

TWO WORDS IN ART HISTORY

I. BAROQUE

Although many volumes have been written on the concept of the Baroque in art criticism and literary history, the etymology of the word is still disputed and its semantic history in the major European languages has not been fully documented. Much confusion has been caused and misunderstandings have arisen through misquotations and wrong datings in the works of art historians, who usually preface their histories of Baroque art by an account of the origin of the term. The standard dictionaries give the etymology of the word, usually without documentation and with little or no attention to its semantic history. The fullest account of the problem, to which the present writer is indebted for some of the early German *loci*, is to be found in O. Kurz's "Barocco: storia di una parola", *Lettere Italiane*, XII (1960). Art critics and literary historians have been much influenced by Benedetto Croce's *Storia dell'età barocca in Italia* (Bari, 1929) and by earlier articles by the same author, in which a dogmatically one-sided account of the origin and semantic history of the word in Italian is presented. Croce is supported by Carlo Calcaterra, "Il problema del Barocco" in *Problemi ed orientamenti critici di lingua e di letteratura italiana*, III (Milan, 1949), who provides several early Italian *loci*. A useful account of the diffusion of the term is to be found in René Wellek's *Concepts of Criticism* (Yale Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 69-127, a reproduction, with a postscript in which some of the statements derived from Croce are retracted, of an article, "The Concept of the Baroque in Literary Scholarship", *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, V (1946), 77-109. Useful, too, is G. Getto's article, "La polemica sul Barocco" in *Letteratura e critica nel tempo* (Milan, 1954), which is distinguished from most other writings by Italians on this problem by its critical attitude to Croce's views.¹

¹ Some of the confusion referred to above has arisen from a misunderstanding of a passage in H. Wölfflin's *Renaissance und Barock* (1888), on p. 10 of which it is said: "die Grosse Encyclopädie kennt das Wort noch nicht in dem Sinne, in dem wir es gebrauchen." This is followed by an example of the use of the term in art criticism purporting to be taken from Quatremère de Quincy's *Dictionnaire historique de l'architecture*, the dates of which are given as 1795-1825. Croce (*op. cit.*, p. 22) ascribes this passage to the *Encyclopédie* and has been faithfully followed by several art critics and literary historians. The confusion has been made worse by F. Blume in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Vol. I (1949-51), p. 1279, who attributes the passage from Quatremère de Quincy to the *Encyclopédie* and ascribes the authorship to Rousseau! Errors of fact on this point and others abound in H. Tintelnot's "Zur Gewinnung unserer Barockbegriffe", a contribution by an art-historian to a symposium on the Baroque held in St. Gallen in the winter 1954-55 and published in *Die Kunstformen des Barockzeitalters* (Bern, 1956). As the crux of the matter is whether the extension of the term *baroque* to art criticism was made by French or Italian art connoisseurs and the Frenchman Quatremère de Quincy is one of the key figures in the relevant period, it is important to get the dates of his works right. He published the first volume of a *Dictionnaire de l'architecture*, in which the article on *baroque* occurs, in 1788 as part of Panckoucke's *Encyclopédie Méthodique*. The *Dictionnaire historique de l'architecture* was a revision of this published in 1832.

Whatever may be the ultimate derivation of *baroque*, it is certain that it was not from the outset a term in aesthetics or literary history. Leaving aside fantastic etymologies to be found in certain eighteenth-century dictionaries, there are three main theories on the origin of the word expounded in recent writings on the subject.²

According to the first, *baroque* is derived from the Med. Latin *baroco*, one of the mnemonic code-words apparently invented by the thirteenth-century schoolman William of Shyreswood to denote the several moods of the syllogistic figures. *Baroco* represents the fourth mood of the second figure, consisting of a major premise that is universal and affirmative and a minor premise that is particular and negative, yielding a conclusion that is particular and negative.³ By an extraordinary coincidence, extraordinary because of the more customary derivation of *baroque* from a Portuguese word *barroco* meaning a pearl, but undoubtedly a coincidence because he uses the example of the pearl for the other moods of the second figure, William of Shyreswood's example of the *baroco* syllogism is: every pearl (*margarita*) is a stone; some men are not stones; therefore, some men are not pearls. The derivation of the French *baroque* from the syllogistic term seems first to have been suggested by J. J. Rousseau in an article on *baroque* music in his *Dictionnaire de Musique* (1767)⁴: "Il y a bien de l'apparence que ce terme vient du *Baroco* des logiciens." This etymology is found sporadically in some nineteenth-century dictionaries, was revived in recent times, especially by Croce (*op. cit.*), but has not been generally accepted by philologists other than Italians. The evidence for and against it will be considered later.

Most modern lexicographers consider that the now current meanings of the word arise from a figurative use of the French *baroque*, borrowed in the sixteenth century from a Portuguese word *barroco*, possibly via the Spanish *barrueco*, meaning a misshapen and therefore inferior pearl.⁵ The ultimate origin of the Portuguese word, which is beyond the scope of this article, is thought by some to be Latin *verruca*, a wart, and by others to be a borrowing from the Arabic *barraga*, a sty on the eye, in either case the pearl being so

² A fourth, that the word is derived from the Italian *barocco* or *barocchico* meaning "unsure", has been advanced by F. Venturi in "Contributi ad un dizionario storico", *Rivista Storica Italiana*, LXXI (1959), 128-30. It has been summarily rejected by Kurz and Getto and need not be considered seriously.

³ On William of Shyreswood see M. Grabmann, *Introductiones in logicam des Wilhelm von Shyreswood*, Sitzungsberichte der bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Abt., Heft 10 (Munich, 1937). It is not certain that the mnemonic words were coined by William of Shyreswood, but they have not been found in earlier treatises on logic.

⁴ The article is repeated verbatim in the volume on music (1791) in the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*.

⁵ This etymology is found, e.g., in OED, Dauzat, Wartburg, Duden, Kluge (down to the 12th edition), *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok* and the *Ordbog over det Danske Sprog*. J. Corominas in his *Diccionario crítico etimológico de la lengua castellana* (1954) thinks that the modern meanings of the word arise from a fusion of the syllogistic term and the word for the pearl. Littré declares that the Portuguese-Spanish word is derived "sans doute" from the *baroco* of the logicians, but offers no evidence to explain how a technical term in scholastic logic could become a jeweller's trade-word.

named because of its characteristic excrescence. The earliest French sources in which the word has been found are inventories of precious stones and jewels, the first of which, an inventory of Charles V, is dated 1531: "97 gros ajorffes dietz barroques".⁶ French dictionaries begin to record the word from the first half of the seventeenth century. It appears in P. Monet's *Abrégé du parallèle* as "perle baroque" and the same lexicographer defines the term in his *Inventaire des deux langues françoise et latine* (1635): "perle baroque, faite au bedon, plate d'un côté, ronde de l'autre, *margarita tympanias*". The word is not recorded in the first edition (1607) of C. Oudin's *Trésor des deux langues espagnole et françoise*, but in the revised version of 1645 we find: "barroques, perles cornues, barruecos". The first two editions (1694 and 1718) of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* state expressly that the term is used only of pearls, and similarly the second edition (1721) of the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* says that *baroque* is a "terme de joaillier, qui ne se dit que des perles qui ne sont pas parfaitement rondes". A variant on this definition is to be found in the second (1694) and third edition (1750), but not in the first (1650), of G. Ménage's *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue françoise*, the first properly etymological dictionary of French: "Barroques, on appelle ainsi les perles et les dents qui sont d'inégale grandeur". The statement that *bar(r)oque* can be used of teeth is not, as may be thought, a Baroque conceit, but has probably been added to support Ménage's fantastic derivation of the word from the Latin *broccus* or *bruncus*, projecting (of teeth). It was presumably from Ménage that the German writer J. J. Winckelmann derived the statement in his *Sendschreiben über die Gedanken von der Nachahmung der Griechen*, published anonymously in 1756: "Man gab dieser Art zu arbeiten die Benennung des Barockgeschmacks, vermutlich von einem Wort, welches gebraucht wird bei Perlen und Zähnen, die von ungleicher Grösse sind." In a translation of Winckelmann into English, made by H. Fusseli in 1765 with the title *Reflections on the Paintings and Sculpture of the Greeks*, this sentence is rendered: "This style of decorations got the epithet of *Baroque* taste, derived from a word signifying pearls and teeth of unequal size."

The word *baroque* was, then, used as a jewellers' term in seventeenth-century French, and from this language it passes into English, Dutch, German and the Scandinavian languages, in all of which it is still current in the jewellers' trade. Significantly for our purpose, it was not adopted in Italian, where the pearl is called *scaramazza*, and it would seem therefore that the seventeenth and eighteenth-century uses of the Italian *barocco*, to be discussed later, must have had some other origin.

The first record in *The Oxford English Dictionary* of *baroque* in the

⁶ This and other examples from inventories, dated 1537 and 1599, were first noted by P. Barbier, "Miscellanea Lexicographica I", *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society*, I, 19. The word *ajorffes* is taken from the Portuguese *aljófar*, a small pearl. The spelling *barroque* with a double r, which is not uncommon in French and English sources at least down to the end of the 18th century, supports the derivation from Portuguese.

sense "pearl" is from 1882, but Kurz (*op. cit.*) quotes an example from an English catalogue of pearls and precious stones published in 1839: "Those pearls which are of imperfect form are called barock." This record is antedated by more than a century by Chambers' *Cyclopædia*, II, 768 (1728): "Pearls of unusual figures, i.e. neither round, nor in the pear-form, are called *Baroquas* or Scotch pearls."

In German the word *Baroqueperle* occurs occasionally, but from about the middle of the eighteenth century it was falsely associated with *Brocken* "fragment" and appears as *Brockenperle* or *Brockperle*. The earliest known example, quoted by Kurz (*op. cit.*), is from G. H. Zincke's *Allgemeines Oeconomisches Lexicon* (1753): "die ungleichen und eckigen [Perlen], so zuweilen von ziemlicher Grösse und daher auch Brocken-Perlen heissen." In his *Waaren-Lexicon in zwölf Sprachen* (1797) P. A. Nemnich gives as equivalents: ragged pearls—Brockperlen; baroques—Brockperlen; Brockperlen—baroques, It. scaramazze. The word is recorded by Adelung as *Brockenperle* in his dictionary (1793) and its ramifications were well known to Th. Heinsius whose *Volksthümliches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (1818) has the entry: "Die ungleichen eckigen und schiefen heissen Brockperlen; Frz. Barroques; Span. Barruecos, berruecos; Port. Barrocos; Engl. Ragged pearls."

In modern Swedish *barockpärla* is still current in the jewellers' trade, and it must have been taken over from French about the same time as it appears in German. The *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok* quotes a literary source from Dalin (c. 1760):

Från Paris och längst från påcker
Ha vi Baroquer och Barlocker.
(We get baroque pearls and trinkets from Paris
and long before that we got them from the Devil.)

To sum up, the French *baroque*, meaning a misshapen pearl, was borrowed, probably via Spanish, from Portuguese in the sixteenth century and by the middle of the eighteenth had passed into the other Western European languages except Italian. Down to about 1700 it was used in French exclusively as a technical term in jewelry. The problem, which remains to be solved, is: was it this word or some other which acquired those accretions of meaning resulting in the use of *baroque* as a technical term in art history and aesthetics? Without anticipating the answer to this question, which must be supported by documentary evidence, it may be pointed out now that the French *baroque* was from the outset the name of an article of *virtu*, inferior though it might be, and that such a word could more easily pass over into the aesthetic sphere than a term from mediaeval logic. The baroque

⁷ This is repeated verbatim in Rees' *Cyclopædia* (1819). As Chambers was to have organised a French encyclopædia, it is not without interest to note that the 12th vol. (1765) of Diderot's *Encyclopédie* has under *perle* a word-for-word translation of Chambers: "Les perles d'une figure irrégulière, c'est-à-dire, qui ne sont ni rondes, ni en poires, sont appelées baroques ou perles d'Ecosse." The "Scotch pearls" are those obtained from the pearl-fisheries in the Scottish rivers, which are of an inferior quality. *Baroquas* is a variant spelling of the Spanish word.

pearl had that irregularity and asymmetry which was regarded by the art critics of the eighteenth century as characteristic of the art of the seventeenth century and their own day, which on that account they rejected as debased and inferior.

Before considering this matter a third theory on the origin of *baroque* must be briefly examined and disposed of. In the first twelve editions of Kluge's *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* the traditional derivation of the word from the Portuguese *barroco* was accepted without question, but in the thirteenth edition (1934), taken over after Kluge's death by A. Götze, and in subsequent ones, a different etymology appears. It is now claimed that all previous theories have been superseded by an article on the Urbino painter Federigo Barocci (1528-1612) published in 1909 by the art-historian A. Schmarsow in the *Abhandlungen der sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl. XXVI*, Nos. 4 and 5. The word *baroque* is, it is asserted, simply the name of this Italian artist, whose work exhibits characteristic features of the early Baroque. This theory appears to have been first suggested, although tentatively, by J. Falke, *Geschichte des modernen Geschmacks* (1886), p. 142, and is accepted with reservations in the 1961 edition of Webster's *New International Dictionary*, but seems to the present writer to lack any historical or semantic justification. In the first place, Schmarsow's article contains only an account of Barocci's work and the word *baroque* is nowhere discussed in it. Secondly, the eighteenth-century French and German art critics who use the word *baroque* or its equivalent in reference to certain stylistic features in post-Renaissance art of which they disapprove and who list the artists concerned nowhere mention the little-known Barocci as typical. We are then left with three possibilities: *baroque* as a term in art history is either an extension of meaning of the syllogistic term *barocco* or of the French word for the misshapen pearl or has arisen in some way from a coalescence of these two words.

The evidence for the derivation from the Med. Latin *baroco* may be examined first. The Humanist scholars of the sixteenth century regarded the hair-splitting logic of the schoolmen with contempt and in their satirical writings, whether in Latin or the vernacular, *baroco* became a term of abuse for egregiously pedantic and involved argumentation. It is so used along with another mnemonic word *Celarent* in the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* (1517), p. 189 (ed. Stokes):

Unus magister noster, qui est doctus excoellenter,
Et vocatur Jacobus de Hochstraaten. . . .
Tandem fuit gradatus, et in Theologia qualificatus;
Quia ibi subtiliter disputavit et multos sillogismos formavit
In Baroco et Celarent, ita ut omnes admirarent.

Because of its form *baroco* was easily assimilated into Italian and it was used frequently in satirical writings in the vernacular from the sixteenth century onwards, often in the alliterative phrase *in barocco e barbara*. Of the many examples quoted by Croce (*op. cit.*) in support of his theory that *baroque* is derived from *barocco* and ultimately from the Med. Latin *baroco*

it may suffice to single out one here, taken from Caro's *Apologia* (1558): "Se questi sillogismi conchinggono, baroco e barbara e tutti gli altri suoi pari sono zuchi." That the Italian *barocco* is derived from the Med. Latin *baroco* is not in doubt, but it should be pointed out that in all the examples cited by Croce from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century the word is used only in conjunction with others belonging to the intellectual sphere, as e.g. *argomento*, *idea*, *discorsi*, *ragioni*, and no example has been found in Italian of the extension to the aesthetic sphere before the very end of the eighteenth century, by which time *le goût baroque* had been for some fifty years a vogue phrase among French and German art connoisseurs. It will be shown below that those Italian writers about 1800 who do use *barocco* with reference to art and aesthetic taste were influenced by contemporary French usage.

The word *baroco* had of course international currency in the handbooks of logic and is occasionally used in vernacular writings other than Italian; so, for example, by Montaigne (I, 25): "C'est "barocco" et "baralipton" qui rendent leurs supposés ainsi crotés et enfumés." But the term was never assimilated into French and is used only with reference to argumentation, either in its technical sense or pejoratively. Evidence of its standing in sixteenth-century France is to be found in H. Estienne's *Deux Dialogues du Nouveau François Italianisé* (1578). In this work the use of Italianisms in contemporary French, some restricted to the Court and others to the University of Paris, is castigated, and of the latter it is said (II, 292): "Telles façons de parler ne passent pas l'Université de Paris non plus que *Faire un argument in barocco*." (Compare the It. *argomentare in barocco*.)⁶ The word was felt to be an undesirable alien and was never naturalized in French. It is used only with reference to logic, never to aesthetic taste, and conversely *baroque* is not used as a technical term in logical reasoning. There appears to be no historical or semantic connection in French between *baroco* and *baroque*. Can it then be established that there is a link between *baroque* pearl and the term in modern aesthetics?

It has been shown above that none of the French dictionaries earlier than c. 1700 record *baroque* other than as a "terme de joaillier", but from about 1740 all of them cite a figurative sense of the word and none of them, with the exception of Rousseau in his *Dictionnaire de Musique* (1767), the lone champion in the eighteenth century of the *baroco* theory, has any doubt that the figurative sense is simply an extension of meaning of the word for the misshapen pearl. The 1740 edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* states under *baroque*: "se dit aussi au figuré, pour irrégulier, bizarre, inégal: un esprit baroque, une expression baroque, une figure baroque". Precisely the same definition is also to be found in the 1743 edition of the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* and examples of its use in French literature from the early eighteenth century onwards are not lacking. In

⁶ Cotgrave (1611) records what he calls the "tipler's phrase" *conclude in barocco*, and with a *carouse*, which he explains as an equivocal allusion to *broc* (tankard).

the prologue to J. Auteau's *Le Port-à-l'Anglois*, a play written for an Italian troupe who performed it in Paris in 1718, two Italian actresses, Flaminia and Silvia, who are to appear in it, discuss whether their Italian accent will jeopardise its success. They approach a M. Trafiquet, whom they believe to be the author, but who has only bought the MS. as a speculation, and he denies that he is either the author or a Frenchman. Whereupon Silvia exclaims, "Il est vrai qu'il a l'accent baroque aussi-bien que nous."⁹ The word is similarly used of an incongruous accent in Cartaud de la Villate's *Essai historique et philosophique sur le goût* (1736), p. 278: "Les beaux vers de M. Racine sont durs et baroques quand ils sortent de la bouche d'un Auvergnat." Referring to an idea the word is found in Saint-Simon's *Mémoires* (II, 438): "il était bien baroque de faire succéder l'Abbé Bignon à M. de Tonnerre." This *locus* cannot be dated exactly as, although the event referred to occurred in 1701, the *Mémoires* were not published until after Saint-Simon's death in 1755. Somewhat later Chateaubriand writes, "Les Anglais et les Allemands ont de nos gens de lettres les idées les plus baroques." It is in the sense "irregular, bizarre" that Rousseau uses the word, significantly spelt with a double *r*, in his *Lettre sur la musique française* (1753): "Les Italiens prétendent que notre mélodie est plate et sans aucun chant . . . ; de notre côté nous accusons la leur d'être bizarre et baroque." In his *Dictionnaire de Musique* (1767) Rousseau defines what he means by *baroque* music:

Une musique *Baroque* est celle dont l'Harmonie est confuse, chargée de Modulations et Dissonances ; le Chant dur et peu naturel, l'Intonation difficile, et le Mouvement contraint.

By this time *baroque* had become a vogue word in art criticism, especially in the phrase *le goût baroque*, which was used by the neo-classical art critics of the second half of the eighteenth century as a derogatory term for those aspects of what is now called Baroque art which they detested: the irregular, the asymmetrical, the preference for the oval over the round, the excessively exuberant ornamentation, elaborate scroll and *rocaille* work, capricious arabesques and *Chinoiserie*. In short, *le goût baroque* was to them bad taste, but, although these art critics mention certain artists whose works exhibit features which they disparage as *baroque*, the word is not yet a technical term in art history. It is not used as the name of a particular period in art, although all the artists condemned by the abusive epithet *baroque* belong to the seventeenth or eighteenth century, nor is it used as the common denominator for them or their style. It is a term of abuse like *gothique*, with which indeed it can be interchanged.

A typical example of the equation of *baroque* and *gothique* is contained in a letter written by the Président C. de Brosses supposedly from Italy in 1739 to his friend, the art connoisseur de Quintin, but the actual date of this *locus* cannot be determined exactly as it is now known that de Brosses wrote up his letters from notes after his return to France. He writes:

⁹ Quoted from J. Auteau, *Œuvres* (Paris, 1749), I, 6.

Les Italiens nous reprochent qu'en France, dans les choses de mode, nous redonnons dans le goût gothique; que nos cheminées, nos boîtes d'or, nos pièces de vaisselle d'argent sont contournées et recourtournées comme si nous avions perdu l'usage du rond et du carré; que nos ornements deviennent du dernier baroque.¹⁰

The earliest known example of the phrase *le goût baroque* in French sources¹¹ is to be found in A. J. Parnety's *Dictionnaire portatif de peinture, sculpture, et gravure* (1757), p. 24:

Baroque, qui n'est pas selon les règles des proportions, mais au caprice. Il se dit du goût et du dessin. Les figures de ce tableau sont *baroques*; la composition est dans le goût *baroque*, pour dire qu'elle n'est pas dans le bon goût. Le Tintoret avait toujours du singulier et de l'extraordinaire dans ses tableaux; il s'y trouve toujours quelque chose de *baroque*.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the general dictionaries and encyclopaedias begin to record this application of the term *baroque* to *objets d'art* and painting. Typical of these is *Le Grand Vocabulaire* of 1788:

BAROQUE, adjectif des deux genres. Ce mot n'a d'usage au propre que pour désigner des perles d'une rondeur imparfaite. *Toutes ces perles sont baroques.*

BAROQUE s'emploie dans le sens figuré, et signifie inégal, irrégulier, bizarre. *C'est un caractère baroque. Il fit une entreprise baroque. Nous y vîmes une cérémonie baroque.*

On dit, en termes de peintures, qu'une figure, un tableau sont dans le *goût baroque*; pour dire, qu'ils ne sont pas selon les règles des proportions, mais que la main du caprice les a peints ou dessinés.

Similarly in the seventh edition (1771) of the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* in addition to the two meanings in the 1743 edition already referred to a third appears: "en peinture, un tableau, une figure, d'un goût baroque, où les règles des proportions ne sont pas observées, où tout est représenté suivant le caprice de l'artiste."

What is perhaps the most significant and influential statement on the *goût baroque* occurs in Quatremère de Quincy's *Dictionnaire de l'architecture*, the first volume of which was published in 1788 as a part of Panckoucke's *Encyclopédie Méthodique*. Quatremère de Quincy's account of the *baroque* in architecture sums up all aspects of the matter and is characteristic of the art critics of the eighteenth century to this element in the art of their day:

Baroque, en architecture est une nuance du bizarre. Il en est, si on veut, le raffinement, ou, s'il était possible de le dire, l'abus. Ce que la sévérité est à la sagesse du goût, le baroque est au bizarre, c'est-à-dire qu'il en est le superlatif. L'idée du baroque entraîne avec soi celle du ridicule poussé à l'excès. Borromi a donné les plus grands modèles de bizarrerie. Guarini peut passer pour le maître du baroque. La Chapelle du Saint Suaire à Turin, bâtie par cet architecte, est l'exemple le plus frappant qu'on puisse citer de ce goût.¹²

¹⁰ Quoted from C. de Brosses, *Lettres familières écrites d'Italie en 1739 et 1740* (ed. R. Colomb, Paris, 1886), I, 105.

¹¹ The French phrase occurs in a German text dated 1747 (see the discussion of the German sources below).

¹² This statement lives on until well into the nineteenth century. It is repeated e.g. in A. L. Millin's *Dictionnaire des Beaux Arts* (1806). The distinction between the *bizarre* and the *baroque* is made by many art-historians in the nineteenth century.

This passage from Quatremère de Quincy is a crucial one in the much disputed question whether the transference of the term to the aesthetic sphere was first made in French or Italian. It is frequently asserted, as e.g. in Battisti-Alessio's *Dizionario etimologico Italiano* (Florence, 1950), that the application of *barocco* to architecture occurred first in Italian and that the French *baroque* in this sense was a semantic borrowing from Italian, but it has been shown above that during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Italian *barocco* was used only as a *terminus technicus* in logic and in satirical and burlesque writings with reference to pedantic argumentation and involved reasoning. It is unknown in any other sense to the lexicographers of the period and is not recorded at all in Baldinucci's specialized art dictionary, *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno* (Florence, 1681). Not until the very end of the eighteenth century do we find the first example of *barocco* applied to architecture and not until the early years of the nineteenth the first record of the phrase *gusto barocco*, and in both cases French influence seems probable. The claim that the Italian usage is prior to the French appears to have arisen from the confusion over the dates of Quatremère de Quincy's work referred to above (fn. 1). Nine years after the appearance of the first volume of Quatremère de Quincy's dictionary of architecture F. Milizia, who was a great admirer of Quatremère de Quincy and who translated some of his works into Italian, published his *Dizionario delle belle arti del disegno* (Bassano, 1797), in which this definition of *barocco* is offered:

Barocco è il superlativo del bizzarro, l'eccesso del ridicolo. Borromini diede in deliri, ma Guarini, Pozzi, Marchioni nella sagrestia di San Pietro in barocco.

Milizia has added two names of his own, but the echoes of Quatremère de Quincy's "il en est le superlatif" (of the bizarre) and "ridicule poussé à l'excès" are obvious, and the true relationship between these two works is conclusively established by the words, "estratto in gran parte dalla Enciclopedia Metodica", which appear on the title-page of Milizia's dictionary. Some fifty years after the phrase *le goût baroque* became current in France *gusto barocco* first appears in Italian in canto xv of the vast burlesque beast epic *Gli Animali Parlanti* (1802) by G. B. Casti, who lived for part of his life in Paris and died there in 1803:

Di palma e d'aloè ricco tabarro
Portan, di singular gusto barocco,
Cui sovrapposto è un lavario bizzarro
Di fior diversi . . .

One notes the typical conjunction of *bizzarro* and *barocco*, found in French as early as Rousseau's *Lettre sur la musique française* (1753). It would, then, seem probable that at the end of the eighteenth century the Italian *barocco* received an accretion of meaning from the French *baroque* and that the phrase *gusto barocco* was originally a Gallicism.

Whatever may be the truth about the relationship between the French *baroque* and the Italian *barocco*, it is certain that English usage of the term

in the eighteenth century faithfully reproduced the French. In its more general sense "odd, bizarre" it is used by H. Walpole, whose interest in things French is well known, in a letter (5. vii. 1773) to W. Mason, referring to the style of Gray's letters in French: "A native of France . . . would deem the style very *baroque*." Early in the nineteenth century in a novel, *Florence Macarthy, an Irish Tale* (1818) by Lady Morgan, who had previously published an account of the state of France, we are told (Vol. I, chap. ii): "It is a pity . . . that the Americans are so *baroque*, for they are, politically speaking, a great people." As applied to art-forms *baroque* occurs mainly in English translations from French or German. Mention has already been made of the phrase *the baroque taste* in Fusseli's translation (1765) of Winckelmann, and one year later J. A. F. Warnecke, translating J. Möser's *Harlekin oder Vertheidigung des Groteske-Komischen* (1761), renders "der Geschmack des Schiefen, oder der sogenannte *gout baroc*" by "the awkward taste, or what they call *gout-baroc*". *Baroque* as applied to a style of music was not unknown to English musicologists in the second half of the eighteenth century. In his *Present State of Music in Germany, the Netherlands, and United Provinces* (1773) Charles Burney, who made a tour of Europe to collect material for a history of music, quotes (Vol. I, p. 348) the opinion of the German musician Hasse that Durante's music was "*baroque*, that is, coarse and uncouth", and in W. Waring's *A Complete Dictionary of Music* (1779) a word-for-word translation of Rousseau's definition of *baroque* music, quoted above, is given:

A Baroque, or rough music, is that, whose harmony is confused, filled with modulations and dissonances, its notes hard and unnatural, the intonation difficult, and the movement constrained. It appears evident that this term must be derived from the Baroco of the logicians.¹³

In English the term acquires at this time no accretions of meaning, and in the sense, "odd, bizarre" remains to the present day rare and literary.

Swedish, too, reflects the eighteenth-century French usage. The *Svenska Akademiens Ordbok* records *barocka idéer* from Thorild (1785) and Rousseau's definition of *baroque* music is faithfully reproduced in Envallsson's *Musikaliskt Lexicon* (1802).

Although German usage in the eighteenth century reproduces all the nuances of meaning of the French word, it is in German that the next significant accretion of meaning occurs. About the middle of the nineteenth century, at a time when interest in France in *le goût baroque* had evaporated as other fashions in art prevailed, German art-historians in the universities and art academies continued to discuss the significance of the term and it was they who first distinguished a Baroque period in the history of the fine arts. *Baroque* became then a *terminus technicus* in art history, and the common denominator of the artists working in that period. But the attitude to the Baroque remained predominantly negative and hostile until in 1888

¹³ Rousseau was less positive on the origin of the word. The same definition is found in J. F. Dannely, *An Encyclopaedia or Dictionary of Music* (London, 1825).

Heinrich Wölfflin wrote in his *Renaissance und Barock* the first positive appreciation of the aims of the Baroque architects and the principles of composition with which they worked.

The word itself was introduced into Germany about 1750 both in its wider and earlier meaning "odd, bizarre" and in the more specific phrase *le goût baroque* (*der Barockgeschmack*) with reference to art-forms and *objets d'art*. Indeed, the first recorded examples of this phrase in German texts, either in its French or German form, are earlier than the one quoted above from Pernety (1757). In an essay by the Dresden architect F. A. Krubsacius, "Betrachtungen über den wahren Geschmack der Alten in der Baukunst und über desselben Verfall in neueren Zeiten", which appeared in 1747 in the *Neuer Büchersaal der schönen Wissenschaften und freyen Künste*, Vol. IV, p. 420, the author refers to the interior decorations of a certain Herr Nahl of Berlin and says that although Nahl is fond of rocaille work he uses it with moderation and seriousness, so that "sein Geschmack vor allen übrigen der wahre *Goût baroque* genennet zu werden verdienet". In a second article, "Untersuchung vom Ursprung, Wachstum und Verfall der Verzierungen", published in 1759 in *Das Neueste aus der anmuthigen Gesellschaft*, Vol. IX, p. 178, the same author castigates the art fashions of his day:

Ist es denn nötig, eine Sache mit lauter Hirngespinsten zu verzieren, mit Dingen, die in der Welt nicht zu finden sind, oder die sich nicht schicken. Und da ein jeder Verständiger, der da fraget, was es denn eigentlich vorstellen soll, sich mit der Antwort begnügen muss, es sey *Grotesque, Arabesque, à la Chinoise* oder *en goût baroque*. Kurzum es sey so Mode!¹⁴

The phrase is also used in its French form by J. Möser, *Harlekin oder Vertheidigung des Groteske-Komischen* (1761): "Der Geschmack des Schiefen, oder der sogenannte *gout baroc*, ist gewiss sonderbar schön, gehört aber nicht in Tempel und andere dauerhafte Werke, welche die Ewigkeit erreichen sollen."¹⁵ The corresponding German phrase *der Barockgeschmack* or sometimes *der barocke Geschmack* occurs equally early. In *Der Phaeton* (1754), a parody of Ovid by F. W. Zachariä, a remarkable carriage in the *goût baroque* is described:

Ganz im barockschen Geschmack war er [the carriage] von
Künstlern geschaffen.
Eine vergöldete Muschel formirte den Kasten; und hinten
Ragt aus der Muschel ein Mohr, mit einem silbernen Turban,
Welcher einen Sonnenschirm hält.

In these and other examples from eighteenth-century German the contemporary derogatory attitude to the *goût baroque* is apparent, but it has been asserted by Karl Borinski in his *Die Antike in Poetik und Kunsttheorie*

¹⁴ This passage has sometimes, e.g. by Schulz-Basler in their *Deutsches Fremdwörterbuch*, been attributed to F. Nicolai in his *Briefe die neueste Literatur betreffend*, III (1759), 50, but Nicolai is here only quoting from Krubsacius in a review.

¹⁵ I am indebted to the article by O. Kurz (*op. cit.*) for the two quotations from Krubsacius and the one from Möser.

(Leipzig, 1914), Vol. I: *Mittelalter, Renaissance, Barock*, p. 303, that J. J. Winckelmann used the term *Barock* in the sense "decoratively free" and not yet in an unfavourable sense (*noch nicht im ungünstigen Sinne*).¹⁶ In the first place, the word had at this time (1756) not been used in any but an unfavourable sense, and it is inconceivable that Winckelmann, that fervent admirer of Greek classical art, who called a Baroque sculpture in a garden near Naples "das abscheulichste Denkmal des Verderbnisses des Geschmacks", should write appreciatively of the Baroque. The confusion has arisen through a piece of literary mystification by Winckelmann himself, who in 1756 published anonymously a *Sendschreiben über die Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechen*, containing a criticism of his own *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der Griechen in der Mahlerey und Bildhauerkunst* (1754), in order to provide himself with an opportunity to reply to his critics. Although written by Winckelmann, the views expressed in the *Sendschreiben* are the opposite of his own and certainly cannot be taken as evidence that he was in any way well disposed to the Baroque. After describing how the artists and sculptors of his day had departed from absolute symmetry and allowed their fancy free play, Winckelmann continues:

Eine Nation [the French], die sich in neueren Zeiten von allem Zwang in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft zuerst frei gemacht, wurde auch in der Freiheit in diesem Theile der Kunst unsere Lehrerin. Man gab dieser Art zu arbeiten die Benennung des Barockgeschmacks, vermuthlich von einem Worte, welches gebraucht wird bei Perlen und Zähnen, die von ungleicher Grösse sind.¹⁷

In his translation (1760) of Diderot's *Discours sur la poésie dramatique*, in which Diderot pleaded for simplicity in stage-settings, Lessing renders Diderot's "point de magots" (grotesque Chinese porcelain figures) by "nichts Barockes",¹⁸ and finally Goethe in the eighth book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit* describes Oeser, his art teacher in Leipzig and previously Winckelmann's in Dresden, as "ein abgesagter Feind des Schnörkel- und Muschelwesens und des ganzen barockischen Geschmacks".

In its wider and earlier sense, "odd, bizarre" *barock* is no less common in German usage of the period under discussion than *der Barockgeschmack*. Both Wieland and Goethe were fond of the word. In *Agathon* (1766) Wieland refers (Bk. XII, chap. i) to the sudden transition from the pathetic to the comic in Shakespeare's plays as *barock*,¹⁹ and in the essay "Über einige ältere deutsche Singspiele" in *Der Teutsche Merkur* (1773) he exclaims: "Alceste mit Hanswurst—ein barockischer Einfall!" Wieland's frivolous verse tale *Der neue Amadis* (1771) has an amusing example of the current use of this vogue word. Nothing, it is said (7th *Gesang*, verse 30), could be more *barockisch* than the figure of "Miss Blaffardine, die Blonde", who was:

¹⁶ This is repeated by René Wellek (*op. cit.*, p. 70) with two different dates for Winckelmann's work, both of them wrong.

¹⁷ On the origin of this remark about pearls and teeth see above.

¹⁸ Lessing, *Werke* (Bong, Berlin), XI, 319.

¹⁹ This passage is quoted in full by Lessing in the 69th *Stück* of his *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* (1787).

Vom Kopf zum Gürtel so scheusslich als bis zum Knöchel schön.
 Von unten der besten Nymphe von Vanloo zu vergleichen,
 Von oben ein Ideal, um Vögel zu verscheuchen.

Goethe in his *Dichtung und Wahrheit* applies the adjective to Behrlich's jokes, to the incongruous pairing-off of persons of different sex in party games and to the Yiddish of his native Frankfurt, and in a letter to Goethe (7. iv. 1796) Schiller calls the presentation of ideas in certain astrological writings *barock*. Although it still has a pronounced literary flavour, the word *barock* is much less rare in modern German than in French²⁰ or English. In his *Harzreise* (1826) Heine tells us he met a tailor's apprentice, who was "eine barocke Mischung von Laune und Wehmut". The adjective is applied in C. F. Meyer's *Der Schuss von der Kanzel* (1877) to the jagged outline of the Alps, and in Th. Mann's *Felix Krull* (1923) the signature of Krull senior, which Felix forged, was "höher als breit, barock und kindlich von Erfindung".

In the German universities and academies of the nineteenth century art history became an academic discipline, and it was in these circles about the middle of the century that the features of the Baroque style were analysed, although it was still regarded as degenerate and debased, and a Baroque period in art history demarcated. The word, formerly an abusive epithet, now became a respectable *terminus technicus* in art history. In H. A. Pierer's *Universal-Lexikon* (1840), III, 420, the Baroque style in architecture is defined as: "der durch unorganisches Zusammenwirken antiker Details und Überladenheit mit nichtssagenden Gliedern und Zieraten entstandene Geschmack in der Baukunst, wie er sich in der 2. Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts geltend zu machen anfang", and in J. Falke's *Geschichte des modernen Geschmacks* (1866) it is stated (p. 142): "Wir pflegen den Kunststil, welcher der Renaissance folgte, als den *Barockstil* zu bezeichnen." Opinions on the precise limits of this period in which the Baroque style flourished were not unanimous. Some described it vaguely as following the Renaissance, others assigned it to the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, while W. Luebke in his *Geschichte der Architektur* (1855) generously extended it to the years from 1580 to 1800.²¹

The two most influential writers on the Baroque in the second half of the nineteenth century, who began the academic reappraisal of this style and whose work led to the extension of the term to the history of literature and music and indeed to many other aspects of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century civilisation,²² were the Swiss Germans Jakob Burckhardt (1818-97) and his pupil and successor in the Chair of Art History in Basel, Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945). In his *Cicerone* (1855), a guide to the art treasures

²⁰ But *baroque* has been proliferating in recent French journalistic writings. See P. Charpentat, "De quelques acceptions du mot *baroque*", *Critique*, July 1964, pp. 661-66.

²¹ The new vogue word *Rococo* was used by several writers at this time as co-terminous with *Barock*.

²² O. Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (Munich, 1920), I, 427, writes of Baroque philosophy, psychology, mathematics and physics.

of Italy, which was translated into several European languages, Burckhardt charted the Italian Baroque, describing it in detail rather than evaluating it, and it was this work which provided a rich mine of information for the popular art histories and Baedeker's guides to Italy, in which the traveller was instructed what he should see, even if he was not to admire it.²³ Burckhardt's attitude to the Baroque was still hostile and apologetic. Although corrupt (*verdorben*) the Baroque is not without interest as a phenomenon in the history of civilisation and it cannot be ignored because there is so much of it. "Die Barockbaukunst", he concludes, "spricht diesselbe Sprache wie die Renaissance, aber einen verwilderten Dialekt davon." There is, however, evidence from letters written during journeys through Italy in 1875-8 to his friend Max Alioth, a Basel architect, that Burckhardt experienced a change of heart, which came too late to influence his published work but may have inspired his pupil Wölfflin to a reassessment of the Baroque. Already in April 1875 he writes from Rome: "Mein Respekt vor dem Barocco nimmt stündlich zu und ich bin bald geneigt, ihn für das eigentliche Ende und Hauptresultat der lebendigen Architektur zu halten. Er hat nicht nur Mittel für alles, was zum Zweck dient, sondern auch für den schönen Schein",²⁴ and in another letter (16. iv. 1876) he compares himself "in Sachen von Barocco und Altertum" to the brothers in J. P. Hebel's anecdote *Die Bekehrung*, which relates of two brothers, one Protestant and the other Catholic, whose religious disputes so disturbed the home that the father sent the Catholic brother away. They continued their discussions by correspondence and on the return of the Catholic brother they found that each had been converted to the religion of the other. In August 1876, Burckhardt, now a Baroque convert, writes from Milan that at the beginning of his journey he had seen in Feldkirch "den genialsten Barock-Beichtstuhl", and in August 1878 he describes the San Salvatore Church in Bologna as "der einfach-schönste Barock in Backstein, den ich kenne".

Burckhardt's views on the Baroque were also to contribute, along with Wölfflin's, to an extension of the concept to other periods than the Baroque proper and to the non-visual arts. Already in 1843 he had suggested in an essay "Über die vorgotischen Kirchen am Niederrhein" that every classical style has a late, florid and decadent stage. From him, or more probably from Nietzsche, the idea was taken up by Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, who in 1881 described Hellenistic art as "ancient baroque", and by L. von Sybel, who in his *Weltgeschichte der Kunst* (1888) has a chapter on ancient Roman baroque. It was probably from Burckhardt that Nietzsche, for a time professor in Basel, derived his conception of the Baroque in *Menschliches*.

²³ The 1869 edition of *Baedeker's Guide to Central Italy and Rome* has an introduction by A. Springer, the author of a *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* (1856), which lists the Baroque artists and stigmatizes their work as 'degenerate Renaissance'.

²⁴ This and other quotations from Burckhardt's letters are taken from J. Burckhardt, *Briefe an einen Architekten*, 1878-89, ed. by H. Trog (Munich, 1913). The Italian *barocco* is commonly used by Burckhardt and others when writing of Italian Baroque.

Allzumenschliches (1878) as a recurrent phenomenon in history, occurring always as classical art declines into rhetoric and theatricality. He writes in a section (II, 144) headed 'Vom Barockstile':

Der Barockstil entsteht jedesmal beim Abblühen jeder grossen Kunst, wenn die Anforderungen in der Kunst des classischen Ausdrucks allzugross geworden sind, als ein Natur-Ereignis, dem man wohl mit Schwermuth—weil es der Nacht voranläuft—zusehen wird, aber zugleich mit Bewunderung für die ihm eigentümlichen Ersatzkünste des Ausdrucks und der Erzählung.

Such a stage has been reached in the music of Nietzsche's own day (the reference is presumably to Wagner):

Gerade jetzt, wo die Musik in diese letzte Epoche übergeht, kann das Phänomen des Barockstils in einer besondern Pracht kennen lernen; denn es hat von den griechischen Zeiten ab schon oftmals einen Barockstil gegeben, in Poesie, Beredsamkeit, im Prosastile, in der Skulptur ebensowohl als bekanntermassen in der Architektur—und jedesmal hat dieser Stil . . . auch Vielen von den Besten und Ernstesten seiner Zeit wohlgethan: —weshalb es anmassend ist, ohne Weiteres ihn abschätzig zu beurteilen.

The way was now open to a reappraisal of the qualities of Baroque art, to an extension of the term to literature and music and to other periods than the Baroque proper. It was in his *Renaissance und Barock* (1888), dealing chiefly with architecture in Rome, that Heinrich Wölfflin gave the first positive technical analysis of Baroque art, from which present-day Baroque scholarship stems,²⁵ and it was he who, by his suggestion that the same features he had observed in comparing Renaissance and Baroque art were traceable in the works of Ariosto and Tasso, led the way to the application of the term to the arts of literature and music. Wölfflin's ideas were avidly taken up by German literary historians, who are still continuing to explore the endless by-ways of what is now known as the Baroque period in German literature and to apply the concept to the literatures of other European countries.²⁶

It was then from Germany that the concept of a Baroque period in art passed into European languages other than French in the second half of the nineteenth century. In Italian, Tommaséo-Bellini's *Dizionario della lingua italiana* (1865) records:

Barocco—in architettura e in ornato quello stile goffo e bizzarro che incominciò a prevalere sulla fine secole XVI e durò quasi tutto il XVIII, e barocchi le opere d'arte che se ne risentano.

A similar definition is also found in the second edition (1865), but not in

²⁵ Wölfflin's views are further developed in his even more influential *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (1915). Interest in the Baroque was also stimulated by Cornelius Gurlitt's three volumes: *Geschichte des Barockstiles in Italien* (1887), *Geschichte des Barock und Rococo in Frankreich* (1888), *Geschichte des Barockstiles und des Rococo in Deutschland* (1889). Gurlitt characterizes individual Baroque works, criticising some and praising others, but does not elaborate any precise conceptual or historical categories for the Baroque.

²⁶ A comprehensive account of the extension of the concept Baroque to the literature of all European countries is given by René Wellek in his *Concepts of Criticism* (1963), pp. 69-127.

the first (1855), of Fanfani's *Vocabolario della lingua italiana*.²⁷ It was probably from Italy that the term passed into Spanish, where *barroco* as the name for a period in art history is recorded in the *Diccionario histórico de la lengua española* (Vol. II, 1936) from 1899 and the derivative *barroquismo* as the term for the Baroque style, previously called *churriguerismo*, from 1909.²⁸ In England the term became known through the popular Baedeker guides and it is frequently used in its technical sense of Italian architecture in the section on fine arts in J. A. Symonds' *The Renaissance in Italy* (1877), but it was not until the present century that the Baroque style found its defenders in M. S. Briggs' *Baroque Architecture* (1913) and the curiously named *The Architecture of Humanism* (1914) by Geoffrey Scott. French was the last of the major European languages to adopt the word *baroque* as a designation for the art of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, understandably so as the Baroque period corresponds roughly to the classical age in French literature and art and in the nineteenth century the word still had objectionable overtones. As late as 1956 René Wellek could write (*op. cit.*, p. 83), "France is, I think, the one major country which has almost completely refused to adopt the term." But in the postscript to his article added in 1962 he reports that the statement is no longer true. Baroque features have now been discovered in French classicism, and the term is now a commonplace in French literary criticism, although it does not appear to have been accepted yet by some major lexicographers. For instance, the 18th edition (1931) of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* still records as the only meaning of *baroque*: "Qui est d'une irrégularité bizarre au sens physical et au sens moral", and the most recent edition of Littré (1956) shows no advance on this definition inherited from the eighteenth century.

The diffusion of the word throughout the languages of Europe is now complete, but the spate of writings on the concept of the Baroque, which shows no signs of abating, has done little to further the problem of its definition, although it has contributed to our understanding of an age and an art which was for long disparaged or misunderstood. This alone, as Wellek says, is sufficient justification for its continued use.

(to be continued)

C. T. CARR

St. Andrews

²⁷ It is perhaps not without significance that *barocco* is not recorded in the first (1852) or the third revised edition (1860) of Tommaseo's *Dizionario estetico*.

²⁸ Some earlier examples of *barroco* from Catalan authors writing in Spanish about the middle of the nineteenth century have been recorded by L. Monguís in "Contribución a la cronología de *Barroco* y *Barroquismo* en España", *PMLA* LXIV (1949), 1227-31, but it is not clear from the passages cited whether *barroco* is there used of the period in art history or in the older meaning "odd, bizarre". The Spanish evidence needs further examination.