engraved by Goltzius.





31a. BLAKE: Queen Katherine's Vision. Pencil and grey wash. *Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.*

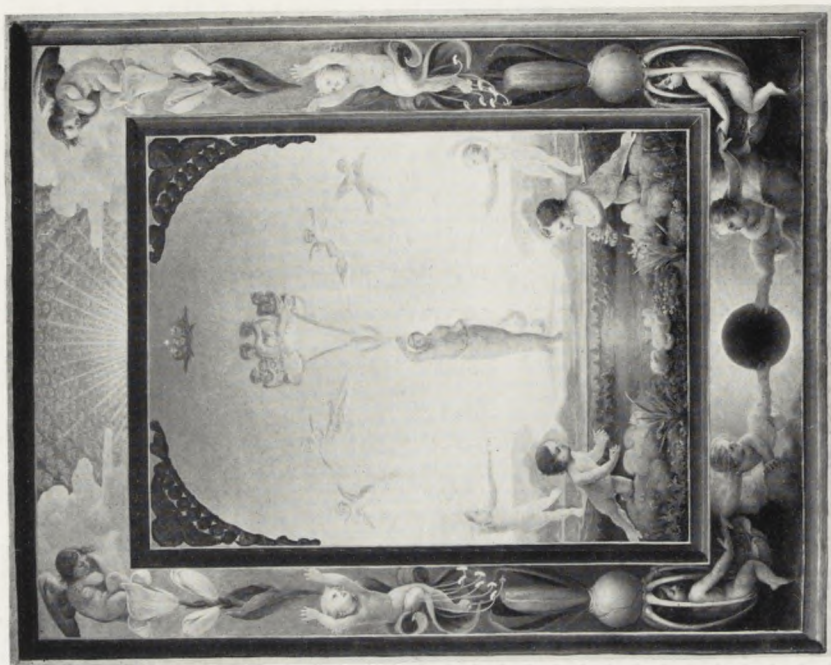


31b. FUSELI: Queen Katherine's Vision. Engraved by Bartolozzi.



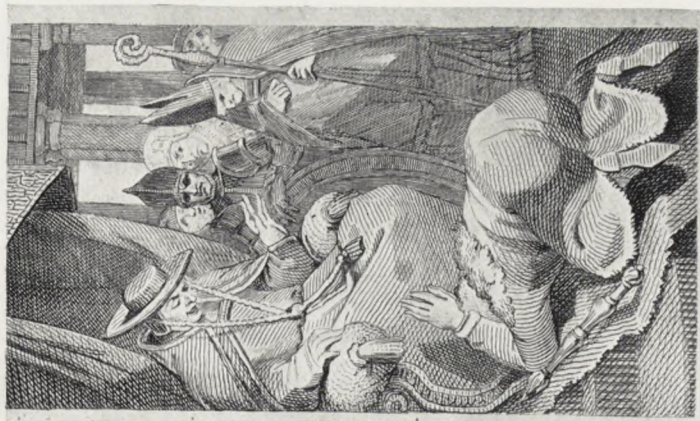


32a. BLAKE: Mirth and her Companions. Illustration to Milton's *L'Allegro*. Engraving.



32b. RUNGE: Morning. Oil. Kunsthalle, Hamburg.





33a. FUSELI: King John absolved by the Cardinal Pandulph. Engraved by Blake. Illustration to C. Allen's *History of England*.



33b. TIBALDI: Figure of Slave. Detail of fresco. Palazzo Poggi, Bologna.





34. FUSELI: Nightmare. Oil. *Goethe Museum, Frankfurt am Main.*





35a. GIULIO ROMANO: *Il Stregozzo*. Engraved by Agostino Veneziano.



35b. MARCANTONIO: *Dream of Raphael*. Engraving.





36a. GIULIO ROMANO: Hecuba's Dream. Fresco. *Palazzo Ducale, Mantua.*



36b. TIBALDI: Monkeys. Detail of fresco. *Castel S. Angelo, Rome.*





37a. FUSELI : Nursery of Shakespeare. Oil.  
*Courtauld Institute of Art, London.*



37b. SALVIATI: Charity. Oil. *Uffizi, Florence.*





38a. FUSELI: Achilles at the Funeral Pyre of Patroclus. Illustration to the *Iliad*, XXIII. Pen, ink and wash. Kunsthaus, Zürich.



38b. Engraving after Rosso: Mars.





39a. GOLTZIUS: Mars. Engraved by Matham.



39b. FUSELI: Religious Fanaticism attended by Folly trampling upon Truth. Mezzotint.





40a. FUSELI: Two Women, half-length. Pencil.  
*Kunsthau, Zürich.*



40b. BELLANGE: The Three Marys. Etching.  
*British Museum.*





41a. UYTEWAELE: Joseph and his Brethren. Detail. Oil. *Museum, Utrecht.*



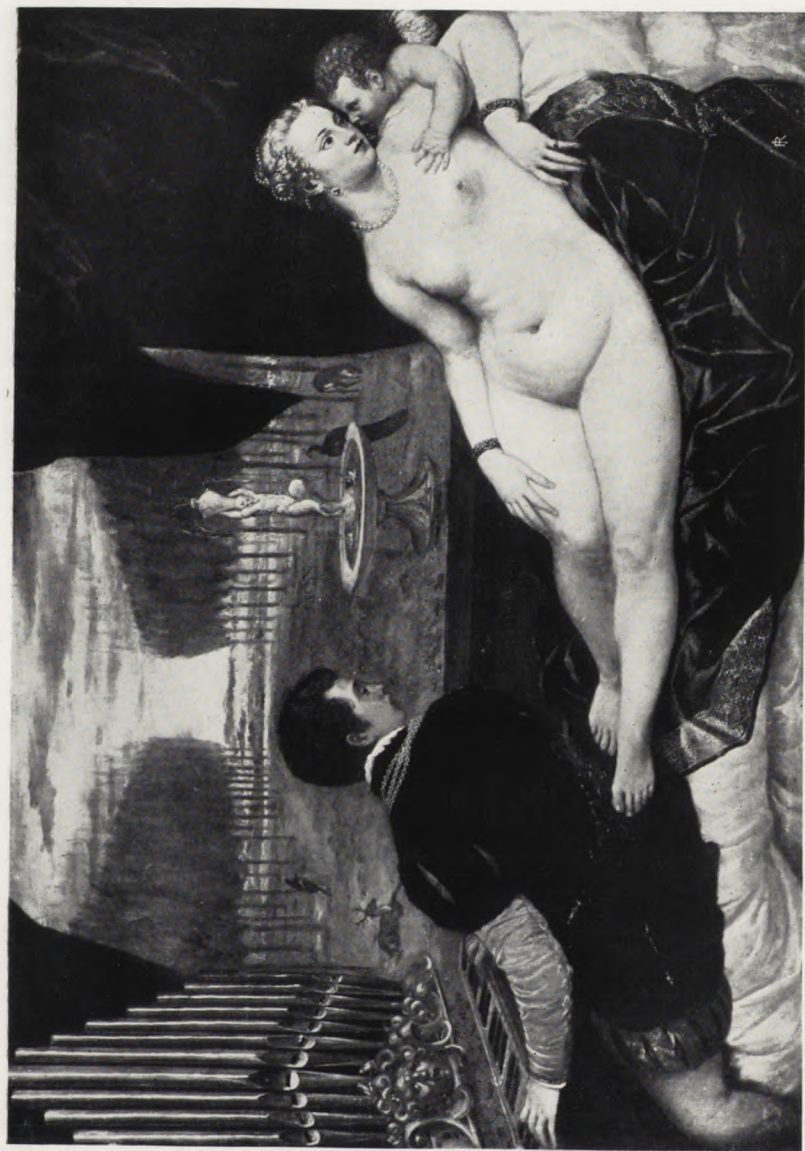
41b. FUSELI: Hotspur and Glendower from Shakespeare's *Henry IV.* Oil. *City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham.*





42. FUSELI: Nude Woman listening to a Girl playing upon a Spinnet. Oil. Ganz Collection, Chicago.





43. TITIAN: Venus and the Organ-player. Oil. Prado, Madrid.





44. FUSELI: Solitude in Twilight. Oil. *Private Collection, Zürich.*





45a. GOLTZIUS: Mars and Venus. Detail. Engraving.



45b. FUSELI: Nightmare. Pencil and wash. Kunsthau, Zürich.





46. FUSELI: Dream of Guyon from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. Pen, ink and wash. Albertina, Vienna.





47a. FUSELI: Free copy after Dürer's 'Lovers.' Pencil. *Kunsthau,*  
*Zürich.*



47b. FUSELI: Portrait of Lavinia de Jujo.  
Pencil. *Kunsthau,* *Zürich.*





48a. BANDINELLI: A Woman sewing. Chalk. Louvre, Paris.



48b. FUSELI: A Woman sewing. Pen and wash. Lord Wharton Collection, Dublin.





49. FUSELI: English Suburban Garden. Pencil and wash. *Roman Sketch-book, Kunsthau, Zürich.*





50. FUSELI: The Women of Hastings. Oil. *Private Collection, Zürich.*







51. HEIDELOFF: Fashion-plate from *Gallery of Fashion*. Aquatint. 1797.





52. FUSELI: A Woman walking. Pencil and wash. *Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.*





53a. FUSELI: Young People on the Banks of the Thames. Detail. Pen and ink. *Kunsthaus, Zürich.*



53b. LIEVENS: Raising of Lazarus. Oil. *Museum and Art Gallery, Brighton.*





54a. FUSELI: Scene from Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour*. Oil. Frau von Albertini Collection, Zürich.



54b. FUSELI: 'Newsreading in the Country'. Illustration to Cowper's *The Task*. Oil. Private Collection, Geneva.





55a. BLAKE: Frontispiece to Mary Wollstonecraft's *Original Stories*. Engraving.



55b. FUSELI: 'Family Life in the Country'. Illustration to Cowper's *Retirement*. Oil. *Private Collection, Basel*.



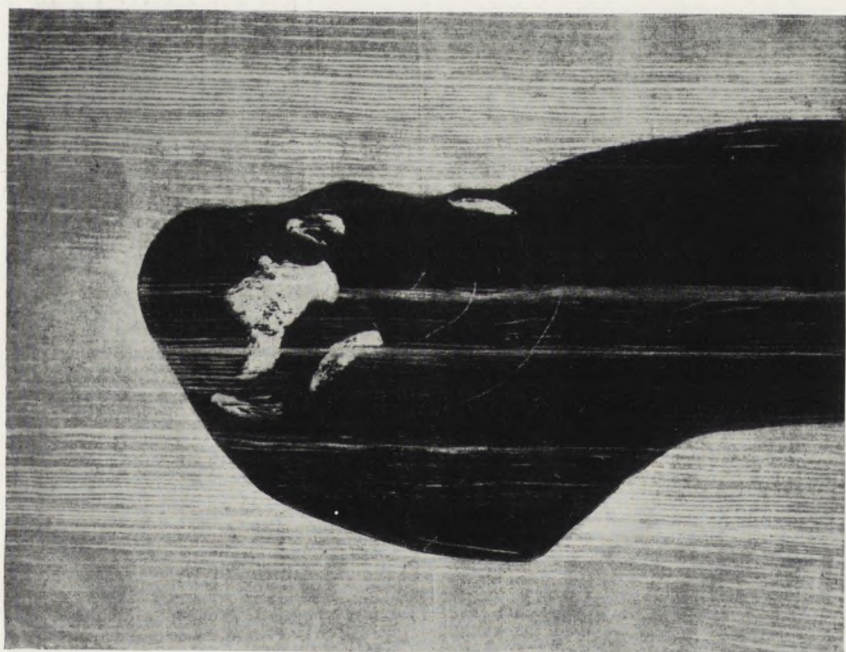


56a. FUSELI: Victim of a Dagger Wound supported by Monks. Pencil and wash. *Bollag Collection, Zürich.*



56b. VON HOLST (here attributed to): Faust and Gretchen. Pencil and wash. *Mrs. T. Lowinsky Collection, London.*





57a. MUNCH: The Kiss, Woodcut, 1897.



57b. FUSELI: The Embrace. Pencil. *Öffentliche Kunstsammlung, Basel.*





58. FUSELI: Young Woman imprisoned with a Skeleton, watched by an old Man in Armour. Oil. *Private Collection, Zürich.*





59. FUSELI: Girl combing her Hair, watched by a young Man. Water-colour.  
*Kunsthaus, Zürich.*





60a. FUSELI: Flight from the Family Circle. Pencil and wash. *Kunsthhaus, Zürich.*



60b. GREUZE: The Father's Curse. Oil. *Louvre, Paris.*





61. FUSELI: Portrait of Miss Otway-Cave. Oil. *Private Collection, Basel.*





62. FUSELI: Woman seen from the Back. Chalk and wash. *Kunsthhaus, Zürich.*





63. FUSELI: Release of a Maiden. Oil. *Private Collection, Basel.*





64a. JOHN MARTIN: *The Bard*. Oil. *Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-on-Tyne*.



64b. FUSELI: *The Bard*. Illustration to Gray's Poem. *Kunsthaus, Zürich*.



## THE AUTHOR

X A Hungarian by birth, Frederick Antal was born in 1887 and died in 1954. He studied art history at the universities of Budapest, Berlin, Freiburg, Paris and Vienna, and at the latter took his doctorate under Professor Dvořák. He worked for a time at the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts and also lectured at Budapest University. Travelling extensively in Italy he devoted himself to research on Mannerist painting and published several papers on this subject. In 1933 he came to England, where he at first lectured at the Courtauld Institute of London University. His book, *Florentine Painting and Its Social Background*, was published in 1948 and has since been translated into several languages.

“Dr Antal’s influence on contemporary art history was of great importance in spite of the fact that comparatively little of his writings had been published. His wide knowledge, which embraced not only the history of the visual arts but also the political and social history of the epochs he studied, became a source of unending inspiration for the younger generation of scholars in England and throughout the world.”

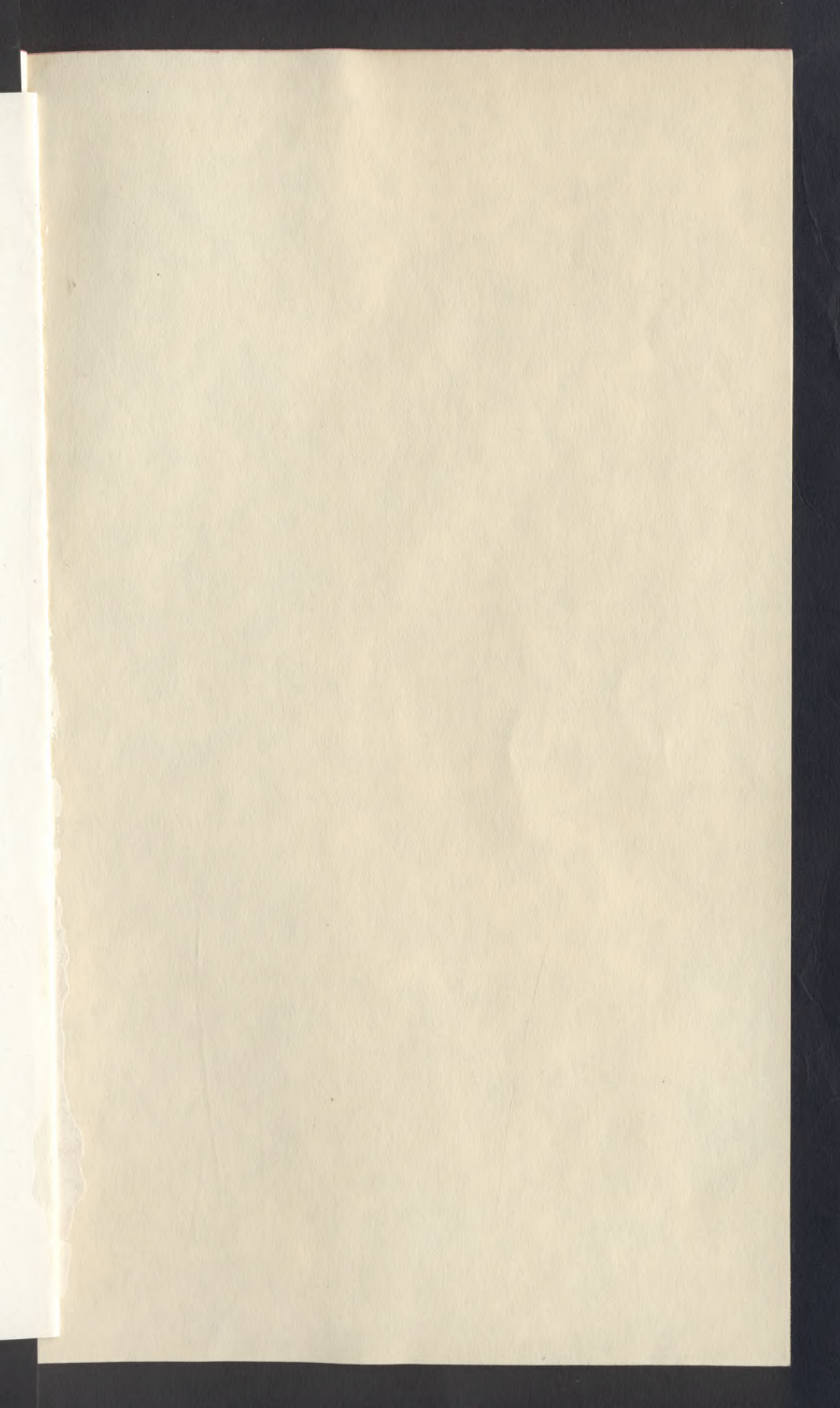
—From an obituary notice  
in ‘The Times’



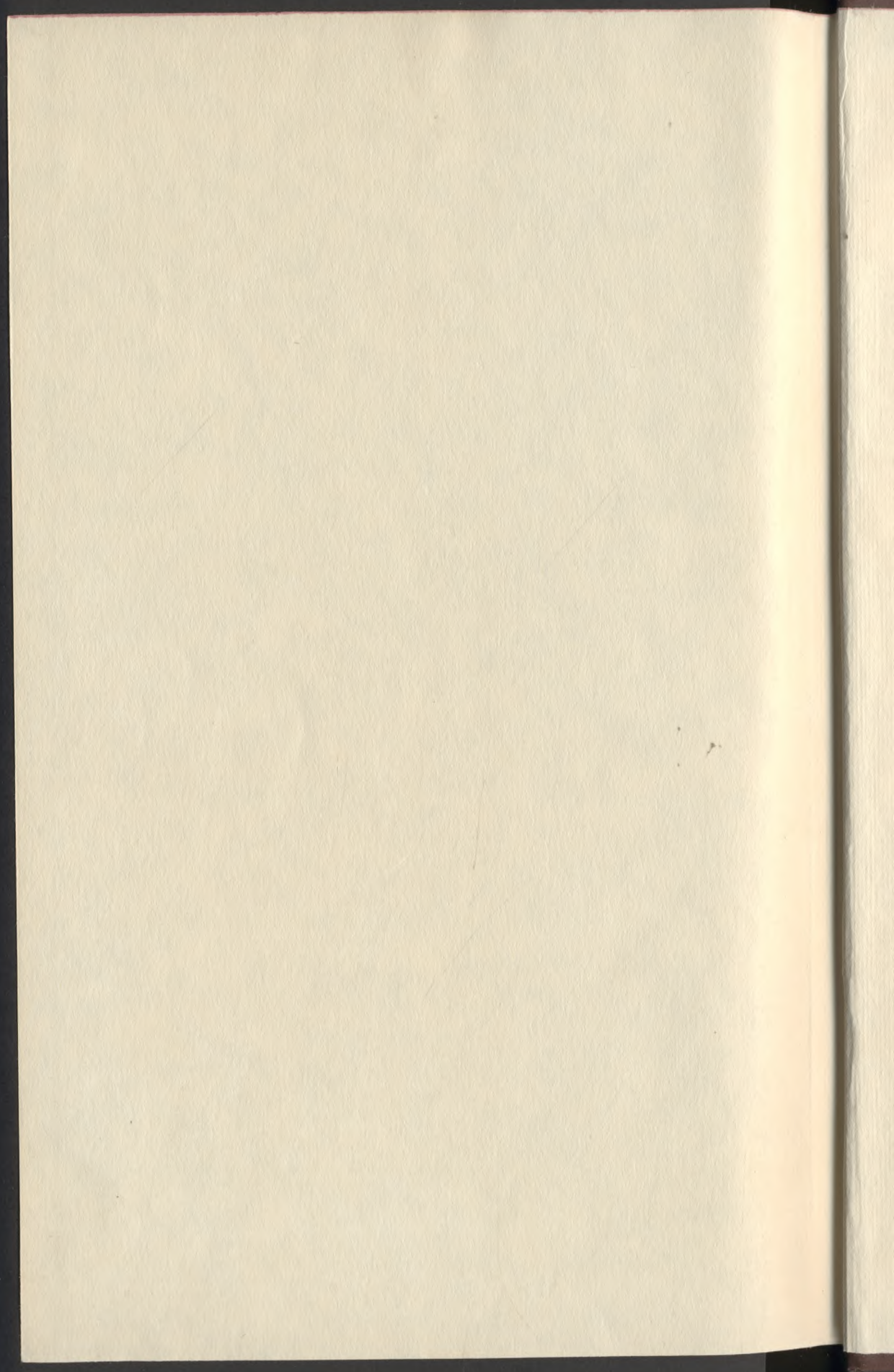
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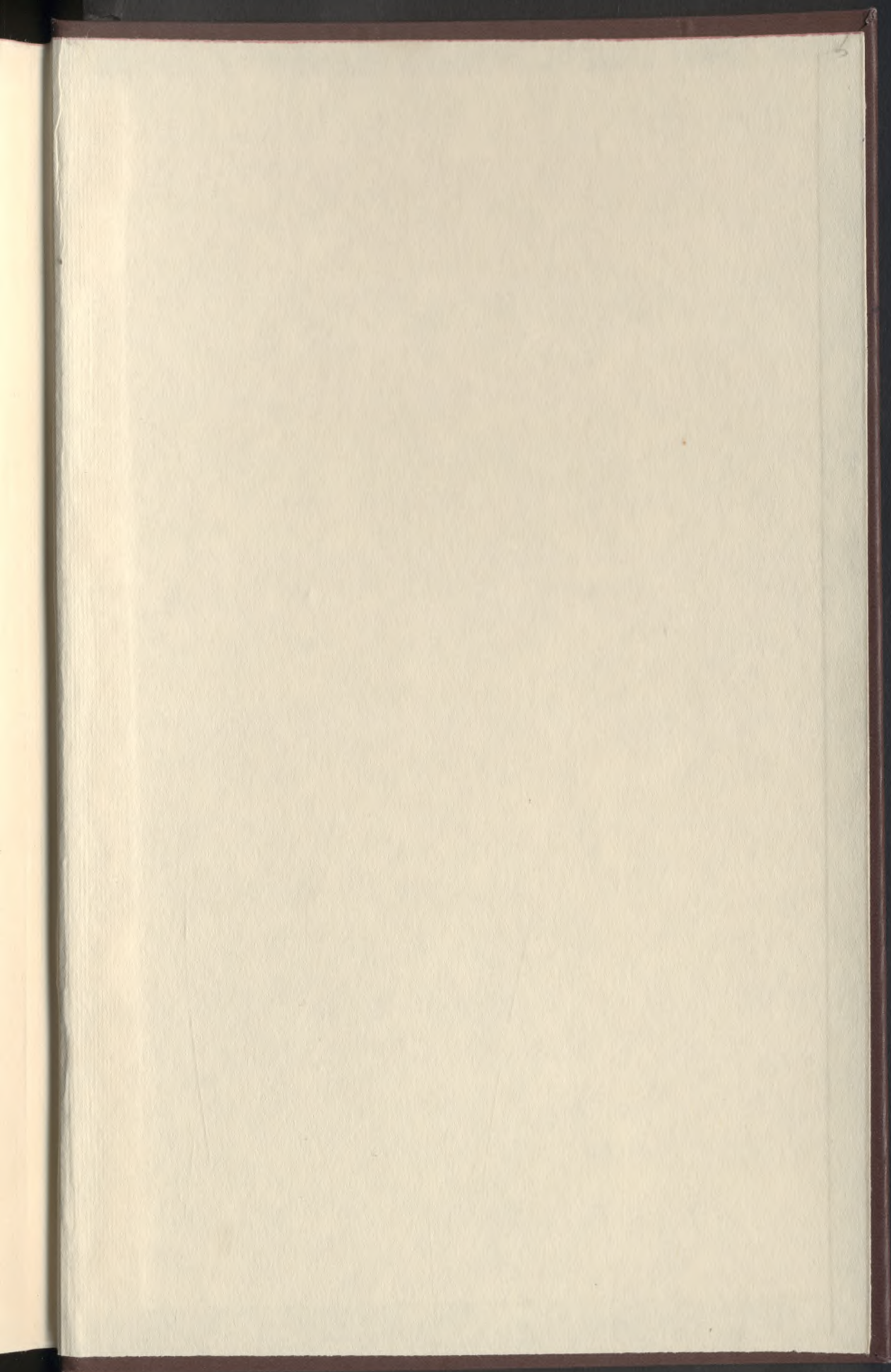




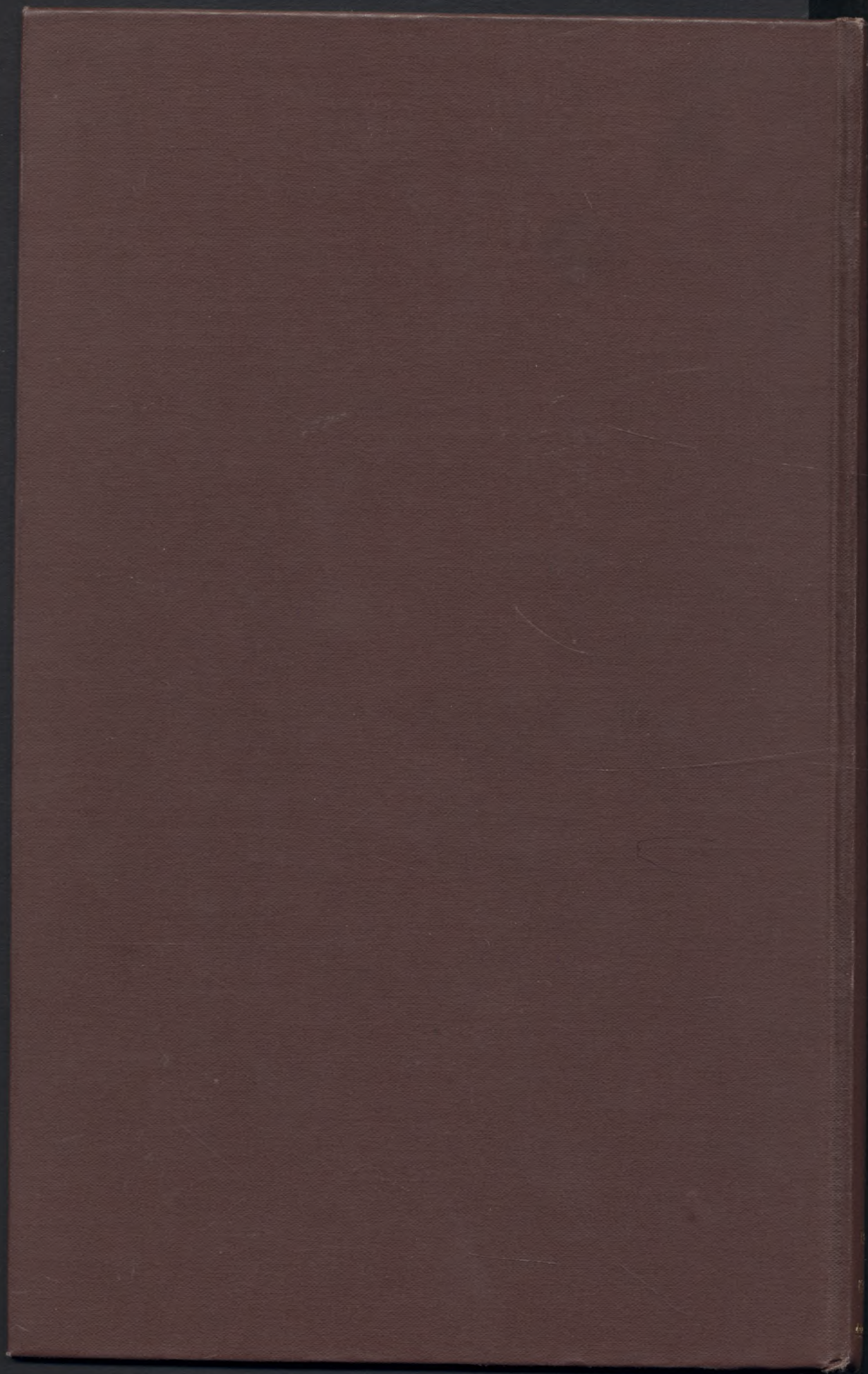














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ANTAL

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&  
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