

A Critical And Evaluative Analysis Of Gombrich's Text

Posted on March 22, 2019

1. What sort of text has Gombrich written? At whom is it aimed? What characteristics of the text do itself indicate the level of the reader at which Gombrich is aiming?

Gombrich's text, *The Story of Art*, is considered to be one of the most well-known and popular texts about art ever written. Gombrich was attracted by the simplicity as well as the clarity of his script. The text has been redesigned, and its illustrations have been put in color all through and have been enhanced. In introducing his book, *The Story of Art*, Gombrich talks about a trap that certain individuals fall into after learning art history (Gombrich 688). For instance, he says that when some people see a work of work, they fail to have a look at it but instead think of a suitable label. Indeed, Gombrich seeks to drive his readers clear of this trap. Resultantly, Gombrich aims to open the eyes of his readers instead of loosening their lounges. He believes that cleverly talking about arts is quite easy for critics because the words they use have lost exactness (Gombrich 687). The sort of text Gombrich has written the story art and why we should embrace the work of art. This work was aimed at people who were seeing the work of art and began to scratch their memory for an appropriate label.

2. What is the role of artists in Gombrich's discussion? How important is the role biography plays in his approach?

Gombrich's discussion points out that the work of artists is to have a look at the pictures and embrace such pictures. For instance, Gombrich takes his readers to have a look at many photos. Further, he takes his readers through the history of art. In his view, the history of arts implies the history of buildings, which entails picture-making. Gombrich believes that when the work of the artist has been looked at, people are sometimes preconception by bad memories in regards to the place, time, what we consider as a reality, as well as how we view the world. He asserts that no one should condemn the work of art in case it is wrongly drawn (Gombrich 688). Overall, Gombrich proposes that people should avoid prejudices and the habit of calling artists strangers. He argues that people should try to

appreciate what artists wanted to do as they did their paintings. Indeed, Gombrich believes that every artist is seeking to make things perfect and right in their way, which is something that has no rules.

3. What is Gombrich's view of the progress of art? Does he see it always moving forward?

Gombrich views the progress of art as impressive. He believes that people will change their perception of the work of art. It is for this reason that he calls on every individual to embrace artists as they give them time to make things right. Gombrich sees art as progressive. The work of art advances in the right way since the arts are striving to make things perfect (Gombrich 689). The work of art does not have a final destination because humans are surrounded by works of art. Thus, the role of the artist, according to Gombrich, is to see and avoid prejudice in the memory.

4. How does Gombrich handle the question of periodization? According to Gombrich, why do the changes take place from one period to another?

Periodization helps subdivide the incessant flow of works of art through the period and space into various groupings. Therefore, period groupings are described by the observation that the work of art in them shares one quality or rather a set of merits that are significant. In this sense, vital attributes may include the prescribed, formal, iconographic as well as thematic contents of the art. Additionally, period groupings are described by the perception, which argues that the quality by which every gathering is related is distinctive. Gombrich handles the question of periodization by subdividing the work of art into different groups and periods. Each of his clusters has unique qualities that distinguish it from another group. In Gombrich's view, the changes from one period to another took place because of the continuous flow of the work of art. He believes that the work of art has substantially increased, and thus, there is a need to subdivide into the periods in which they were produced.

Notably, periodization helps in organizing art based on essential viewpoints as well as explanatory theories. The description of a period reflects decisions concerning the nature of significant associations between works of art and between entire arts. Admittedly, the subdivisions made between these periods show decisions about the pathways of various artistic development. Besides, periodization influences the discernment of the audience based on the qualities that are applied to group works of art (Gombrich 688). Indeed, qualities within the individual artwork, which are believed to be significant to different periods, are more noticeable to viewers, although other attributes within the same artwork are sometimes overlooked.

5. What is the relationship between art and society, according to Gombrich?

According to Gombrich, art and society are inseparable. They depend on each other for their development. He believes that art reflects the community as it is. Traditionally, many people hold the view that art imitates society and life in general. The artist, the painter, represents only what they see by creating a division on a canvas. A photographer does it directly. Art also changes the way in which people view the world (Gombrich 689). In fact, Gombrich believes that life occasionally imitates art as opposed to the other way around. Moreover, Gombrich argues that art can change society, especially when new forms of art/ media are applied to express a concept.

6. How does Gombrich handle the question of gender difference?

Gombrich never acknowledged or mentioned the female gender in his discussion because he feared that he would be labeled sexist. Additionally, he did not include any female artists in his works. This implies that he is gender insensitive (Gombrich 690). It is expected in modern society that both genders will be represented. Moreover, the contemporary society discourages gender discrimination.

7. Does Gombrich use iconographical analysis at any point?

Gombrich has used numerous iconographical analyses in his book *The Story of Art*. Moreover, it is remarkable that at the time Gombrich's symbolic images were published, none of the individuals who reviewed them commented on the relationship between the symbols used by Gombrich and other writers. There are no subsequent commentators on iconology who have pursued the issue of the relationship either (Gombrich 695). Most reviewers of Gombrich's works credited him for avoiding the extravagant interpretation of the symbols he uses, which sometimes provide the air of metaphysical fantasy to the writings. Moreover, he follows the 'Warburgian' practice of studying the subject rather than the forms, as well as the outstanding advantages. For all his works, Gombrich has been considered to be the most concerned about knowing the moment to stop being erudite. Moreover, Gombrich presents the main differences between other writers in the use of iconology and himself. As a result, it reflects the fundamental difference in the method and philosophy.

8. Does Gombrich refer to the reception?

The question of the reception of the artwork might be considered in relation to the history of science. According to Gombrich, the outdated historiography of science values personal scientists who are considered to have advantages as well as specialized recognition are evaluated particularly by the inventions that are linked with their name. Nevertheless, the concept of severely increasing progress within the account of science and in the account of art was left since the emergence of the new historiography due to the sensitivity to separations. However, this never suggests that an individual denies the continuity (Gombrich 697). Nevertheless, it is significant to note that continuity in this context should be understood not as simple logical permanence but instead as a complex chronological relation as well as a theoretical one.

9. How historicist is Gombrich? Does he make value judgments?

In the beginning chapters of the story of arts by Gomrich, he takes the readers on a journey into much more than other writers who at all times have only a picture. Moreover, he takes readers on a voyage of the history of arts, and the readers are encouraged by the plenty of knowledge gained. Through his work 'the history of art,' Gombrich refers to the history of picture making, buildings as well as stature making. Moreover, Gombrich comprises such entities as part of the history itself, without considering where exactly they took place, where they occurred, or even at what period. Gombrich does not make value judgments, according to many. Most people who have reviewed his work note that his work lacks the major history due to Gombrich being selective and his fears (Gombrich 692). Moreover, he includes certain elements of history that any other historian today might do, but this does not make him outstanding from the rest. However, it is significant to note that he mainly focuses on western history. Contrary to the expectation, his selectivity makes his book unconventional in terms of egalitarianism and the current multicultural tide. Gombrich was also selective in the type of work he included in his work. He did not include women artists for fear of being labeled sexist. On the other hand, he did not include the history of every nation on the planet for fear of being labeled as Eurocentric. Thus, his book, *The Story of Art*, was criticized by many.

10. How well does Gombrich's chapter work? What are its strengths and weaknesses?

Gombrich's chapters work to enlighten people about historical evolution. Most of the time, history carries the power of memories, times, and places, how the individuals see the world. Moreover, his chapters present what was considered to be reality then and now. Hence, it presents fundamental information that is useful for comparing the past and the current. However, history can carry with it

the prejudice of bad memories, hence a constant reminder for the readers (Gombrich 698). Therefore, to understand and enjoy Gombrich's work of art, readers should discard their prejudice and the habit of approaching the artist as a stranger.

Conclusion

In summary, Gombrich's book is subdivided into various chapters and sections dealing with defined periods regarding the history of the work of art. The Story of Art emphasizes the need to value the work of arts and artists. Overall, Gombrich seeks to ask people to see art and avoid labeling their perception to call artists as strangers.

Works Cited

Gombrich. E. H. The Story of Art, New York: Phaidon Press, 1995. PP. 688