

Hans Tietze and art history as *Geisteswissenschaft* in early twentieth-century Vienna

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Introduction 2011

This article on the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* (1913) by Hans Tietze (1880-1954) was originally published in Italian in 1994.¹ No specific study of Tietze's book had appeared in English before my article, and the situation has not changed after its publication; in fact, no studies on Tietze have appeared in any language that have challenged it.² Thus it seemed useful to make available to readers of English my analysis of this important work by a significant but often neglected representative of the so-called Vienna School of art history.

The text appears here unchanged in terms of content and argument. I have double-checked my translations from Tietze's text, revised them where needed, and introduced the German original. I have also corrected some mistakes and made small stylistic changes in the interest of readability, even though I have not tried to eliminate the naïveté that transpires from some of the article's moves, which clearly show that this was my first attempt as a scholar, sharing the results of my *tesi di laurea*, the dissertation that the Italian system used to require for graduation from the first stage of university education.³ Thus it seems appropriate that this article is

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¹ Riccardo Marchi, 'Hans Tietze e la storia dell'arte come scienza dello spirito nella Vienna del primo Novecento', *Arte Lombarda*, 110/111, 1994, 55–66. This issue of the journal, whose editor-in-chief was Maria Luisa Gatti Perer, contained the second part of the proceedings of an international congress in honor of art historian Eugenio Battisti: *Metodologia della ricerca: Orientamenti attuali*. The first part had been published in *Arte Lombarda*, 105/106/107, 1993. I was one of the editors of the proceedings, together with Maria Luisa Gatti Perer, Giosuè Bonetti and Alessandro Rovetta.

² See the bibliography in the most recent contribution on the *Methode*: Anselm Wagner, 'Hans Tietze: Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte', in *Hauptwerke der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*, ed. Paul von Naredi-Rainer, Johann Konrad Eberlein and Götz Pochat, Stuttgart: Kröner, 2010, 440-443.

³ This stage was not truly comparable to the undergraduate level of education in the Anglophone system. For a discussion of the particular nature of the *tesi di laurea*, and of the commonalities and differences between dissertations in various university systems see Umberto Eco, *Come si fa una tesi di*

published in the section of this journal devoted to ‘documents’, in that it also documents one of the ways in which art historiography was practiced in Italy in the early 1990s: as a close reading of a text and of the discursive context to which it refers and contributes.

Also the bibliography in the notes of the article has remained that of 1994. The only exceptions are references to three publications on Tietze that have appeared since then, which are given between square brackets and discussed below, and to texts which in the original article were quoted in other languages, but here are referenced in their English translation, in order to make the article more useful.

However, because the seventeen years that separate the original publication of this article and its translation are a very long time in terms of the development of scholarship (others’ and mine), I felt that some additional information and discussion were in order.

Hence this introduction, in which I do three things. First, I explain the choices I made in dealing with some key terms for the purpose of this translation. Second, I present the scholarship on Tietze relevant to the article that appeared after its publication, and assess other contributions that require some qualifications about the scope and nature of my argument. Finally, I conclude by pointing out the theoretical and historical issues addressed in Tietze’s *Methode* that remain, in my view, most important today.

Geist, Geisteswissenschaft, Geistesgeschichte

These terms are pivotal in the philosophical discourse that, as I show in my article, is crucial to the way Tietze presents the epistemological status of art history in the *Methode*. They present some challenges to a translation into English, and require some clarifications.

To avoid lengthy periphrases and for the sake of uniformity, I have always translated *geistig* as ‘spiritual’.⁴ It should be kept in mind, however, that here ‘spiritual’ does not refer to a metaphysical or abstract entity, and does not have a primarily religious connotation.⁵ Instead, the ‘spiritual’ or the ‘spirit’ (*Geist*) here denotes very concrete products of human activity. In the philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911), a thinker central to Tietze’s discussion, the ‘spirit’ ‘encompasses

laurea: le materie umanistiche (1977), Milan: Bompiani, 1987, 9-14. The Italian university system was modified in the late 1990s, in the wake of the Bologna Process of reform in European higher education.

⁴ This is a rather common usage in philosophy and art history. See for instance Alan Kim, ‘Wilhelm Maximilian Wundt’, in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, 2006, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/wilhelm-wundt>, and, for Kandinsky’s concept of *das Geistige*, the most valuable observations in Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky in Munich: The Formative Jugendstil Years*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, 139-141.

⁵ As Weiss pointed out, in English ‘the religious connotations are overriding’, and dominate the definitions of the word provided in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, where ‘[o]nly in definitions six through eight (out of nine) is [the term spiritual] related to the “intellect or higher faculties of the mind”’ (Weiss, *Kandinsky*, 140).

language, custom, every form and style of life, as well as family, civil society, state, and law' and also 'art, religion and philosophy'.⁶ As Hans Peter Rickman points out, this means that in this context *die geistige Welt* ('the world of human spirit')⁷ is 'the world of thoughts, feelings and purposes embodied in physical manifestations'.⁸ This is, continues Rickman, a 'sphere ... distinct from those of mental processes and of physical things, yet based on both'; a sphere to which 'belong such things as the English language, the play *Othello*, the game of chess and the Napoleonic code' (and art works, we could add). 'All these', concludes Rickman, are 'creations of individual minds but confront us with an objective existence of their own'. To help the reader to connect the concept of the 'spiritual' to this specific German philosophical context, I have always coupled it with the original *geistig*.⁹

The *Geisteswissenschaften* are the disciplines that study the *geistige Welt* thus understood. In Dilthey's words, they are the 'sciences of man, society and state',¹⁰ and encompass what we refer to in English as the humanities and the social sciences: 'history, economics, sociology, social anthropology, psychology, comparative religion, jurisprudence, political science, philology and literary criticism, but *not* human biology, physical anthropology, or physiological psychology'.¹¹ The standard English translation of *Geisteswissenschaften* as 'cultural or human sciences'¹² is informative and practical for quick reference, but loses the connection to the meaning of *Geist* I have outlined, and to the intense debate on the

⁶ Wilhelm Dilthey, 'The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences' (1910), in *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences, Selected Works*, ed. Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, vol. 3, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002, 173. Dilthey used these words as he put forward his 'new conception' of Hegel's 'objective' and 'absolute spirit', which he proposed to 'ground ... in history' (173), and characterized as follows: 'Hegel constructs metaphysically; we analyze the given' (172). On Dilthey's thought see the introductions by Makkreel and Rodi to the five volumes of Dilthey's *Selected Writings* that have appeared so far for the Princeton University Press (1, 1989; 2, 2010; 3, 2002; 4, 1996; 5, 1985; the sixth volume is in preparation), and Rudolf A. Makkreel, *Dilthey: Philosopher of the Human Studies*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.

⁷ This is the English translation of the expression *geistige Welt* offered in Wilhelm Dilthey, 'Introduction to the Human Sciences', in *Introduction to the Human Sciences, Selected Works*, ed. Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, vol. 1, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989, 63 (with details in note 12).

⁸ This quotation and the next ones in the paragraph come from H[ans] P[eter] Rickman, introduction to Wilhelm Dilthey, *Meaning in History: Wilhelm Dilthey's Thoughts on History and Society*, ed. Hans Peter Rickman, London: Allen and Unwin, 1961, 22. Emphasis is always mine.

⁹ Of course Dilthey's usage is rooted in the broader history of the term in German culture. Besides referencing the philosophical debate of which Dilthey was a protagonist, in her discussion of *das Geistige* in Kandinsky Weiss recalls that in Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (1897) 'the substantive *das Geistige* is demonstrated ... as having been used by Goethe and Schiller to indicate the whole man' (Weiss, *Kandinsky*, 140); and that in Nietzsche *Geist* means "'spirit, mind, intellect, intelligence'" (Weiss, *Kandinsky*, 141n3, quoting from Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Twilight of the Idols and the Anti-Christ*, trans. Reginald John Hollingdale, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1968, 25).

¹⁰ Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, introduction to Dilthey, *The Formation*, 19.

¹¹ The list is from Rickman, Introduction, 23.

¹² See for instance Martin Jay, *Songs of Experience: Modern American and European Variations on a Universal Theme*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005, 223. For further discussion of this terminology see also note 4 in Wilhelm Dilthey, 'Introduction to the Human Sciences', 56.

nature of these disciplines that occupied many philosophers in the German speaking world between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, and in which Dilthey had a key role. Because the goal of my article is precisely to show that Tietze intends to establish art history as one of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, by virtue of its object and approach and in light of that debate, I have chosen to leave the term in German, also in my title.

Geistesgeschichte designates a way of writing the history (*Geschichte*) of the products of the *geistige Welt* understanding them in the terms indicated above: as ‘physical manifestations’ embodying a ‘world of thoughts, feelings and purposes’.¹³ In the history of art, this approach is commonly associated with Max Dvořák (1874-1921) and his later work, gathered by his students Johannes Wilde and Karl Maria Swoboda in the collection of essays they published in 1924, three years after Dvořák’s death, under the title *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte*. Tietze was a friend and colleague of Dvořák at the University of Vienna, and his *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* constitutes an early important theoretical articulation of that approach to art history. (I have more to say below on how the relationship between Tietze and Dvořák is best understood now in light of the recent scholarship of Hans H. Aurenhammer.) In English, the title of the collection of Dvořák’s essays is often translated as ‘the history of art as the history of ideas’.¹⁴ But ‘history of ideas’ does not convey the ambition and the specificity of Dvořák’s and Tietze’s art historical project, which was not to turn the history of art into intellectual history, but aimed instead at understanding how ‘art’, in the particular visual appearance and physical substance of its ‘formal solutions’, ‘embodies ... a worldview’.¹⁵ I have left the term

¹³ I am using once again the expression quoted above from Rickman, Introduction, 22.

¹⁴ See Max Dvořák, *The History of Art as the History of Ideas*, trans. John Hardy, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984 (which does not contain the fundamental 1918 essay *Idealismus und Naturalismus in der gotischen Skulptur und Malerei*, available in English as *Idealism and Naturalism in Gothic Art*, trans. and ed. Randolph J. Klawiter, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967.)

¹⁵ These are Dvořák’s words, with my emphasis added. They come from an article which was also a review of Tietze’s *Methode*: ‘Über die dringendsten methodischen Erfordernisse der Erziehung zur kunstgeschichtlichen Forschung’ (1913/1914), now in *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 27, 1974, 7-19 from which I quote. Here is the full passage in which they are contained: ‘Art does not just create formal solutions, but in them it embodies at the same time ... a worldview’ (‘Die Kunst schafft nicht nur formale Lösungen, sondern verkörpert darin zugleich ... Weltanschauung’, 14). Immediately after the words quoted above, Dvořák states very clearly his commitment to the specificity of art history: ‘there can be no doubt that [to study] the history of the *Weltanschauung*, the relationship of humanity to metaphysics, nature and life is not the task of the history of art. However, it is also not less certain that, on the one hand, the general *Kunstwollen* of an epoch can hardly be understood without this spiritual content; on the other hand, that the role of art in the effort to perceive and know is so important that for some epochs the history of art can claim a leading role in presenting this effort, on which the spiritual evolution is first and foremost founded.’ (‘wenn es keinem Zweifel unterliegen kann, daß die Geschichte der Weltanschauung, das Verhältnis der Menschen zur Metaphysik, zur Natur und zum Leben nicht Aufgabe der Kunstgeschichte ist, so ist es doch auch nicht minder sicher, daß einerseits das allgemeine Kunstwollen eines Zeitalters ohne diesen geistigen Inhalt kaum verstanden werden kann, andererseits aber die Mission der Kunst in dem Ringen um Anschauung und Erkenntnis so wichtig ist, daß ihre Geschichte in bestimmten Perioden bei der Darstellung dieses

Geistesgeschichte in German to signal the full and sometimes neglected import of this approach to art history, and its connection to the philosophical context that shaped it.

New work, new views

Since 1994, three contributions on Tietze have appeared that have a direct connection with the issues discussed in this article and the moment in Tietze's career when he was working on the *Methode*. They are so relevant that they deserve to be mentioned here and not just incorporated in the notes.

One of my key references was Edwin Lachnit's 1984 doctoral dissertation on the relationship between the early Vienna school and contemporary art, which contained a very perceptive discussion of Tietze's *Methode*, on which I was able to build solidly.¹⁶ Now this study, revised and condensed in a book, is more readily accessible.¹⁷

Kampfes, auf dem in erster Linie die geistige Evolution beruht, eine führende Stellung beanspruchen kann.', 14).

In addition, even in the 1920 passage that Dvořák's students used to justify the title chosen for the collection of their teacher's essays, Dvořák had not actually set up the *immediate* identification of art history with *Geistesgeschichte* that appears in the title, which was instead his students' catchier but less precise version of his thought. More cautiously, and very significantly, Dvořák had written of art history as '*a part* [my emphasis] of the general *Geistesgeschichte*', thus as a discipline that contributed, in its own realm, to a general project of scholarship grounded on certain presuppositions, *along with* the other *Geisteswissenschaften*. Here are Dvořák's words: 'art does not consist of the solution and evolution of formal tasks and problems only: it is also at the same time and first and foremost the expression of the ideas that dominate humanity. Its history, no less than the history of religion, philosophy and poetry, is a part of the general *Geistesgeschichte*.' ('Die Kunst besteht nicht nur in der Lösung und Entwicklung formaler Aufgaben und Probleme: sie ist zugleich und in erster Linie Ausdruck der die Menschheit beherrschenden Ideen, ihre Geschichte nicht minder als die der Religion, Philosophie oder Dichtung ein Teil der allgemeinen Geistesgeschichte.' These words were read by Dvořák in the lecture *Über Kunstbetrachtung* he held in Bregenz in 1920, and were published posthumously in *Belvedere*, 5, 1927, 85-91; the passage quoted is on p. 91. Swoboda and Wilde quote them in their introduction to *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte*, originally written in 1923, and now available in the reprint of Dvořák's collection published by Mann in Berlin in 1995, x.)

At any rate, since 'art history as *Geistesgeschichte*' is the label under which Dvořák's position is commonly known and immediately recognizable in art historiography, I use it without further qualifications throughout this translation, as a kind of shorthand reference. However, I keep it in quotation marks, to allude to the more complex history and meaning of his project. I have discussed these issues in my study 'Max Dvořák e la storia dell'arte come parte della *Geistesgeschichte*', in Max Dvořák, *Idealismo e naturalismo nella pittura e nella scultura gotica*, ed. and trans. Riccardo Marchi, Milan: Franco Angeli, 2003, 107-97.

¹⁶ Edwin Lachnit, 'Kunstgeschichte und zeitgenössische Kunst: Das wissenschaftliche Verhältnis zum lebendigen Forschungsgegenstands am Beispiel der älteren Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte', PhD diss., University of Vienna, 1984, 159-162.

¹⁷ Edwin Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte und die Kunst ihrer Zeit: Zum Verhältnis von Methode und Forschungsgegenstand am Beginn der Moderne*, Vienna: Böhlau, 2005. On Tietze especially 98-110.

In her remarkable and ambitious 2006 book, which also offers very original readings of the broad significance of the modern historiography on art, Catherine M. Soussloff highlighted Tietze's role as one of the central protagonists in the history, theory and art of portraiture in early-twentieth century Vienna, by virtue of his art historical writings and of his interaction with Oskar Kokoschka, who famously portrayed him and his wife Erica in 1909, and whom Tietze precociously defended.¹⁸ The history, theory and art of portraiture are, Soussloff argues, cultural practices that contributed in a crucial way to the elaboration of the modern notion of the subject, through the 'development ... of an ethics of representation that emphasized subjects as socially and historically constructed selves who could only be understood – and understand themselves – in relation to others, including the portrait painters and the viewers'.¹⁹

Finally, in 2007, Almut Krapf-Weiler, with the collaboration of other scholars, edited a most useful annotated collection of articles by Tietze from 1910 to 1954, making available also to the general reader these brilliant pieces, otherwise obtainable only in specialized libraries.²⁰ Building on her long standing research on Tietze, in her anthology Krapf-Weiler also offers a thorough documentary biography rich with new information, and an updated bibliography of writings on Tietze.²¹

Hans H. Aurenhammer's scholarship on Max Dvořák, which has appeared in several important articles since 1996, requires that the relationship between Tietze and Dvořák be now seen in a light slightly different from the one in which I had presented it in my article.²² Then, I had insisted on Tietze's *Methode* leading the

¹⁸ Catherine M. Soussloff, *The Subject in Art: Portraiture and the Birth of the Modern*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2006, especially 37 and 61-82 (for Tietze and Kokoschka, with extensive bibliography). The portrait of Hans Tietze and Erica Tietze-Conrat was purchased by the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1939, soon after the Tietzes' forced emigration to the United States in the wake of the Nazi Anschluss of Austria. I have not been able to reproduce the portrait here because of the impossible, recurring costs of copyright fees that even open access scholarly publications are charged. At any rate, many color reproductions are viewable on the internet; and a top quality, zoomable digital image can be accessed by searching the online collection of the Museum of Modern Art (<http://www.moma.org/explore/collection>). Interesting observations on the portrait are in Nathan J. Timpano, 'The Semblance of Things: Corporeal Gesture in Viennese Expressionism', PhD diss., Florida State University, 2010, 16-18, 203, 287-288.

¹⁹ I quote from the back cover of the book.

²⁰ Hans Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910-1954*, ed. Almut Krapf-Weiler with the collaboration of Hans H. Aurenhammer, Alexandra Caruso, Sabine Plakolm-Forsthuber, and Susa Schintler-Zürner, Vienna: Schlebrügge, 2007. A review of the volume, in Czech, was published by Jindřich Vybíral in *Umění*, 57: 2, 2009, 192-194.

²¹ See also Almut Krapf-Weiler, "'Löwe und Eule": Hans Tietze und Erica Tietze-Conrat; eine biographische Skizze', *Belvedere*, 5: 1, 1999, 64-83.

²² An excellent, updated synthesis of his own work and recent studies is in Hans H. Aurenhammer, 'Max Dvořák' in *Klassiker der Kunstgeschichte 1: Von Winckelmann bis Warburg*, ed. Ulrich Pfisterer, Munich: Beck, 2007, 214-226. Key articles, with new information on the unpublished lectures, were 'Max Dvořák, Tintoretto und die Moderne: Kunstgeschichte "vom Standpunkt unserer Kunstentwicklung" betrachtet', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 49, 1996, 9-39; and 'Max Dvořák

way, in several respects, into the shift to ‘art history as *Geistesgeschichte*’, underlining, in the wake of other studies, that this shift took place in Dvořák’s work only after the publication of the *Method*, and especially in his 1918 *Idealismus und Naturalismus in der gotischen Skulptur und Malerei*. But Aurenhammer, working on Dvořák’s unpublished lectures (which at the time I did not know), has demonstrated that Dvořák was already developing the fundamental elements of his new project of art history in his courses since 1912. The relationship between Tietze and Dvořák, then, should be understood less in terms of chronological priority and more as a rich and complex intellectual exchange, grounded on their interaction in the crucial years before and after World War I.²³

In my article, I also stressed how Tietze’s *Method*, both explicitly and implicitly, takes issue with the positions of scholars such as Alois Riegl, Heinrich Wölfflin, Adolf Göller and August Schmarsow, especially in terms of their analysis of form, which Tietze, because of their debt to psychophysiology, considers too dependent on an epistemological model derived from the natural sciences, and proposes to integrate more fully with a broader consideration of content, iconography and cultural context. Because the many in-depth studies that have appeared in the past two decades on these scholars and on the theories that shaped their work have given us a more complex sense of their approaches, which now we would not be so quick to define as positivistic or formalist in a pejorative sense, a reader of my article today might not fully recognize the image of these scholars which emerges in it.²⁴ Thus I need to stress here – as I did not do clearly and

und die moderne Architektur: Bemerkungen zum Vortrag “Die letzte Renaissance” (1912), *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 50, 1997, 23-40.

²³ See Tietze’s own warm recollections in his ‘Geisteswissenschaftliche Kunstgeschichte’, in *Die Kunstwissenschaft der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*, ed. Johannes Jahn, Leipzig: F. Meiner, 1924, 183-185 (reprinted in Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910 – 1954*, 106-107). I thank Hans H. Aurenhammer for reminding me of this passage. In this exchange, Tietze’s experience of contemporary art was certainly crucial to alert Dvořák to it. See Aurenhammer, ‘Max Dvořák, Tintoretto’, 26.

²⁴ On Riegl, see Margaret Olin, *Forms of Representation in Alois Riegl’s Theory of Art*, University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992; Margaret Iversen, *Alois Riegl: Art History and Theory*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1993; Wolfgang Kemp, introduction to Alois Riegl, *The Group Portraiture of Holland*, ed. Wolfgang Kemp, trans. Evelyn M. Kain and David Britt, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999, 1-57; Richard Woodfield, ed., *Framing Formalism: Riegl’s Work*, Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach Arts International, 2001; Benjamin Binstock, ‘Alois Riegl, Monumental Ruin: Why We Still Need to Read Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts’, in Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, trans. Jacqueline E. Jung, New York: Zone Books, 2004, 11-36; Soussloff, *The Subject in Art*, 30-37, 69-70, 71-76.

On Wölfflin, see Joan Hart, et al., *Relire Wölfflin*, Paris: École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1995; Michael Podro, ‘Wölfflin, Heinrich’, in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, vol. 33, New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, 1996, 297-298 (available also online, in a version with bibliography updated by the editors in 2010: *Grove Art Online*, Oxford University Press, updated May 26, 2010, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T092033>); Joan Hart, ‘Wölfflin, Heinrich’, in *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, ed. Michael Kelly, vol. 4, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998, 472-476 (available also online: accessed October 28, 2011, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.ezproxy.lib.usf.edu/subscriber/article/opr/t234/e0530>); and Jason Gaiger, *Aesthetics and Painting*, London: Continuum, 2008, 101-115.

forcefully enough in 1994 – that my goal was not to present a full assessment of their work, but, rather, to understand what their work meant in 1913 to Tietze, who was a scholar belonging to a younger generation, responding to very different interests and demands.

Tietze's Work as *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft*

In the editorial of the first issue of this journal, Richard Woodfield put forward a rationale for the study of art historiography with which I fully agree: 'historical figures would not be important were it not for the problems that they addressed.'²⁵ Thus I close this introduction by pointing out the relevance of Tietze's *Methode* in this light.

One of the greatest merits of Tietze's book lies precisely in the fact that the issues with which he grappled are still central to our thinking about the fundamental tasks and goals of art history: What is the role of the individual artist in the history of art? What does it mean to write a *history* of objects that address us in the *present*, and how does our current experience – of the art of the past, but also of the art and of the world of our own time – affect our writing of history, in terms of what we choose to study and how we study it? What constitutes an art historical fact? How do we study artistic form by acknowledging its specificity and ultimate irreducibility to the cultural conditions that surround it, but also by recognizing and understanding its expressive impact, its content, and the ways in which its production and reception connect it to the culture and society where it emerges?

Some of the methodological solutions Tietze offered in 1913 do not appear viable to us today, or are at least in need of major theoretical elaboration. We are uncomfortable with the notion of 'genius';²⁶ work with more complex notions of intention²⁷ and expression;²⁸ are suspicious of *Geistesgeschichte* and some of its

Wölfflin is also discussed, together with Göller and Schmarsow, in the excellent introduction of the anthology edited by Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou, *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873–1893*, Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994, 1-85. For Wölfflin and Schmarsow, see also Kirsten Wagner, 'Die Beseelung der Architektur. Empathie und architektonischer Raum', in *Einführung: zu Geschichte und Gegenwart eines ästhetischen Konzepts*, ed. Robin Curtis and Gertrud Koch, Munich: Fink, 2009, 49-78. A good analysis of Schmarsow's 1905 *Grundbegriffe der Kunstwissenschaft* is in the essay devoted to it by Brigitte Winkler-Komar in *Hauptwerke der Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*, 391-94. Further recent bibliography on Riegl, Wölfflin, Schmarsow and Göller is also cited below, in note 34.

²⁵ Richard Woodfield, 'Editor's Introduction', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 1, December 2009, 1, http://arthistoriography.files.wordpress.com/2011/02/media_139153_en.pdf.

²⁶ For a brilliant history and critique of the myth of the artist-genius in the Western tradition, see Catherine M. Soussloff, *The Absolute Artist: the Historiography of a Concept*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997.

²⁷ Most useful and acute overviews of positions in philosophy and literary theory are in the articles by Paul Taylor, Gary Iseminger and Beth Ann Dobie gathered in the entry 'Intention' published in 1998 in the *Encyclopedia of Aesthetics*, edited by Michael Kelly and now available online (accessed January 23, 2010, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t234/e0293>). Theoretically sophisticated discussions of intention as it pertains specifically to art history are Mark Roskill, *The Interpretation of*

sweeping generalizations, and demand much greater specificity from any attempt to draw connections between art, culture, and philosophy;²⁹ and have replaced the faith of Dilthey's hermeneutics in the understanding of interiority and immediate 'lived experience' (*Erlebnis*) – all so important to Tietze – with a detailed investigation of 'discourse' and of the 'materialities of communication'.³⁰

But all this does not diminish the force and urgency of the questions that the *Methode* poses. In addition, in the way Tietze answered these questions are two commitments that I still find most productive: to conceive of art not as a purely autonomous realm, but as an activity through which we 'come to terms with the world';³¹ and to understand the manifold ways in which artistic form affects its

Cubism, Philadelphia: Art Alliance Press, 1985, 185-222, 269-275; Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985, 41-73; and Richard Wollheim, *Painting as an Art*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 17-19, 86-87. The theme is very much vital in art history. In 2010, Todd Cronan and Charles Palermo co-chaired a double session on the issue of intention and interpretation, whose speakers included Walter Benn Michaels, David Summers, Whitney Davis, Stephen Melville, and Thierry de Duve, at the College Art Association annual conference in Chicago. Cronan and Palermo are among the editors of the recently launched online peer-reviewed quarterly journal of scholarship in the humanities *nonsite.org*, which lists 'Intentionality: Was it a Fallacy?' as the theme of a possible future issue of the journal, soliciting submissions. (See 'Future Issues', *Nonsite.org*, Emory College of the Arts and Sciences, 2011, <http://nonsite.org/future-issues>.)

²⁸ See E. H. Gombrich, 'Expression and Communication', in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse, and Other Essays on the Theory of Art* (1963), 4th ed., London: Phaidon, 1985, 56-69; Hal Foster, 'The Expressive Fallacy', in *Recordings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics*, Port Townsend, WA: Bay Press, 1985, 59-77; Wollheim, *Painting*, 80-89, 138-139; and Alberto Argenton, *Arte e espressione: studi e ricerche di psicologia dell'arte*, Padua: Il Poligrafo, 2008.

²⁹ E. H. Gombrich, 'In Search of Cultural History', in *Ideals and Idols: Essays on Values in History and in Art*, Oxford: Phaidon, 1979, 24-59. A reassessment of Gombrich's polemic against Hegel, and a provocative proposal for a nonmetaphysical interpretation of Hegel's *Geist* as a 'distinctively social form of mindedness' were recently put forward by Jason Gaiger in his article 'Hegel's Contested Legacy: Rethinking the Relation between Art History and Philosophy', *Art Bulletin*, 93: 2, June 2011, 178-194 (the quote is from page 194). More on nonmetaphysical ways of understanding *Geist* is in note 36 below.

³⁰ See David Wellbery, foreword to Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks 1800/1900* (1985), Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990, viii-xxxiii; Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht and Karl Ludwig Pfeiffer, eds, *Materialities of Communication*, trans. William Whobrey, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994 (especially the editors' essays: Pfeiffer's on 'The Materiality of Communication', 1-12, and Gumbrecht's 'A Farewell to Interpretation', 389-402); and David Wellbery, *The Specular Moment: Goethe's Early Lyric and the Beginnings of Romanticism*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996, 7 (against the 'hermeneutics of experience') and 11-26 (for the relevance of 'discourse', and the deployment of a 'nonhermeneutic mode of reading ... that attends not to the animating intention or the essential truth of the text, but rather to the dynamics of its textuality', 19).

³¹ I am referring to Tietze's notion that the task of art history is 'to show the evolution of the way in which humanity, in giving form to what it has seen and experienced, has come to terms with the world' (Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte: Ein Versuch*, Leipzig: Seemann, 1913, 46: 'entwickelnd darlegt, wie sich die Menschheit, Geschautes und Erlebtes formend, mit der Welt auseinandergesetzt hat').

viewers (past and present) and generates meaning for them.³² These commitments, it seems to me, are helpful in providing an orientation amidst the methodological proposals and challenges we face today.³³

For instance, several scholars have recently called for an understanding of the response to art less in terms of cognition and social and historical context, and more in terms of precognitive emotions and corporeal sensations that are universal; in some cases turning to the most recent and advanced results of neuroscience. In this project, these scholars have hailed as pioneering those very attempts of understanding form founded on psychophysiology towards which Tietze was skeptical and highly critical.³⁴ Tietze's position here is valuable in drawing attention to a central problem that this new trend leaves open.

It is certainly necessary for art historians to make room for and to learn more about immediate, precognitive and potentially universal responses to art. But if human nature is also immersed right from the beginning in culture, to the point that we could even say that our nature *is* culture,³⁵ any analysis that wants to be art historical will still have to account for the way in which immediate responses and emotions become meaningful in the highly mediated cultural and social realm of human activity in which art is made, circulated and discussed.

To answer this challenge, the legacy of a notion of art history as *Geisteswissenschaft* remains crucial as a starting point. Its focus on the *Geist* invites us to always integrate the study of the brain and its neuronal activity with the study of the socially and culturally inflected mind. This effort will be especially productive if, in this sense, we conceive of the *Geist* not as something that mysteriously

³² On the tension between aesthetic experience and historical study see the important book by Karen Lang, *Chaos and Cosmos: On the Image in Aesthetics and Art History*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006.

³³ Some of these proposals and challenges are nicely summarized in the agenda for the *Journal of Art Historiography* Conference "After the New Art History" scheduled for March 2012 in Birmingham. See <http://arthistoriography.wordpress.com/colloquia>, accessed on October 15, 2011.

³⁴ See Andrea Pinotti, *Il corpo dello stile: storia dell'arte come storia dell'estetica a partire da Semper, Riegl, Wölfflin*, Milan: Mimesis, 2001; David Freedberg and Vittorio Gallese, 'Motion, Emotion and Empathy in Esthetic Experience', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 11: 5, 2007, 197–203 (Wölfflin); John Onians, *Neuroarthistory: From Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007 (Göller, Wölfflin and Riegl); Harry Francis Mallgrave, *The Architect's Brain: Neuroscience, Creativity, and Architecture*, Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010 (Wölfflin and Göller).

³⁵ I have in mind here philosopher Felice Cimatti's powerful words: 'if the world of culture *is* – biologically – the *natural* human world, the one in which [the human animal] *lives* (and not only thinks), then we will finally be able to get rid of the undying opposition between nature and culture'. ('se il mondo della cultura è - biologicamente - il mondo *naturale* umano, quello in cui [l'animale umano] *vive* (e non soltanto pensa), allora ci potremo infine sbarazzare dell'insanabile contrapposizione fra natura e cultura'. Original's emphasis.) The quote is from Felice Cimatti, 'Discende sulla terra l'umano universale', review of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Il primato della percezione e le sue conseguenze filosofiche* [1946], ed. Rosella Prezzo and Federica Negri, Milan: Edizioni Medusa, 2004, *Il manifesto*, July 23, 2004, 15. More extensively on this point see two books by Cimatti: *Il senso della mente: Per una critica del cognitivismo*, Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 2004, especially 9-33, 148-175, and 200-222; and *Mente, segno, vita: Elementi di filosofia per Scienze della comunicazione*, Rome: Carocci, 2004, 113-147.

descends in and inhabits cultural products; but, rather, as the ‘meanings, contents, [and] values’ emerging out of the innumerable ‘social acts’ of ‘inscription’ (in texts, documents, but also people’s minds) that make up the human world and its objects through ‘institutions’, ‘imitation, education and culture’.³⁶ It is through these

³⁶ See Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentalità. Perché è necessario lasciare tracce*, Bari: Laterza 2009, 235 (for ‘meanings, contents and values [*i significati, i contenuti, e i valori*]’ as ‘all that people more or less confusedly represent as “spirit” [*tutto ciò che si rappresenta più o meno confusamente come “spirito”*]’, and 279 for the other quotes. Here is the full passage from which these are taken: ‘The fundamental idea is that whereas the theory of the spirit (and its new appearance in [the notion] of collective intentionality) assumes that there is something broad, indefinite and collective that solidifies in institutions, the theory of social objects as inscribed acts assumes that, on the basis of imitation, education and culture, intentions and psychological and spiritual acts that are individual emerge from inscriptions and institutions.’ (‘L’idea di fondo è che mentre la teoria dello spirito (e la sua riproposizione nell’intenzionalità collettiva) suppone che ci sia qualcosa di ampio, indeterminato e collettivo che si solidifica in istituzioni, la teoria degli oggetti sociali come atti iscritti suppone che dalle iscrizioni e dalle istituzioni, sulla base di imitazione, educazione e cultura, emergano intenzioni e atti psicologici e spirituali individuali.’, 279). The ‘theory of the spirit’ is Hegel’s, whereas ‘collective intentionality’ is John R. Searle’s concept, discussed especially in his *The Construction of Social Reality*, Free Press: New York, 1995. In his revision of the concept of ‘spirit’, besides discussing these thinkers (for Hegel, 318-332; for Searle, 161-181), Ferraris also explicitly addresses the legacy of the *Geisteswissenschaften* and Dilthey’s position (135-139).

Here I can’t of course even begin to do justice to the scope and ambition of Ferraris’s important attempt to offer a philosophically rigorous theory of the social world, which would certainly deserve to be translated into English and discussed in a broad interdisciplinary context; also among art historians. However, a brief presentation of Ferraris’s key concepts will allow the reader to gain a fuller understanding of the passages I have quoted.

‘Social objects’ are, for example ‘taxes, and promises [*le tasse e le promesse*]’, ‘weddings or academic degrees [*i matrimoni o le lauree*]’ (33), but also, crucially, ‘art works [*opere d’arte*]’ (33; discussed extensively on pages 305-317). These objects are different from ‘natural objects [*oggetti naturali*]’ (sand, water, mountains, animals, plants and so on) and from ‘ideal objects [*oggetti ideali*]’ (numbers, theorems, and ‘relations [*relazioni*]’ such as ‘the fact that the world is larger than a table, or that on my right there is a window, that $4 > 3$ etc.’ [‘il fatto che il mondo sia più grande di un tavolo, che alla mia destra ci sia una finestra, che $4 > 3$ ecc.],’ 39), in that social objects ‘occupy a place in space and time, and ... depend on subjects, even if they are not subjective’. (‘occupano un posto nello spazio e nel tempo, e ... dipendono dai soggetti, pur non essendo soggettivi.’, 32).

Social objects depend on subjects in the sense that for their existence, they require ‘human beings [*uomini*]’ who constitute them and recognize them as such (33, 359-360). More specifically, ‘social objects are the result of social acts (that must involve at least two people) characterized by the fact of being inscribed: on paper, on a computer file, or even simply in people’s heads.’ (‘gli oggetti sociali sono il risultato di atti sociali (che coinvolgono almeno due persone) caratterizzati dal fatto di essere iscritti: su carta, su un file di computer, o anche semplicemente nella testa delle persone.’, 360). All this leads Ferraris to enunciate the fundamental principle for the constitution of social objects as follows: ‘[Social] Object=Inscribed Act’. (‘Oggetto=Atto Iscritto’, 360).

The concept of inscription describes a very broad range of phenomena in Ferraris’s theory. At the most basic level, ‘inscription [*iscrizione*]’ is for him ‘a trace or physical modification which is affixed on a support’ (‘una traccia o modificazione fisica che si appone su un supporto’, 51). He then goes on to say that inscriptions ‘can be divided into inscriptions in a broad sense (any type of recording, even simply in people’s minds); and [inscriptions] in the strict sense of the word (writings on paper or on file, and within this class, documents, understood as inscriptions endowed with distinctive institutional value). This explains why there is inscription in a notch on a stick as well as on a Post-it note, in a pre-Raphaelite painting as well as in a gas bill, in a handshake as well as in a soccer game.’ (‘si dividono in

meanings, contents and values that we attribute significance also to our emotional and corporeal responses to art works, and constitute these responses as fully relevant to our historically evolving sense of what is art and what its powers are.

Finally, Tietze's *Methode* is also a formidable stimulus to study modernism from a point of view and geographical focus very different from those that have dominated prominent areas of English speaking scholarship for a long time. Tietze's clearly stated perception that his attempt to integrate the study of form with the study of content was in tune with the art of his own time – which he knew intimately, from Kokoschka to Kandinsky, and supported courageously – powerfully questions ideas of 'medium specificity' and 'opticality', and invites an exploration of the visual and discursive contexts that made such a perception possible.³⁷

iscrizioni in senso lato (ogni tipo di registrazione, anche semplicemente nella mente delle persone) e in senso stretto (scritture su carta o su file, e, all'interno di questa classe, i documenti, intesi come iscrizioni dotate di peculiare valore istituzionale), e questo spiega perché ci sia iscrizione in una tacca su un bastone come in un post-it, in un quadro preraffaellita come in una bolletta del gas, in una stretta di mano come in una partita di calcio.', 51). With regard to his use of the notion of inscription about the activity of the mind, Ferraris clarifies that his proposal to consider the mind 'as a *tabula*, as a support for writing' ('come tabula, come supporto scrittoria'), is not a 'metaphor [*metafora*]', but 'grasps the circumstance according to which perceptions and thoughts present themselves as inscriptions in our mind'. ('coglie la circostanza per cui percezioni e pensieri si presentano come iscrizioni nella nostra mente.', 361). (For a full discussion of this last point, see 221-240.)

Of course Ferraris admits openly the central debt of his theory to Derrida, whom he acknowledges as one of his teachers (416), and quotes extensively throughout the book. But Ferraris also originally tempers Derrida's position, modifying it into what he calls a 'weak textualism [*testualismo debole*]' (xiii; 176-181) informed by a realist approach. For Ferraris, it is not true that 'there is nothing outside of the text' ('nulla esiste fuori dal testo', 83; the reference is to Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology* [1967], corrected edition, The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, 1997, 158), because 'natural objects and ideal objects exist even without inscriptions' ('gli oggetti naturali e gli oggetti ideali esistono anche senza iscrizioni', 360). Ferraris's point is, instead, that 'nothing *social* exists outside of the text'. ('nulla di *sociale* esiste fuori del testo.', 360; original's emphasis); where text has to be understood in the context of the broad definition of 'inscription' seen above.

³⁷ Some of Tietze's key writings on modern art, which include a 1911 assessment of Kokoschka's work (in the context of a review of the Hagenbund show in Vienna) and the 1912 review of the *Blaue Reiter* almanac, are reprinted in Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910 – 1954*, respectively 28-37 and 38-44. For 'medium specificity' and 'opticality' see Clement Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting' (1960), in *Collected Essays and Criticism*, ed. John O'Brian, vol. 4, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, 85-93; and Michael Fried, 'Three American Painters: Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Frank Stella' (1965), in *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998, 213-265. Many studies (including Fried's own art historical work) have challenged the views of mid-twentieth century formalism; but, comparatively speaking, until recently Anglophone scholarship has centered its study of European modernism above all on French art, and less on German speaking countries. (The association of the Historians of German and Central European Art and Architecture, a scholarly society affiliated to the College Art Association, was founded only in 1997. See <http://www.hgcea.org>.) I have contributed to the investigation of this alternative line of modernism first with an examination of the relationship of Dvořák's project of art history to Expressionism (see Marchi, 'Max Dvořák', 145-158, 184-197), and then with a study of the pictorial practice, theory and reception of Umberto Boccioni, Robert Delaunay and Wassily Kandinsky in Berlin between 1912 and 1913, which focused on their exhibitions at Herwarth Walden's gallery Der Sturm. See Riccardo Marchi, 'Pure Painting in

Using the title of the important book Tietze published in 1925, I think that we can say without any doubt that his *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* is indeed an example of *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft*: that is, of a way of thinking about the fundamental theoretical issues of our discipline that is still 'vital'.³⁸ I hope that the translation of this article may contribute to make Tietze's work vital also for many other scholars, and to raise interest in his thought and other writings, which deserve further visibility and relevance.

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Berlin, 1912–1913: Boccioni, Kandinsky and Delaunay at Der Sturm', PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2002, which I am revising for publication, and a set of articles on Kandinsky: 'Learning to Look at Kandinsky in Berlin, 1913', in *Seeing Perception*, ed. Silke Horstkotte and Karin Leonhard, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2007, 216–36; 'Kandinsky, l'abstraction et le monde en 1913', in 'Abstraction dans les arts: Un concept à définir', ed. Nadia Podzemskaia, special issue, *Ligeia: Dossiers sur l'art*, 22: 89-92, January-June 2009, 75-89; 'October 1912: Understanding Kandinsky's Art "Indirectly" at Der Sturm', *Getty Research Journal*, 1, March 2009, 53-74; and 'Kandinsky et Der Sturm', in *Kandinsky*, ed. Christian Derouet, Paris: Éditions du Centre Georges Pompidou, 2009, 230-245.

³⁸ Hans Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Zur Krise der Kunst und der Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna: Krystall-Verlag, 1925. For the translation of *Kunstwissenschaft* as 'the theory of art' see E.H. Gombrich, preface to *Meditations on a Hobby Horse*, vii.

Hans Tietze and art history as *Geisteswissenschaft* in early twentieth-century Vienna

Translated from the Italian by Clarice Zdanski

Hans Tietze (1880-1954),¹ student of Franz Wickhoff and Alois Riegl, published the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* in Leipzig in 1913. The book is dedicated to his two teachers, who, along with Heinrich Wölfflin, had founded art history as an autonomous scientific discipline dedicated to the rigorous study of the evolution of formal problems.

Apart from a few exceptions, this treatise, which Ernst H. Gombrich still holds to be 'important and all too neglected',² has been considered by most as a

*This article is based on research carried out between 1990 and 1993 for my Italian *tesi di laurea*, 'Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte (1913) di Hans Tietze. La storia dell'arte come scienza dello spirito nella Vienna del primo Novecento', which I defended in April 1993 at the Università Cattolica in Milan, and whose readers were Gianni Carlo Sciolla and Maria Luisa Gatti Perer.

I wish to thank all of the people who offered me advice, assistance and information: Dieter Bogner, Sergio Finardi, Eva Frodl-Kraft, Ernst H. Gombrich, Werner Hofmann, Edwin Lachnit, Artur Rosenauer, Gertraud Schikola with all of the personnel at the Institute of Art History and the Archive at the University of Vienna, Joseph Schweiger, Andreas Tietze. Special thanks to Professor Maria Luisa Gatti Perer, for always being willing to help me at the Istituto per la Storia dell'Arte Lombarda, where I was able, among other things, to consult Tietze's text in the copy belonging to the Fondo Gengaro. Throughout this article, my references to the *Methode*, including those given between parentheses in the text, come from this edition: Hans Tietze, *Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte: Ein Versuch*, Leipzig: Seemann, 1913. Translations from it are all mine.

¹ On Tietze's life and work, see in particular Susanne Gerold, 'Hans Tietze 1880-1954: Eine Biographie', PhD diss., University of Vienna, 1985; Eva Frodl-Kraft, 'Hans Tietze 1880-1954: Ein Kapitel aus der Geschichte der Kunstwissenschaft, der Denkmalpflege und des Musealwesens in Österreich', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege*, 33, 1980, 53-63; Gianni Carlo Sciolla, *Materiali per la storia della critica d'arte del Novecento*, Turin: Tirrenia Stampatori, 1980, 32, with bibliography.

² E. H. Gombrich, letter to the author, 9 January 1993. Tietze had been one of Gombrich's teachers at the University of Vienna. See E. H. Gombrich, *Arte e progresso: Storia e influenza di un'idea*, Bari: Laterza, 1985, 79. [An English edition of this book is not available. This is the text of the 1971 Mary Duke Biddle Lectures at the Cooper Union in New York, which was only circulated privately in English and became first available as a book in German, from which the Italian edition is translated: *Kunst und Fortschritt: Wirkung und Wandlung einer Idee*, Cologne: DuMont, 1978.]

monument to that type of art history, almost like a work that came to life posthumously.³ Instead, I fully agree with the best of the few studies that have dealt

³ When the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* came out, some hailed it as the tool that had long been missing from art history, and that consolidated the procedures of historical research in an exemplary way: thus the author who signed his review [a.] in *L'Arte*, 17, 1914, 474-475; Max Dvořák, 'Über die dringendsten methodischen Erfordernisse der Erziehung zur kunstgeschichtlichen Forschung (1913/1914)', now in *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 27, 1974, 7-19; Louis Réau, 'Un théoricien de l'histoire de l'art: Hans Tietze', *Revue de Synthèse Historique*, 28: 1, 1914, 45-50; Walter von Seidlitz, *Kunstchronik*, Neue Folge, 25, 1914, coll. 629-630; the author who signed his review [W.] in *Die Kunst für Alle*, 29, 1914, 308-312; Joseph Neuwirth, *Allgemeines Literaturblatt*, 24: 13/14, 1915, 215; Oskar Pollack, *Kunstchronik*, Neue Folge, 26, 1915, 28-32.

Others instead thought that the tie to history that it proposed was too tight. See Carl Neumann, 'Zur Theorie der Geschichte und der Kunstgeschichte', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 116, 1916, 484-494; Walter Sange, *Literarisches Zentralblatt*, 36, 1917, coll. 879-880; Max Friedländer, *Der Kunstkenner*, Berlin: Cassirer, 1919, 13-16. In particular, it aroused the opposition of the art historians close to the *Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* of the Berlin philosopher and psychologist Max Dessoir. (Tietze had sharply criticized these art historians in the *Methode*: see 254 ff. and 307.) Thus Richard Hamann, 'Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte und die allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft', *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft*, 9: 1, 1916, 64-78; *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft*, 9: 2, 103-114; *Monatshefte für Kunstwissenschaft*, 9: 3, 141-154; especially 64-70, with particularly negative overtones. Moreover, Oskar Wulff, *Grundlinien und kritische Erörterungen: Zur Prinzipienlehre der bildenden Kunst*, Stuttgart: Enke, 1917, 1-6 and 81-83, and Walter Passarge, *Die Philosophie der Kunstgeschichte in der Gegenwart*, Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1930, 6-10. Also for Erwin Panofsky ('The Concept of Artistic Volition' (1920), trans. Kenneth J. Northcott and Joel Snyder, *Critical Inquiry*, 8: 1, Autumn 1981, 19 and 25-26), Tietze's text was lacking from a theoretical point of view. In 1975 Heinrich Lützel (*Kunsterfahrung und Kunstwissenschaft: Systematische und entwicklungsgeschichtliche Darstellung und Dokumentation des Umgangs mit der bildenden Kunst*, vol. 1, Munich: Alber, 1975, 500 ff.) was still very critical. The only exception in this milieu comes from one of the main theorists of this movement, Emil Utitz, who recognized Tietze's treatise and used it extensively in his *Grundlegung der allgemeinen Kunstwissenschaft*, Stuttgart: Enke, 1914-1920. Strzygowski's stance was significant. Already a bitter enemy of Riegl and Wickhoff, after the latter's death (1909) he ran the 'I. Kunsthistorische Institut' (First Institute of Art History) at the University of Vienna, in opposition to the 'orthodox' current of the Viennese School represented by Dvořák and Schlosser (see Eva Frodl-Kraft, 'Eine Aporie und der Versuch ihrer Deutung: Josef Strzygowski-Julius von Schlosser', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 42, 1989, 7-52). Strzygowski, who proposed a new art historical methodology, thought Tietze's work was antiquated, because it was too deeply rooted in the study of written sources. See Josef Strzygowski, *Die Krisis der Geisteswissenschaften, vorgeführt am Beispiele der Forschung über bildende Kunst: Ein grundsätzlicher Rahmenversuch*, Vienna: Schroll, 1923, 48 and 65. According to Edwin Lachnit ('Kunstgeschichte und zeitgenössische Kunst: Das wissenschaftliche Verhältnis zum lebendigen Forschungsgegenstands am Beispiel der älteren Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte', PhD diss., University of Vienna, 1984, 159), Tietze, in his criticism of absolute innovators (Tietze, *Methode*, v and 30), could have been taking aim at Strzygowski himself. [Now see also Edwin Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule der Kunstgeschichte und die Kunst ihrer Zeit: Zum Verhältnis von Methode und Forschungsgegenstand am Beginn der Moderne*, Vienna: Böhlau, 2005, 99.] The sporadic references to the book in the years that followed reaffirmed appreciation of the solid historical foundation of the discipline that the *Methode* presented: see Walter Timmling, *Kunstgeschichte und Kunstwissenschaft*, Leipzig: Koehler und Wolckmar, 1923, 46; Robert Hedicke, *Methodenlehre der Kunstgeschichte*, Strasbourg: Heitz, 1924, 46 and frequently; Julius von Schlosser, 'Commentario della mia vita' (1924), in *La storia dell'arte nei ricordi e nelle esperienze di un suo cultore*, Bari: Laterza, 1936, 41 (this is the Italian translation of Schlosser's text 'Ein Lebenskommentar', in *Die Kunstwissenschaft der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*, ed. Johannes Jahn, Leipzig: F. Meiner, 1924, 95-134); Ernst Buschbeck, 'Hans Tietze: Zu seinem fünfzigsten Geburtstag', *Belvedere*, 1, 1930, 69-70. This is repeated in the

with this text and acknowledged that it also puts forward a new conception of art history.⁴ Up-to-date on the methodological innovations that were being proposed in those years, including those that were particularly critical with respect to Riegl, Tietze's *Methode* even anticipates Max Dvořák's 'art history as *Geistesgeschichte*'.⁵

obituaries that appeared after Tietze's death in 1954 (cited in Sciolla, *Materiali*, 32; Gombrich's obituary, cited below, stands out for its critical insight and hence deserves to be mentioned separately). This is also the tone of the observations in Otto Kurz, 'Julius von Schlosser: Personalità metodo lavoro' (1955), introduction to Julius von Schlosser, *L'Arte del Medioevo*, Turin: Einaudi, 1961, xvii.

In 1973, the reprint of the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* published in New York seems not to have been noticed: going through the *Répertoire d'Art e d'Archéologie* from 1973 to 1980, in fact, yielded nothing. Histories of art criticism and art history dedicate only a few lines to the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte*: Dagobert Frey, 'Probleme einer Geschichte der Kunstwissenschaft', *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 32, 1958, 23; Arnold Hauser, *The Philosophy of Art History*, Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1985, 199-200 and 220; Lionello Venturi, *History of Art Criticism*, New York: Dutton, 1964 only cites it in the bibliography, 373; Luigi Grassi and Mario Pepe, *Dizionario della critica d'arte*, 2 vols, Turin: Utet, 1978, s.v. 'Scuola di Vienna', vol. 2, 522; Heinrich Dilly, *Kunstgeschichte als Institution*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1979, 29-30; Hermann Bauer, *Kunsthistorik: Eine kritische Einführung in das Studium der Kunstgeschichte*, 3rd ed., Munich: Beck, 1989, 119; Germain Bazin, *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art de Vasari à nos jours*, Paris: Michel, 1986, 156 ff.; Udo Kultermann, *The History of Art History*, New York: Abaris Books, 1993, 169.

In the section specifically dedicated to the Viennese school at the twenty-fifth 'International Art Historical Congress', very little space was reserved for the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte*: the only references were in Sergiusz Michalski, 'Zur methodologischer Stellung der Wiener Schule in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren', in *Wien und die Entwicklung der kunsthistorischen Methode*, ed. Hermann Fillitz and Martina Pippal, vol. 1, Vienna: Böhlau, 1984, 85 ff. (with a distinctly restrictive judgment).

⁴ See Erich Rothacker, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*, 41, 1919, 176-180; Erich Rothacker, *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*, 2nd ed., Tübingen: Mohr, 1930, 205-207; E. H. Gombrich, 'Hans Tietze', *The Burlington Magazine*, 618, 1954, 289-290; Frodl-Kraft, 'Tietze', 62 ff.; Lachnit, 'Kunstgeschichte', 159-162 [now see also Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule*, 99-101]; Michael Ann Holly, *Panofsky and the Foundations of Art History*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984, 98-99 and 197n12; Gianni Carlo Sciolla, 'Il metodo morelliano e la Scuola di Vienna 1880-1915' (1987), in *Argomenti viennesi*, Turin: Il Segnalibro, 1993, 58 ff. A synthetic presentation of the main contents of the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* was anticipated by Gianni Carlo Sciolla ('Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte: Riflessioni sul metodo della storia artistica di Riegl, Strzygowski, Tietze e Dvořák', in Sciolla, *Argomenti viennesi*, 90 ff.), who in the part of the paper dedicated to Tietze, drew on and confirmed the analyses and arguments I had put forward in my thesis, also using some of my unpublished translations of the treatise.

⁵ Lachnit, 'Kunstgeschichte', 160 had already underlined this [now see also Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule*, 99-100]. On Dvořák see also Dagobert Frey, 'Max Dvořák's Stellung in der Kunstgeschichte', *Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 1 (15), 1921/1922, 1-21; Otto Benesch, 'Max Dvořák: Ein Versuch zur Geschichte der historischen Geisteswissenschaften' (1924), in *Collected Writings*, ed. Eva Benesch, vol. 4, London: Phaidon, 1973, 267-303; Hans-Berthold Busse, *Kunst und Wissenschaft: Untersuchungen zur Ästhetik und Methodik der Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft*, Mittenwald: Mäander, 1981, 85-108. Here it should be noted that Benesch, 'Dvořák', 279 ff. and Busse, *Kunst*, 102 ff. agree in discerning clear signs of the announcement of this shift in his art history in the 1914 piece 'Über die dringendsten methodischen Erfordernisse der Erziehung zur kunstgeschichtlichen Forschung' (see note 3). But I do not think that it has yet been stressed that the starting point of Dvořák's article was precisely Tietze's *Methode*, which he enthusiastically reviewed, and in which Dvořák also remarked a coherent application of the principles of the theorists of the *Geisteswissenschaften* in art history (See Dvořák, 'Erfordernisse', 9).

My thesis is that the red thread that runs through the almost 500 pages of Tietze's book is his conviction that art history should be established as one of the *Geisteswissenschaften* in the sense that this term had in the writings of the philosophers of modern historicism, from Wilhelm Windelband to Heinrich Rickert, from Wilhelm Dilthey to Georg Simmel and on down to Benedetto Croce.⁶ And it is this constant reference to the criteria that these philosophers considered as characteristic of the *Geisteswissenschaften* that led Tietze to conceive of the history of art in clearly innovative terms with respect to the model represented by the scholars to whom the work is dedicated.

Ever since the last decades of the nineteenth century, the definition of the specific nature of the *Geisteswissenschaften* – and among them, of history in particular – as opposed to the natural sciences had been one of the privileged themes of philosophical reflection. A significant episode in the 'revolt against positivism',⁷ and 'a true point of union in the philosophical front of the twentieth century',⁸ this problem was the central concern of a host of thinkers. Although their positions on certain issues differed widely at times, they agreed that the distinctive characteristics of historical knowledge lay in its tendency to grasp the individual, unrepeatable aspect of events, in opposition to an attitude towards generalization, aiming at establishing laws, which instead they saw as typical of the natural sciences; in its being based on the process of 'understanding' (*verstehen*); in its being linked to values. Through these reflections, philosophy ended up, in Benedetto Croce's words, being a 'methodology of historiography'.⁹

Aware of the fact that this debate had not just been a *querelle* among historians only, but that what was at stake in it was 'one of the two ways of considering the world',¹⁰ Tietze intends to base his argument on the results of those reflections. It is in this higher sense, in my opinion, that for Tietze art history belongs to the realm of the historical disciplines, and that he is able to dismiss criticisms of this position as being based on a concept of history that is too limited (vi).

⁶ On this debate and its leading figures, see Nicola Abbagnano, *Storia della filosofia*, vol. 3, Turin: Utet, 1990 (updated reprint of the third edition of 1982), 555-556, which I follow closely here; Eugenio Garin, 'Storicismo', in *Enciclopedia del Novecento*, vol. 7, Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1984, 213-231. I also consulted the classic Raymond Aron, *La philosophie critique de l'histoire: Essai sur une théorie allemande de l'histoire*, 2nd ed., Paris: J. Vrin, 1950, and Pietro Rossi, *Lo storicismo tedesco contemporaneo*, 2nd ed., Turin: Einaudi, 1971.

⁷ Henry Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: the Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930*, rev. ed., New York: Vintage Books, 1977, 33-66.

⁸ Eugenio Garin, 'Filosofia', in *Enciclopedia del Novecento*, vol. 2, Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1977, 988.

⁹ Croce's words as quoted (without source) by Abbagnano, *Storia*, 556. See also what is put forward about Wilhelm Dilthey by Maurizio Ferraris, *History of Hermeneutics*, trans. Luca Somigli, Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1996, 112: 'The ultimate structure of validation is not philosophy but history. There is no form of knowledge that is not the expression of a determinate historical situation, therefore, there is no greater knowledge than historiographic knowledge.'

¹⁰ Tietze, *Methode*, 1: 'eine der beiden Arten der Weltbetrachtung.'

In what follows, I prove my thesis by examining the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* through three of the fundamental issues it discusses: the role of the individual in the evolution of art; the question of the historian's value judgments and objectivity; and the problem of the study of form and content.¹¹

My analysis starts from the passages in which Tietze states the general principles upon which he bases his conception of art history, which he calls 'evolutionary [*entwicklungsgeschichtlich*]' (41). With this definition, Tietze inserts his own work into a consolidated paradigm that was widespread in art historical studies,¹² and that had constituted the framework for the research of the key figures of the Vienna school of art history. Already present in Rudolf Eitelberger and Alexander Conze,¹³ this paradigm had been central in Wickhoff,¹⁴ too, but more than any other, Riegl¹⁵ was the one who had made it the cornerstone of his research, and the early work of Dvořák¹⁶ also followed in this vein. In reality, however, Tietze's call to tradition already contains the signs of integration and novelty in his intimately problematic general statements.

The 'most decisive factor' in the evolution of art

The first axiom reads:

The evolution of art is all-embracing, and involves all of the phenomena and expressions that the period in question produces; a single individual – however eminent he might be – cannot fall out of this evolution, which takes place according to inner laws, giving expression to the *Kunstwollen* of the period.¹⁷

¹¹ As brilliantly explained by Willibald Sauerländer ('Alois Riegl und die Entstehung der autonomen Kunstgeschichte am Fin De Siècle', in *Fin de Siècle: Zu Literatur und Kunst der Jahrhundertwende*, ed. Roger Bauer et al., Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977, 125 ff.), these are the three cornerstones that contributed to the birth of scientific art history, freed from the tutelage of *Kulturgeschichte*, the biographical method and normative aesthetics. Hence these three issues constitute a valid litmus test for reading the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* and evaluating its position.

¹² For art history see Christian Töwe, *Die Formen der entwickelnden Kunstgeschichtsschreibung: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Deutung des Entwicklungsbegriffs*, Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1939 and for a more general overview Karl Clausberg, 'Naturhistorische Leitbilder der Kulturwissenschaften: Die Evolution-Paradigmen', in '*Geschichte allein ist zeitgemäß*': *Historismus in Deutschland*, ed. Michael Brix and Monika Steinhauser, Lahn-Gießen: Anabas-Verlag Kämpf, 1978, 41-51.

¹³ See Sciolla, *Materiali*, 10.

¹⁴ See Max Dvořák, 'Franz Wickhoff', in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kunstgeschichte*, Munich: R. Piper, 1929, 299-312.

¹⁵ See Max Dvořák, 'Alois Riegl' (1905), in Dvořák, *Aufsätze*, 28 ff.; Karl Maria Swoboda and Otto Pächt, introduction to Alois Riegl, *Historische Grammatik der bildenden Künste*, ed. Karl Maria Swoboda and Otto Pächt, Graz: Böhlau, 1966, 12. [This introduction was not translated in Alois Riegl, *Historical Grammar of the Visual Arts*, trans. Jacqueline E. Jung, New York: Zone Books, 2004.]

¹⁶ See Benesch 'Dvořák', 267-268; Busse, *Kunst*, 90-95.

¹⁷ Tietze, *Methode*, 41-42: 'die Entwicklung der Kunst ist eine allgemeine und umfaßt alle Erscheinungen und Äußerungen, die die betreffende Periode hervorbringt; ein Einzelindividuum -

This might seem to be a faithful codification of ‘art history without names’.¹⁸ Instead, Tietze immediately adds that he by no means wants to limit the importance of the role of the individual in the evolution of art: on the contrary, it is one of its ‘very special and important factor[s]’.¹⁹ And in fact, in analyzing the ‘general factors [*allgemeine Faktoren*]’ (429) of evolution, he places individual factors among the decisive ones. In addition, he defines them as ‘psychic factors [*psychische Faktoren*]’ (443); that is, in accordance with the *geisteswissenschaftlich* nature of the discipline, ‘spiritual forces [*geistige Kräfte*]’ (430).

To sanction this alignment of art history to the canon of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, Tietze places ‘comprehension [*Auffassung*]’, the culmination of historical research, under the aegis of Schleiermacher’s motto, which Dilthey had put at the end of the *Entstehung der Hermeneutik* (1900): ‘the ultimate goal of the hermeneutic process is to understand an author better than he understood himself.’²⁰ In this major text, where Dilthey was in fact turning from psychology towards hermeneutics, to which he assigned the task of providing the study of individual *Erlebnis*²¹ with a more solid grounding, and thus of constituting the new foundation of the *Geisteswissenschaften*,²² the philosopher stated his central focus as precisely ‘the problem of the *scientific* knowledge of individuals and indeed the main forms of singular human existence in general’.²³

und sei es noch so überragend - fällt aus der sich nach inneren Gesetzmäßigkeiten vollziehenden und dem Kunstwillen der Zeit Ausdruck verleihenden Entwicklung nicht heraus.’

¹⁸ See Hauser, *Philosophy*, 117-276; Grassi and Pepe, *Dizionario*, s.v. ‘Storia dell’arte senza nomi’, vol. 2, 574-575.

¹⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 42: ‘ein sehr besonderer und wichtiger Faktor’.

²⁰ Wilhelm Dilthey, ‘The Rise of Hermeneutics’ (1900), in *Hermeneutics and the Study of History, Selected Works*, ed. Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, vol. 4, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996, 250; Wilhelm Dilthey, ‘Die Entstehung der Hermeneutik’, in *Die geistige Welt: Einleitung in die Philosophie des Lebens. Erste Hälfte: Abhandlungen zur Grundlegung der Geisteswissenschaften* (1924), *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Georg Misch, vol. 5, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1961, 331: ‘Das letzte Ziel des hermeneutischen Verfahrens ist, den Autor besser zu verstehen, als er sich selber verstanden hat.’

Tietze specifically refers to Dilthey in his text, and adapts his words, writing that the purpose of ‘hermeneutic interpretation [*hermeneutische Interpretation*]’ in art history is to ‘understand the intention of the artist better than he understood it himself’ (Tietze, *Methode*, 181: ‘die Intention des Künstlers besser zu erfassen als dieser selbst’).

²¹ ‘Lived experience’ is the common translation of the term *Erlebnis*, which I however prefer to keep in German, to mark its belonging to this specific philosophical context. On the concept of *Erlebnis* in Dilthey see Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. rev. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall, 2nd ed., New York: Crossroad, 1989, 53-59; Karol Sauerland, *Dilthey's Erlebnisbegriff*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972.

²² On Dilthey’s hermeneutic shift see Franco Bianco, *Introduzione a Dilthey*, Rome: Laterza, 1985, 103 ff. and Gianfranco Morra, Introduction to Wilhelm Dilthey, *Ermeneutica e religione*, Milan: Rusconi, 1992, 7-53.

²³ Dilthey, ‘Hermeneutics’, 235 (original’s emphasis); Dilthey, ‘Hermeneutik’, 317: ‘die Frage nach der *wissenschaftlichen* Erkenntnis der Einzelpersonen, ja der großen Formen singulären menschlichen Daseins überhaupt’.

Relying on such assumptions, Tietze cannot help taking a distance from the conceptions of art history founded upon the paradigm of the natural sciences. Above all, he expresses his divergence from attempts to detect a law in the evolution of art. These were attempts whose seductiveness Tietze is willing to admit, and which had bewitched even Wickhoff or Riegl, confident as they were of the possibility to grasp the supra-individual principles that governed the history or artistic forms.²⁴

Tietze's main polemical objective here, however, is the theory of aesthetic 'exhaustion [*Ermüdung*]', together with the criticisms that it raised, in particular of Wölfflin. In this theory, whose principal exponent was Adolf Göller,²⁵ stylistic change was explained as the consequence of an obsolescence of form, which, engendering a sort of perceptive saturation, induced artists to look for formal solutions that could arouse interest and aesthetic satisfaction anew.

Wölfflin had been among the main critics of this theory. In *Renaissance und Barock* (1888), clearly and admittedly drawing from the theory of empathy (*Einfühlung*), he identified the true driving force of formal renewal in an epoch's 'feeling for life [*Lebensgefühl*]', which was then translated into an all-embracing 'feeling for form [*Formgefühl*]' that materialized in the style of clothing and shoes, visual arts, poetry and music, just as it did in all of the other manifestations of a historical period.²⁶ However, Wölfflin ultimately explained the change of the 'feeling for form' as a consequence of 'a general numbing of the nerves [*eine allgemeine Abstumpfung der Nerven*]', which become incapable of responding to certain stimuli.²⁷ And therefore the psychophysiology that shaped Göller's theory, driven out the door because too limited, came back in through the window as a general interpretative framework. In fact, Simone Viani has shown that, above and beyond the openly stated differences, the theories of Göller and Wölfflin actually show a family resemblance. As a matter of fact, in *Renaissance und Barock*, Wölfflin appears to be 'engaged in explaining the meaning of transformations from a psychological point of view, in order to be able to deduce a supra-temporal law of

²⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 97 associates Wickhoff with those attempts to uncover a sort of cyclical evolution in the course of art; and, even more explicitly, he presents his two teachers as examples of the 'tendency of their time, indebted to the natural sciences [*naturwissenschaftliche Tendenz ihrer Zeit*]' for this very aspect in his article 'Julius Schlosser, zum 60. Geburtstag am 26 September', *Belvedere*, 9-10, 1926, Forum, 169. On Wickhoff and Riegl from this point of view see Joan Hart, 'Some Reflections on Wölfflin and the Vienna School', in Fillitz and Pippal, *Wien*, 53-64; Rothacker, *Repertorium*, 177 and 1930, 205 ff. For Riegl see also Lorenz Dittmann, *Stil, Symbol, Struktur: Studien zu Kategorien der Kunstgeschichte*, Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1967, 53.

²⁵ Professor at the Stuttgart Polytechnic and scholar of the psychology of artistic form following directly on the Herbartian school. On him see Simone Viani, 'Alla ricerca del Barocco', in Heinrich Wölfflin, *Rinascimento e Barocco: Ricerche intorno all'essenza e all'origine dello stile barocco in Italia*, 2nd ed., Florence: Vallecchi, 1988, 54-57.

²⁶ See Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, trans. Kathrin Simon, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966, 73-88; Heinrich Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barock: Eine Untersuchung über Wesen und Entstehung des Barockstils in Italien*, ed. Hubert Faensen, Leipzig: Koehler und Amelang, 1986, 78-98.

²⁷ Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Baroque*, 75; Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barock*, 80.

forms and styles, which attracts him much more than the historical contribution of individual artists'.²⁸

Tietze rejects the theory of *Ermüdung*, but he does not agree with Wölfflin's explanations either. He starts with an analysis of art's evolution: it appears to us as a compact, unstoppable flux, but actually 'the evolution of art is, in the final analysis, a concatenation of individual processes'.²⁹ Unlike the theoreticians of *Ermüdung* and their adversaries, Tietze gives considerable space back to the individual. For him, it is not necessary to use the unlikely idea of more or less conscious perceptual tedium of forms extending through several generations. Renewal takes place because 'a work of art is born only through an addition of a personal note to the general heritage of forms', since 'the reality of artistic creation of necessity entails the factor of change'.³⁰ Hence the individual artist is the one who is responsible for change in forms. They constitute the current language, the solution provided by the previous generation and the point of departure for the new one; the artist intervenes on them

²⁸ Viani, 'Barocco', 54: 'impegnato a spiegare psicologicamente il senso delle trasformazioni, per poterne dedurre una legge sovratemporale delle forme e degli stili, che lo attrae molto di più del contributo storico dei singoli artisti.' This search for a law, together with his confidence in finding a cyclical periodicity in the course of art's evolution, definitely characterizes Wölfflin's work from the very beginning, and even after *Renaissance und Barock*. See Sauerländer, 'Riegl', 126-127; Joan Hart, 'Reinterpreting Wölfflin: Neo-kantianism and Hermeneutics', *Art Journal*, 42, 1982, 292-300; Dittmann, *Stil*, 53. As a matter of fact, Wölfflin, in the introduction to his book *Die klassische Kunst*, had praised the theory of Adolf Hildebrand, who in his *Problem der Form* (1893) had been highly critical of those who studied only the historical, individual peculiarities of art instead of investigating the distinct, autonomous laws that governed it. (See Heinrich Wölfflin, *Classic Art: An Introduction to the Italian Renaissance*, trans. Peter and Linda Murray, 5th ed., London: Phaidon, 1994, xi; Heinrich Wölfflin, *Die klassische Kunst: Eine Einführung in die italienische Renaissance* (1899), 5th ed., Munich: Bruckmann, 1912, vii-viii). Tietze, who instead firmly believes that art history must focus on the non-repeatable, unique aspect of historical events, expresses perplexity at this approach, underlining its debt to the natural sciences (Tietze, *Methode*, 133). For Wölfflin instead, Hildebrand's ideas, although unilateral, were a 'refreshing shower upon [the] parched earth' of a type of art history that seemed to have forgotten the realm on which it had set out to work; and he thought that it would be useful 'for every art-historical monograph to contain at the same time a part of aesthetics' (Wölfflin, *Classic Art*, xi [modified]; *Die klassische Kunst*, vii: 'ein erfrischendes Regen auf dürres Erdreich'; vii: 'dass jede kunstgeschichtliche Monographie zugleich ein Stück Ästhetik enthielte.'). Vis-à-vis this deviation from one of the key convictions that shape his conception of art history, Tietze in part seems willing to come to a compromise, interpreting it as a beneficial invitation to pay more attention to the specific nature of the object of the discipline. But he adds that if instead Wölfflin's words were not to be understood in this manner, then there would be no doubt that 'this unnatural connection [*diese unnatürliche Verbindung*] with aesthetics would 'unfailingly eliminate the art historical nature of the research [*unfehlbar den kunsthistorischen Charakter der Untersuchung aufheben*]. And in fact, for Tietze, where Wölfflin's writings 'attempt to bend [historical issues and relationships] towards that part of aesthetics, [they] leave the realm of art history' (Tietze, *Methode*, 134: 'treten ... dort, wo sie diese jenem Stück Ästhetik zu beugen versuchen, aus dem Bereich der Kunstgeschichte hinaus').

²⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 42: 'ist die künstlerische Entwicklung in letzter Line eine Verkettung individueller Vorgänge'.

³⁰ Tietze, *Methode*, 142-143: 'nur durch eine Zufügung einer persönlichen Note zum allgemeinen Formenbesitz entsteht ein Kunstwerk.'; 143: 'die Tatsache des künstlerischen Schaffens schließt den Faktor der Veränderung notwendig in sich ein'.

because they are no longer capable of serving his or her purposes. For Tietze, in the history of art it is always a question of individuals who make intentional decisions to give preference to certain figurative solutions: 'only in this way in fact can we speak of a new way of seeing, ... but not ... in the sense of biological evolutionary progress'.³¹

Tietze thus completely rejects explanations shaped by the natural sciences; and if these last observations are not directly aimed at Wölfflin, it must in any event be emphasized that in *Renaissance und Barock* he had unequivocally placed his explanation in a 'neurological' framework,³² and that Tietze explicitly uses the term 'biological [*biologisch*]' for purely formal explanations of art's evolution (136). A further observation will enable us to perceive even more clearly Tietze's distance from Wölfflin. While the Swiss art historian left practically no space for the individual, excluding that stylistic changes could take place because of the 'whim of one person',³³ Tietze went so far as to state explicitly that the art historian must consider seriously also 'the most whimsical ideas of one person'.³⁴ This is a formulation that is hard to imagine without a direct reference.

On the whole, Tietze brings the explanation of stylistic change back to a very concrete level. The 'all-embracing' evolution of art, once analyzed in its constitutive parts, is revealed as 'a conceptual abstraction that one constructs starting from single phenomena that can be ascertained inductively'.³⁵ Stylistic evolution is produced by individuals who find new solutions; by individuals who, as they come to terms with these solutions, expand their use; and by individuals who, in appreciating them, guarantee their affirmation. The history of art is hence a history of works, of contacts between artists: the 'tangible core [of style] is formed by the concrete relations between individual works of art, handed down by artists'.³⁶ It is certainly not an 'evolution of a purely optical kind [*Entwicklung rein optischer Art*]',³⁷ based on the change in perception or 'feeling for life'. Tietze underlines that, even if the art historian always tends to put stylistic questions in the forefront, he always does so on the tacit assumption that they 'reflect psychic processes' that go beyond

³¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 142n1: 'Nur in diesem Sinne kann von einer neuen Art des Sehens gesprochen werden, ... nicht aber, ... im Sinne eines biologischen Entwicklungsfortschritts.' Similar positions also on p. 238.

³² Viani, 'Barocco', 56.

³³ Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque*, 73 (modified); Wölfflin, *Renaissance und Barock*, 78: 'die Willkür eines Einzelnen'.

³⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 147: 'kapriziösesten Einfälle eines Einzelnen'.

³⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 42: 'eine gedankliche Abstraktion aus den induktiv feststellbaren Einzelercheinungen'.

³⁶ Tietze, *Methode*, 412: 'greifbaren Kern die durch Künstler vermittelten konkreten Beziehungen zwischen einzelnen Kunstwerken sind'.

³⁷ Instead, it was this very evolution that Wölfflin proposed to trace with his new history of 'artistic seeing [*künstlerisches Sehen*]'. See Wölfflin, *Classic Art*, 287 (modified); Wölfflin, *Die klassische Kunst*, 276. For a discussion of Tietze's direct stance with respect to this point, see below the analysis of how he proposed to integrate the study of forms.

the mere perception of forms.³⁸ And these ‘psychic processes’ are what must be brought back to the centre of attention when the art historian arrives at the culminating phase of historical methodology, ‘comprehension [*Auffassung*]’.

Psychology takes care of this. But it is no longer psychophysiology, dedicated to the analysis of perception and its laws. Where study must turn to individuals, the true driving forces of evolution, the ‘intuitive study of the psyche [*intuitive “Psychognosis”*]’ proves once again to be an indispensable tool for the historian, states Tietze, referring to the Dilthey of *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung* (1905).³⁹

Only this approach can really allow the inner transference (*hineinversetzen*) into the past that makes it possible to re-experience (*nacherleben*) it in its full vitality. In the first phase of his reflections, Dilthey had placed this very type of psychology – the science of understanding individual *Erlebnis* – at the base of his *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften* (1883). He did not think that the type of psychology that was practiced in the laboratories of Wundt and Fechner, where perception was studied starting from its most minute units, was enough, and offered instead a type of psychology that he called ‘descriptive [*beschreibend*]’, which aimed at accounting for the totality of psychic life, in order to reach the same depth of psychological penetration that poets are capable of, and hence to retrieve the past in a fuller manner. And in the text on the origins of hermeneutics (which, as we have seen, forms an important framework for Tietze’s conception), where Dilthey set out to give a further scientific foundation to this recovery of the past by means of the support that the centuries-old tradition of philological exegesis could provide, psychological understanding founded on re-experiencing (*Nacherlebnis*) was always in the background.⁴⁰

If it were possible to push historical investigation to the depth desired, one would discover that every evolutionary artistic process leads back to a single creative act, says Tietze founding his position on Karl Vossler’s 1904 *Positivismus und Idealismus in der Sprachwissenschaft*, a book dedicated to Croce as author of *Estetica* (1902).⁴¹ In Croce’s text, Vossler hailed an event that marked the beginning of a new age – the age of idealism, in fact, which would substitute the positivism of the previous era.

³⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 445: ‘psychische Vorgänge reflektieren’. See also p. 320: ‘the *Zeitstil* [the style of an epoch] is the artistic expression of precise inner needs’ (‘der *Zeitstil* der künstlerische Ausdruck bestimmter innerer Bedürfnisse ist’).

³⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 443 ff. On Dilthey’s text see also Rainer Rosenberg, ‘Nachwort’, in Wilhelm Dilthey, *Das Erlebnis und die Dichtung: Lessing, Goethe, Hölderlin*, Leipzig: Reclam-Verlag, 1991, 389-420. About these issues see also also Garin, ‘Storicismo’ and Bianco, *Introduzione*, 70 ff.

⁴⁰ Dilthey, ‘Hermeneutics’, 236, 250; Dilthey, ‘Hermenutik’, 318, 331. It is interesting to note that, in regard to this subject, Wölfflin, who had been a student of Dilthey, did not fully implement these positions, but instead chose a more ambiguous route, leaning more towards scientific psychology. See Viani, ‘Barocco’, 10-11; instead Hart, ‘Reinterpreting Wölfflin’, sees a closer connection of Wölfflin to the theses of the Berlin philosopher.

⁴¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 42. Hauser, *Philosophy*, 199-200 already brought attention to this passage.

In art history (as in the history of literature) Croce's thought was powerful in stimulating monographic studies on individual artists.⁴² In Vienna, it would then furnish Julius von Schlosser – here, too, through the mediation of Vossler – with the key to get out of what he saw as an irresolvable crisis in the discipline, consisting mainly of the opposition between the history of art and the history of artists.⁴³ Even the great outsider of the Vienna school of art history, Josef Strzygowski, dedicated considerable space to artistic personality.⁴⁴

Another important episode in this context had also taken place, in the years just before the appearance of the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, with the publication of Friedrich Rintelen's book *Giotto und die Giotto-Apokryphen* in 1911.⁴⁵ Enthusiastically endorsed by Schlosser⁴⁶ and carefully reviewed by Dvořák,⁴⁷ this text acted as a catalyst for a more intense reflection on the question of the role of individual personalities within the evolution of art.

Inspired by all these stimuli, Tietze thus states that 'if [art history] sets itself the task of investigating the connectedness of the whole evolution, it will never accomplish it by excluding the most decisive factor, individual artistry.'⁴⁸

Art historians use stylistic and chronological seriation to reconstruct the evolutionary line into which they place art works, and all of these operations continue to be fundamental. However, it is certain that 'a human being will never come out of this alembic',⁴⁹ Tietze states with a bit of regret. Instead, he feels the need for a broader vision, and tries to forge a new concept of 'historical-artistic individuality',⁵⁰ which he understands as 'the entire individual complex of external

⁴² See Luigi Salerno, 'Historiography', in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963, col. 528. In the context of literary criticism, it should be mentioned that, in these same years, and precisely in Vienna, Leo Spitzer was also committed to overcoming the limits of positivism through an original elaboration of ideas derived from Dilthey, Croce and Vossler. See the extremely well-informed introduction by Claudio Scarpati in Leo Spitzer, *Studi italiani*, Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1976, especially 10 ff.

⁴³ See Schlosser, 'Commentario', 41 and 46-47.

⁴⁴ See the introduction by Strzygowski in Coriolan Petranu, *Inhaltsproblem und Kunstgeschichte: Einleitende Studien*, Vienna: Halm und Goldmann, 1921, 3.

⁴⁵ On Rintelen see Kultermann, *History*, 207-208.

⁴⁶ See Kurz, 'Schlosser', xiii.

⁴⁷ See Max Dvořák, review of Friedrich Rintelen, *Giotto und die Giotto-Apokryphen*, Munich: Müller, 1912, *Kunstgeschichtliche Anzeigen*, repr. in Dvořák, *Aufsätze*, 345-353. In the preface Rintelen even went so far as to say that he wanted to remove Giotto from the evolution of art, a formulation which historians of the Vienna school could not agree with. In fact, Dvořák acknowledged that he was the most distant from Rintelen on this point. See also note 52 for Tietze's important integrations in this regard.

⁴⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 454-455: 'wenn diese sich auch zur Aufgabe setzt, den Zusammenhang der ganzen Entwicklung zu erkennen, so kann sie jene doch niemals durch Ausscheiden des maßgebendsten Faktors, der individuellen Künstlerschaft, lösen.'

⁴⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 445: 'niemals wird aber aus dieser Retorte ein Mensch hervorgehen'.

⁵⁰ Tietze, *Methode*, 448: 'For art history, the unconscious participation of the artist in the general process of the evolution of style cannot be separated from his conscious effort through definite tasks; both are connected in a new unity, which in its precise relation with the true individuality of the artist could be called his art historical individuality.' ('Der unbewußte Anteil des Künstlers am allgemeinen Prozeß der Stilentwicklung ist für die Kunstgeschichte von seinem bewußten Ringen um bestimmte Aufgaben

and internal characteristics, to the extent to which, through the relationship with a unitary, personal artistic creation, it possesses a centre'.⁵¹

Tietze makes it clear that, in this sense, for example, if 'Giotto is the part of painting with which the name Giotto is connected', he is, however '*the entire* [italics mine] part; not a simple segment in a purely formal evolution, but rather the exponent of all of the spiritual [*geistig*] forces that can be expressed through figurative means.'⁵²

Tietze's interest in a broader vision of artistic personality is clear, and explains the high rank that he reserves for biographical and autobiographical written sources, which he deems indispensable tools for reaching a multidimensional reconstruction of the personality of the artist.⁵³ In fact, what Tietze specifies as decisive are

those spiritual [*geistig*] ... qualities ... that can be recognized and documented in [the artist's] work; that not only reinforce the work's effect, but rather in certain cases condition it. And wanting to exclude them from the part of art that coincides with the name of the artist ... [is] dangerous formal purism.⁵⁴

Tietze is evidently intolerant of an exclusively formalist approach, since it can only restore a patchy image of the evolution of art. In fact, for Tietze 'without insight into the purely human currents in the work of Michelangelo, without

nicht abtrennbar; beides verknüpft sich zu einer neuen Einheit, die in ihrer bestimmten Relation zur wirklichen Individualität des Künstlers dessen kunsthistorische Individualität genannt werden könnte.') Tietze thus constructs his concept of 'art historical individuality' in a way that is coherent with his hermeneutic purpose of understanding the individual better than the individual had understood himself: that is, through considering not only his intentions, but also the contemporary phenomena – artistic or otherwise – that he participated in without realizing it, and that become fully manifest only to later observers. This circular movement of understanding recalls Dilthey's (but derived from Schleiermacher) 'hermeneutical circle [*Zirkel im Verstehen*]', to which Holly refers for the method of Erwin Panofsky (*Panofsky*, 39-40). In Vienna, Leo Spitzer also was aware of it: for the juxtaposition of Panofsky and Spitzer see Carlo Ginzburg, 'From Aby Warburg to E.H. Gombrich: A Problem of Method', in *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, 185-186n99; on Spitzer Scarpati, Introduction, 30.

⁵¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 448-449: 'ist der ganze individuelle Komplex von äußeren und inneren Eigenschaften verstanden, soweit er durch die Beziehung auf eine einheitliche und persönliche künstlerische Leistung ein Zentrum besitzt'.

⁵² Tietze, *Methode*, 449: 'Giotto ist das ganze Stück der Malerei, mit dem der Name Giotto verbunden ist. ... das ganze Stück; nicht ein bloßer Abschnitt in einer reinen Formalentwicklung, sondern auch der Exponent aller geistigen Kräfte, die mit bildnerischen Mitteln zum Ausdruck gebracht werden können.' These comments are in reference to Dvořák's criticism of Rintelen (Dvořák, Review, 346-347).

⁵³ Tietze, *Methode*, 213-214.

⁵⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 449: 'jene geistigen ... Qualitäten ..., die in seinem Schaffen erkennbar und nachweislich sind, die die Wirkung dieses nicht nur verstärken, sondern unter Umständen bedingen und die aus dem Stück Kunst, das der Name des Künstlers deckt, ausscheiden zu wollen, ... ein gefährlicher Formalpurismus'.

knowledge of who Dürer was as a religious man, the understanding of their historical-artistic individuality also seems ... incomplete.⁵⁵

This new need leads Tietze to suggest broadening the terms of stylistic analysis as understood in Giovanni Morelli's method of connoisseurship, so profusely adopted by the Viennese school, and especially by Franz Wickhoff.⁵⁶ For Tietze, Morellian method should not limit itself to the analysis of unconscious stylistic characteristics any longer. On the contrary, based on the premise that all formal elements are 'emanations of an individual spiritual [*geistig*] core', and that there are no merely exterior formal habits, but that when we look at style we are instead witnessing the result of a 'continuous "becoming form of spiritual [*geistig*] processes"', Tietze now proposes that stylistic analysis should embrace the possibilities offered, for example, by a more careful examination of the way artists use colour or render space.⁵⁷ This is a way of introducing the broad issues Riegl had tackled in his sweeping explorations of artistic territories into the study of the individual manifestations of style (in fact, Tietze refers to *Das holländische Gruppenporträt*). Tietze concludes by saying that he is confident that this kind of research would produce a more solid knowledge 'not only of general stylistic processes, but also of the individual artistic personality'.⁵⁸

(This deeply rooted awareness of the need to integrate the merely formal study of artistic personalities and to thoroughly investigate their relationship with the cultural currents of their time is an aspect that anticipates Dvořák's 'art history as *Geistesgeschichte*'. In fact, artists immersed in periods of great religious and cultural strife would become one of Dvořák's privileged subjects for research, and this aspect would make them all the more interesting to him because of the richer human dimension of their work.⁵⁹)

⁵⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 449: 'Denn ohne Einblick in die rein menschlichen Ströme in Michelangelos Schaffen, ohne Erkenntnis, was Dürer als religiöser Mensch war, dünkt mich das Verständnis auch ihrer kunsthistorischen Individualitäten unvollkommen.'

⁵⁶ See Sciolla, 'Metodo'. On Morelli, see also the wealth of material in the proceedings of the international conference held in Bergamo (4-7 June 1987), published in Giacomo Agosti, Maria Elisabetta Manca, and Matteo Panzeri, eds, *Giovanni Morelli e la cultura dei conoscitori*, 3 vols, Bergamo: Lubrina, 1993. For Tietze's distance from the Morellian method as positivistic see also below on the question of form and content.

⁵⁷ Tietze, *Methode*, 339: 'Ausflüsse eines individuellen geistigen Zentrums'; 'Kontinuierlichen Informtreten geistiger Vorgänge'.

⁵⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 340: 'nicht nur allgemeiner Stilvorgänge, sondern auch der künstlerischen Einzelpersönlichkeit'.

⁵⁹ On this point as one of the cornerstones of Dvořák's 'art history as *Geistesgeschichte*', see Benesch 'Dvořák', 290 and Busse, *Kunst*, 98 ff. Tietze himself, called upon to represent this approach three years after Dvořák's death in 1924, recognized that it was this close focus on an artistic individuality that could enable art history to avoid the risk of getting lost in the search for all too vague connections between art and culture. See Hans Tietze, 'Geisteswissenschaftliche Kunstgeschichte', in *Die Kunstwissenschaft der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*, ed. Johannes Jahn, Leipzig: F. Meiner, 1924, 183-198 [now reprinted in Hans Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910-1954*, ed. Almut Krapf-Weiler et al., Vienna: Schönböcker, 2007, 104-120].

In any event, Tietze warns that this broadening of the study of specific individuals' contributions to artistic evolution in a psychological and cultural direction should not be applied to all artists, but should only be employed with those artists whose 'personality is great enough to stand as the nodal point of the conditions of the time'.⁶⁰ Only these artists, in fact, can sustain such broadening of the perspective of study that, by combining formal analysis with consideration of the different cultural conditions of a period, would lead to the concept of art historical individuality that Tietze developed. Even if 'the geniuses that blaze the trail [*die bahnbrechenden Genies*]' (449) undeniably belong to their times, their individual characteristics are so strong that they stand out against the general historic and artistic situation. Instead, 'all of the other countless artists ... whom we know about are only fortuitous names, carriers of fragments of evolution, extras on the artistic scene, or paradigmatic representatives of groups' (450).⁶¹ Thus, Tietze's awareness of a different importance for the leading figures in art's evolution clearly emerges. Even if he remains within the 'evolutionary' conception of art history by stating that the importance granted to single eminent personalities serves precisely to make their decisive effect on art's evolution come to the fore, he nevertheless introduces an extremely significant change of perspective in this model of art history, which is all the more clear if one compares the programmatic commitment shown above with the way in which artistic individualities had been studied by Tietze's teachers.⁶²

⁶⁰ Tietze, *Methode*, 450: 'Persönlichkeit groß genug ist, um als Knotenpunkt der zeitlichen Bedingungen zu gelten'.

⁶¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 450: 'Alle die unzähligen anderen Künstler aber, von denen wir Kenntnis haben, sind nur zufällige Namen, Träger von Entwicklungsfragmenten, Komparsen des Kunstgeschehens oder paradigmatische Repräsentanten von Gruppen.'

⁶² From this point of view, Wickhoff had not gone beyond a severe application of the Morellian method. See Sciolla, 'Metodo', 52. Although Riegl – who in several of his major works had studied periods where art was anonymous – did also refer to an individual *Kunstwollen*, he stated that it was a good idea to abandon it (Alois Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, trans. Rolf Winkes, Rome: Bretschneider, 1985, 211; Alois Riegl, *Die Spätromische Kunstindustrie* (1901), 2nd ed., Vienna: Österreichische Staatsdruckerei, 1927; repr., 4th ed., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978, 369), in order to assume instead the broader outlook that would enable him to realize his true goal: 'the presentation of the laws governing the evolution' of the art in question (Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, 6 (modified); Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, 2: 'die Aufzeigung der leitenden Gesetze der Entwicklung'). When dealing with Rembrandt, for example, he limited himself to analyzing him from the point of view of his contribution to solving the formal problem of the group portrait, considering him the greatest 'executor of the *Kunstwollen* of his nation and times'. See Alois Riegl, *The Group Portraiture of Holland*, trans. Evelyn M. Kain and David Britt, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999, 254 (modified); Alois Riegl, *Das holländische Gruppenporträt* (1902), Vienna: Österreichischen Staatsdruckerei, 1931, 180: 'Exekutor des Kunstwollens seines Volkes und seiner Zeit'; on which Sandro Scarrocchia, *Studi su Riegl*, Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1986, 91.

The art historian without 'taste'? *Lebendigkeit* and subjectivity in art history

The second cornerstone of 'evolutionary' art history rests on the conviction that the 'evolution of art is continuous and uninterrupted', and this idea eliminates the concept of 'artistic decadence' from the vocabulary of the true art historian.⁶³ Here there is a clear, direct reference to the great examples of Wickoff and Riegl, who had rehabilitated periods once condemned to oblivion from a scholarly point of view because they were not in line with reigning taste, thus opening new routes to the study of art history.⁶⁴

Once again, however, Tietze promptly includes a necessary integration. If every moment in art's evolution is equally entitled to scientific citizenship on the basis of the principle that there is no artistic decadence, Tietze hastens to add that this in no way implies making all periods equal from an aesthetic point of view, and hence – and the institution of this causal connection is of great importance – from a historical point of view as well.

The study of art history by formal problems (*Problemgeschichte*), championed by Riegl, was what had made such unbiased access to the creations of forgotten periods possible.⁶⁵ Placed in series as solutions to certain artistic problems, the works of every period no longer had to respond to the demands of preconceived aesthetic norms, and – at least in terms of intentions – this approach avoided the influence of any residual subjectivity on the part of the art historian.⁶⁶

Despite these great merits, *Problemgeschichte* had a serious drawback. For Tietze, in fact, to put everything on the same level is a sort of 'Hegelian sanctification of what is'.⁶⁷ Thus, from the establishment of 'maximum justice [*größte Gerechtigkeit*]', *Problemgeschichte* ended up creating 'supreme injustice [*höchste Ungerechtigkeit*]', complains Tietze – here using the same words that Ernst Heidrich, student of Wölfflin and of Dilthey, had used to criticize Riegl's method, thus marking, according to Hans Sedlmayr, the beginning of a new phase of art history.⁶⁸ The 'injustice' is for Tietze the fact that all of the art works, since they were considered merely as documents of style, turned out to have the same value.

⁶³ Tietze, *Methode*, 42: 'Die Entwicklung der Kunst ist stetig und ununterbrochen'; 43: 'Kunstverfall'.

⁶⁴ Tietze writes that to postulate interruptions or standstills in the evolution of art is equal to a 'theory of catastrophes [*Katastrophentheorie*]' (*Methode*, 43), just as Riegl had expressed himself in the fundamental introduction to *Late Roman Art Industry*, 8: 'violent disruption through catastrophes'; Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, 7: 'das gewaltsame Eingreifen von Katastrophen'.

⁶⁵ Tietze clearly defined Riegl's method as *Problemgeschichte* in 'Alois Riegl', in *Neue Österreichische Biographie*, ed. Anton Bettelheim, vol. 8, Zurich: Amalthea-Verlag, 1935, 142.

⁶⁶ Tietze expresses some perplexity on the absolute possibilities that this method had to escape from any link with the present, even with all of its heroic abnegation. See Tietze, *Methode*, 462.

⁶⁷ Tietze, *Methode*, 168: 'Hegelschen Heiligsprechung alles Gewordenen'.

⁶⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 465, citing Ernst Heidrich, review of Hans Jantzen, *Das niederländische Architekturbild*, Leipzig: Klinkhardt und Biermann, 1910, in *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*, 8, 1913, 130. Hans Sedlmayr's comments on Heidrich are in his *Kunst und Wahrheit: Zur Theorie und Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, Mittenwald: Mäander, 1978, 22.

Tietze disagrees with this leveling of art works. He states:

In the context of a conception of history that aims for totality and not fragments the value of a work of art consists in the wealth of creative forces it contains. In this way, an important adjustment is made to the monotonous leveling of all periods, which in a certain way is solidly grounded in the fact that *Problemgeschichte* cannot relinquish any of them. The importance of each period depends on the sum of the vital values that it contains.⁶⁹

These words clearly convey Tietze's dissatisfaction with that model, against which he sets a different concept of the work of art ('totality and not fragments') as well as a distinct perception of values.⁷⁰

This perception of values was crucial for the *Geisteswissenschaften*, which had one of their foundations in this very relation to them, as their theorists from Rickert to Weber, and from Dilthey to Croce had stated.⁷¹ And on the basis of this relation to values, the *Geisteswissenschaften* made that selection in the material they studied, which Tietze, too, demands from his discipline:

The history of art does not do justice to its rigorously historical task by investigating what happened with the greatest accuracy possible and retelling it, but rather... by making a selection within the enormous amount of events.⁷²

⁶⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 465: 'Im Sinne einer historischen Erfassung, die auf das Ganze und nicht auf Bruchteile ausgeht, liegt der Wert eines Kunstwerks im Reichtum schöpferischer Kräfte, den es enthält. Dadurch erhält auch die öde Gleichberechtigung aller Zeiten, die in der problemgeschichtlichen Unentbehrlichkeit gewissermaßen bürgerlich wohl begründet ist, eine bedeutsame Korrektur; die Wichtigkeit der Perioden richtet sich nach der Summe lebendiger Werte, die sie einschließen'. See also the statement that 'what is most important from the historical point of view is what is still vital or what has become vital again today' (Tietze, *Methode*, 28: 'ist das, was heute noch oder wieder lebendig ist, das historisch Bedeutsamste').

⁷⁰ For Tietze's 'synthetic' concept of the work of art, noticed immediately by Rothacker (*Repertorium*, 177), see also pp. 393, 410, 414, and below for his integration of the history of forms.

⁷¹ On the question of values as a unifying point for the theorists of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, see Abbagnano, *Storia*, 555.

⁷² Tietze, *Methode*, 166: 'Ihrer streng geschichtlichen Aufgabe wird sie nicht dadurch gerecht, daß sie das Vorgefallene mit möglichster Genauigkeit erforscht und wiedererzählt, sondern indem sie aus der Fülle des Geschehenen ... eine Auswahl trifft'. See Hughes, *Consciousness*, 65, who defines this attitude as typical of the new intellectual climate. It was precisely this act of selection, according to Tietze, that allowed art history to be true to its nature as *Geisteswissenschaft*. In fact, expressly referencing Rickert, he states that to indiscriminately include every object in the field of study of the discipline 'would be in contradiction with the scientific nature of art history, which, like all of its sister *Geisteswissenschaften*, must make a choice from among the mass of facts.' (Tietze, *Methode*, 15: 'würde dem wissenschaftlichen Charakter der Kunstgeschichte widersprechen, die gleich all ihren geisteswissenschaftlichen Schwestern aus der Fülle der Tatsachen eine Auswahl zu treffen hat.'). On Rickert, see Rossi, *Storicismo*, 279 ff.

That ‘vital values [*lebendige Werte*]’ are the criterion to be used for this selection further confirms Tietze’s intention to constitute art history as *Geisteswissenschaft*. *Lebendigkeit* (vitality) was also a key concept for Dilthey and in his system it is ‘ultimately the quality every fact or event must have in order to be understood as “spiritual fact [*geistige Tatsache*]” or significant “*Erlebnis*”’.⁷³

To write history in the new way, the mainstays of ‘Ranke’s paradigm’ – the most wide-ranging research possible in the sources and a careful critical examination of them – even if they are still necessary steps, are no longer enough.⁷⁴ In fact, as seen above, it is no longer possible to proceed by ‘investigating what happened with the greatest accuracy possible and retelling it’, like the old ‘historical radicalism [*historische Radikalismus*]’ (4), from which Tietze wants to take a distance. Instead, it is necessary to rely on ‘re-experiencing [*Nacherleben*]’, which Tietze saw as ‘the true organ of historical understanding [*das eigentliche Organon des historischen Erfassens*]’, because it made it possible to ‘move back into the past [*Rückversetzung*]’; and in this specific case, into its art.⁷⁵

Thus, for Tietze, the route leading to an understanding the art of the past is ‘to experience something from an artistic point of view [*etwas künstlerisch zu erleben*]’.⁷⁶ This formulation brings into play *Erlebnis*, which in Dilthey’s philosophy defines the specific kind of knowledge at stake in the *Geisteswissenschaften*. For Dilthey, in the *Geisteswissenschaften* we are intimately involved with the objects of our knowledge through a ‘life-relationship [*Lebensverhältnis*]’. This is completely different from what happens with the natural sciences: their objects of knowledge have not been produced by us, and hence remain, as it were, external to us.⁷⁷ The

⁷³ Here I cite the words of Giovanni Matteucci, ‘L’esperienza estetica in Wilhelm Dilthey’, in Wilhelm Dilthey, *Estetica e Poetica: Materiali editi e inediti (1886-1909)*, Milan: Franco Angeli, 1992, 36. On the concept of *Lebendigkeit* in Dilthey see also Sauerland, *Erlebnisbegriff*, 101 ff. Ten years later, ‘vitality’ would still be an indispensable necessity for Tietze. *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft* (‘vital theory of art’) is in fact the title of the book Tietze published in Vienna in 1925, where he even more forcefully posits the need for a vital relationship between past and present, and is also very interesting in the way he takes stock of the years of Expressionism, which at that date he saw as a movement that had already lost its spark of originality. For an extremely positive evaluation of this text see E. H. Gombrich, ‘André Malraux and the Crisis of Expressionism’, in *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and Other Essays on the Theory of Art*, 4th ed., London: Phaidon, 1985, 168.

⁷⁴ On Dilthey’s critical position on Ranke’s project of history, which Dilthey considered as an attempt at ‘pure description [*reine Beschreibung*]’ (Riedel’s words) of the past ‘as it really was [*wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*]’ (Ranke’s famous motto), see Manfred Riedel, introduction to Wilhelm Dilthey, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* (1911), Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1991, 73-74.

⁷⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 444-445. Tietze insisted on the fact that the historian must present past events in a lively manner: see Tietze, *Methode*, 467-468 and 470; to compare with Benedetto Croce, *Filosofia come scienza dello spirito*, 2, *Logica come scienza del concetto puro*, 2nd ed., Bari: Laterza, 1909, 196 ff.

⁷⁶ Tietze, *Methode*, 445.

⁷⁷ See Wilhelm Dilthey, ‘The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences’ (1910), in *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences, Selected Works*, ed. Rudolf A. Makkreel and Frithjof Rodi, vol. 3, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002, 141; Wilhelm Dilthey, ‘Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften’, in *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften* (1927), *Gesammelte Schriften*, ed. Bernhard Groethuysen, vol. 7, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1961, 118. On this point see Bianco, *Introduzione*, 126 ff.

Erlebnis central to the discipline of art history – on the basis of the nature of its object, which first of all calls upon vision and feeling – is obviously aesthetic. Tietze therefore attributes an ‘essential role to the immediate aesthetic effect from the historical point of view, too’.⁷⁸ In fact, it constitutes almost a presupposition to historical understanding, since ‘where ... the aesthetic effect fails, we stumble around ... in the dark from an art historical point of view as well.’⁷⁹

According to Tietze, then, art historians must have a sound knowledge of the ways in which their response to art emerges. Hence, they will benefit from the results of psychological aesthetics, because psychological aesthetics will allow them to penetrate the processes that regulate their aesthetic reactions. And this very knowledge will enable them to fully account for the richness and multifariousness of these reactions. This is a necessary task in order not to reduce their work – which would be ‘true historical-artistic deformation’⁸⁰ – to historical understanding only, which inevitably tends to disperse that wealth through the operations of seriation and abstraction carried out in order to place works of art within stylistic series, in observance of the ‘evolutionary’ paradigm of their discipline.

In fact ‘only insight into the fundamental traits of aesthetic experience, only the true ability to react to artistic impressions in general can give access to the intuitive understanding of corresponding phenomena in the past, which the art historian needs.’⁸¹

This was a highly original position in Vienna, and was received very well in Dvořák’s review of the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, also considered because of this aspect as one of the first programmatic statements of his ‘art history as *Geistesgeschichte*’.⁸² Moreover, it would be reached only in the years to come by Schlosser in his *Lebenskommentar* (1924), where he was very critical in recalling his own attitude towards art before encountering Croce’s work.⁸³

The way in which Tietze thinks art historians ought to acquire this ability to experience the art of the past in such a vital way is also of great interest. They must ‘have their evaluation of the past regulated by a sound knowledge of the present’,⁸⁴ because this special sensibility

⁷⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 52: ‘auch in der historischen Betrachtung der unmittelbaren ästhetischen Wirkung eine wesentliche Rolle’.

⁷⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 181: ‘tappen wir dort auch kunstgeschichtlich ... im Dunkeln, wo die ästhetische Wirkung ... versagt.’

⁸⁰ Tietze, *Methode*, 106: ‘die eigentliche kunsthistorische Verbildung’.

⁸¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 166: ‘Erst der Einblick in die Grundzüge des ästhetischen Erlebens, erst die wirkliche Reaktionsfähigkeit auf künstlerische Eindrücke überhaupt, kann das intuitive Verständnis für die entsprechenden Vorgänge in der Vergangenheit, dessen der Historiker bedarf, erschließen’.

⁸² See Dvořák, ‘Erfordernisse’, 9, on which Busse, *Kunst*, 102 ff.

⁸³ Schlosser ‘Commentario’, 26 and 50.

⁸⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 28: ‘seine Bewertung der Vergangenheit von einer sicheren Erkenntnis der Gegenwart regeln zu lassen’.

has its strongest foundation in the immediate relationship with art in general, which we encounter in the most direct and clear manner *in the work of our own time* [my italics] ... ; without the warmth of the flame of life, the secret writing of the past remains invisible, illegible, mute in the history of art as well.⁸⁵

Through these statements, Tietze very urgently conveys the danger already pointed out by Nietzsche in the third of his *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, in which he had discussed ‘the uses and disadvantages of history for life’ (*Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben*, 1874), and thus aligns himself with a position common to the entire antipositivistic front, from Dilthey to Simmel, from Bergson to Croce.⁸⁶

The relationship with contemporary art is a special characteristic of the Viennese school: its most illustrious representatives, from Eitelberger to Moritz Thausing and on down to Wickhoff, Riegl, Strzygowski and then Dvořák, wrote their works – although in very different ways – more or less aware that they were in line with the artistic movements of their time.⁸⁷ However, for none of these scholars did this relationship reach the point of becoming a deliberate methodological presupposition as for Tietze, for whom the art of the present is ‘the only bridge that leads to the ... understanding’ of the art of the past;⁸⁸ only through it can ‘the unbridgeable abyss’ that separates us from past ages be crossed.⁸⁹

This position is all the more relevant because it does not come from abstract theorizing, nor is it limited to rhetorical statements: instead, it starts from personal experience that has no equal in that period among art historians with an academic background.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 166: ‘besitzt in dem unmittelbaren Verhältnis zur Kunst im allgemeinen, die uns im Schaffen der eigenen Zeit am direktesten und ungetrübtesten entgegentritt, die stärkste Grundlage. ... ; ohne die erwärmende Flamme des Lebens bleibt auch in der Geschichte der Kunst die Geheimschrift der Vergangenheit unsichtbar, unleserlich, stumm.’

⁸⁶ See Tietze, *Methode*, 106 and 167-168. On this issue see Garin, ‘Filosofia’, 984 and Hughes, *Consciousness*, 59-66.

⁸⁷ The most complete treatment of the problem, which studies the entire ‘first Viennese school’ down to Tietze is in Lachnit, ‘Kunstgeschichte’ [now available in Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule*]. On Riegl specifically, see Sauerländer, ‘Riegl’.

⁸⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 161: ‘die einzige Brücke die zu ihrem Verständnis führt’.

⁸⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 170: ‘die unüberschreitbare Kluft’. In introducing his collection of writings *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Zur Krise der Kunst und der Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna: Krystall-Verlag, 1925, 3, Tietze even stated that the ‘concatenation of present and past was already the fundamental thought [*Verkettung von Gegenwart und Vergangenheit war schon der Grundgedanke*]’ of the treatise, which, however, did not emerge in full clarity because of the ‘heavy ballast of doctrinal erudition [*schweren Ballast doktrinären Wissens*]’ that he had not been able to jettison.

⁹⁰ See Gottfried Boehm, ‘Die Krise der Repräsentation: Die Kunstgeschichte und die moderne Kunst’, in *Kategorien und Methoden der deutschen Kunstgeschichte 1900-1930*, ed. Lorenz Dittmann, Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1985, 120.

Tietze was among the first supporters of Oskar Kokoschka, and had the artist do a portrait of him with his wife Erica already in 1909.⁹¹ In times when Kokoschka's shows aroused scandals and heated controversies, Tietze publicly defended the artist in the newspapers, thus causing perplexity in university circles.⁹² It was to his encounter with Kokoschka that Tietze explicitly attributed his ability to understand the art of the past,⁹³ and it is highly significant that in a retrospective study on the artist's career, Tietze describes the works of the first decade of the twentieth century – the ones he continued to admire as the best – as pervaded with 'tense vitality [*gespannte Lebendigkeit*]', using the same category that constitutes the reference criterion in the *Methode*.⁹⁴

Finally, to cite just one more example of Tietze's attention to the most advanced developments of the art of his time, it is worth mentioning that he had reviewed the *Blaue Reiter* almanac with great timeliness and intelligence.⁹⁵

Udo Kultermann has spoken of an 'art history of Expressionism'⁹⁶ in defining the work of those art historians who, thanks to the art movements in the first decades of the twentieth century, rediscovered El Greco; or who, like Ernst Heidrich, turned to *Geistesgeschichte*; or who, like Friedrich Rintelen, looked at Giotto through Cubism. In light of what I have presented, it truly does seem curious

⁹¹ On the portrait, now housed in the Museum of Modern Art in New York, see Hans Maria Wingler, *Oskar Kokoschka: the Work of the Painter*, trans. Frank S. C. Budgen et al., Salzburg: Galerie Welz, 1958, 296. [On Tietze and Kokoschka now see Catherine M. Soussloff, *The Subject in Art: Portraiture and the Birth of the Modern*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2006, 61-82.] Tietze's activity as supporter of contemporary art was of great importance, through his extensive writings, as well with the foundation of the 'Gesellschaft zur Förderung der modernen Kunst in Wien' (Society for the Advancement of Modern Art in Vienna). There is still no complete reconstruction of this aspect of his work. The best outline is in Lachnit, 'Kunstgeschichte', 158-175 [now see also Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule*, 98-110]. For a rapid survey see also Buschbeck, 'Tietze' and Dieter Bogner, 'Hans Tietze und die moderne Kunst', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 33, 1980, 7-15.

⁹² See Werner Schweiger, *Der junge Kokoschka: Leben und Werk*, Vienna: C. Brandstätter, 1983, 188 for a reprint of Tietze's 1911 review of the show at the Hagenbund in Vienna, where Kokoschka had two rooms dedicated to his work. [This review is now also available in Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910-1954*, 28-37]. The reaction of the university milieu to Tietze's engagement with contemporary art is discussed in the biography written by his wife Erica Tietze-Conrat, originally meant to be included in *Essays in Honor of Hans Tietze, 1880-1954*, ed. E. H. Gombrich, Julius S. Held and Otto Kurz, Paris: Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1958, but left unpublished and in a preparatory stage. (I thank Tietze's son, Professor Andreas Tietze, for making this important testimony available to me.) The very fact that Tietze took a position in favour of contemporary artists kept him from obtaining the chair at the University of Prague: see Buschbeck, 'Tietze', 70.

⁹³ See Hans Tietze, 'Oskar Kokoschka', *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst*, 53, Neue Folge 29, 1918, 83.

⁹⁴ See Hans Tietze, 'Der Fall Kokoschka', *Der Kreis*, 7: 2, 1930, 84.

⁹⁵ Hans Tietze, 'Der Blaue Reiter', *Die Kunst für Alle*, 27, 1911-1912, 543-550, repr. in Tietze, *Kunstwissenschaft*, 93-100 [and now also in Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910-1954*, 38-44]. On the relevance of this review see Klaus Lankheit, 'A History of the Almanac', in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, ed. Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, trans. Henning Falkenstein, New York: Viking, 1974, 44.

⁹⁶ See Kultermann, *History*, 199-210.

that Tietze is not given a prominent place among the figures Kultermann discusses, since he undoubtedly deserves one.

We can say that Tietze overturns Riegl's famous dictum (handed down by Max Dvořák), according to which 'the best art historian is the one who has no personal taste, because in art history it is a matter of finding the objective criteria for historical evolution'.⁹⁷ Tietze considered this statement 'paradoxical', and was among the first to notice that Riegl was clearly in tune with the artistic issues of his time.⁹⁸ As a substitute for Riegl's model of scholarship, which was marked by a faith in science that was after all still rather positivistic, Tietze offered a new one, where it was no longer necessary to exorcise subjectivity, but rather to transform it 'into a scientific driving force' (353), since 'objectivity in a gnoseological sense can never be more than relative' (455).⁹⁹

The role that Tietze reserved for subjectivity in the *Methode* shows that he was fully aware of the cultural syndrome now called 'crisis of positivism' or 'revolt' against it.¹⁰⁰ In fact, recalling the period when he worked on the *Methode*, Tietze clearly wrote that 'whoever had experienced science or art in the first years of the second decade [of the twentieth century] with even the slightest ability to see, knew or felt that he or she was at an important turning point in spiritual [*geistig*] life' and that 'revolution was in the air'.¹⁰¹

In the texts of the theorists of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, the problem of subjectivity returned with force. The 'relevance to value [*Wertbeziehung*]' which Max Weber recognized as the principle that determines the researcher's interest in the object under investigation, and in the data selected and organized; the

⁹⁷ See Dvořák, 'Riegl', 285: "'Der beste Kunsthistoriker ist der, welcher keinen persönlichen Geschmack besitzt, denn es handelt sich in der Kunstgeschichte darum, objektive Kriterien der historischen Entwicklung zu finden'". On this position of Riegl's see Margaret Olin, 'Spätromische Kunstindustrie: The Crisis of Knowledge in fin de siècle Vienna', in Fillitz and Pippal, *Wien*, 29-36.

⁹⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 458 ('paradoxal'). On this matter, see Lachnit, 'Kunstgeschichte', 94 [now also Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule*, 56-57]. Riegl himself had rehabilitated late Roman art feeling that he was in tune with the artistic aspirations of his own time (Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, 6; Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, 3). And in *Der moderne Denkmalkultus: sein Wesen und seine Entstehung* (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1903), he had carried out an accurate analysis of the values that came into play in the protection of monuments, among which he had also emphasized 'present-day value [*Gegenwartswert*]', which indicated the emotional attachment of the contemporary age to the values of the past in line with its own. See Margaret Olin, 'The Cult of Monument as a State Religion in late 19th Century Austria', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 38, 1985, 177-198, and Sandro Scarrocchia, "'Al tempo la sua arte, all'arte la sua libertà": il Denkmalkultus di Riegl', in Alois Riegl, *Il culto moderno dei monumenti: Il suo carattere e i suoi inizi*, 3rd ed., Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1990, 9-23.

⁹⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 353: 'zu einer wissenschaftlich treibenden Kraft'; 455: 'daß eine Objektivität in erkenntnistheoretischem Sinn nicht mehr als relativ sein kann'.

¹⁰⁰ See Garin, 'Filosofia', 980 ff.; Hughes, *Consciousness*, especially 33-42. These points of contact were outlined by Frodl-Kraft, 'Tietze', 62 ff., with observations for which here I try to provide a broader and more documented context. Other art historians were moved by this important intellectual revolution: for Riegl see Olin, 'Spätromische Kunstindustrie' and on Wölfflin Hart, 'Wölfflin'.

¹⁰¹ Tietze, 'Geisteswissenschaftliche Kunstgeschichte', 183: 'Wer ... in Wissenschaft und Kunst miterlebt hat, wußte oder ahnte, an einem bedeutungsvollen Wendepunkt, des geistigen Lebens zu stehen. Revolution lag in der Luft' [now also in Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910-1954*, 106].

presupposition of the ineliminable historicity of man set by Dilthey, whose project for a ‘critique of historical reason’ had turned into a ‘historical critique of reason’ (Rossi); Croce’s idea that ‘every true history is contemporary history’: these were all crucial issues for Tietze, who, as we have seen, re-elaborated them in a very original way, shaping them in light of his own personal experience.¹⁰²

Moreover, in his treatise Tietze showed that he was quite up-to-date on the theories of Ernst Mach, who had played a central role in that ‘revolution’, overturning classical epistemology and founding the new order of knowledge on subjectivity,¹⁰³ thus becoming an ‘obligatory point of reference’ for this ‘central problem in twentieth century philosophy’.¹⁰⁴

As a careful reader of Mach’s *Analyse der Empfindungen*, which, as will be seen in a moment, he expressly cites in the *Methode*, Tietze was certainly aware of his critique of the concepts of ‘fact [*Tatsache*]’ and ‘substance [*Substanz*]’ in that work.¹⁰⁵ Hence it is of particular interest to note that in the context of his elaboration of the concept of ‘source [*Quelle*]’, Tietze stated that ‘only for a naïve sort of art historical realism does the work of art that we have before our eyes completely identify with the fact [*Tatsache*] it embodies’.¹⁰⁶ (And here it should be added that polemic opposition to obtuse empiricism significantly aligns Tietze with the Berlin philosopher Georg Simmel, who was of like mind when he used the same words in

¹⁰² See Rossi, *Storicismo*, 282 (Weber) and 88-92 (Dilthey). For Croce, see his ‘Storia, cronaca e false storie’, in *Atti dell’Accademia Pontaniana*, 42, 1912, 1-32; the quote is on page 2: ‘ogni vera storia è storia contemporanea’. This essay is translated into English in Benedetto Croce, *History: Its Theory and Practice*, trans. Douglas Ainslie, New York: Russell and Russell, 1960, 11-63 (the quote in on page 12). Tietze (*Methode*, 457-458) closely follows the reflections on history developed by Croce in a study that appeared in the first issue of the prestigious journal *Logos* (‘Über die sogenannten Werturteile’, *Logos*, 1, 1910/1911, 71-82), which contained contributions by other important figures of European philosophy, from Husserl to Rickert (on the importance of *Logos*, see Garin, ‘Filosofia’, 979).

¹⁰³ See Massimo Cacciari, *Krisis: Saggio sulla crisi del pensiero negativo da Nietzsche a Wittgenstein*, 5th ed., Milan: Feltrinelli, 1979, 34.

¹⁰⁴ Garin, ‘Filosofia’, 983. Knowledge of Mach’s work was widespread in Vienna, also among writers, from Hermann Bahr to Hugo von Hofmannstahl, down to Robert Musil. See Olin, ‘Spätrömische Kunstindustrie’ and Claudia Monti, ‘Mach e la letteratura austriaca: Bahr, Hofmannsthal, Musil’, in *Anima ed esattezza: Letteratura e scienza nella cultura austriaca tra ‘800 e ‘900*, ed. Riccardo Morello, Casale Monferrato: Marietti, 1983, 128-148. But Mach was also well known to the art historians of the Vienna School: for Riegl see Scarrocchia, Riegl, 15-16, and Jörg Oberhaidacher, ‘Riegls Idee einer theoretischen Einheit von Gegenstand und Betrachter und ihre Folgen für die Kunstgeschichte’, *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 38, 1985, 210. Moreover, there is the even more striking case of Wickhoff’s student Robert Eisler, who wrote his doctoral dissertation on the theory of value (*Studien zur Werttheorie*, Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1902), dedicating it to Mach (I owe this information to Scarrocchia, Riegl, 15-16 and 112-113).

¹⁰⁵ Ernst Mach, *The Analysis of Sensations, and the Relation of the Physical to the Psychical*, trans. C. M. Williams, revised and supplemented from the 5th German edition by Sydney Waterlow, Chicago: Open Court, 1914; repr., New York: Dover, 1959, 328-333 (on substance), and 333-334 (on facts); *Die Analyse der Empfindungen und das Verhältniss des Physischen zum Psychischen*, 5th ed., Jena: Fischer, 1906, 268-272 (*Substanz*), 272-274 (*Tatsachen*). On these points see Abbagnano, *Storia*, 675-678.

¹⁰⁶ Tietze, *Methode*, 121: ‘Nur einem naiven kunsthistorischen Realismus identifiziert sich das Kunstwerk, das uns vor Augen steht, absolut mit der Tatsache, die es verkörpert’.

his definition of it in the relativism-drenched second edition of his *Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie*.¹⁰⁷ In fact, Tietze maintained that ‘even when observing things from an art historical point of view, we do not handle the artistic fact [*künstlerische Tatsache*] in itself, but rather the sensation [*Empfindung*] that the fact has aroused in us’ (185); and this is precisely because ‘the work of art ... constitutes ... the whole complex of sensations [*Komplex von Empfindungen*] that it arouses in the beholder’ (181).¹⁰⁸

Tietze then directly cites Mach’s *Analyse der Empfindungen* when he identifies the constitutive operation of science in the transformation of facts into conceptual form through the work of abstraction and reduction.¹⁰⁹ For Tietze, this activity of abstraction presides over the very construction of the crucial concept of *Kunstwollen*, which he obviously derives from Riegl, but subjects to considerable revision, thus aiming to avoid any sort of risk of hypostatization.¹¹⁰ In fact, by *Kunstwollen* Tietze

¹⁰⁷ See Georg Simmel, who in *Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie*, 2nd ed., Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1905, v, wrote about a ‘naïve consciousness [*naïve Bewußtsein*]’ of the operations of history, which he called ‘historical realism [*historischen Realismus*]’, and from which Tietze also took his distance on various occasions (*Methode*, 104 and 129). On Simmel see Rossi, *Storicismo*, 210 ff. Wilhelm Worringer also read Simmel in this key. See Giovanni Gurisatti, ‘Astrazione, complessità, espressione: “forma gotica” e problema dell’avanguardia’, in Wilhelm Worringer, *Problemi formali del Gotico* (1911), ed. Giorgio Franck and Giovanni Gurisatti, Venice: Cluva, 1985, 134.

¹⁰⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 185: ‘handhaben wir auch in der kunstgeschichtlichen Betrachtung nicht die künstlerische Tatsache selbst, sondern die Empfindung, die sie in uns gelöst hat’; 181: ‘das Kunstwerk ... bildet ... den Komplex von Empfindungen, die es bei den Beschauern auslöst’.

¹⁰⁹ Tietze (*Methode*, 45) uses the third edition of Mach’s book (Jena: Fischer, 1902), and quotes this sentence: ‘Alle Wissenschaft geht es darauf aus, Tatsachen in Gedanken darzustellen’ (actually on page 238, and not on 230 as indicated by Tietze). For its translation see Mach, *Analysis*, 314 (256 in the fifth German edition): ‘all science has for its aim the representation of facts in thought’. The discussion of the process of conceptual ‘abstraction [*Abstraktion*]’ is in Mach, *Analysis*, 321-326; in German, *Analyse*, 262-266 (in the fifth edition; in the third, used by Tietze, 244-248). On this point in Mach’s philosophy see Alfonsina D’Elia, *Ernst Mach*, Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1971, 97. The opposition between abstraction and vitality is one of the fundamental themes of Tietze’s treatise. In this paper I have tried to bring out this contrast with regard to a few important points. I would like to recall the abstraction that presides over the construction of a compact image of the evolution of art, behind which, however, there are individuals, of whom Tietze wanted to retrieve a more plastic image; the need to retrieve the ‘vital values’ of art, as opposed to the equalizing tendency of *Problemgeschichte*; and finally, the abstraction to which art history with formalist orientation subjects the ‘living ... course’ of art and the need, instead, to integrate *Problemgeschichte* through the study of content, in order not to reduce the full vitality of the work of art.

¹¹⁰ For Tietze, the *Kunstwollen* is the ‘abstraction obtained from the sum of the aesthetic factors of a work of art’ (*Methode*, 122: ‘die aus der Summe der ästhetischen Faktoren eines Kunstwerks gewonnene Abstraktion’). On Riegl’s *Kunstwollen* see above all Otto Pächt, ‘Art Historians and Art Critics -VI: Alois Riegl’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 105: 722, 1963, 190 ff.; Henri Zerner, ‘L’histoire de l’art d’Alois Riegl: un formalisme tactique’, *Critique*, 31, 1975, 339-340, 944 ff.; E. H. Gombrich, *The Sense of Order: A Study in the Psychology of Decorative Art*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979, 193, 196-197; Wolfgang Kemp, ‘Alois Riegl 1858-1905’, in *Altmeister moderner Kunstgeschichte*, ed. Heinrich Dilly, Berlin: D. Reimer, 1990, 46-51. Gombrich (*Sense of Order*, 193) underlined that from the *Stilfragen* to the *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, Riegl had decisively modified the way he used the concept of *Kunstwollen*, which he transformed from a simple tool in his argument with Semper’s theories into a ‘vitalistic principle underlying the whole history of art’, regulating its evolution with rigorous necessity not only

means 'the synthesis obtained starting from the artistic manifestations of a period', taking care immediately to specify that

It is not a question of a special mystical force, or of the impulse of a people, but rather of a concept obtained simply from works and manifestations of another kind, a concept that serves to orient all single objects that are added [in the research process], but that these can again enlarge and modify.¹¹¹

Tietze's *Kunstwollen* is a 'synthesis that we produce' in order to create an indispensable tool, but its subjective nature is always present to him.¹¹² Here too Mach's writings could have been relevant, as well as the works of the other theorists of empiriocriticism, whom Tietze would have been able to study, and who were well-known in Vienna. These thinkers had all underlined the 'economical' nature of concepts in science: they were ideal abstractions and mere labels, which were useful, of course, but only in order to allow us to orient ourselves with respect to phenomena.¹¹³

Integrating the history of forms

The third cornerstone of art history according to Tietze is constituted by the firm conviction that

the evolution of art, to the extent that it must be the object of historical study, is essentially autonomous, and governed by its own necessities. As important as art might be for culture as a whole, and hence for history in general, for art history, it is a matter of its history as art, that is to say, of a

on the diachronic level, but also on the synchronic level, thus determining the style of a period from its architecture to its painting, sculpture and minor arts.

¹¹¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 13-14: 'die Synthese aus den künstlerischen Äußerungen einer Zeit'; 14: 'Dabei handelt es sich aber nicht um eine besondere mystische Kraft, um einen Triebe eines Volkes, ... sondern um einen lediglich aus den Werken und sonstigen Äusserungen gewonnenen Begriff, der zur Orientierung aller neuhinzukommenden Einzelobjekte dient, aber aus ihnen auch wieder Erweiterung und Modifizierung erfahren kann.'

¹¹² Tietze, *Methode*, 14: 'Synthese, die wir vornehmen'; see also 412, on the subject of *Zeitstil*.

¹¹³ The documents related to Tietze's studies at the University of Vienna ('Nationalen der juristischen-philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Wien: Hans Tietze', summer semester, Universitätsarchiv Wien, 1902) indicate that he had enrolled in courses held by Adolph Stöhr on the empiriocriticism of Richard Avenarius, the Swiss philosopher considered to be the leader of this current. (On Mach's differences and independence from Avenarius see also D'Elia, *Mach*, 252 ff.). Furthermore, also the influence of Heinrich Gomperz (1873-1942) might have been important (on him see Ernst Topitsch, 'Heinrich Gomperz', *Wiener Zeitschrift für Philosophie, Psychologie, Pädagogik*, 5, 1954, 1-6). Gomperz was another philosopher belonging to the area of empiriocriticism and friend of Ernst Mach, who cites him in his *Analyse der Empfindungen* (xxxix and 326-327 of the English edition). *Privatdozent* at the University of Vienna, in the early years of the twentieth century Gomperz had also collaborated intensely with several reviews of texts on art history and aesthetics for the *Kunstgeschichtliche Anzeigen*, the journal founded by Franz Wickhoff and which Tietze also contributed to.

precise spiritual [*geistig*] function. Each stage of evolution is determined and founded by the artistic situation that precedes it, and what imposes itself in terms of influence and external circumstances remains limited to the secondary role of triggering force or stimulating factor.¹¹⁴

However, Tietze alleviates the categorical nature of this assumption with the considerations he expresses immediately thereafter. In fact, he recognizes that an ‘enormous and coherent abstraction’ is necessary in order to reduce ‘the living, multifarious course of art to an internal evolution of the forms of artistic expression’.¹¹⁵ This ‘living, multifarious course’ is indissolubly linked ‘to other realms of spiritual [*geistig*] life’.¹¹⁶ Entirely aware of this, Tietze in no way intends to prejudicially forbid the inclusion of any element in art historical investigation. The only condition is that such an element must have affected, clearly and in such a way as to truly make studying it necessary, the formal constitution of the artistic object; that is to say, external factors must ‘have become manifest in works of art in a way that is accessible to perception’.¹¹⁷

In this way Tietze can steer ‘evolutionary’ art history away from the accusation of formalism: ‘expressive factors [*Ausdrucksfaktoren*]’ and ‘content [*Inhalt*]’, if they respond to the requirements mentioned above, must also be investigated; and in fact, if subject ‘to more intense examination than has normally been the case up to now, they will reveal that they belong to the internal evolution of art’.¹¹⁸

Tietze’s opening towards the study of content is expressed in the *Methode* through a highly articulated route that leads him to take a distance from Morellian method and from the overuse of psychophysiology in the formal reading of an art work, to then arrive at a redefinition of the role of iconography.¹¹⁹ Analyzing this route and the positions that Tietze takes with respect to key figures like Wickhoff,

¹¹⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 43-44: ‘die Entwicklung der Kunst ist, soweit sie Gegenstand historischer Erforschung zu sein hat, in erster Linie eine selbständige und wird von ihren eigenen Notwendigkeiten geregelt. Welche Bedeutung die Kunst im Verbands der Gesamtkultur und damit für die allgemeine Geschichte auch besitzen mag, für die Kunstgeschichte handelt es sich um ihre Geschichte als Kunst, d.h. als einer bestimmten geistigen Funktion. Jedes Stadium der Entwicklung ist durch vorherige Zustände der Kunst bedingt und begründet, und was sich an äusseren Einflüssen und Umständen geltend macht, bleibt auf die sekundäre Rolle auslösender Kräfte oder anregender Faktoren beschränkt.’

¹¹⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 44: ‘einer gewaltigen und konsequenten Abstraktion’; ‘lebendigen und vielgestaltigen Kunstverlaufes auf eine immanente Entwicklung der künstlerischen Ausdrucksformen’.

¹¹⁶ Tietze, *Methode*, 44: ‘mit anderen Seiten des geistigen Lebens’.

¹¹⁷ Tietze, *Methode*, 45: ‘in einer der Anschauung zugänglichen Weise in Kunstwerken ihren Niederschlag gefunden haben.’

¹¹⁸ Tietze, *Methode*, 45: ‘werden einer intensiveren Befragung, als sie bisher in der Regel geübt wurde, ihre Zugehörigkeit zur immanenten Kunstentwicklung bekunden.’

¹¹⁹ On the history of the form vs. content *querelle* in the 19th century and in the years preceding the publication of the *Methode* see Julius von Schlosser, ‘The Vienna School of the History of Art’ (1934), *Journal of Art Historiography*, trans. and ed. Karl Johns, no. 1, December 2009, 26-27 and Roberto Salvini, introduction to *La critica d’arte della pura visibilità e del formalismo*, Milan: Garzanti, 1977, 7-62.

Riegl and Wölfflin makes it possible to grasp the overall import of the project of art history that Tietze proposes.

First of all, Tietze criticizes the positions of those, such as August Schmarsow, who had maintained that since art works are aimed directly at the senses, they can be assimilated to the object of study of the natural sciences and hence must undergo an examination oriented in such a way. Tietze refutes this approach with an argument that confirms his alignment with the positions of the theorists of the *Geisteswissenschaften*, agreeing with the Neo-Kantian Heinrich Rickert that it is not on this basis that the distinction between the different modes of scientific treatment lies. In fact, according to Rickert, the distinction between *Geisteswissenschaften* and natural sciences does not lie in what they study, but rather in the approach taken to what is studied: concentrating on its individual, unique aspects, like the historical sciences, or instead trying to uncover a law that transcends such aspects, like the natural sciences.¹²⁰

On the strength of these assumptions, Tietze can then go on to assess Morellian method, which he openly defines as ‘natural historical [*naturgeschichtlich*]’, and even ‘biological [*biologisch*]’,¹²¹ strongly reducing its usefulness for art history and placing it in a phase of the discipline that, even though it had promoted a valuable sharpening of art historical vision and focus through its great attention to form, belonged inexorably to the past. The traits that appeared most obsolete to Tietze must have been the ones which, as Giovanni Previtali pointed out, made Morellian method most similar to the classifications of natural historians or anatomists, obtained through patient morphological analysis.¹²² But it was precisely this characteristic that had moved Wickhoff, with his would-be botanist’s positivistic spirit, to enthusiastically hail Morelli’s theories as a great conquest, because they seemed to be able to finally guarantee art history that type of objectivity that seemed to be reserved for the natural sciences alone.¹²³ Tietze, who had attended the seminars that Wickhoff gave every year to introduce his students to Morellian method,¹²⁴ now takes his distance from his teacher, albeit indirectly.

Again along these lines, Tietze’s stance with respect to the overuse of the results of psychophysiology – one of the glories of positivistic science – in art historical studies is also very important.¹²⁵ Although recognizing the usefulness of psychophysiology to a certain extent, mainly for formal analysis since it contributes to explain how vision functions, he thinks it indispensable to show its precise limits. According to Tietze, too much reliance on the results of psychophysiology is based

¹²⁰ See Tietze, *Methode*, 121 ff. For Rickert on this matter, see Abbagnano, *Storia*, 534 ff. On Schmarsow see Kultermann, *History*, 173-175.

¹²¹ See Tietze, *Methode*, respectively 122 and 331.

¹²² See Giovanni Previtali, ‘À propos de Morelli’, *Revue de l’Art*, 42, 1978, 27-31.

¹²³ See Schlosser ‘Commentario’, 13.

¹²⁴ The documents housed at the University of Vienna indicate that Tietze attended his seminar for two semesters. See ‘Nationalen’, 1901 and 1902.

¹²⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 237-238 and 274-275. On experimental psychology see Nicola Abbagnano, ‘Psicologia’, in *Dizionario di Filosofia*, Turin: UTET, 1971.

on a fundamental misunderstanding: the assimilation of the forms and colors of art works to natural objects. But the physiological process of vision is something else with respect to 'artistic seeing [*künstlerisches Sehen*]' (237), because, as Tietze strongly underlines, basing his claims on the authority of Fiedler and Hildebrand, such 'seeing' forces what is given in nature to undergo a transformation that makes the work of art completely different from its starting point in nature.¹²⁶

Here it is also interesting to note that Tietze, while constantly referring to the theorists of 'pure visibility' for his general conception of artistic activity, makes very little use in his treatise of their analytical tools, in particular those Hildebrand developed from the ideas of the formalist aesthetics of the Herbartian Robert Zimmermann and from the results of the psychology of perception,¹²⁷ which had instead become valuable in the rigorous formal analyses of Wickhoff,¹²⁸ Riegl¹²⁹ and Wölfflin.¹³⁰ Vis-à-vis these scholars, Tietze assumes a diversified position.

While he does not directly refer to Wickhoff in this regard, in the case of Riegl, instead, he hints at explicit disagreement at times. On a more general level, Tietze expresses reservations on the effectiveness of Riegl's psychophysiological terminology, certainly coherent as an attempt to forge a new tool with which to

¹²⁶ On Fiedler and Hildebrand see Tietze, *Methode*, 227 and 236-237.

¹²⁷ I am referring to Hildebrand's discussion of the two fundamental modes of seeing: vision from a distant vantage point, which is a 'pure vision' (Hildebrand writes here of the 'rein schauende Auge', literally 'an eye that only sees'), and of vision from a close vantage point, an experience in which seeing turns into 'true touching [*ein wirkliches Abtasten*]'; and to the related concepts of 'inherent form [*Daseinsform*]', and 'effective form [*Wirkungsform*]'. See Adolf Hildebrand, *Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst*, Strassburg: Heitz, 1893, 10 (for the two ways of seeing; a section which is too freely translated and misses the distinction between seeing and touching in the otherwise most useful English version of Hildebrand's text contained in Harry Francis Mallgrave and Eleftherios Ikononou, eds, *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems in German Aesthetics, 1873-1893*, Santa Monica: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1994, 229) and 20 (for *Daseinsform* and *Wirkungsform*; the English translation is on page 233). On the relation between Hildebrand and the psychophysicologists see Hart, 'Reflections', 54-55.

¹²⁸ On Wickhoff's relationship with Hildebrand see Hart, 'Reflections', 56.

¹²⁹ Riegl had used the concepts of 'tactile' (which he later replaced with 'haptic') and 'optical' to indicate the two poles around which the entire evolution of art revolved, making them rigorous tools for investigating the specific nature of form in Late Roman art production, thus saved from accusations of decadence as formulated by 'dogmatic [*dogmatisch*]' art history, which he substituted with 'historic-psychological [*psychologisch-historisch*]' art history (Dvořák, 'Riegl', 291). It was Riegl himself who admitted how close he was to Hildebrand's formulations and who defined his own method and scientific ideal as 'positivistic [*positivistisch*]'; thus furnishing a very revealing description of them. See his words in 'Naturwerk und Kunstwerk' (1901), in Alois Riegl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, ed. Karl Maria Swoboda, Augsburg: Filser, 1929, 59. Even if recently Kemp ('Riegl', 48) did not give much weight to this statement, in the years of the *Methode*, above all Heidrich (Heidrich, Review, 128 ff.) was very polemical in taking issue with this aspect of Riegl's approach, which he considered as the most ambitious (but also dangerous) attempt to assimilate the study of art history to the natural sciences, carried out through the use of a rigorous scientific terminology.

¹³⁰ On the constitutive importance of psychology for Wölfflin see also Zerner, 'Histoire', 946-947, and Sauerländer, 'Riegl', 126-127. On the relationship between Wölfflin and Hildebrand see Hart, 'Reflections'; Dittmann, *Stil*, 57; and Hart, 'Reinterpreting Wölfflin', 298.

closely analyze art works, but just as difficult for the reader to comprehend.¹³¹ Underlining the importance of content, Tietze then significantly points out that forms are the object of study of ‘evolutionary’ art history only in so far as they are understood as carriers of expression; if, instead, they are considered only as ‘optical or haptic phenomena [*optische oder haptische Erscheinungen*]’, investigating them must be the task of some other discipline.¹³²

Towards Wölfflin, instead, Tietze’s perplexity is not expressed as directly as in the cases already seen. Nevertheless, when still in the context of his discussion of the importance of content for art history, Tietze affirms that ‘there is no object in the nature surrounding us with which we would be in a purely optical relationship’ (359),¹³³ I think it is very likely that he is referring to the famous proclamation that Wölfflin issued at the end of *Die klassische Kunst*, declaring that the object with which the new art history (the history of ‘artistic seeing’) had to deal first and foremost was precisely an ‘evolution of a purely optical kind’.¹³⁴

If one cannot conclude that Tietze’s direct targets were Wickhoff, Riegl and Wölfflin in his argument against the overuse of psychophysiology in art history, his reservations, as mentioned above, are in any event a sure sign of his distance from the conception of art history that they represented.

Tietze’s giving considerable weight to iconographical interpretation, a key component in the interpretative process along with formal interpretation, is hence coherent with this position.

The study of iconography was not new in Vienna, aside from Riegl’s rejection of it, on which I will say more below. In fact, to claim its importance, Tietze makes reference to Wickhoff,¹³⁵ who – in close connection with the vast series of studies produced in this field by German and French art history¹³⁶ – was the first in a rich tradition including Strzygowski¹³⁷ and culminating in Schlosser.¹³⁸

¹³¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 476. Already Rothacker, *Repertorium*, 177 had opportunely pointed out Tietze’s reservations with respect to Riegl’s terminology. However, his criticism was slight with respect to other art historians of the time: from Heidrich down to Schlosser (Schlosser, ‘Commentario’, 28).

¹³² Tietze, *Methode*, 45.

¹³³ Tietze, *Methode*, 359: ‘es gibt kein Objekt der umgebenden Natur, zu dem wir in einem rein optischen Verhältnis stünden’.

¹³⁴ Wölfflin, *Classic Art*, 287 (modified); Wölfflin, *Die klassische Kunst*, 276 (‘Entwicklung rein optischer Art’).

¹³⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 230.

¹³⁶ See Jan Białostocki, ‘Iconography and Iconology’, in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963, coll. 770-785 for a rapid but exhaustive overview. See also Sciolla, ‘Metodo’, 105-106, which, taking his cue from my analysis of these passages (Riccardo Marchi, ‘Die Methode der Kunstgeschichte (1913) di Hans Tietze: La storia dell’arte come scienza dello spirito nella Vienna del primo Novecento’, *tesi di laurea*, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, 1993, 145-152) furnishes a general but more analytical framework, with bibliography.

¹³⁷ See Petranu, *Inhaltsproblem*, 19 ff.

¹³⁸ See Schlosser, ‘The Vienna School’, 26-28. On Schlosser see Kurz, ‘Schlosser’, xix ff. and Gian Lorenzo Mellini, ‘La storiografia artistica di Julius von Schlosser’, *Critica d’Arte*, 28, 1958, 286-300. Mellini’s study is also important because it highlights Schlosser’s debt to Croce with regard to the principle of the identity of form and content in relation to the question of the relationships between art

However, Tietze connotes the study of content with a sense of great topicality. In fact, he clearly states that his position is in tune on the one hand with the process of intense 'spiritualization [*Durchgeistigung*]' of post-impressionist art (229),¹³⁹ and on the other with the renewed significance that aesthetics – among others with Croce – had been giving to expression.¹⁴⁰ (Croce had certainly been important for his conception of art as *a priori* synthesis of intuition and expression, of form and content, in showing Tietze a way to overcome what seemed like an irresolvable dualism.¹⁴¹ In addition, to complete this frame of references, even if Tietze does not directly cite Dilthey in this context, here it is worth recalling, because of the intense presence of the themes of his philosophy in the *Methode*, the centrality that the concept of expression took on in the last hermeneutic phase of Dilthey's thought, where it is summoned in order to guarantee the possibility of inter-subjective access to *Erlebnis*, in itself a purely inner experience.)¹⁴²

Tietze thus points out that the study of content must no longer be carried out as it had been in the past. That is to say, content should not be considered 'as historical anecdote or poetic fable, ... but rather as expression of the spiritual [*geistig*] need of an age or an individual, of the clear and obscure inner life, which must govern the subject matter [*Gegenstand*] as well as the form.'¹⁴³

In fact, for Tietze, art carries a rich content of ideas. He defines the work of art as 'expression of the artistic ideas of a period',¹⁴⁴ and he intends to investigate the evolution of these ideas with special intensity in the writings on aesthetics and art theory as well,¹⁴⁵ because a 'coherently evolutionary explanation ought to start with the ideas that were dominant in the different periods'.¹⁴⁶

and its different contexts. This idea was developed by Croce in *Problemi di estetica* (1911), and was also central for Tietze, who cites Croce's text on this very subject (Tietze, *Methode*, 45).

¹³⁹ I plan to return to this point (for which I am taking the liberty of referring to Marchi, 'Tietze', 189-194) in more depth, with the necessary enlargements, in a study in preparation. [For my subsequent publications in this area see note 37 of the 2011 introduction to this article.]

¹⁴⁰ On aesthetics in general see Tietze, *Methode*, 229. For Croce see also p.114.

¹⁴¹ This is in fact the criticism that Croce had made against Wölfflin's *Klassische Kunst*, where Wölfflin had stated the need to exclude expressive elements from true art history. See Benedetto Croce, 'La teoria dell'arte come pura visibilità' (1912), in *Saggi filosofici*, 5, *Nuovi saggi di estetica*, Bari: Laterza, 1969, 234-257. On Croce and his importance for overcoming the positivistic conception of the separation of form and content see also Guido Morpurgo-Tagliabue, *L'esthétique contemporaine*, Milan: Marzorati, 1967, 75 ff.

¹⁴² See Bianco, *Introduzione*, 103 ff. Tietze's insistence on the concept of expression is considerable. See Tietze, *Methode*, 43 ff.; 234; 320.

¹⁴³ Tietze, *Methode*, 229-230: 'Nicht als historische Anekdote oder poetische Fabel, ... sondern als Ausdruck des geistigen Bedürfnisses einer Zeit oder eines Einzelnen, des lichten und des dunkeln Innenlebens, das dem Gegenstand so gut wie der Form das Gesetz geben muß.'

¹⁴⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 340: 'Ausdruck der künstlerischen Zeitideen'.

¹⁴⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 111 ff.

¹⁴⁶ Tietze, *Methode*, 20-21: 'Eine folgerichtige entwicklungsgeschichtliche Darstellung müßte von den Ideen ausgehen, die in den verschiedenen Zeitabschnitten geltend waren'.

These statements, as clearly seen by Edwin Lachnit,¹⁴⁷ definitely lead Tietze to positions that are very close to those that the editors of Dvořák's work used to justify giving the title *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte* (1924) to the posthumous works of their teacher. In fact, for Dvořák 'art does not consist of the solution and evolution of formal tasks and problems only; it is also at the same time and first and foremost the *expression of the ideas* [italics mine] that dominate humanity'.¹⁴⁸ The clear formulation and realization of a type of art history coherent with this assumption emerges in Dvořák's work, however, only after the First World War: on this point, too, Tietze was significantly ahead of his time.

But let's go back to an examination of the role of iconographical interpretation in the *Methode*. In line with what we have seen above, it has the task of 'showing which spiritual [*geistig*] elements were expressed by means of representation'.¹⁴⁹ Since 'the expressive factors of art' are 'the natural organs of connection with other spiritual realms [*Geistesgebieten*]',¹⁵⁰ it is obvious that in studying these aspects, art historians find themselves at work in areas that do not directly belong to their field of expertise, but instead to the field of the historian of literature or even culture. The guarantee that these connections do not compromise the scientific quality of the work always resides in the art historian's firm attention to the specificity of his object of study: content should be investigated only in so far as it has revealed itself as constitutive for 'visual form [*anschauliche Form*]' (233). From that point, it becomes fully pertinent to the art historian, who must no longer be afraid of practicing generic *Kulturgeschichte*.¹⁵¹

Riegl had relegated iconography to a merely auxiliary role, precisely in order to avoid the risk of abandoning the visual specificity of the art historian's object of study. In his defense of iconography, Tietze takes a very autonomous position with respect to his teacher, whom he openly places in a phase of art historiography that by that time belonged to the past: the moment of formalism.¹⁵² Tietze goes so far as to say, for example, that in order to assess the evolution of medieval art, it is 'indubitable that one must first ask ... about "what" and then about "how"'.¹⁵³ Thus he overturns the hierarchy established by Riegl, who complained about this very

¹⁴⁷ Lachnit, 'Kunstgeschichte', 159, who comments on the last passage cited [see now Lachnit, *Die Wiener Schule*, 99].

¹⁴⁸ Words spoken by Dvořák in his lecture 'Über Kunstbetrachtung' held in Bregenz in 1920, cited in Karl Maria Swoboda and Johannes Wilde, 'Vorwort der Herausgeber', in Max Dvořák, *Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte*, Munich: R. Piper, 1924, x: 'Die Kunst besteht nicht nur in der Lösung und Entwicklung formaler Aufgaben und Probleme: sie ist zugleich und in erster Linie Ausdruck der die Menschheit beherrschenden Ideen'.

¹⁴⁹ Tietze, *Methode*, 360: 'zeigen, welche geistigen Elemente durch die Gestaltung zum Ausdruck gebracht wurden'.

¹⁵⁰ Tietze, *Methode*, 45: 'die Ausdrucksfaktoren der Kunst, die natürlichen Organe der Verbindung mit anderen Geistesgebieten'.

¹⁵¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 44-45 and 234.

¹⁵² Tietze, *Methode*, 229.

¹⁵³ Tietze, *Methode*, 230: 'zweifelloso, daß wir ... zuerst nach dem "was" und dann nach dem "wie" zu fragen haben.'

attitude in *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*.¹⁵⁴ And slightly later, Tietze clearly added that ‘only through a conscious integration of the history of the development of forms can the basis for a thoroughly exhaustive evolutionary history of art be established’; and iconographical interpretation was to have a particularly important role in taking on the task of such integration.¹⁵⁵

Indeed, the range of the possibilities that iconography opens in Tietze’s outlook is considerable.¹⁵⁶ As we have seen, it connects art ‘with the other spiritual realms’ of an era. Furthermore, the study of content is on the one hand a privileged way to have access to artists’ intentions;¹⁵⁷ on the other, it allows art historians to go back to the original effect of a work, through the reconstruction of the intellectual and emotional impact it had among those to which it was addressed.¹⁵⁸ Thus the circle of production and reception is closed harmoniously.

This is a well-articulated conception, which allows us to gauge how comprehensive Tietze’s vision is. In fact, in his methodological edifice, the interpretation of monuments, which encompasses both formal and iconographical interpretation, has an ambitious task. The interpretation of monuments sets out to ‘understand ... the work of art in its connectedness [*verstehen ... das Kunstwerk in seinem Zusammenhang*]’ (357), writes Tietze. He thus places himself in a tradition that had put *verstehen* at the centre of the historian’s work ever since Droysen,¹⁵⁹ and that in recent times had been rekindled by none other than Dilthey, in the *Entstehung der Hermeneutik*. And Dilthey, in another of his fundamental texts, *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*, had forcefully underlined the ‘connectedness’ of the products of the ‘world of human spirit [*geistige Welt*]’.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁴ Riegl, *Late Roman Art Industry*, 226-227n117; Riegl, *Spätromische Kunstindustrie*, 394-395n2.

¹⁵⁵ Tietze, *Methode*, 235: ‘erst, durch bewußte Ergänzung der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Formen wäre der Grund zu einer allseitig erschöpfenden genetischen Kunstgeschichte gelegt.’

¹⁵⁶ This outlook already contains the essential characteristics of the ‘new iconography’ upon which Tietze, referring to the examples of Aby Warburg and Karl Giehlow, founded his explicitly *geistesgeschichtlich* vision, set forth in 1924 in his essay ‘Geisteswissenschaftliche Kunstgeschichte’. Białostocki considered Tietze’s 1924 position as an important step in the history of iconographic studies, which then led to Panofsky’s iconology. See Białostocki, ‘Iconography’, col. 774. As for Warburg, it is curious to note that his name is not cited in the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte*, since he had already presented his ‘plea for an extension of the methodological borders’ of art history at the tenth ‘International Art Historical Congress’ held in Rome in 1912, with the famous paper on the frescoes of the Palazzo Schifanoia. See Aby Warburg, ‘Italian Art and International Astrology in the Palazzo Schifanoia, Ferrara’, in *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, trans. David Britt, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1999, 563-591; the quote is from page 585. On the importance of this conference in the history of iconography see William Heckscher, ‘The Genesis of Iconology’, in *Acts of the 21st International Art Historical Congress in Bonn, 1964*, vol. 3, Berlin: Mann, 1967, 239 ff. and Peter Schmidt, *Aby Warburg und die Ikonologie*, Bamberg: S. Wendel, 1989, 27 ff.

¹⁵⁷ Tietze, *Methode*, 230.

¹⁵⁸ See Tietze, *Methode*, 107 and 234.

¹⁵⁹ On Droysen and *verstehen* see Ferraris, *Hermeneutics*, 108-110.

¹⁶⁰ See Dilthey, ‘Formation’, chapter 4: ‘The World of Human Spirit as a Productive Nexus [Die geistige Welt als Wirkungszusammenhang]’, 174-209; Dilthey, ‘Aufbau’, 152-188; especially 180, on ‘connectedness [*Zusammenhang*]’ as the fundamental principle that should guide the study of ‘pictures,

To 'understand ... the work of art in its connectedness' in the specific field of art history hence means for Tietze, fully in line with Dilthey's sense of the 'connectedness' of the products of the 'world of the human spirit', 'to evoke the entire range of associations that its author wanted to arouse in those for whom [the work] was originally intended'.¹⁶¹ This is a plan from which a clear intention to place art in the widest context possible emerges.

Such 'conscious integration' of the history of forms is necessary in order to broaden the spectrum of action of *Problemgeschichte*, which otherwise risks reducing the vital fullness of art works to fragments, maintains Tietze, again echoing the criticisms that Ernst Heidrich had advanced against Riegl. This integration is possible on the basis of the presupposition that 'the unity of spiritual [*geistig*] facts ... truly exists'.¹⁶² This is a unity that of course can be seized only by partial assays; but from that moment onwards, through a coherent analysis of all of the problems the work of art entails, not just the formal ones.¹⁶³

A history of broad stylistic connections, but not forgetting the fundamental role of great individuals; rigorous scientific study of visual facts, but nevertheless attentive to their differences in terms of artistic value and their aesthetic effect, and founded on a conscious, profound relationship with the production of one's own era; a history of forms, but integrated with a new conception of the interpretation of content: these are the cornerstones of art history according to Tietze. The possibility for art history to gain a privileged position among the *Geisteswissenschaften* is founded on its commitment to meet these demands. It is by so doing that art history can accomplish its task, which is impressive: 'to show the evolution of the way in which humanity, in giving form to what it has seen and experienced, has come to terms with the world.'¹⁶⁴

Although deliberately remaining within the paradigm of art history as the history of forms, the *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* pushes this paradigm to its extreme boundaries, and ultimately already sets it on a new route. It should come as no

statues, plays, philosophic systems, religious writings, and legal books [*Bilder, Statuen, Dramen, philosophische Systeme, Religionsschriften, Rechtsbücher*] in the *Geisteswissenschaften*, where 'analysis of the complete work on the basis of induction must be counterbalanced by synthetic reconstruction of the whole'. ('Formation', 180; 'Aufbau', 158: 'Zergliederung des Werks als eines Ganzen auf induktiver Grundlage und synthetische Rekonstruktion des Ganzen aus der Beziehung seiner Teile ... greifen auch hier einander'.). Tietze (*Methode*) cited Dilthey's text at pp. 52 and 353. On this position of Dilthey's and its consequences for 'contextualist' art history down to Panofsky, see Holly, *Panofsky*, 38-42.

¹⁶¹ Tietze, *Methode*, 357: 'den ganzen Umkreis von Assoziationen heraufbeschwören, die sein Urheber bei denen hervorrufen wollte, für die es ursprünglich bestimmt war'.

¹⁶² Tietze, *Methode*, 463-464: 'Die Einheit des geistigen Geschehens ... besteht wirklich'.

¹⁶³ Tietze, *Methode*, 463-464.

¹⁶⁴ Tietze, *Methode*, 46: 'entwickelnd darlegt, wie sich die Menschheit, Geschautes und Erlebtes formend, mit der Welt auseinandergesetzt hat.'

surprise that all this should happen under the sign of the coexistence – at times even contradictory – of opposing elements, since Tietze lived in the Vienna of 1913, symbolized by Robert Musil's character Ulrich:

He is gifted, strong-willed, open-minded, fearless, tenacious, dashing, circumspect - ... suppose we grant him all those qualities – yet he has none of them! They've made him what he is, they've set his course for him, and yet they don't belong to him. When he is angry, something in him laughs. When he is sad, he is up to something. When something moves him, he turns against it. He'll always see a good side to every bad action. What he thinks of anything will always depend on some possible context – nothing is, to him, what it is; everything is subject to change, in flux, part of a whole, of an infinite number of wholes presumably adding up to a superwhole that, however, he knows nothing about. So every answer he gives is only a partial answer, every feeling only a point of view, and he never cares about *what* something is, only about some secondary "how" it is.¹⁶⁵

The *Methode der Kunstgeschichte* is thus not only, as Tietze himself said, the 'formulation of the old conception';¹⁶⁶ it is much more like a farewell to it.

¹⁶⁵ Robert Musil, *The Man Without Qualities*, trans. Sophie Wilkins, vol. 1, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995, 63-64 (modified); Robert Musil, *Erstes und zweites Buch, Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften*, ed. Adolf Frisé, vol. 1, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1987, 65: 'Er ist begabt, willenskräftig, vorurteilslos, mutig, ausdauernd, draufgängerisch, besonnen – ... er mag alle diese Eigenschaften haben. Denn er hat sie doch nicht! Sie haben das aus ihm gemacht, was er ist, und seinen Weg bestimmt, und sie gehören doch nicht zu ihm. Wenn er zornig ist, lacht etwas in ihm. Wenn er traurig ist, bereitet er etwas vor. Wenn er von etwas gerührt wird, lehnt er es ab. Jede schlechte Handlung wird ihm in irgendeiner Beziehung gut erscheinen. Immer wird für ihn erst ein möglicher Zusammenhang entscheiden, wofür er eine Sache halt. Nichts ist für ihn fest. Alles ist verwandlungsfähig, Teil in einem Ganzen, in unzähligen Ganzen, die vermutlich zu einem Überganzen gehören, das er aber nicht im geringsten kennt. So ist jede seiner Antworten ein Teilantwort, jedes seiner Gefühle nur eine Ansicht, und es kommt ihm bei nichts darauf an, was es ist, sonder auf irgendein danebenlaufendes "wie es ist"'.
¹⁶⁶ Tietze, 'Geisteswissenschaftliche Kunstgeschichte', 184: 'die Formulierung der älteren Auffassung' [now also in Tietze, *Lebendige Kunstwissenschaft: Texte 1910-1954*, 106].