NORWEGIAN MURAL PAINTING FROM 1910 TO 1950

By

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No comprehensive discussion of Norwegian mural painting has been written since Arne Nygaard-Nilssen's book, Moderne Norsk Veggmaleri, appeared in 1928. Since that time large fresco projects have been completed, such as the Blindern University Vestibule, the Chapel of the New Crematorium at Borgen, and the Oslo City Hall, as well as many smaller commissions. Although the paintings are widely discussed in Norway by both the artists and the general public, it was not until 1952 when an exhibition of photographs, "Ten Centuries of Norwegian Decorative Painting," was held that anything approaching a survey was made of the tradition of wall decoration.

As a Fulbright fellow in Norway in 1951-52 I had an opportunity to study Norwegian mural painting. After attending general lectures on Norwegian art by Professor Anders Bugge at the University of Oslo and by Dr. Henning Gran and Oscar Thue at the National Gallery, Oslo. I began a study of mural painting in Oslo which I submitted as a Fulbright report. Later this paper was enlarged to include mural painting throughout Norway for presentation as a thesis. Since I have limited this thesis to paintings which I was able to examine personally I have made several omissions,

the most noticeable of which is Gerhard Munthe's painting in Hakon's Hall, Bergen. The paintings were destroyed in 1944 and had already been included in Nygaard-Nilssen's book; therefore, I have not attempted a further discussion which would of necessity be based on photographs and earlier descriptions.

This thesis is the first survey of Norwegian mural painting to appear in English. In Part I the development of mural painging in Norway is discussed; Part II contains a critical analysis of the most important individual works.

I am especially indebted to Professor Bugge for his criticism of the original project and to Dr. Henning Gran for the use of his library, personal notes, and collection of unpublished letters by Scandinavian artists and art historians. The illustrations in Part II are from the catalogue, Norges Dekorative Malerkunst Gjennem 1000 År, Oslo, 1952. They were obtained from the printer, Morten Johansen's Printing House, through the courtesy of the Norwegian Information Office in Oslo.

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PART I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF MURAL PAINTING IN NORWAY

Inherent in monumental painting are problems which have been of constantly diminishing concern in easel painting. The relationship between the painter, his painting, and the spectator is an important one. Because of the essentially public nature of his art, the mural painter must reflect the average taste of the time; nevertheless, he must not sacrifice his own personal style by condescending to this taste. On the one hand, the artist may tell an anecdote in his painting aimed at capturing immediate public approval with petty details and likenesses. On the other hand, he may make a profound statement in a rich, formal composition thereby creating a truly monumental work of art.

Ideally the mural painter is aware of the techniques, social impulses, and stylistic trends of his time, yet he tempers and simplifies his own work so that it may become a part of the architecture it covers. This important formal relationship between painting and architecture is difficult to achieve. Painting must not sink to a craft in which the artists become a guild of technicians trained to decorate buildings. No, the painter and sculptor should work with the architect so that the three artists may create a final unified effect which cannot be achieved when each in succession

adds his touch to the building. Architecture, painting, and sculpture must, then, not attempt to be sufficient unto themselves, but rather cooperate, each enhancing the beauty of the others. Unfortunately, unless one man has been able to master all three arts, such a situation has seldom existed. Walls of buildings, if decorated at all, are painted by men who have had nothing to say about their location or proportion.

A piece of architecture is apparently sufficient unto itself. The architect has worked with the relationship of planes, masses, and voids, with lighting and with textural effects. His building has been stripped of all eclectic ornament. Is it now to be "decorated" again? In the Year Book of the Norwegian College of Engineering is found this answer.

> The sober 'form-language' and the large dimension need a supplement: against architecture's crystalin character, something human, against the colossal, a new scale, and in the sober and pertinent, a touch of the poetic or epic. In many cases painting will be able to serve as a natural completion of the building, of the architectural space . . . [1]

Mural painting in Norway is the outgrowth of extensive study and discussion on the part of artists long before they received financial support for monumental paintings. The roots of Norwegian mural painting lie in the last ten years

of the nineteenth century, in the reaction against realistic painting and Impressionism and the renewal of emphasis on formal values in painting. Although the men who took part in this stylistic revolution were easel painters, they developed a style appropriate to wall painting through their interest in simplified forms and decorative values. This increase in emphasis on the formal, monumental values in painting led the artists to an awareness of the possibilities of tempera rather than oil as a medium. The use of tempera in panel painting led to an interest in the techniques of fresco painting and gradually to an interest in murals rather than easel painting.

Norwegian painters traveling to Paris at the time of the World's Fair of 1889 saw Puvis de Chavanne's new decoration of the Auditorium the Sorbonne. The work made a profound impression on them, and they began to consider the interesting possibilities offered by mural painting. The influential director of the Norwegian National Gallery in Oslo, Jens Thiis, wrote extensively and enthusiastically about Puvis' work to friends in Norway.

By 1891 "decorative painting" as the Scandinavians called the new direction toward simplification of form, suppression of depth, and broad pictorial organization, was an

established European School. Toulouse-Lautrec had begun his work in poster design; Hans Von Marees, one of the first modern painters to use fresco, had completed wall paintings in Naples. Of particular interest to the Norwegians were German painters such as Buchlin and Klinger who had begun to work in tempera and the Finnish-Swedish painter Edelfelt who was in direct contact with Puvis. In the annual Autumn Exhibition in Oslo, both Gehard Munthe and Eric Werenskiold wrote of a changed direction in painting, a tendency toward abstraction and a search for the classical feeling that art had lost.

The Danes had preserved a solid, academic art education in Scandinavia. The young Norwegian painters turned to Copenhagen for guidance, particularly to Kristian Zahrtmann whose school in Copenhagen from 1890 to 1905 had forty-five Norwegian pupils including Oluf Wold-Torne, Thorvald Erichsen, Kristian Holbo, Harald Sohlberg, August Eiebakke, and Halfdan Egedius. These disciples of Zahrtmann painted heavy, plastic forms with subdued colors and sharp contours. They were encouraged by Zahrtmann to attempt large compositions suitable for wall decoration. At the same time in Norway, Gerhard Munthe began his experiments with decorative painting, taking his inspiration, not from the Orient as the French had done, but from his own Norwegian decorative tradition.

Many Norwegian painters traveled to Paris to study in 1893. Symbolism, and then Nabi, were probably the most interesting movements to these painters. An exhibition of Whistler's painting in 1894 was followed by a new wave of interest in his work and in color symbolism. Cezanne was "discovered" by the Nabi group and interest among the French painters began to shift from Gauguin to Cezanne. Strangely enough, Cezanne remained unknown to the Norwegians. They studied Albert Besnard's paintings in the School of Pharmacy as well as Puvis de Chavannes' work. Puvis was considered by the Norwegians the master painter in France. When he died in 1898, they felt that no one was great enough to take his place.

While in Paris the Norwegians were encouraged to travel to Italy by friends among the Italianized Danes, whose paintings from this period show a strange stylistic mixture of Botticelli, Fra Angelico, and the Bolognese School. It was not long before the Norwegians abandoned Paris and moved on to Italy to study for themselves the painters of whom they had heard so much from their Danish friends. Many traveled to Florence early in 1894 where they worked in the galleries making careful copies of works by Giotto, Piero, and Raphael. At the same time they studied the great Florentine frescoes. Interest in Italian art was so great that when Thorvald

Erichsen, who had gone first to Rome and Naples, traveled to Florence in 1894, he reported that his friends had become art historians and that they needed to return home if they were to develop a painting style of their own.

When these painters did return to Norway, they found the economic situation so unstable that even the paintings in the annual Autumn Exhibition were not sold. These conditions prevailed from 1897 to 1905. It was during this time when there was so little hope of executing large scale fresco paintings that the fresco technique was introduced into Norway. The Danish painter Möller-Jensen had learned the fresco technique in order to decorate the City Hall in Copenhagen in 1898. Whilhelm Wetlesen, a fellow student with Möller-Jensen, learned to use fresco from him. Wetlesen wrote from Copenhagen on April 4, 1902:

> 'I have learned to paint fresco here, and it has interested me very much, also al seco painting. A decorative association is instituted here, and I shall find out about its laws. --Could push to have such an association at home, too. Möller-Jensen, one of my fellow painters at the academy, he who decorated the Radhus, has a decorative school.[2]

When he returned to Norway, Wetlesen found that no work was available for a fresco. He retired to the valley of Gudbrandsdal, unable to profit by the new technique he had learned.

Other Norwegians in Copenhagen were also learning to paint in fresco. April 20, 1902, Skovgaard wrote that Bernard Folkestad wanted to come to him as an assistant and that Arne Lofthus, who later entered the competition for the Bergen Stock Exchange murals, had worked with him a year and was especially adept in the preparation of cartoons.[3] By 1905, however, the Norwegians far surpassed their Danish teachers as creative artists. The Danes still considered Charles Cottet and Lucien Simon the finest painters in Paris and refused to accept such newer movements as Fauvism. Disappointed by this apparent backwardness of their former masters, Zahrtmann and Skovgaard, the Norwegians turned directly to France to continue their education.

Jean Heiberg traveled to Paris in 1905 and became acquainted with Matisse in 1906. He began to study with Matisse and by 1908 his enthusiastic reports brought many other Norwegians to the school, among them Henrik Sørensen, Axel Revold, Per Krohg, Bernard Folkestad, and Per Deberitz. Matisse encouraged the study of the work of Cezanne and Gauguin, and he himself advocated the use of strong plastic forms combined with an emphasis on linear contours as well as an expressive use of both form and color. This simple, strong, decorative painting led naturally to wall painting.

When economic prosperity, following the dissolution of the union with Sweden, led to the first competition for mural painting in Norway, the decoration of the Auditorium of the University of Oslo, Norwegian painters were prepared for the task.

Foreign study was not the only preparation for mural composition which was offered Norwegian painters. Wall decoration was a continuous development in Norway from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. Among the earliest preserved paintings are those from Torpo Stave Church in Hallingdal dating about 1250. A combination of figures and geometric patterns was painted directly on the wooden interior. In New Church, Telemark, paintings on plaster date from about 1300. The ceiling and walls of Ål Stave Church, Hallingdal, from the early fourteenth century are, however, the best preserved example of medieval wall decoration. The ceiling was decorated with scenes from the Old Testament and the life of Christ. On the west wall was the Last Supper, and a Crucifixion covered the east wall above the altar. Although geometric patterns filled any empty space between figures and scenes, the framing of individual scenes was preserved. This geometric organization of the field was nearly lost in later painting.

Throughout the centuries the tradition of wall and ceiling painting was preserved in the Rosemaling which decorated farm homes and parish churches with its elaborated floral patterns. Rosemaling was executed in pure, strong colors, especially red, yellow, blue, and after the mid-eighteenth century, green, on a white or reddish brown background. In true Rosemaling the simplified figures and floral patterns were painted first, and the contours and details were added later in black. The rhythmic decoration covered ceiling, walls, and even furniture without pause or halt. The color and composition of Rosemaling became an important source of inspiration for contemporary decorative painters.

In the twentieth century few wall paintings had been executed by artists with formal training prior to the University Auditorium competition. Emanuel Vigeland, a painter in the pre-Raphaelite tradition, painted the apse of Vålerengen Church between 1905 and 1910 using the fresco technique which he had learned from Skovgaard in Denmark. The work is more aptly described as colored drawing than painting; the color itself varies from yellow-brown to purple-brown. Vigeland's artistic ability was so slight that he exerted no appreciable influence on fellow painters. The decoration of Vålerengen Church can hardly be considered a part of the development of Norwegian monumental painting.

Two other projects might be considered as forerunners of Norwegian wall painting. Erik Werenskiold painted a frieze with scenes from Norwegian fairy tales for Fridthjof Nansen's dining room in Lysaker in 1903-08. Gerhard Munthe painted two large canvasses in 1912 for the stair hall of the Oslo Stock Exchange. Although in both cases the paintings were set into the wall, they function as independent decorative adjuncts to the building, not as an integral part of the interior.

To celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the University of Oslo in 1911, a new auditorium was erected. A competition was held for the decoration of the interior of the building which was entered by Emanuel Vigeland, Gerhard Munthe, Eilif Peterssen, Erik Werenskiold, and Edvard Munch. The Aula, or auditorium, with its neo-classic architecture and symbolic significance as the center of the University, offered a real challenge to the painter in both the form and the content of its decoration. Vigeland submitted a sketch of St. George and the dragon. Gerhard Munthe abandoned his personal style based on Norwegian folk art for a neo-classical composition depicting Greek students before the light of learning. Eilif Peterssen sketched "classical" students stretching after Minerva's laurel

wreath. Erik Werenskiold based the style of his representation of the light of genius falling on three youths on Norwegian medieval painting. Edvard Munch, who had just returned from Germany where he had been a leader in the development of German expressionism, submitted a sketch for his famous painting, History.

Thorwald Erichsen and Oluf Wold-Torne had planned to enter the contest; Erichsen was to paint the figures and landscapes, and Wold-Torne, the decorative borders. Their letters and comments on the contest are of particular interest since they were definitely considering the use of fresco instead of oil on canvas. Had they not dropped out of the competition the Aula decorations might have been the first truly modern Norwegian frescoes.

Erichsen wrote to Werenskiold in June, 1909:

> I have reported to the University. I don't hold so much to Oil and canvas now. Have really a great desire for fresco. That I myself haven't had any experience is true, of course, but it's worse that the others haven't either; at any rate, not enough. The ceiling at any rate won't be any valut, for then I think fresco is necessary. The epic idea that is necessary I will probably discover; I have it under way. The question is whether educated people will think it is 'epic'. I have more and more desire to get hold of something in that direction. It's too bad that the end panel has to be finished first when the central idea must probably be there, and when it would be natural to do it last. I have naturally considered the material

> which should be used. Fresco has, of course, the great advantage that it can be chopped down, and one can begin again fresh. It would be fun to bring fresco into a modern color vision, if I decide to do it at all.
>
> As far as I know Puvis de Chavannes is the last decorator, but now it should be possible to go much further forward.[4]

It is altogether probable that Erichsen and Wold-Torne would have produced very fine paintings. The eminent Danish art historian Vilhelm Wanscher wrote to Aubert on April 3, 1911, proposing that Erichsen do the paintings and saying,

> I believe he will far surpass the four (Vigeland, Munthe, Peterssen, and Munch) now that Werenskiold has dropped out.[5]

The financial risk and the pressure of work proved too much for the men, however, and they decided not to enter the competition. In August, 1909, Wold-Torne wrote to Munthe:

> We are not going to enter the contest. Among other things he (Erichsen), says that we can't do it for 1000 crowns each and that he is <u>tortured by heavy work</u>. Yes, now I'm glad that it is decided. I have really walked and seen Greek in both trees and clouds, in rooms and overall, so that it becomes pure persecution.
>
> Erik will not take any money in advance so as not to be committed.
>
> Both he and I are agreed to answer no.[6]

Later Werenskiold withdrew, and the judges limited the contest to Emanuel Vigeland and Edvard Munch. The final decision to award the work to Munch brought considerable protest. Skovgaard who was one of the judges is reported to have preferred Werenskiold's sketches when he saw them later in Copenhagen. In a letter to Grönvold, May 14, 1910, Johan Rohde wrote:

> Skovgaard tells me that during his stay in Copenhagen with Erik Werenskiold, he saw this sketch for the University which he found much better than any of the contestants. Had Werenskiold taken part, Skovgaard would without reservation have supported him. He really found none of the four contestant's work suitable.[7]

Both Werenskiold and Harriet Backer were supporting Munch; however, Miss Backer wrote to Werenskiold:

> . . . agree with you that Munch should be cheered, for I saw his large sketches of History and Alma Mater, as the companion piece at this time is called. They fascinate me.[8]

History is a truly twentieth century painting. Munch makes no concessions in style or iconography to the neo-classical setting of his works. (Figures 1-3). Munch described his plans as follows:

> I have decided that the decorations should present a final and independent idea-world and that this artistic expression should be at the same time peculiarly Norwegian and universally human.
>
> With consideration to the room's Greek style, I think that between it and my painting method there

> are many points in common, especially in the simplification and handling of planes, which make the room and the decoration 'stand together' even though the paintings are Norwegian.
>
> In order that the three principle paintings, Sun, History, and Research, shall function as heavy and imposing masses in the room, the other panels shall be lighter in weight and color. They shall work as a paler transition to the room's whole style and as a frame around the principle paintings.
>
> History shows a remote landscape permeated in history in which an old man from the fjords who has toiled through many years now sits deep in his rich memories telling tales to an enthralled little boy.
>
> Research plays on the other side of the Norwegian nature and soul: summer and fruitfulness, the battle of research, the eagerness for learning, and the desire for exploit.[9]

Although the paintings are executed in oil on canvas rather than fresco, they must be considered the first in the series of contemporary monumental wall decorations in Norway.

Between 1918 and 1927, the so-called "fresco brothers," Axel Revold, Per Krohg, and Alf Rolfsen, established fresco as an important medium in Norwegian paintings.

Revold's work in the Bergen Stock Exchange, 1918-1923, marked the beginning of modern fresco painting in Norway. Per Krohg painted the Seamen's School at Ekeberg in 1921-24. The youngest of the three, Alf Rolfsen, decorated

the Oslo Telegraph Building in 1922 and the Oslo Guild Hall in 1925. In 1927 the three men each painted a panel in the stair hall of Hersleb School. These early paintings show the strong influence of Italian Renaissance frescoes and of French Cubism. Foreign influences were quickly assimilated by the artists who combined with them the native love of profuse decoration and the intense colors of Rosemaling and tapestry weaving. Thus the "fresco brothers" created a distinctive Norwegian style in monumental painting.

The competition for the decoration of the Bergen Stock Exchange is as important to the development of Norwegian mural painting as the contest for the decoration of the University of Oslo Aula. Just as the Aula paintings were the first monumental paintings in twentieth century Norway, so were the Bergen Stock Exchange decorations the first truly architectonic frescoes. The Bergen Stock Exchange was built in 1893. At this time mural decoration was planned for the main hall; however, the competition for the work was not held until 1916. The terms of this epoch marking contest were as follows:

1. The decoration was to illustrate the business life of Bergen.
2. The artist could work in either oil on canvas or fresco.

3. The contestants were to submit a written explanation of their chosen theme and a plan for the entire hall, as well as a color sketch of all ten fields in the ratio one to ten, one field in color at one to four, and a full scale detail in the chosen material one by one and one-half meters in size.

The judges were Professor Joakim Skovgaard from the Academy of Art in Copenhagen, Jens Thiis, director of the National Gallery in Oslo, the painter Harriet Backer from Oslo and Professor Haakon Shetelig from Bergen. Sixteen painters entered the contest. The final decision of the judges in 1918 awarded the work to Axel Revold, but divided the prize money equally among Revold, Per Krohg, and Henrik Sörensen.[10]

It is interesting to note that the fresco technique was actually suggested by the competition committee although, as has been noted, very few Norwegian painters had actually worked in the medium. The people of the "west country" have an unusual amount of local pride, and the citizens of Bergen are particularly chauvinistic. It has been suggested by Dr. Henning Gran that fresco was mentioned as a possible medium because the Bergen painter, Arne Lofthus, had studied the fresco technique with Skovgaard in Denmark and the committee wanted to give a local man a good opportunity to

receive the commission. The only entries of real merit, however, were those of Per Krohg and Axel Revold, both of whom were Oslo painters trained in Paris.

Per Krohg's design for the Exchange Hall was a delightful allegory of Mercury and Fortune at work for the good of the city of Bergen. The inhabitants of Bergen were portrayed with Krohg's inimitable blend of sensitivity and satire. Krohg's combined Norwegian medieval painting and peasant art with Greek sixth century painting created a fantastic but charming style. The sketches for the work were charming but the composition as a whole was weak. It is unlikely that it could have been enlarged to cover a wall effectively.[11]

Axel Revold chose as his theme Varebytte, or Barter (Figures 4-5). His paintings illustrate the activities which give Bergen its position in Norwegian economic life and emphasize its importance as an international trading center. After receiving the commission for the work in 1918, Revold traveled to Paris where he studied fresco painting with Rene Piot and Paul Baudowin. He went on to Italy in 1920 for further study and finally returned to Norway to paint the Stock Exchange from 1921 to 1923.

The people of Oslo soon followed the Bergensers' example for the mural decoration of public buildings. In 1919 a competition was held for the decoration of the vestibule, entrance corridor and lecture hall of the Seaman's School at Ekeberg. The principal competitors for the work were Per Krohg and Alf Rolfsen. The commission was awarded to Krohg who represented the life of the seaman under the signs of the zodiac. He achieved a remarkably unified effect in the ungainly areas designated for decoration and yet retained the fresh humor and fantasy of his sketches for the Bergen Stock Exchange. Krohg wrote of his method of work on the Seaman's School:

> The theater decorations I had seen were a great help in my preliminary work. At that time I saw all nature in an indirect form, and on the stage I found nature as I wished to portray it. Now later, the bewildering effects of motion pictures have been just as great a gift to me. I can just as easily see nature directly, "as it is;" but I would rather play a role myself in the picture, and let my position as composer decide the whole. I am not only stage manager, the man who holds all the threads; I am also the people, the trees, and the bushes. I appear suddenly in the figure of a bird, suddenly as a storm cloud. The smallest detail is thought over and approached from every side. The setting is determined first, and when all the furniture is in place, the figures come in and place themselves in such a way that man sees himself. In a moment perhaps the stage is empty again. All have equally great importance in the picture: main figures and subsidiary figures, props, fore- and background figures, and "the living background." One must accept the fact that first plans shall be far different from the second and third

> and not be disappointed when this happens. The construction is felt as the work progresses. If movements stiffen, the picture dies. The background must be forced back, but only so far that one feels that an outstretched arm can touch it, so that contact with the picture plane is maintained. No threads must be stretched until they break. The painter must be stage director, light master, orchestra leader, and machinist. Nature is for me constantly a real stage.[12]

The painting was executed between 1921 and 1924. (Figures 6-7.)

The third of the "fresco brothers" and Krohg's rival in the Seaman's School competition was Alf Rolfsen. Although he lost this competition to Krohg he was given a chance to execute a mural in the following year. He was commissioned by the Telegraph Company to paint the wall opposite the entrance of the public service office in the Oslo Telegraph Building (See Figure 8). The painting was executed in 1921-22 at the time that telephones were being installed in Oslo. Rolfsen wrote that the raising of the telephone poles captured his imagination, and he chose to make this operation the central motif of his wall decoration.[13]

In 1924 Rolfsen was given a larger, more complex problem in mural painting, the decoration of the Guildhall of the Oslo Handicraft and Industrial Association (Figure 9). He had the unusual opportunity of collaborating with the architect in the design of the hall. He completed the

decoration in 1925. The final effect was a remarkably harmonious blend of architecture, painting, and interior furnishing. Rolfsen wrote of his aims:

> The guild hall is conceived not as a room which is decorated with pictures, but a picture which is to be walked into. There is a large empty space in the middle where a table stands surrounded by chairs. Here is a place in which to hold meetings. One can close the door after oneself, sit down on one of the chairs, and be in the painting.[14]

A tradition of fresco painting had been established by 1927 when the three "fresco brothers" decorated the main stair hall in Hersleb School, Oslo. The work was privately commissioned and indicated a growing public interest in such projects. The Hersleb School decorations are the first in a series of similar commissions which have developed into the "Art in the Schools" group. This organization buys paintings by contemporary Norwegian artists to be hung in classrooms and also commissions artists to decorate the interior walls of school rooms.

On the landings of the main stairs at Hersleb School were painted Rolfsen's History, Krohg's Nature, and Revold's Geography. Rolfsen chose to represent history with a scene to capture the imagination of a Norwegian child, the moment of the launching of the great Oseberg Ship. Krohg summarized all nature by a tree stump filled with insects (Figure 10).

He wrote of the work:

> If one lies down on the earth with a magnifying glass and takes enough time, a play develops remarkably like man's life and struggle, so colorful and expressive that it is worth while to stretch it out, give it dimension, and relegate to man and his activities a modest place completely in the background of the spacious arena.[15]

Axel Revold's Geography is a sentimental illustration of a little boy dreaming of distant lands. He wrote, "There isn't much to say . . . It is planned for children."[16]

Actually the paintings were not completely successful as architectural decoration, for they were conceived as easel paintings rather than as an integral part of the wall. Nevertheless, the commission brought together the founders of monumental painting in Norway in a single building and thereby served as a summary of their achievements during the twenties and as a guide for the further development of style and technique in the thirties. The "fresco brothers" had progressed from an abstract, theoretical approach to art, strongly influenced by the principles of Cubism, to a more humane and a more representational approach to their subjects.

In the thirties the "fresco brothers" were joined by other painters; nevertheless, they retained their leadership through their position as teachers and the high quality of

their work. During the period of the Mellomgenerasjon, the generation of artists working between the two World Wars, artists learned to think of painting in terms of both the architectural surroundings and the public. They blended the technical discoveries of the past and the contemporary theories of space and form with their own national art. Thus, a Norwegian style in mural painting was formed. It is characterized by a love of narration, brilliant color, all-over pattern, and decorative rather than representational drawing.

A painting school was established in 1924 by Axel Revold. He was a popular teacher and by 1925 was appointed professor at the National Academy of Art, a post which he held until 1948. Through this position Revold became a dominant influence on art students of the post-World War I generation. He instilled into his students a keen interest in brilliant, earthy colors and dramatic contrasts of light and dark. His own painting, however, became increasingly dry. Each work seemed a school-piece executed as a demonstration for his students.

In 1932 Revold painted the wall over the circulation desk in the Deichman Library, in Oslo (Figure 11). The subject chosen was Science flanked by artistic achievement as

represented by the poet and technical achievement as represented by the modern city. The combination of mechanical and natural motifs produced a jarring effect. The next year Revold and Krohg collaborated on the decoration of the stair hall in the University Library. Revold painted side panels and Krohg the end wall with themes from northern mythology (Figure 12). For Revold the work was not completely successful. Not only did the styles of the two artists fail to harmonize but Krohg's powerful statement made Revold's work seem uninspired.

The period between the two World Wars was a productive one for Per Krohg. Between 1931 and 1938 he completed four mural commissions, three of which were of major importance. In 1931 he painted the front wall of the public service office in the Oslo Electricity and Gas Building (Figure 13). A mural had been planned for the area by the architect although the painter was not consulted in the design of the room.[17] Krohg chose to illustrate the generation of power and the subsequent uses of electricity. The abstract patternization of natural forms and the subdued color scheme of the painting blend with the architectural setting to create one of the handsomest interiors in Oslo.

Paintings for the stair hall of the University Library, previously mentioned in connection with Axel Revold, were donated anonymously by a private individual who dictated the subject and position of the paintings as well as the artists who were to execute the work.[18] Thus the unfortunate effect of the total arrangement is not entirely the fault of the artists. Krohg was, however, able to achieve a remarkable painting (Figure 14). He represented the theme of Ragnarok, the destruction of the gods and the end of the world, in terms of the contemporary armament race, creating a frightful warning to his countrymen.

In the same year, 1932, Krohg painted a second, lighter work, an allegory of the artist's life, on the ceiling of the stair hall of the Artists' House in Oslo. Although a competent painting and a handsome decoration, this work apparently failed to capture the mind and imagination of the painter. It remains a technical display in the dramatic use of foreshortening.

Between 1935 and 1938, however, Per Krohg solved one of the most challenging problems in mural design ever offered to a painter, the decoration of the vestibule of the Science Building of the University of Oslo at Blindern (Figures 15-16). The vestibule was a room three stories high. Three

walls were composed of alternating horizontal bands of wall and windows and the fourth wall was entirely of glass. By using both fresco and stained glass Krohg was able to compose each wall as a single field. The complex iconographical scheme represents man's environment and his conquest of it. With the completion of this work, Krohg achieved a secure reputation as the most inventive painter in Norway.

It was Alf Rolfsen, however, who painted the finest murals of the thirties, the paintings in the auditorium of the New Crematorium at Borgen executed between 1932 and 1937 (Figures 17-20). The aisles were painted in fresco while the central dome was painted al seco. A simple allegory on the Tree of Life that every mourner could understand and in which many could find comfort the theme of the paintings. Rolfsen described the effects he hoped to achieve when he wrote:

> In the middle is the night. Under this dark vault sit the mourners, surrounded on all sides by day, surrounded by the Tree of Life. The Tree is planted before our eyes, it grows under snowbanks in winter's waiting time; it casts its shadow, sharpest in the representation of birth and death, glimmering over man's play; it spreads itself like a thicket along a river; the time which moves so eagerly; it bears flowers like the Milky Way's mist of stars; it shoots in another dimension, up behind the bier. In the woman the tree grows while the man builds. Humanity's building is powerful, like a cathedral in its skaffolding. Nearby is man's destruction; hither goes the path. Halfway along the path the child leaves and takes its first groping step out into uncertainty.

> Wonderingly the children, the new people, look around at nature; soon they will make discoveries, set the water wheel in the stream. They will search forward toward sounds in the steps over the stones in the river. Alone they will travel forward through rugged terrain (of middle age). Lonely, they will sit in front of the bridge in the evening (of old age).
>
> In the background the night develops the theme further and transforms it through dawn into day. Man and woman go through dawn's mists forward toward the bier; they seek to hold fast to their shells; they look back. At dawn they cast off their mantles, these empty forms for which we are collected to bid farewell.
>
> With an incessant rising movement life's Tree goes up through space. A bough shoots up from the stem, looking like a tree itself. It stands in a shaft of light from the day above; thereby casting its shadow on the mist, and, like the shadow of reality casting itself on the inconstant mists of our minds, stands a fragment of the Tree of Life, like the cross on a grave over the bier.[19]

Although Rolfsen's mural paintings are few in number, each of his projects is of such grand scale and powerful conception that he deserves his place among the foremost painters of the country.

Norway's leading religious painter is Hugo Lous Mohr. Mohr was a student of Revold, but became a much more subjective expressive painter, perhaps under the influence of Henrick Sörensen. Although primarily an easel painter, he was called upon to execute some wall paintings in churches and in some cases adopted the fresco technique.

Mohr's first large fresco painting was the chancel of St. John's Parish House, Bergen, executed in 1924. In front of a background of mountains and sky covering the entire wall he placed monumental representations of the Nativity, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. The individual scenes were well composed, but the wall as a whole lacked the unity which could have been achieved by a tighter composition. The Chancel of Volda Church, Sunnmöre, a mature work in fresco, was painted in 1932. The powerful central figure of the youthful Christ is one of the finest in modern Norwegian church art. The entire composition is marked by a quiet rhythm, clean drawing, and simple color scheme.

In 1936 Mohr began the ceiling paintings for the Cathedral of Oslo, a project which was to occupy him for the next fourteen years (Figures 21-23). The painting was commissioned by the Oslo Savings Bank. Since the Cathedral of Oslo lacked the historical and architectural value of the Romanesque and Gothic churches in Trondheim, Stavanger, and Bergen, it was the desire of the donors that the mural painting in the enterior give prestige to the building. A contest was held in 1932 to select five artists to paint the ceiling. After the entries were examined, however, it was apparent that in order to achieve a unified interior one man would have to paint the entire ceiling. Mohr was

awarded the commission. His work on the painting was stopped by the Nazi occupation of Norway. After the liberation, a second and a third attempt to paint the ceiling failed. The fourth trial was successful, and the painting, executed in egg tempera on the wooden ceiling, was finished in 1950.[20]

Many other men were at work at this time decorating schools, hospitals, and other public buildings. Henrik Sörensen executed some murals for Ulleval Hospital. He is, however, essentially an easel painter, and his finest works are paintings of Telemark landscape. Bjarne Ness painted his only fresco, "The Victor", in the gymnasium of Östensjö School near Oslo. Other wall decorations were executed by Karl Högberg in Töyen School, Oslo and by Reider Aulie in Stein School, Romerike, and Tåsen Home for the Aged. None of these paintings, however, can be compared in quality to the work of Rolfsen and Krohg.

The richest example of Norwegian decorative painting is the Oslo Rådhus or City Hall. For two decades the City Hall called forth the best efforts of Norwegian artists; architects, painters, sculptors, tapestry weavers, and designers of all the varied furnishings for the buildings. Although a new city hall was suggested as early as 1916,

the building, designed by Arnstein Arneberg and Magnus Poulsson, was not actually begun until 1931.

By 1936 the structure was complete, and a competition for the decoration of the main hall and the surrounding galleries was held. The jury for the competition consisted of Prime Minister Oscar Torp, chairman, Professor Otte Sköld from Stockholm, painters Hugo Lous Mohr and Per Deberitz, National Gallery Director Jens Thiis, and the architects of the building. The program for the competition specified that the jury could divide the work and prize money as it saw fit and could hold additional competitions for specific areas among the winners of the first contest. The award money for the central hall totaled 24,000 crowns (measured in terms of buying power, about $5,000.00) and for the galleries 12,000 crowns (about $2,500.00). Twenty-seven artists entered the competition for the painting of the central hall, while sixteen submitted sketches for the galleries.[21]

The winners were announced in 1938. Henrik Sörensen was awarded the south wall in the central hall; Alf Rolfsen, the remaining three walls in the central hall; Axel Revold, the two end walls of the Festival Gallery; Per Krohg, the East Gallery; Aage Storstein, the West Gallery; and Willi

Midelfart, the north wall of the Banqueting Hall. Riedar Aulie and Karl Högberg were later commissioned privately to paint the east and west walls respectively of the first floor extension of the central hall.

Axel Revold was the first to execute his commission. Between 1938 and 1942 he painted the two short walls in the long, narrow Festival Gallery. On the west wall is the painting Shipping and Industry, (Figure 24). The shipbuilding yards inspired the angular composition and the metallic colors of the painting. Fishing and Agriculture (Figure 25), on the east wall is composed with the rich, earthy colors and the free-flowing forms of nature. These paintings are Revold's best work in Oslo. Although he was an inspiration to the next generation of artists both as a teacher and as a pioneer in the introduction of monumental fresco painting into Norway, Revold's own painting after the Bergen Stock Exchange frescoes does not equal that of Per Krohg or Alf Rolfsen.

The giant oil painting on the south wall in the central hall, the wall opposite the building's entrance is entitled Work, Administration, and Festivity (Figure 26). It is the work of Henrik Sörensen who began the painting in 1939, but was unable to complete it until 1950. Sorensen's own

statement about the work provides the best description of the individual motifs:

> The painting begins in Vika which shall be demolished. Unless this slum--this forgotten poor quarter of Oslo--be brought up to date with the development of the town, a social erruption in some form or other, symbolized by the huge flame on the left of the picture will occur. The dragon motif on the extreme left represents the misery which has dominated Vika. Above this base the picture looms in bright optimistic hues: orange, red, yellow, and blue. We leave Norway behind us, come in through the hall, up the stairs, and walk up into the painting. A young boy out of the fairy tales makes his way to the forest in the bottom right corner. We meet the town, its people and its life--young and old in different episodes, especially the young people, natives of Telemark and Gudbrandsdal, meet the Oslo people. In the middle of the picture the two young people meet. Further to the left we have simple illustrations of trade and commerce. On the extreme right we leave generalizations and see the Royal Family being greeted by Pal Berg, the underground leader, and Einar Gerhardsen, the mayor of Oslo, that beautiful June day in 1945.
>
> The second register represents professors and students in a clinic. A child comes into the world, is carried by its mother into life from the cradle to school (symbolized by Anna Setne and Nordahl Rolfsen, great Norwegian teachers of our time). Ignorance has been vanquished. To the right we see symbols for the troubled times of the occupation, the prisoner being set free, the mother beside the grave stone of the fallen ones. On it are names of two patriots who were shot: Ivar Moun, the young boy, and Doctor Haakon Saethre. Next comes the Norwegian farmer with the red banner of his district. He leads a little dun-colored pony with a boy on its back past Henrik Wergeland. The boy throws a bouquet of flowers down to the homecoming groups below.
>
> The third and uppermost section: Homecoming and Departure. The boy with the golden crown who started in the lower corner by the stairs meets his beloved,

> or the Princess of his fairytale. Nearby stands old mother Norway, Anne Noregarden from Vinje, resting her clasped hands on a symbolic church. Farthest to the right we meet the cultural life of Oslo symbolized by the poet, the actor, the painter, and the musician and at the very top near the canopy the source of art, children at play. Children with Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian flags place a large wreath over Wergeland.
>
> The figures within the gold frame symbolize: the mother and father at the bottom, the child who is the picture's center and above the large figure of Charity, mercy's symbol--and the town halls highest function--help. Charity gives a golden apple to the little girl on the right. She is flanked by Song and Thought. In a kind of silver white mist are the silhouettes of Akershus Castle and the City Hall.[22]

Sörensen was influenced by his studies of Renaissance painting at this time. He attempts neo-classical figures and a frieze-like composition foreign to his temperament. The painting is best when the artist occasionally returns to his individual style reminiescent of Norwegian medieval painting and folk art (Figure 27).

The remaining three walls of the central hall are decorated by Alf Rolfsen. The north wall, over the entrance, illustrates the various occupations and aspirations of the people of Norway (Figure 28). Rolfsen writes:

> The north wall covers Norway from the drifting nets of the fishermen to the woods in the east. Simple, free-standing figures give a picture of the people.
>
> The two standing figures are portraits and symbols at the same time. West of the flock of birds

> Nansen turns out toward the white wasteland--and expression for all in the country which searches beyond the borders. 'He set out as thought goes, from the known to the unknown'.--Bjornson who wrote this poem about him, stands himself at the opposite side of the panel, in the smoke from the stump puller's fire--an expression for the people's expansion inward.
>
> Between these two symbols the fisherman come in from the sea, the sailer returns home, beyond the sailor pass the workers, farther away is the interior of the country with ripening grain fields.[23]

The east and west walls are covered with a decorative pattern and provide a contrast to the figure painting of the north and south walls. The pattern on the west wall is broken by a "fantasy" on the Oslo coat of arms (Figure 29). Rolfsen writes:

> The figure group on the west wall is a fantasy on the city coat of arms: St. Hallvard and the woman rest on the Oslo fog under Holmenkollen, between iron ships in drydock and long-boats drawn up on land under Håkon the Fifth's Akerhus Castle. The swans remind us of the time of sailing ships and also of the old name Etterstad (the plateau just above the town), or Alptarstadir, "the place of the swans." Between St. Hallvard and Vajehals tower on Akershus is a glimpse of Christiania, and to the east of Bjorvika Creek rise the towers of St. Hallvard's Cathedral over the boathouses of Harald Harrade.[24]

The east wall of the central hall is divided into two registers by the balcony. Above the balcony the geometric pattern of the west wall is continued. Below in a figure painting, is represented the history of the German occupation

from the attack until the first Seventeenth of May parade after the liberation (Figure 30).

> Some go to the woods while others exchange rumors and opinions by the well. Planes come; now the house we are in is broken down. The door opens behind us, and strange men cross the threshold;--door posts come crashing down;--the people are put up against the wall. But in the ruined cellars council is held;--and bands of young men are silhouetted against the morning sky.--In front of them is barbed wire. The prison doors burst open one day, and the prisoners go from their underworld out into the light;--where the children's parade winds up toward a future we cannot see.[25]

The City Hall frescoes seem coolly intellectual when compared with the paintings in the New Crematorium. Nevertheless, they are technically irreproachable. Rolfsen is an artist capable of creating a worthy representation of his theme on a monumental scale. His City Hall paintings are among the finest murals in Norway.

In the southern extension of the central hall are two large paintings neither of which are true wall paintings. On the west wall is Karl Högberg's fantasy based on business life in Oslo at the turn of the century. The painting, Shipping, Commerce, and Industry, is the gift of the Oslo Stock Exchange to the City Hall. On the east wall is Reidar Aulie's blatantly moralizing illustration, The Development of the Labor Movement in Norway, the gift of the Oslo trade unions. Neither artist is able to abandon his accustomed

easel painting technique; thus the paintings are not designed as part of the architectural setting.

A third large composition which is not truly a wall painting is Willi Midelfart's painting of nude children playing on a bathing beach covering the north wall of the Banqueting Hall. It is conceived as an easel painting and executed in oil on canvas. The freedom and action of the figures as well as the highly keyed colors are wonderfully expressive of the "joy of living." The painting provides a brilliant contrast and complement to the rich, somber colors of the room.

The decoration of the galleries flanking the city council chambers was awarded to Per Krohg, who painted the East Gallery, and to Aage Storstein, who painted the West Gallery. The identical rooms are long, narrow and high with a single large window in the outside wall and the main entrance in the opposite short wall. The two painters worked independently and arrived at opposite solutions to the problem: Storstein chose to reduce the height of the room by the use of horizontal lines while Krohg emphasized its verticality with a rising composition.

Storstein wrote of his painting (Figures 31-32):

The decoration of the West Gallery attempts to give in pictures the development of the Norwegian constitution of 1814. The men at Eidsvoll gave it such a form that the possibilities were laid for the development of our society toward a more and more democratic and just arrangement of society.

Our constitution took up many of the ideas which (in the most dramatic manner) were given life by the French Revolution. Therefore, I have on the first field of the south wall tried to represent the revolution, with "freedom's flame" bursting out of the earth like a volcanic eruption and exploding in the middle of the panel right against anyone who comes into the room from the stairs in the west tower. And thus the torch is lit in the flame and is brought, together with the Rights of Man, by two women over to the Norwegian wall. We see them carrying it through the winter night (the short wall), where the underground creatures menace the torch (in the lower field) to the left of the door to the town council room, and to the right we find symbols for the Norwegian people--the (captive princess and the (hibernating) bear. In the panel between the short wall and the revolution we see Bernadotte (later King Karl Johan) who comes from the revolution and is on the way to the princess in the mountain. Behind him stands the Troll to connect him with our fairy tale figure Askeladden who in this case won a princess and two kingdoms. But at the same time the Troll gives him a sinister air, which causes the men of Eidsvoll to join hands in a ring of brotherhood.

Up the north wall one entering from the central hall faces the tree which Queen Ragnhild, Harald Harfagres mother, dreamed (about) as a symbol of Norway's unity. And up through the tree winds the chain of Eidsvoll men up to Henrik Wergeland who takes the torch and Bjornstjerne Bjornson who begins the children's parade. On the extreme left of this field the princess appears riding on the bear and as a symbol of the Norwegian people, she receives the crown and scepter given her people, she receives the crown and scepter given her voluntarily by Christian Fredrick and Christian Magnus Falsen.

> The last section to the left of the door in the north wall, represents the occupation with the attack on the constitution made by the Germans and their collaborators. It is the underworld creatures from the short wall who appear again now in uniforms, and they try to pull the coronation robe off the princess and extinguish the torch of freedom which she lifts as high as she can.
>
> Because of its great height it was necessary to divide the wall. I have, therefore, let the women with the torch move in a light panel or band from the French Revolution forward to the tree, thereby binding the motifs of the three walls together at the same time dividing the wall into panels which can be seen along. This is to some extent necessary when the space is so small that it is difficult to get a survey over the whole wall at one time.[26]

Aage Storstein was Norway's leading exponent of Cubism. In an article "Naturalisme og kubisme" written in 1935 he pointed to Cubism as the realization of "pure painting" in which the work of art forms a world of its own, creating its own space, movement, and atmosphere through the abstract use of color and form.[27] In his first attempts to find a personal mode of expression after studying under Sörensen and Krohg, Storstein's painting was too hard and brutal, too destructive of the human form. The dictates of early Cubism conflicted, however, with his training and with his own preference for intense colors. When the City Hall frescoes were finally executed after the interruption caused by World War II, Storstein had resolved the early conflict in his style. He returned to a more representational style

in painting at the same time retaining the formal, decorative values of his youthful work. Of all the paintings in the City Hall, Storstein's work is the farthest departure from naturalism.

Per Krohg, as might be expected, had an unusual solution to the problem of the East Gallery (Figures 33-34). Instead of minimizing the awkward proportions of the room, he chose to emphasize the sense of verticality they created. On the east window wall, he painted geometric patterns from Norwegian medieval art, giving a Fourteenth Century atmosphere to the room. Of the other walls he wrote:

> The motif is simple as a whole, the town and its hinterland. The people walk in and out of the houses like bees in a hive, occupied as they are with work for the progress of the town. The town looks like a beehive, and one can see into the yards and the apartments. On the short wall underlining the double meaning, we have a real hive from whence the inhabitants fly over to the rosebush to bring back to their "town" what they need just as the people in the town go out to the country to get the necessities of life for themselves.
>
> On the north wall, then, we see people in happy and unhappy situations: the men with the divining rod, the children with baby birds, driads (wood nymphs) who gather animals about them, the artist in meditation and in intimate contact with nature, the winter with its lacy ice and with its purposeful and arduous work. Above I have painted a simplified and symbolic representation of Grini Concentration Camp and Norway's war with the conquerors (the Germans represented as huge malignant insects), the captivity, and final liberation from

> the barbed wire. This is taken to give the decoration a definite time in history and in art.
>
> We are thus finished with the proper, visible motifs and come to the composition.
>
> The space is high and narrow and makes one think of a cathedral in miniature, I have chosen to emphasize this. The dim lighting casts a sort of mystery that works well with the fresco technique and its simple color possibilities. Then the room is so narrow that I have made the composition such that wherever one walks one finds groups and separate scenes. Little pictures in the large whole. Only in the transverse wall I have used a central composition: the tree root which heaves up and forms a sort of rose window, wherein one can see nature as though in a kaleidoscope. Over us in the ceiling are large, quiet figures. Their purpose is to form another tempo and to unite the many small episodes on the walls. They symbolize snow and fog (near the window), the strain between light and dark (in the middle), and nearest the rose window wall, rain and thunder storms.
>
> Over the whole I have thought of a huge bird. Its shadow falls over the earth and covers it with darkness, but when it lifts its wings, there is light. In this manner the room is divided into three transverse sections, and one gets the effect of both length and breadth in the composition.
>
> I wished to create in the onlooker a feeling that he stood in the middle of the picture surrounded on all sides by figures and situations which have contact with each other over the room from wall to wall.[28]

The acute observation of daily activity, imaginatively represented within a complex formal design and heightened by the rich yet sensitive use of color, makes the East Gallery one of Krohg's finest achievements and a focal point in the entire decorative system of the City Hall.

In spite of the excellence of individual paintings, the decoration of the Oslo City Hall is not immediately satisfactory as a whole. Its richness seems hardly appropriate to the Norwegian character or to the simplicity of Norwegian life. The paintings often fail to define the architectural forms; instead they hang as a sheath of decoration over the walls. An almost child-like attitude is apparent: a desire to surpass neighboring countries in order to compensate in some way for material poverty and relative youth as a modern independent nation.

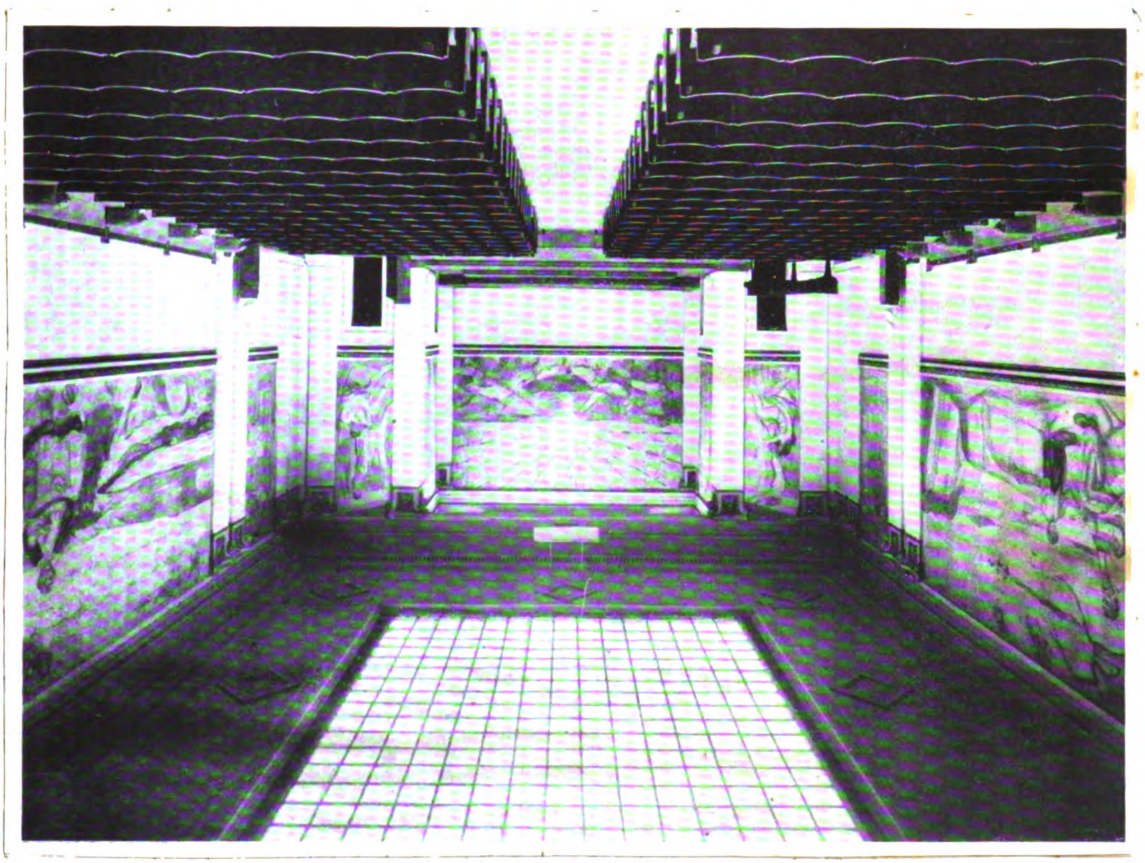
The total effect of the City Hall is one of barbarian splendor. The building is so filled with painting, sculpture, wood carving, gilding, and tapestry that the spectator senses a primitive desire to decorate every surface if only with a geometric pattern. Further investigation into early Norwegian art suggests that this lavishness of decoration in the City Hall is actually part of a very strong tradition of centuries of decorative painting.

PART II. ANALYSIS OF THE PRINCIPAL NORWEGIAN MURALS

Figure 1. Edvard Munch. University of Oslo, Oslo. Auditorium. 1910-15. Oil on canvas. History.

Figure 2. Edvard Munch. University of Oslo, Oslo. Auditorium. 1910-15. Oil on canvas. Alma Mater.

Figure 3. Edvard Munch. University of Oslo, Oslo. Auditorium. 1910-15. Oil on canvas. The Sun.



Edvard Munch. University of Oslo, Oslo. Auditorium. 1910-1915. Oil on canvas. Figures 1-3.

Munch's finest work in the Auditorium of the University of Oslo is the west wall (Figure 1). In the principal painting, History, an old man sits beside a giant oak in a rugged fjord landscape telling stories to a little boy. The clean drawing, broad planes, and slow movement of the composition are classical in spirit without becoming neo-classical in style. Munch displays a masterful ability in the use of color; the simple yet rich harmony of cool greyish blues and greens harmonize with the marble interior. The modern Norwegian painting fits easily into the neo-antique, Mediterranean architectural setting.

On the east wall is Research, Natural Sciences, or Alma Mater as the companion piece to History is now called, (Figure 2). In this painting the old man and boy are replaced by a peasant woman surrounded by children. The landscape, too, has mellowed. The fjord and mountains have given way to a sunny meadow; the giant oak, to a fir and a grove of young birch trees. The development of the theme is weak, however, and the work seems empty. Only the mother

figure, an earthy, peasant type free from nineteenth century sweetness and sentimentality, is equal to Munch's better paintings.

Smaller panels filled with nude figures frame the larger compositions. The figures are loosely painted. In fact, they are little more than sketched in pale, warm colors and serve as rhythmic, decorative accents throughout the hall.

The panel known as The Sun covers the wall behind the speaker's platform (Figure 3). This landscape painting not only provides a decorative pause among the many figure compositions but also emphasizes the importance of the sun to man and his activities. As the sun rises over the fjord, figures in the four decorative panels surrounding the principal field stretch toward it. The sun's rays spread over all three walls unifying the many smaller panels. Munch attempted to create the illusion of an actual sun by the use of light, strong colors, and a spinning compositional movement. The painting is an intelligent and interesting experiment.

Munch's painting may be interpreted in several ways. The figures and scenes portrayed are simple everyday activities; the paintings are an artist's research in the representation of the human form, the Norwegian landscape, and the action

of light. Because of their location in a university an interpretation of the paintings as allegories on science and history is possible, an interpretation which would not be particularly appropriate under other circumstances. Even beyond the immediate allegories appear a commentary on the opposition of human and divine knowledge, of man and nature, and of learning and life.

Although Munch preserves the surface of the wall even in the perspective representation of the fjord landscape, his painting lacks both a true architectonic feeling and logical connection between the individual panels. The painting technique throughout the room is uneven. Some figures, particularly in the smaller panels, are painted so hurriedly that the effect is of a sketch rather than a finished painting. In spite of these faults the painting is daring in its originality: in the scope of the idea and composition, the freedom of the forms, the clarity of the color, and the vitality of the brushwork.

Figure 4. Axel Revold. Stock Exchange, Bergen. Exchange Hall. 1918-23. Fresco. Interior, north wall.

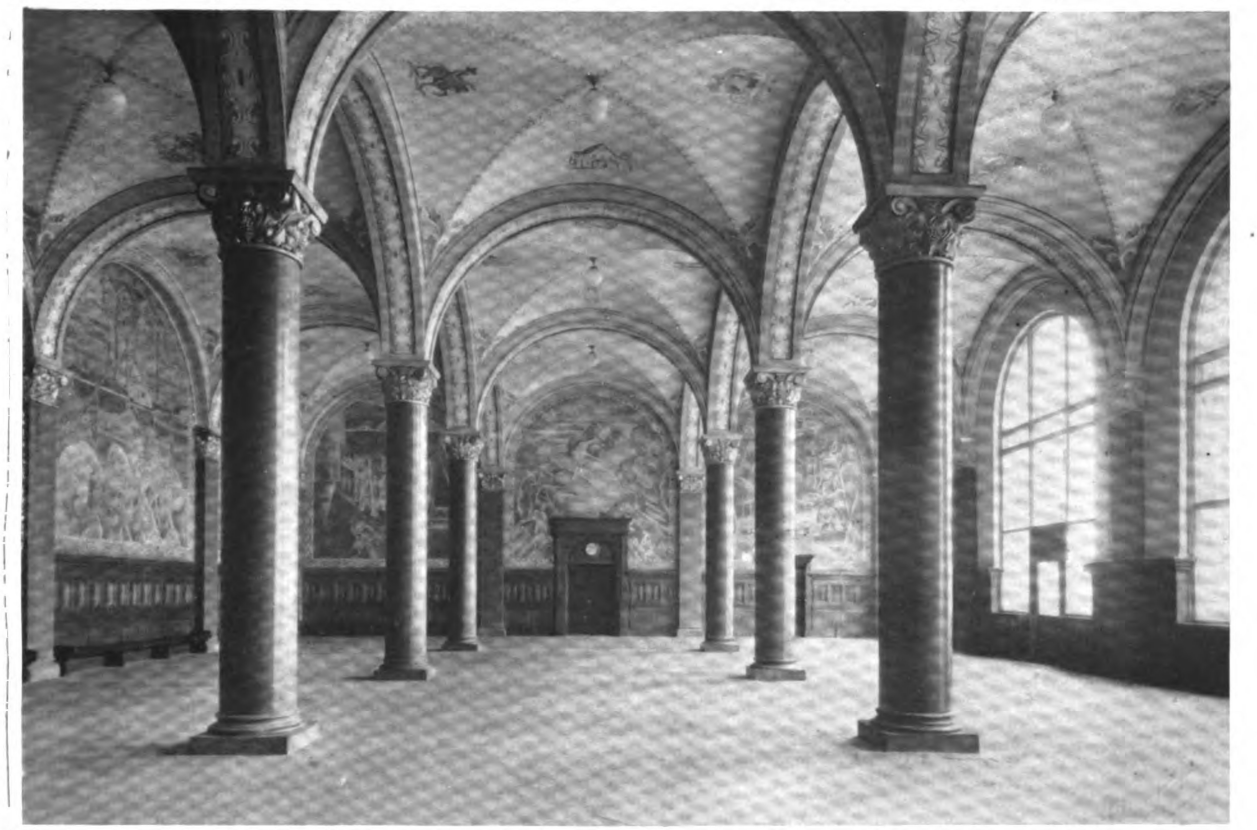
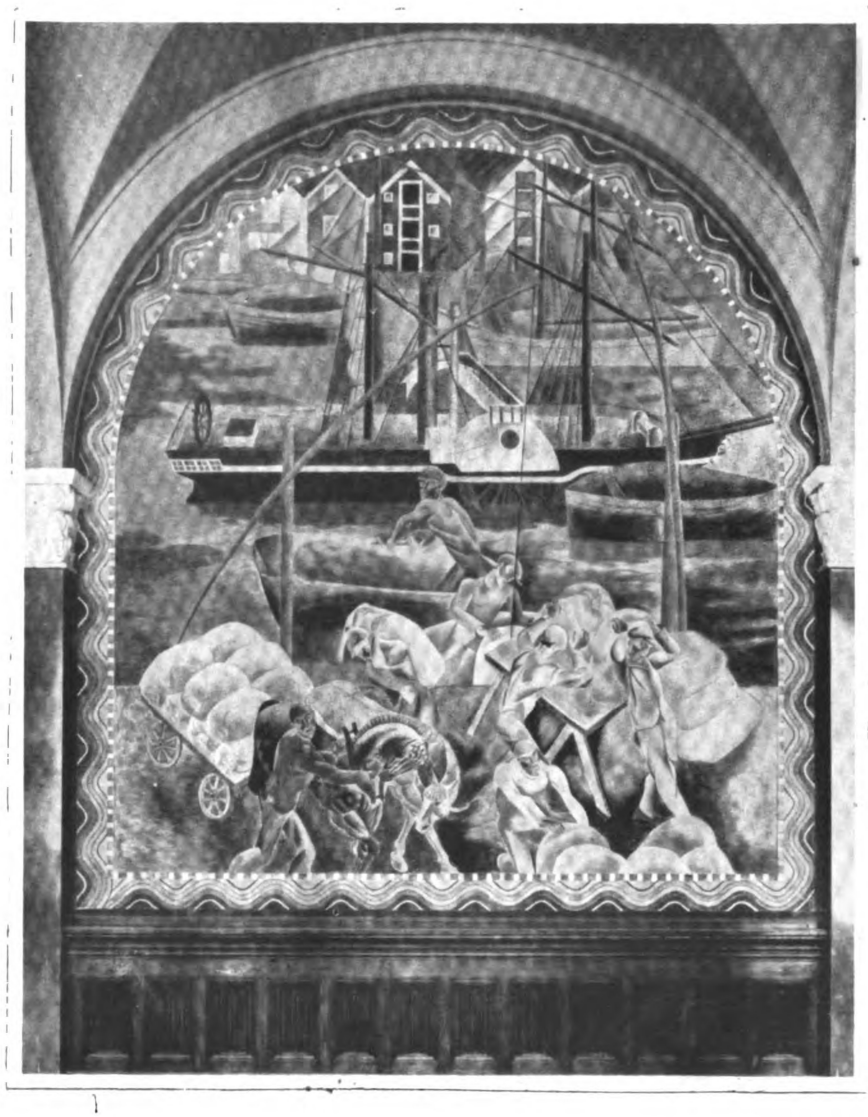


Figure 5. Axel Revold. Stock Exchange, Bergen. Exchange Hall. 1918-23. Fresco. Grain Import.



Axel Revold. Stock Exchange, Bergen. Exchange Hall. 1918-1923. Fresco. Figures 4-5.

The Bergen Stock Exchange paintings depict the importance of Bergen as a center of trade and commerce. The side walls follow a sequence representing natural resources, the work of man in developing these resources, and the transportation of commodities to Bergen. The connecting wall illustrates the history of the port of Bergen, the exchange of goods, and the daily work in the harbor.

In a hall such as this with a division of the decorative fields into two groups of three and one of four, it is reasonable to expect an emphasis to be placed on the central panels in each group and on the long wall rather than the two sides. Revold, however, chooses to give each panel equal emphasis since the numerous columns supporting the vaults prevent the spectator from seeing the room as a whole (Figure 4). The scenes are drawn as though seen slightly from above. The advantages of this high point of view are that the action of the figures can be clearly presented without overlapping and the background is brought near the picture plane, thereby minimizing the feeling of depth and preserving the wall surface. The resulting two-dimensional effect of the paintings is necessary in order to emphasize

the enclosing function of the walls in the open, colonnaded hall.

In the "Nordland wall" on the south, with scenes from the Lofoten fisheries, some attention has been paid to the total compositional effect. The angles of the boats and sails in the outer panels balance and lead into the central panel with its racks for the drying of codfish. Ice blue and brown dominate the color scheme in all three fields giving the wall added unity. The north wall on the other hand is an incoherent composition contrasting luxuriant tropical forests, wide grain fields, and the abstract patterns of a ship's engine room (Figure 4). The four fields of the west wall are drawn together by the representation of the wharves in the foreground and the jagged pattern of the Hanseatic warehouses in the background.

The paintings of the Bergen harbor are quite similar in their triangular composition. Grain Import is typical of this wall (Figure 5). The roof line of the Hanseatic warehouses crosses the top of the field and is repeated in the rigging of a vessel. The wooden hoists and the lower rigging form two legs of a triangle whose base is in the painting's lower frame. The figures form a symmetrical group within the larger triangle. The downward thrusts of the diagonal

lines are stopped by a wagon to the left and grain sacks to the right.

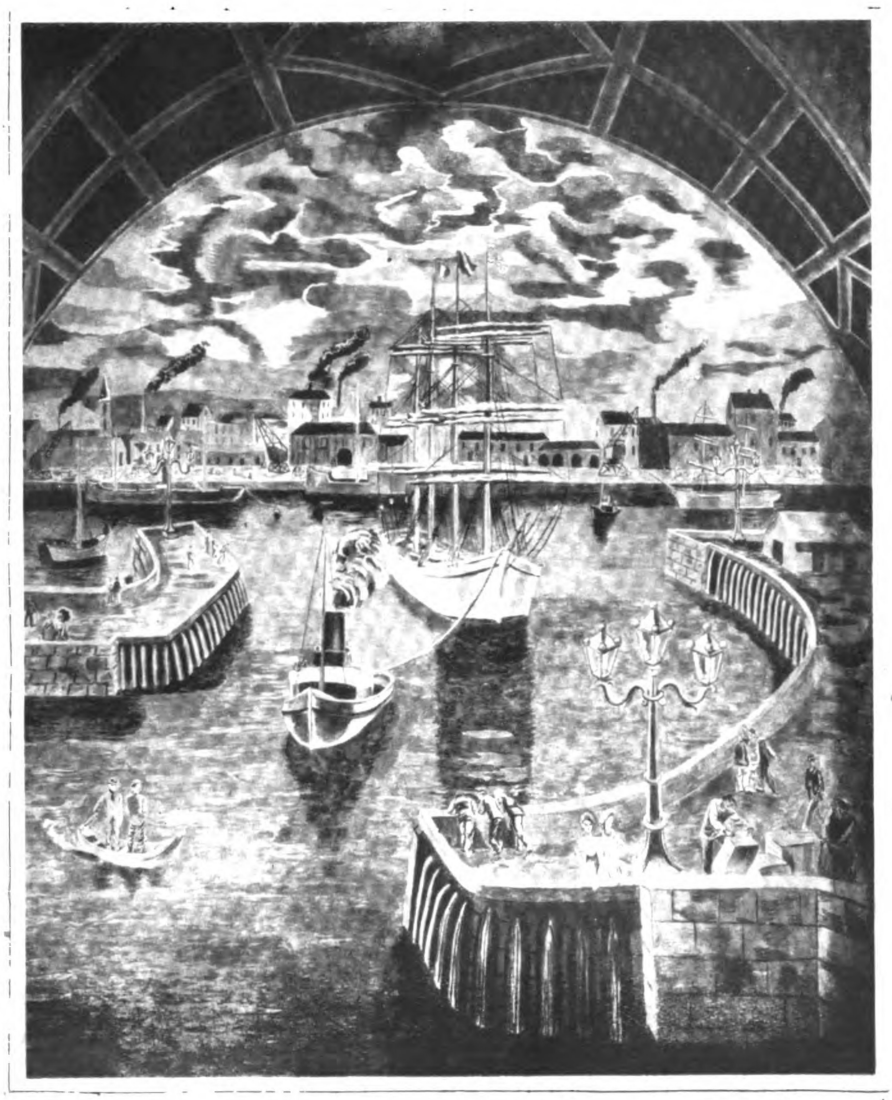
The individuality of each panel is not only emphasized by its composition but also by marked differences in the color scheme. The sea, for example, changes in the various fields from bluish green, to grey-blue, to green streaked with brown. Broad decorative frames separate the panels further by their different patterns and colors.

Revold was at this time influenced by Cubism. Each field is primarily a decorative panel and secondly presents an illustration. In an analysis of Revold's painting Henning Gran writes of the work in the Bergen Stock Exchange Hall:

> What Revold aims at in these decorations is an absolute matter-of-factness in the presentation, a simplification, a lucidity and economy of structure. He consciously gives up any naturalistic interpretation of the motif and anything which might be termed external charm. The rigid constructional composition and the almost mathematical balance of the various groups of figures and the picture surface assist the terse matter-of-factness in the build-up of the motif. But at the same time he makes room for a fresh and vivid feeling of reality, which is expressed, not only by means of the primitive simplicity of the drawing, but also through the deep glow of the colour. The drawing fills the surface with the sort of exactness we might associate with weaving, and in this way harmonises with what is Revold's chief concern, i.e., totality in the conception of the motif. With these decorations in Bergen Revold created not only an apotheosis of Norwegian working life but also an apotheosis of his own age. He also created a monumental work which ushers in a new era in Norwegian painting.[29]

Figure 6. Per Krohg. Seamen's School, Ekeberg, Oslo. Vestibule andEntrance Corridor. 1921-24. Fresco. Interior of the corridor, Signs of the Zodiac

Figure 7. Per Krohg. Seamen's School, Ekeberg, Oslo. Vestibule and Entrance Corridor. 1921-24. Fresco. Interior of the corridor, Harbor Scene



Per Krohg. Seamen's School, Ekeberg, Oslo. Vestibule and Entrance Corridor. 1921-1924. Fresco. Figures 6-7.

Although Krohg painted the lecture room as well as the entrance corridor in the Seamen's School it is the latter for which he is famous (Figure 6). The corridor is a low tunnel vault with a vestibule at one side. Because of the awkward arrangement of architectural details it is an extremely difficult area to compose as a mural successfully. Light blazes in with blinding intensity from the few small, irregularly spaced windows, but the major portion of the hall remains in darkness even on a bright day. The murals can be seen only by electric light.

The theme portrayed is the relationship of the seaman to nature. On the walls are found incidents in the life of the sailor while on the ceiling are painted giant figures of the zodiac dominated by the Goddess of Destiny. As a whole, Krohg treats the life of the sailor with the naive attitude of the landsman. Only a single storm breaks into the romance of departures and returns, exotic ports, sunny seas, and graceful ships.

The work is remarkable for the fantasy and sense of humor which Krohg shows in overcoming the difficulties of his task. In an effort to compensate for the abrupt changes

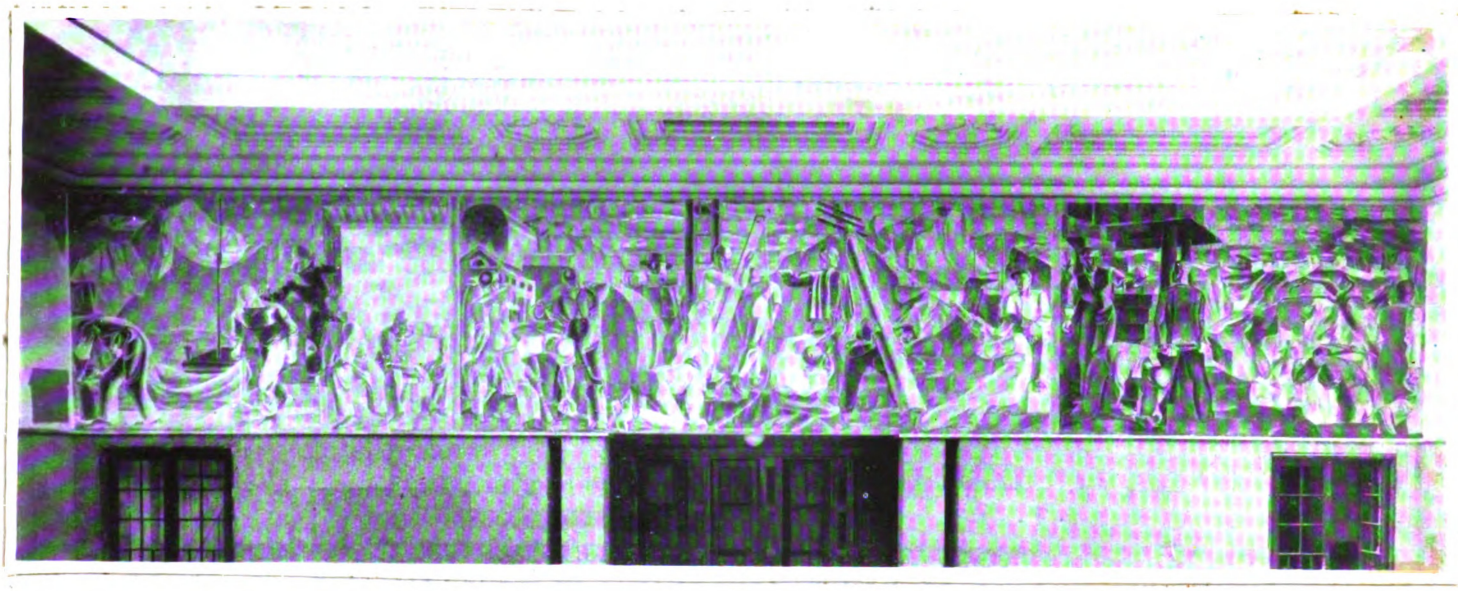
in illumination of the painting Krohg paints larger figures in stronger colors on the walls farthest from windows. Architectural features breaking into the fields are made part of the composition; for example, in the Venetian scene a niche in the wall is painted as the opening of a bridge through which a gondola is seen to pass. On the other hand, the architecture may be ignored. The Waterman, for example, pours down a flood of water from his jars directly over a window.

In order to create an appearance of height, Krohg has painted his mural from floor to floor without a suggestion of the horizon using the same blue ground for sea, sky, and sea again. The comparatively large size of the zodiac figures, however, tends to re-establish the actual elevation of the vault. A great variation in style appears within the individual paintings from the Waterman painted at the beginning of the work to the harbor scenes painted at the end. The Waterman was done at a time when the artist was not yet sure of his medium (Figure 6). Although the painting is very crisp and hard, it seems decorative rather than stiff in its surroundings. The round skull, torso, and water jugs of the figure contrast with the rippling lines of the beard, water, and drapery.

The harbor paintings, on the other hand, were painted after Krohg had grown accustomed to his medium and had learned to use it with greater freedom (Figure 7). The composition is sketched into the wet plaster, but the painting is never completely controlled by the lines of the sketch. The paint is applied in thin lines of contrasting color. Thus the lively effects of Impressionist painting are achieved while the geometric structure of the objects are preserved. The abstract forms of the harbor and ships are contrasted with the free billowing smoke and cloudy sky. The figure studies are lively, often humorous representations of the people and activities along the waterfront.

By the time he painted the Seamen's School frescoes, Krohg was a mature painter; however, he retained the fresh approach, humor, and fanciful imagination which characterized his student work. Cubism never influenced Krohg to the extent that it influenced Revold. His figures remain living people not geometric patterns; however, from Cubism he learned to free his composition from strict adherence to appearance and thereby to allow greater freedom to his imagination.. Krohg has made one of the most important contributions to Norwegian mural painting by the inventiveness with which he overcomes the most difficult obstacles.

Figure 8. Alf Rolfsen. Telegraph Building, Oslo. Central Telegraph Office. 1921-22. Fresco.



Alf Rolfsen. Telegraph Building, Oslo. Central Telegraph Office. 1921-1922. Fresco. Figure 8.

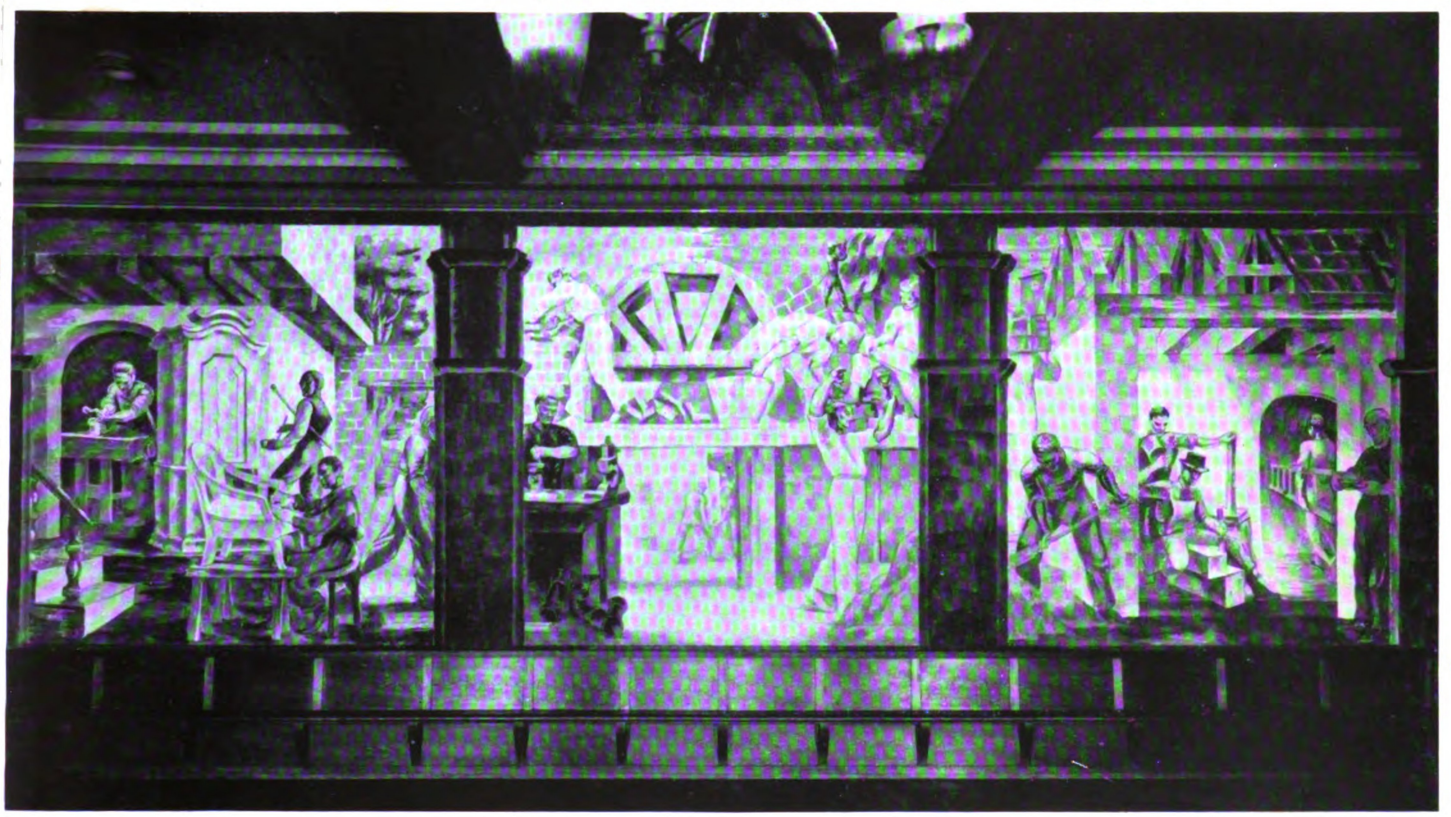
The Oslo Telegraph Building mural is above the service desk and faces the entrance to the room (Figure 8. Rolfsen has divided the panel into three sections. The principal motif illustrates the laying of cables and the raising of telephone poles. At each side the telegraph is shown in operation.

Strong verticals stabilize the composition. The erect figure of the foreman and an upright ladder mark the center area of the central panel. This division is repeated in each side panel by the relationship of a vertical line formed by the end of a building and a standing figure to the inner edge of the panel. The telephone pole and a plank form a triangle around the foreman and mark the center of the wall. The diagonal movement is stopped by the rising figure of a man at the right and the reverse curve of a roll of cable at the left. In each side panel the movement swings down from the inner vertical, across the bottom of the panel in a slow curve, and is turned upward again by the figure of a stooping man in each corner. Although an attempt is made to relate the painting to the wall, it continues to function as a decorative frieze set against the wall rather than as an integral part of the architecture.

The color is quiet; warm pinks and buffs contrast with dull blues and greys. The spotting of color in the figures forms no regular pattern. Rolfsen is one of the few Norwegian painters who is not primarily a colorist; his strength lies in his composition and drawing.

Rolfsen has been strongly influenced by Cubism and by the fresco painting of the early Italian Renaissance. His forms are simplified but not stylized. He has a strong feeling for humanity and for plastic values which prevents him from producing a decorative wall design such as Per Krohg's painting of dissecting the human figure into a moving geometric form as does Axel Revold. Each man and each detail of the landscape is modeled simply but convincingly. The composition creates a feeling of great depth; nevertheless, the action of the figures is bound to the picture plane.

Figure 9. Alf Rolfsen. The Oslo Handicraft and Industrial Association, Oslo. Guildhall. 1924-25. Fresco. South wall.



Alf Rolfsen. The Oslo Handicraft and Industrial Association, Oslo. Guildhall. 1924-1925. Fresco. Figure 9.

The Guildhall is a square room with a paneled ceiling and wainscoting. On the window wall painted statues of the master and the apprentice fill the two panels between the three windows. The three remaining walls are decorated with working men and their shops illustrating the different trades which are represented at the guild meetings (Figure 9). The entire action takes place behind painted piers which seem to support the beams of the ceiling. The walls are so carefully composed that in the rather small space twenty-two of the thirty-four trades are represented.

Only a slight change in style may be observed between the Telegraph Building and the Guildhall frescoes. The figures, although modeled in broad, simple planes, are directly representational. The work is in the tradition of Giotto and Massacio whose work Rolfsen studied in Italy. The dark, subdued colors are not remarkable. Dull browns dominate the side walls while the south wall opposite the windows is lighter, more buff in tone with areas of rosy rust, light blue, and green.

Each wall has the same basic composition ingeniously arranged to contain a large number of individual motifs. The

similarity in composition of the three walls is not immediately apparent because of the variation in the handling of figures and architecture. The same middle ground runs through all nine panels. The central panel of each wall opens into a deep perspective view, to the right of center in the east wall, in the center of the south wall, and to the left of center in the west wall. At the outer side of each of the side panels a building mass juts forward into the foreground, but each building contains an opening through which an interior lying in the middle ground can be seen. Thus the eye swings easily and naturally in and out in the picture-space observing the many scenes as it moves. The action always remains behind the piers which mark the actual limit of the picture plane.

The color values emphasize the four distinct planes of action: the middle ground is dark with light in the background opening; the building masses in the foreground are light while their interiors are dark again; the painted architecture is dark. In other words, the side panels are generally light opening into a dark area, the central panels, dark opening into the light. Thus while the actual wall surface would have been "painted out" by the architectural perspective, the action of the light preserves its enclosing quality. The light and buildings come forward to meet the

dark columns; the light background comes forward to the darker middle ground. The color compresses the action into a tight frieze along the wall while the drawing extends it back into the distance. Thus the dual feeling of free space and enclosing walls typical of Rolfsen's best work is achieved.

Figure 10. Per Krohg. Hersleb School, Oslo. Stair hall. 1927. Fresco. Nature.

Per Krohg. Hersleb School, Oslo. Stair hall. 1927. Fresco. Figure 10.

A certain lack of relationship with the architecture is apparent in Per Krohg's Nature which is placed like an easel painting on the wall of the stair hall landing (Figure 10). When it is considered as a painting apart from its setting, the work is remarkable for its imaginative theme and rich color. Krohg portrays life in a tree stump where black and red ants battle while snails, worms, beetles, and other insects look on disinterestedly. The activity of human beings on farms and in cities is placed far in the background as though the artist had lost his faith in the importance of man.

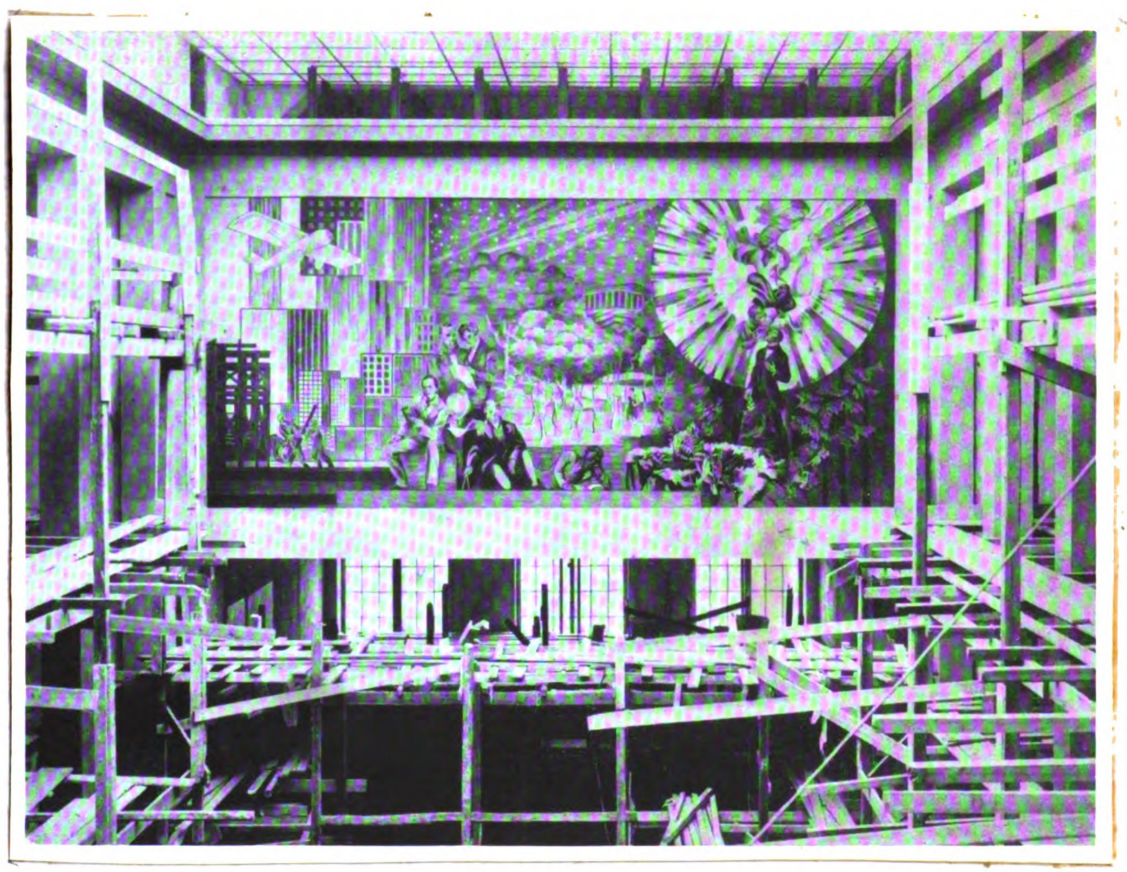
The painting is not monumental in form or conception. It is composed of repeated circular forms of insect bodies, tree roots, and leaves. The originality of the work lies in its use of dimensional contrast; the laws of linear perspective give the insects human size and reduce the people to mites on the horizon.

The composition is enhanced by the elegant drawing and the refined color. The insects have been thoroughly studied and their characteristic actions and positions faithfully recorded in sharp detail. "The insects' movements are full of harmony, their form painterly, if one thinks of

them as a sort of people with many legs," writes Krohg.[30]

Krohg proves himself a masterful colorist in this panel. The sky is a fresh, delightful aqua against which is set the soft brown tree stump with its few light green leaves. The landscape at each side is painted in typically Norwegian colors: yellow-green streaked with lines of rose and blue. The insects themselves make particularly rich decoration. The rusty red ants fighting with their blue-black relatives contrast with the soft pastels of snail shell and the yellow, green, and black bees, beetles, and worms. The whole panel is gay and lively. Although the children for whom the painting is intended may have difficulty understanding its meaning they cannot fail to appreciate it as colorful decoration.

Figure 11. Axel Revold. Deichman Library, Oslo. Circulation Department. 1932. Fresco.



Axel Revold. Deichman Library, Oslo. Circulation Department. 1932. Fresco. Figure 11.

In the Deichman Library on the wall over the circulation desk Revold painted an allegory of modern learning: science, the arts, and technology (Figure 11). Although the artist intended a contrast between a man-made and a natural environment the opposing abstraction and naturalism in drawing and color become too antagonistic. The figures and landscape are realistically portrayed; the city is a series of rectangles and Inspiration, a wheel of stick-like rays. The figures are painted with strong highlights, and Inspiration is gilded. The severe geometric forms at each side, the circle of Inspiration and the rectangles of the city, were undoubtedly intended to balance each other with the figure group forming a connecting arc between them; however, the three motifs fail to work successfully together. The wall as a whole is theatrical and heavy.

Figure 12. Axel Revold. University Library, Oslo. Stair hall. 1933. Fresco. Voluspå.

Axel Revold, University Library, Oslo. Stair hall. 1933. Fresco. Figure 12.

Revold decorated the walls to the left and right of the stairs in the University Library. The themes of the paintings come from Norse mythology, Voluspå, or the prophecy of the destruction of the gods and the rebuilding of the world after the fall.

On the window wall is painted the rebuilding scene. The composition of the painting follows the Venetian tradition of landscape painting, a land mass to the right with a deep perspective view to the left in front of which stand a man and woman. The muddy color is in no way reminiscent of Venetian landscape painting, however.

The prophecy of the destruction of the work is represented by the Tree of Life with the Serpent of Evil gnawing at its roots (Figure 12). The three Norns, the fates who watch over the past, present, and future, surround the tree. The entire iconography is somewhat confused, for Tor, the god of storm and war, rushes through the clouds to the left in his goat chariot. Below him stands the Witch of Prophecy. These figures were later developments than the Norns in the northern mythology.

The composition is based on a zigzag line repeated in the tree branches and roots, the mountain landscape, the bolts of lightning, and the angular positions of the figures. Into this pattern are introduced the curviliniar forms of fire, smoke, clouds, and the wildly moving figures of Tor and the Witch. Typical of the painting is the jarring contrast between the realistically painted eagle and the geometric branch upon which he is perched.

The wall as a whole lacks unity of composition. While the left side and bottom are quite free in form, the right and upper sections are completely geometric. The painting could have been saved by a rich and refined use of color, but unfortunately the color is subdued and muddy. The painting does not arouse antagonism but is easily forgotten.

Figure 13. Per Krohg. Electricity and Gas Works, Oslo. Public Service Hall. 1931. Fresco.

Per Krohg. Electricity and Gas Works, Oslo. Public Service Hall. 1931 Fresco. Figure 13.

The fresco for the Oslo Electricity and Gas Works' Public Service Hall is one of Krohg's most successful architectural paintings. In color and composition as well as theme it is appropriate to the room and complements the architecture. At the same time, it retains its individuality and independence as a painting.

The mural represents electricity at work (Figure 13). It is a painting of men and machines set in a landscape and is itself a machine-like painting. Throughout the composition objects are converted to a decorative pattern particularly noticeable in the representations of evergreen trees in the forest, the triangular roofs in the city, and the rectangles of the buildings. Even the slanting shadows cast on the painting by the windows made a part of the slanting lines of the composition. The painting is limited as much as possible to variations of the three primary colors: light grey-blue, buff, and deep, greyed rose approaching brown.

The mural is formal in keeping with the style of the architecture. At first glance it appears symmetrical, but small variations exist within the composition. A distant mountain landscape appears at each side; the power lines

lead into the foreground, and between them is another deep perspective view of Oslo in the center of the field. The entire composition is built up of vertical and horizontal lines except for the movement of the power lines which sweep in from each side changing the basically static composition into a dynamic one, just as electricity has the power to give movement to otherwise still objects in the city. The mural tells its story in a simple, straightforward way. It serves its purpose of decorating the wall, articulating the space, and describing the function of the building to the public.

Figure 14. Per Krohg. University Library, Oslo. Stair Hall. 1932. Fresco. Ragnarok.

Per Krohg. University Library, Oslo. Stair hall. 1932. Fresco. Figure 14.

In the decoration of the Stair hall of the University Library with Revold, Per Krohg was to paint the wall over the landing between Revold's two frescoes. The setting is unfortunate for the painting is difficult to see except from the upper hall. In his representation of the gloomy theme of Ragnarok, Krohg paints a peculiarly terrifying illustration of the destruction of the world in contemporary terms (Figure 14). A monster race of machine men is shown attacking the world and converting men and women into an endless line of marching automats. The conquerors are almost indistinguishable from their machines.

The composition is appropriately mechanical. The movements cross and stop one another, not symmetrically but at least in perfect equilibrium. The color is metallic and cold. The painting style itself calls to mind the geometry of the machine. The lines are crisp and the modeling is hard. The figures are creations of curved sheets of metal rather than of flesh. Everything is drawn as a simplified geometric pattern with none of the discord and irregularity of life.

The painting itself is gripping in spite of the fact that man has now perfected a superior race of monsters with which to destroy himself. It is both a commentary on contemporary civilization's worship of the machine and a warning to man that personality may be destroyed if human values are ignored. Krohg has created a mechanized nightmare, a "machine age Hell."

Figure 15. Per Krohg. Blindern University, Oslo. Vestibule. 1935-38. Fresco and stained glass. West Wall.

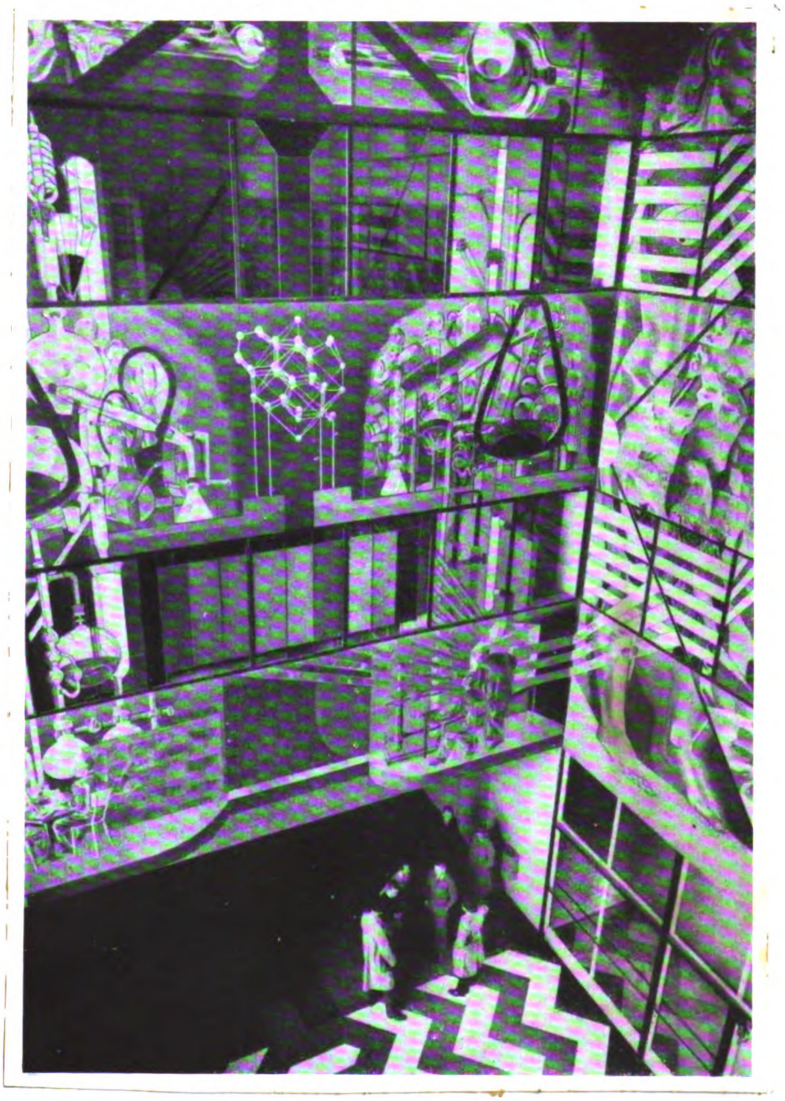
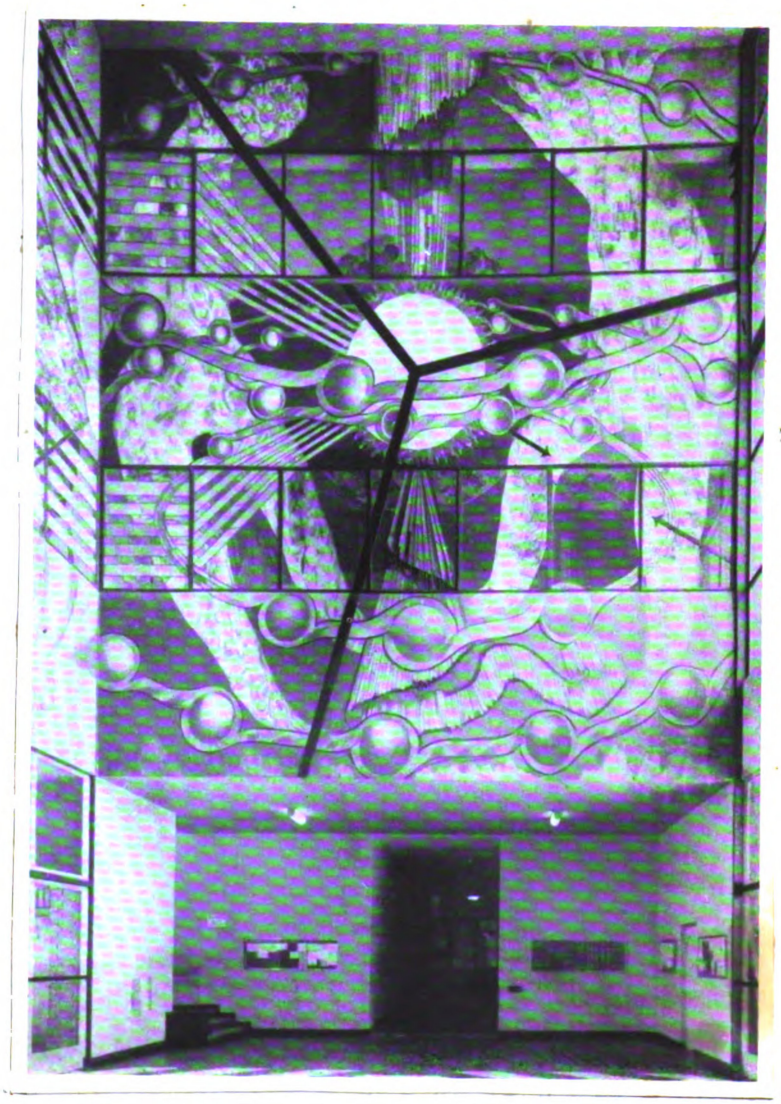


Figure 16. Per Krohg. Blindern University, Oslo. Vestibule. 1935-38. Fresco and stained glass. East Wall.



Per Krohg. Blindern University, Oslo. Vestibule. 1935-1938. Fresco and stained glass. Figures 15-16.

The vestibule of Blindern University is a large room three stories high. The south wall is of plate glass; the other three walls are divided horizontally by an unbroken row of windows at each floor. (Figure 15). Krohg chose to compose all three walls as a single unit painting in fresco over the wall areas and using stained glass in the window areas.

The composition, an ingenious combination of geometric and natural forms, begins on the east wall with the sun as the central motif (Figure 16). From the sun extend straight black lines as well as broad yellow rays, gasses, fluids, and strange cellular patterns. A rather free organic form, the elemental stuff of which the world is to be formed, lies in a circle around the sun converting the wall into undulating surface behind the geometric frame provided by the black bands. Two groups of rays extend out from the sun to the rows of windows in the wall. By following the windows around the room, the rays unite all three walls and, furthermore, create an impression that the horizontal bands of windows were an intentional part of the composition of the painting. The stained glass of the windows is more appropriate for the glow of the sun than fresco painting.

The north wall is devoted to the natural sciences. Giant figures of a man, woman, and child fill the space. The wall is again divided by black lines which connect the midpoints of the four sides of the panel and form a diamond shaped frame for the child whose head marks the geometric center of the wall. The sections of the bodies of the figures which fall between the framing black lines are painted as landscapes representing the natural sciences of botany, zoology, and geology. The sun from the east wall still dominates as the life giving force.

The west wall is devoted to the physical sciences. The sun's rays are broken down by a prism into the spectrum in the center of the panel. Man, too, has lost the dominating physical position in the world which he held on the north wall. As he works beneath the huge combinations of laboratory apparatus, he is a tiny creature physically but powerful mentally. The central position held by the sun in the solar system and the child in the natural world is now filled by a diagram of the structure of the molecule. The power of the sun is still of primary importance, but man is learning to harness its power. This is the function of the university to which this room is an entrance.

In spite of their ingenious composition which represents the entire world of science and scientific research in one comparatively small area and unites the three walls and two bands of windows into a single field, the Blindern frescoes are not entirely successful. They fail largely because of their coloring. After an absence in the University Library, the gay, fresh color of the Hersleb School frescoes has returned to Krohg's work in trebled intensity. The highly keyed color developed in glass painting is carried into the fresco work where a more subdued tone is more appropriate. Thus, the walls and windows are united by the color, but the effect is garish rather than rich. All three walls are directly illuminated by the light from the plate glass wall on the south so that the colors, already brilliant, appear even more intense. The combinations and contrasts become particularly offensive in the oversized human figures which are painted in rose with yellow highlights and blue-green shadows. In figures standing three stories high in a room of rather small horizontal dimensions, the effect is oppressive.

The work forms a remarkable contrast to Ragnarok in theme and presentation. A much more optimistic point of view on the part of the artist may account for the emphasis on natural forms, the freedom of composition within geometric

limits, and the bright, clean color. While Ragnarok was a warning to civilization against over-mechanization and eventual domination by the machine, the Blindern paintings are a more hopeful belief in man's power to understand and control his environment.

Figure 17. Alf Rolfsen. The New Crematorium, Borgen. Chapel. 1932-37. Fresco. Interior, Tree of Life.

Figure 18. Alf Rolfsen. The New Crematorium, Borgen. Chapel. 1932-37. Fresco. Right aisle, Youth and middle age.

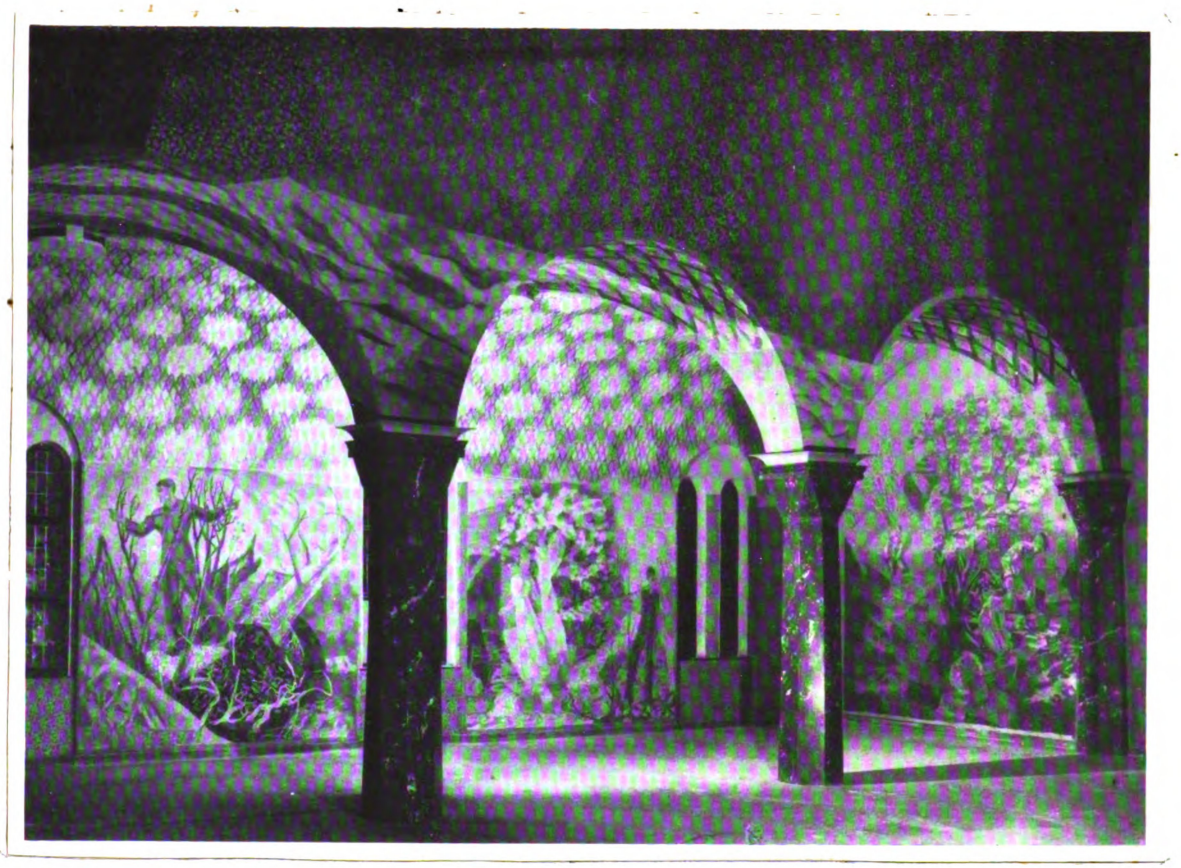
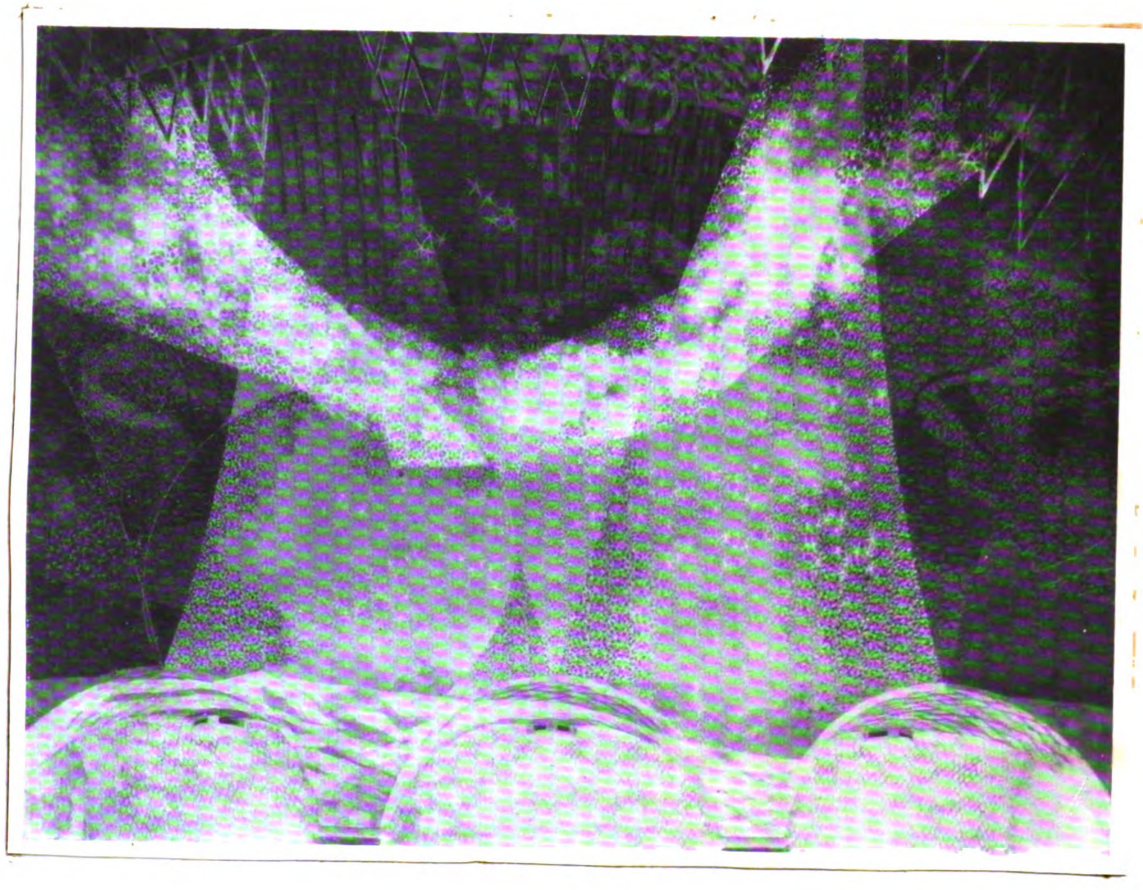


Figure 19. Alf Rolfsen. The New Crematorium, Borgen. Chapel. 1932-37. Fresco. Interior, Evening.

Figure 20. Alf Rolfsen. The New Crematorium, Borgen. Chapel. 1932-37. Tempera. Dome, detail of the decorative painting.



Alf Rolfsen. The New Crematorium. Borgen. Chapel. 1932-1937. Fresco and tempera. Figures 17-20.

The Chapel of Borgen Crematorium presented an unusually difficult problem to the artist. The hall itself is roofed by a low dome. The side aisles, separated from the central hall by arcades, are dwarfed by the dome and seem wholly unrelated to the central area. It was necessary that the decoration lighten the effect of the dome and give an impression of unity to the room. When the function of the Crematorium Chapel is considered, the problem becomes even more difficult. The theme of the paintings must be acceptable to all faiths, and the method of representing the theme must be meaningful to people of every degree of sophistication.

Rolfsen represents the never-ending cycle of life and death in nature. On the outer walls of the side aisles is the story of man from birth to old age. On the main wall, opposite the entrance, the Tree of Life is the dominating motif (Figure 17). The Tree is painted as though seen from below. Its giant trunk rises at a slight diagonal from right to left filling the wall space with the pattern of its leaves. In the upper right center a branch is caught by a beam of light casting a shadow which falls in the form of a cross above the platform for the bier. This shadowy cross is the

only specifically Christian symbol in the room. At the right of the tree a man and woman, clutching their robes, huddle together looking backward toward the earthly life which is represented in the arcade painting. At the left of the tree they have dropped their heavy robes and rise ecstatically into the light. Thus is the never-ending cycle emphasized: constant life arising from death, one earthly generation following another, heavenly life following earthly life.

Each panel in the side aisles has a strong independent composition, yet all are united by the decorative pattern of the vault. The allegory of middle age and the difficult road is, for example, built in the strong yet subtle composition of which Rolfsen is a master (Figure 18). He combines a powerful feeling for space and plastic structure with a decorative pattern which holds the composition to the wall surface. The field is sufficient unto itself. Every movement has a counter movement; every diagonal is stabilized; every outward movement is stopped and turned into the picture again. The entire field is filled with short, broken lines in keeping with its motif of struggle against the harshness of nature, and yet all these movements are held within the bounds of the allotted space. Nevertheless, the painting is not isolated from its surroundings but fits harmoniously in with the neighboring panels. The lines of

the branches to the right in the autumn scene are repeated in the background planes to the left in the preceding spring-time panel. Just as the figures of the girls are facing and walking in the direction of the man in autumn, so the man walks on to the final panel, Evening.

Evening is one of the finest single panels in the building; a quiet, dignified composition whose theme is admirably suited to Rolfsen's personal style (Figure 19). In the center of the field a woman sits by a quiet pool in a stream, alone and thoughtful. Her figure is reflected in the pool adding subtly to the stability of the composition. The movement of the composition revolves slowly about the figure and its reflection giving a feeling of stability and symmetry to the field which is not there in actuality. The earth and rocks make a shallow arc around the pool rising to the right in more rocks and shrub formations, to the left in the movement of the stream and its banks. The upward movements are caught ny the bridge which then repeats in an angular fashion the slow circle of the land about the pool. The sky is softly modeled in tans and yellows which blend into the vault above.

The woman's figure shows Rolfsen's masterful figure style. The details of facial expression or dress are never allowed to dominate the plastic structure of the body or the

movement of the figure. That Rolfsen has been influenced by his studies of Greek sculpture and of early Italian Renaissance mural painting and by his early interest in Cubism is apparent. By the time of the Crematorium painting, however, these studies had unconsciously become blended into a single, personal style. Rolfsen's style is one of the most sincere and dignified in contemporary art.

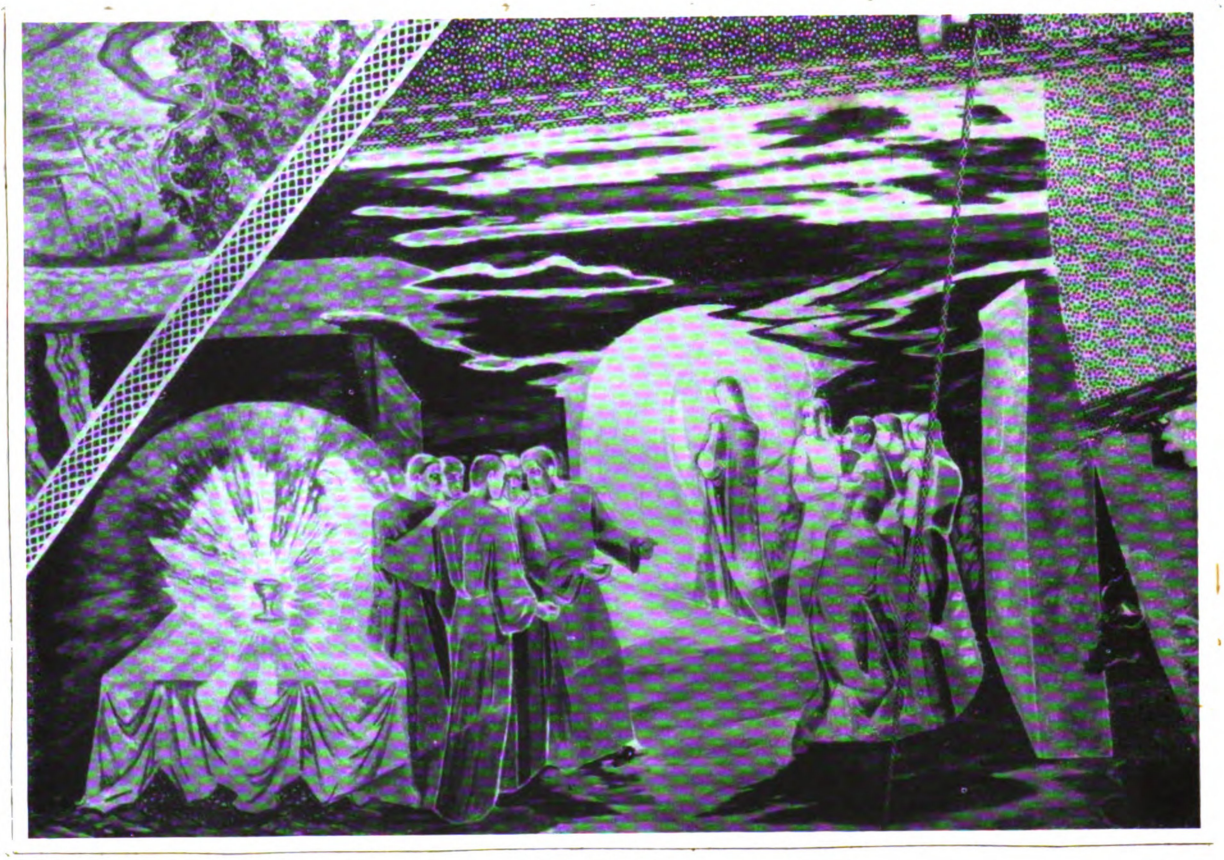
The painting of the Crematorium chapel shows a wonderful improvement in Rolfsen's use of color. The color is still subdued as is appropriate for this setting, but it has become richer and more varied than ever before. The new development of color values in Rolfsen's painting is especially apparent in the dome, one of the masterpieces of Norwegian decorative painting (Figure 20). The vault is painted blue, blue of every conceivable tone and value. The heavy, depressing dome has been converted into a night sky, all embracing, all pervading, drawing paintings and people into its folds, comforting and consoling, rising and lifting. It is painted <u>al seco</u>, blue over blue in wonderful tones, accented and highlighted by dazzling grey and yellow stars and swirls of star mist. It turns the clumsy, broken architectural space into an artistic entity at the same time that it gives it lightness through variation. Through the painting of this mysterious blue heaven Rolfsen has succeeded in

underlining both the form and the function of the room. The round form is repeated in the sweeping circles and ellipses of the pattern which with their constant intersecting raise the eye, mind, and spirit heavenward. He has made out of the painting of the Crematorium Chapel a hymn of joy and of triumph to life and nature.

Figure 21. Hugo Lous Mohr. Cathedral of Oslo, Oslo. Ceiling. 1936-1950. Egg tempera on wood. Interior, nave.

Figure 22. Hugo Lous Mohr. Cathedral of Oslo, Oslo. Ceiling. 1936-1950. Egg tempera on wood. The Baptism.

Figure 23. Hugo Lous Mohr. Cathedral of Oslo, Oslo. Ceiling. 1936-1950. Egg tempera on wood. The Last Supper.



Hugo Lous Mohr. Cathedral of Oslo, Oslo. Ceiling. 1936-1950. Egg tempera on wood. Figures 21-23.

Mohr is not bound by traditional religious art but interprets the Bible in his own way in his ceiling painting in Oslo Cathedral. He gives to the traditional stories and concepts a new, pertinent meaning for the twentieth century worshippers.

The interior walls of the church are painted white; their simplicity is accented by a richly carved and gilded Baroque altarpiece and pulpit. The shallow, wooden barrel vault provides an unbroken field for decoration.

Mohr has chosen as his central motif the sun, the traditional symbol of spiritual power in the universe (Figure 21). Alternating bands of shadow and light radiate from the sun in concentric circles dividing the vaults transversely. These bands of darkness and light are cut by golden rays which extend from the sun and mark off the boundaries of the separate motifs along the cornice. The rays are concentrated at the meeting of the vaults forming a cross of light. The figure paintings above the cornice illustrate the Confession of Faith with scenes from the Old and New Testaments. By placing these compositions along the cornice and leavning the overhead ceiling to a decorative pattern of stars and clusters

of rays, Mohr brings the vital parts of his painting into the worshipper's view and avoids the possibility that the congregation may ignore the message of the paintings during the service.

In the entrance vault the four Evangelists and the four Major Prophets lead into the main composition. The Evangelists stand in pairs opposite each other against the light band; the Prophets remain in the band of shadow.

The chancel vault is the Vault of the Creation with God the Creator in the central field. From the hands of God come down two seraphim, one carrying the cross, the sign of suffering, and the other, the dove, the sign of the Spirit. Along the sides of the vault the great catastrophies and miracles of the Old Testament are contrasted as illustrations of the purification and final victory of man through defeat. From the left side, the side of defeat, the composition leads to the Vault of Christ in which erring man is saved by the coming of Christ to the world. The Christ of the central panel is an active Christ, victoriously fighting the dragon of evil and bringing light into the darkness by his raised cross. Individual motifs at each side refer to the Second Article of the Confession of Faith. Over the right transept following the line of victory is the Vault of the Holy Ghost, the vault of life and spirit. The Holy Ghost is

suggested by the scene of the baptism of Christ in the center field. The figure of Christ is a quiet, meditating figure, sharply contrasting with the active Christ in the left transept. The scenes portrayed along the cornice illustrate the Third Article of Faith. Mohr has painted the well-known Biblical scenes and traditional spiritual symbols without sentimentality. He makes of them instead a series of powerful expressions of the triumphant Christian ethic.

Typical of Mohr's combination of traditional stories and new iconography and style is his portrayal of the baptism of Christ (Figure 22). The composition is roughly symmetrical and contains certain traditional elements such, the representation of the Holy Ghost by the Dove and God by outstretched arms and hands. John the Baptist is, however, omitted; all interest is concentrated in the single figure of Christ. Instead of the usual landscape setting the scene is enclosed in broad bands of light with the simplest suggestion of a mountainous horizon whose peaks are repeated in a decorative pattern in the sky. Within the holy light is the Tree of Life. The style is assuredly twentieth century in its grasp of essentials in the presentation; it is very Norwegian in its use of intense, light colors and its assimilation of the principles of Cubism into a basically representational style.

The Last Supper is even further removed from traditional symbolism than The Baptism (Figure 23). Mohr's painting of the Last Supper depicts the scene just after the crisis. Christ walks off, his back to the room, a solitary figure going to face his trial alone. John is also alone. He remains by the table meditating on the vision of the mystically glowing cup. The setting is neither an interior nor a landscape but a blend of both. A simple geometric form suggestive of building is seen to the right and the left; a tormented sky writhes overhead; shafts of light divide the composition diagonally.

The figures are simply drawn and clothed in dignified drapery of no specific historical period. Mohr relies heavily on the use of drawing rather than modeling. He uses color for its psychological effect rather than to create a feeling of plastic form. In the Oslo Cathedralpaintings his use of red is particularly noteworthy; every possible value from light orange to dark purple is present in all degrees of intensity, brilliantly complemented by yellow, yellow-green, light blue, and pale aqua.

The central decorative pattern of stars and ground in bands of grey and white on dark blue alternating with shades of blue on grey and tan and broken by rays of glaming orange-yellow creates an unfortunate effect. The color contrast is

so strong that it detracts from the figure painting. Stretching above the austere white walls and the discreet richness of the altar and pulpit the ceiling painting seems almost gaudy. The effect is not entirely the painter's fault. Since it was necessary to execute the entire painting by electric light, Mohr did not see the colors as they now appear until the work was completed, and the temporary ceiling erected at the level of the cornice in place of scaffolding was removed.

Figure 24. Axel Revold. City Hall, Oslo. Festival Gallery. 1938-42. Fresco. Shipping and Industry, west wall.

Figure 25. Axel Revold. City Hall, Oslo. Festival Gallery. 1938-42. Fresco. Fishing and Agriculture, east wall.

Axel Revold. City Hall, Oslo. Frestival Gallery. 1938-42. Fresco. Shipping and Industry, west wall. Figure 24. Fishing and Agriculture, east wall. Figure 25.

The west wall is broken by a high, central fireplace and two intricately panelled doors. The painting Shipping and Industry, is made to harmonize with the architectural features by the representation of the scaffolding in the ship yards in the narrow panels between the door and fireplace which carry the composition to the floor (Figure 24). Interest is concentrated in the mass of buildings and machinery over the fireplace and in the figures of the workmen over each door. The painting is hard and geometric taking its major movements from the sharp angular forms of roof tops and scaffolding. Even the figures of the men have an angular quality achieved by the painter through an emphasis on wrinkles in clothing and sharply bent elbows and knees. At the top of the composition the low mountains of the Oslofjord form a horizontal line which acts as a foil to the jagged contours and nervous movements created by the short diagonals below. The representational portrayal of figures and landscape fails to harmonize with the two-dimensional quality of the simplified building forms. A rusty iron red dominates the color scheme together with lighter tones of tan and a cold, deep blue.

In the center of the east wall is a panelled door framed by a wide border of grey marble carved in a delicate gilded pattern. On the wall surrounding the doorway the painting, Fishing andAgriculture, replaces the mechanical lines of industry with the flowing forms of nature (Figure 25). While the west wall is an intellectual and mathematical composition, the east wall is pure romantic illustration. Revold paints his favorite motif, the Lofoten fisheries, at the top of the composition; however, the major portion of the field is filled by the luxuriant foliage of a valley interior which forms the setting for a romantic portrayal of the life of the farmer. The compositional field is organized and given stability by the two diagonal lines of the shore which rise upward from the sides toward the center dividing the agricultural section from the fisheries. The painting captures a sense of the richness of nature both in its color and in its rolling, intertwining linear pattern. An icy blue-green heightened by a discreet use of yellow-ochre dominates the color scheme. On both walls the colors are used in the same manner, rich and dark in the lower areas lightening as the compositions rise, and becoming thin and delicate in the seascapes at the top of the paintings.

The representation of industry by rectilinear forms and cold, subdued colors and the selection of curvilinear

forms and rich greens and yellows in the painting of nature, as well as the symmetrical arrangement of the compositions as a whole seem too obviously contrived. The paintings provide a direct appeal to the senses but only slight stimulation for the imagination or challenge to the mind. They form handsome decorative additions to the room and as such are the best examples of Revold's monumental painting in Oslo.

Figure 26. Henrik Sörensen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-50. Oil on wood. Work, Administration, and Festivity, south wall.

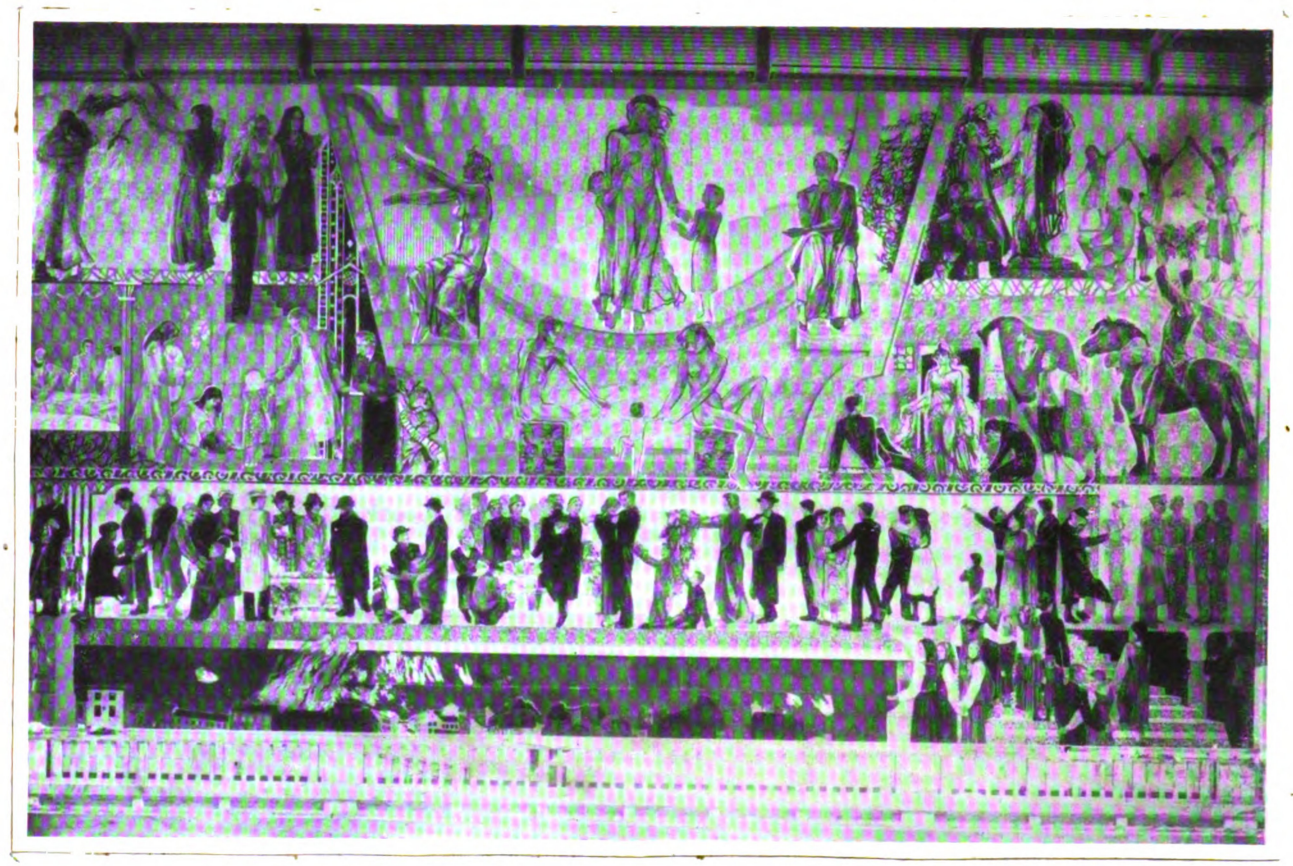
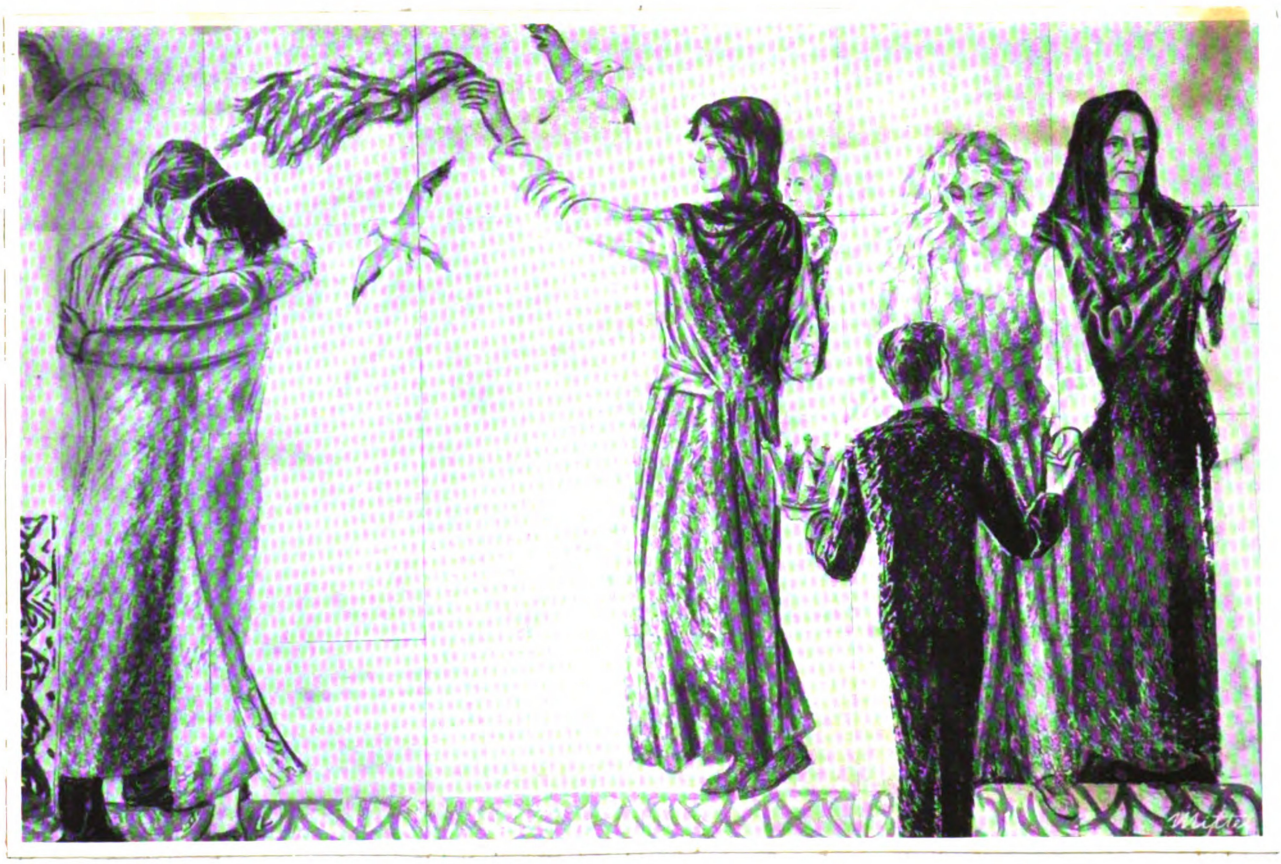


Figure 27. Henrik Sörensen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-50. Oil on wood. Detail of the south wall.



Henrik Sörensen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-1950. Oil on wood. Work, Administration, and Festivity, south wall. Figures 26-27.

The painting on the south wall is divided into four registers (Figure 26). Sörensen tries to capture the feeling of universality found in a classic frieze by eliminating the background and placing the figures in a single plane; however, the painting is brought into a historical context by the very specific details of costume and facial expression. Each panel becomes a loosely connected procession lacking unity or emphasis. The third and fourth registers have a unified movement swinging up to right and left necessitated by the central allegory of Charity which fills both of the upper registers in the center. The allegory of Charity is composed in the traditional triangular arrangement with a supporting figure at each side; however, an attempt to inject some variation into the symmetry of the group destroys its harmony and balance.

The outstanding fault of the painting lies in the use of strongly contrasting colors in the background. The brilliant, deep blue of the first register is separated from the light yellow background of the second by bands of grey, green, and orange. A band of gold painted with Rosemaling decorations serves as a border to the brilliant orange of

the third register and divides it from the upper panel which is light grey-blue. Gilding is used liberally over the painting, and the central panel is framed in gold. The allegorical figures are drawn in red and modeled in pale blue and yellow. They are outlined by a wedge which is cut into the wooden panel and then gilded.

It is in the painting of a few individual figures that Sörensen's real ability as a colorist is apparent (Figure 27). The young farm women in their national costumes form excellent details painted in the rich colors of Telemark Rosemaling, deep reds, orange, blue, brown, and a little green and white. The color combinations which Sörensen uses so effectively in his easel paintings become garish when expanded to wall size. It is only in certain details especially of the farm people that the huge painting seems worthy of Sörensen. In spite of this and other attempts at monumental painting he remains essentially an easel painter and landscapist.

Figure 28. Alf Rolfsen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-50. Fresco. The Occupations of the People of Norway, north wall.

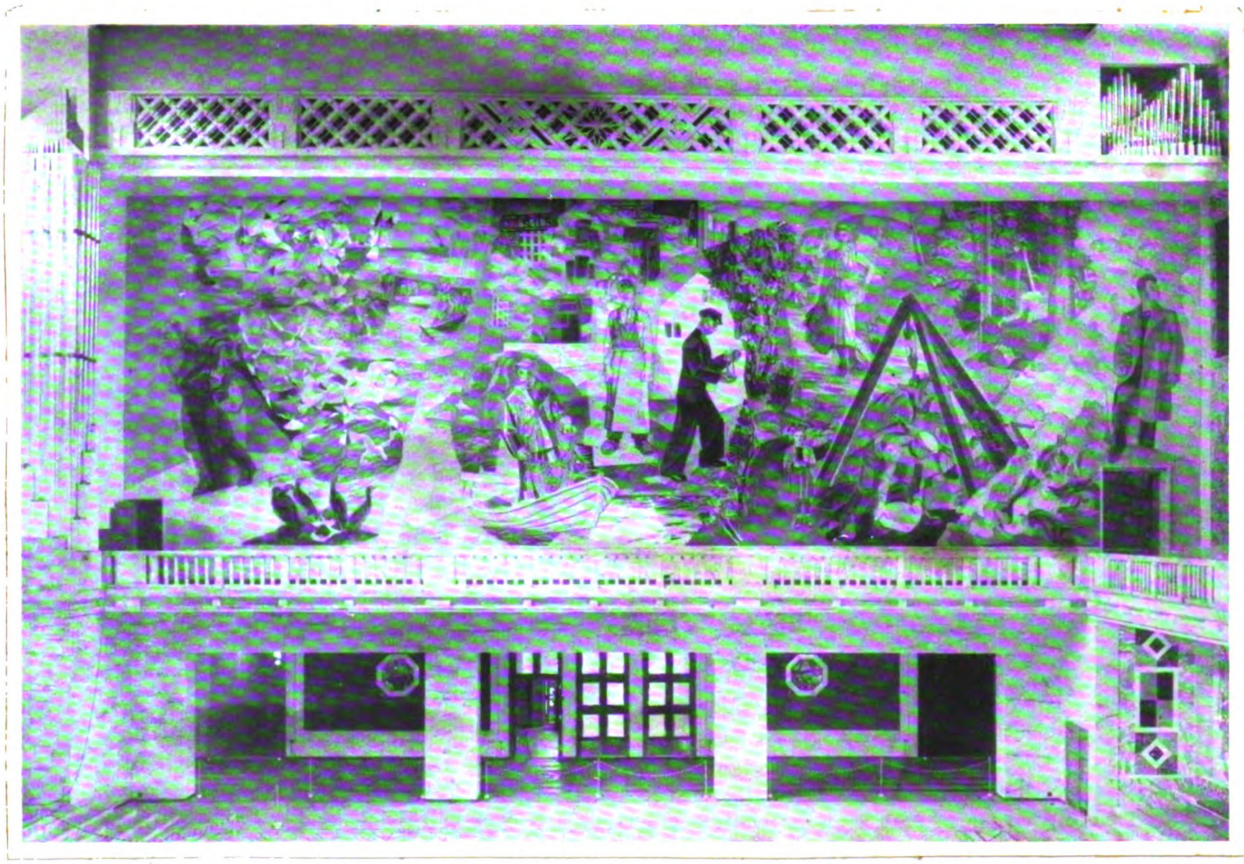


Figure 29. Alf Rolfsen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-50. Tempera. St. Hallvard, west wall.

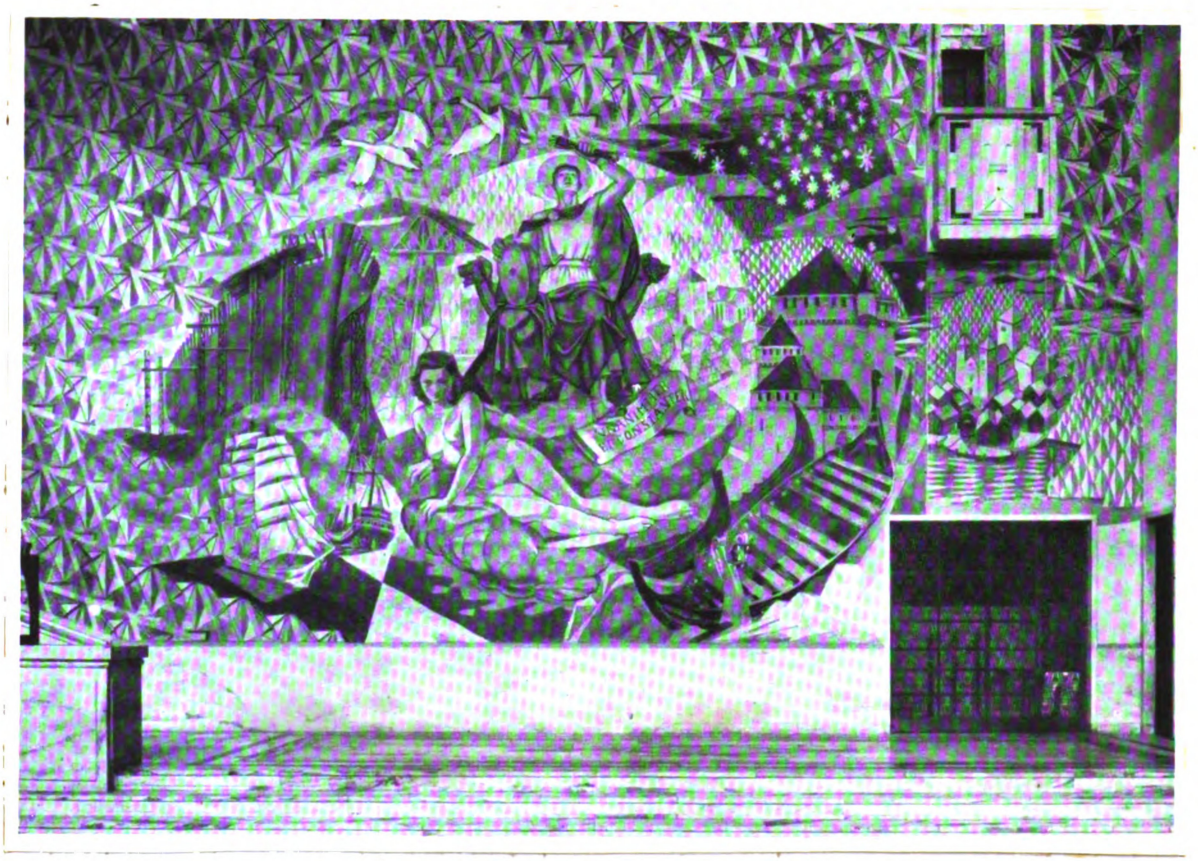
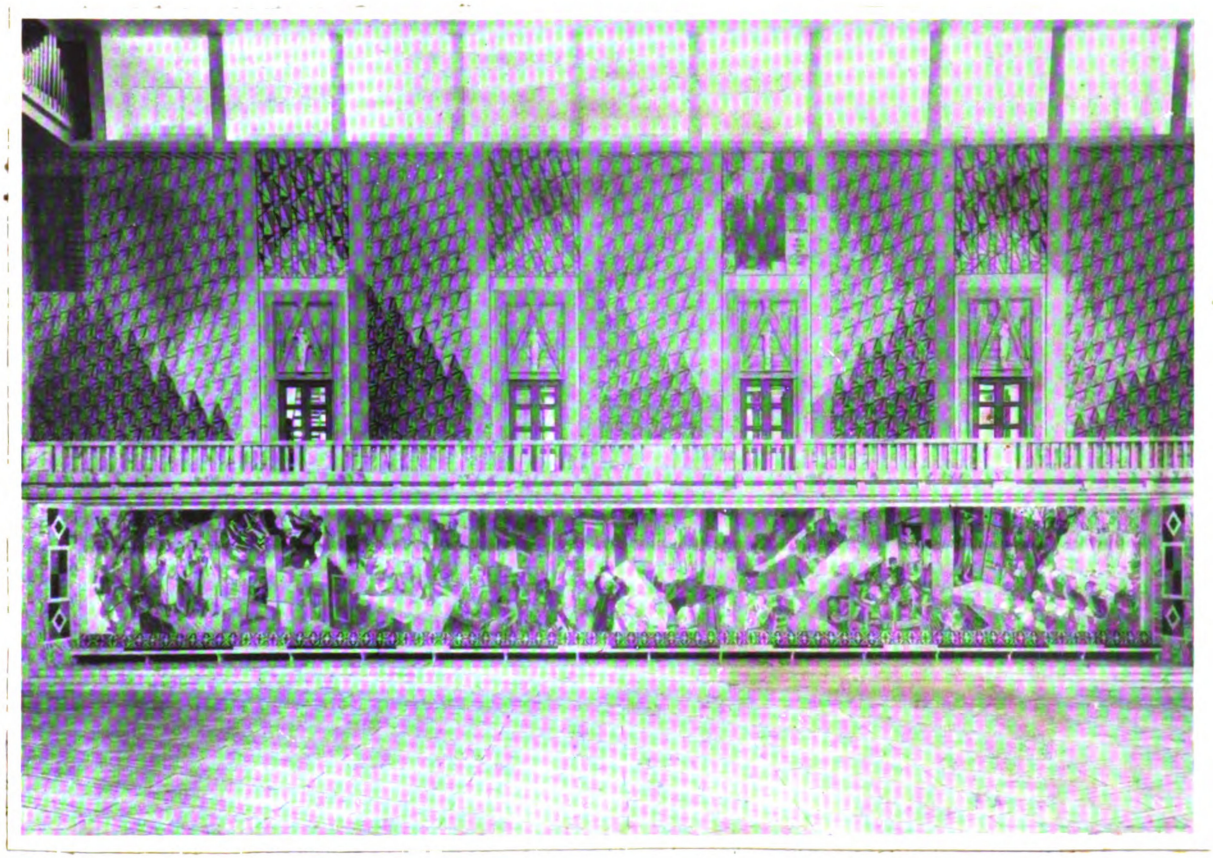


Figure 30. Alf Rolfsen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-50. Fresco. The Occupation Frieze, east wall.



Alf Rolfsen. City Hall, Oslo. Central Hall. 1939-1950. Fresco and tempera. The Occupations of the People of Norway, north wall. Figure 28. St. Hallvard, west wall, Figure 29. The Occupation Frieze, east wall. Figure 30.

Alf Rolfsen's paintings on the remaining three walls of the central hall provide a sharp contrast to the south wall by their quiet color, intricate composition, classic figure style, and monumental feeling. On the north wall Rolfsen represents the most typical occupations of the Norwegian people, forestry, farming, fishing, sailing, and light industry. (Figure 28). The hoist of a stump-puller standing out in its strong triangular form in the lower right of the field establishes the dominant movement of the composition, a series of intersecting diagonals. This triangular form to the right is reversed to the left as a flight of gulls forms a triangle with its base at the upper edge of the composition and its apex at the lower. Between these two triangles diagonal lines fall in a giant zigzag motif reminiscent of barbarian decoration. A series of circles and ellipses sets up a contrast to this rigid pattern of diagonals.

The painting is carefully composed in relation to the architecture. Three wide doors open into the hall below the painting, reducing the lower wall space into little more than four marble piers. A balcony at the second floor level

separates the painting from the architecture below. The upper wall area is broken by a pipe organ, grill, and two small doors. The parallel verticals of the pipe organ are minimized by a pause in the decoration where they join the painting and by a repetition of the verticals in the figure of Björnsen over the door on the right. The painting is further related to the architecture by having the diagonal lines originate directly from the piers dividing the door openings. The triangle of the stump-pulling apparatus falls exactly over the door opening to the right, the triangle of the gulls over the opening to the left. The figures of the fishermen, the factory laborer, and the seaman form a third triangle above the center door. One of the major circular forms further emphasizes each of the side doors.

The painting is enhanced by Rolfsen's discreet use of color. It is composed with only a few colors which are carried through the entire work: rich and varied greens, rusts, blues, and lighter tones of tan and pale green. The colors fade into soft pastel shades behind the framing portrait figures. The entire wall is harmoniously balanced yet gives the impression of great activity and complexity.

The decorative pattern of the east and west walls provides a contrast to the figure painting of the north and south

walls. By using a single decorative figure, a rectangle receding sharply in linear perspective, throughout the room, Rolfsen succeeds in creating an effect of length in the square hall and adds to the feeling of spaciousness which might have been reduced by the active figure compositions. The variation and gradation of color in the pattern gives an added effect of flickering lights within larger shadow areas.

The west wall is broken by many awkward architectural features: two windows, a grill, the organ, and a monumental stairway rising from the right to a large doorway under a marble canopy in the upper left. The pattern on the wall is a variation of olive green, light tan, and rust. The shadows move in diagonal lines upward and perpendicular to the stairs while the actual linear pattern parallels the staircase. St. Hallvard occupies the area at the foot of the staircase.

The composition of St. Hallvard is based on a complex system of intersecting, interlocking circles, ellipses, and triangles (Figure 29). Three circular forms accent the shape of the millstone, the largest of which forms a mandorla around the saint's figure. The circles are united by elliptical forms. Triangular patterns are superimposed on the curvilinear forms in an arbitrary fashion and relate the composition to the pattern of the wall as a whole. The color is richer

than is usually seen in Rolfsen's work although it is still soft. A circle of yellow surrounds the saint, whitish-blue dominates the right-hand lower area and rust and green the left-hand. A very definite division between colors is apparent. The painting is quite linear in character although the two figures are strongly, almost geometrically, modeled. Both the drawing of individual details and the composition as a whole are more abstract than any of Rolfsen's work since the Telegraph Building frescoes.

Although broken into two registers by a balcony the east wall is composed as a single unit (Figure 30). Above the balcony the geometric pattern of the west wall is continued. The zigzag motif of the north wall is extended over the east wall. The only figure painting in this upper section is a portrait of King Haakon VII. Although the portrait is architectural in character and a part of the decorative pattern of the entire wall, it is, nevertheless, also one of the finest, most truthful portraits of His Majesty.

The many episodes of the story of World War II in Norway are presented in a continuous frieze unified and separated at the same time by the architectural fragments which form the background. Since it is more appropriate to present buildings in a shattered condition in a war painting

views into the houses and cellars made by the partial removal of a wall do not seem contrived. The areas of light and shadow as well as the lines of the composition of the upper wall extend into the occupation frieze. The frieze has a regular rising and falling movement of its own within the over-all plan.

Three major diagonals divide the wall. All these lines come down from left to right; however, in the final scene the Seventeenth of May parade carries the movement sharply upward to the right providing a conclusion to the composition and history. A series of vertical lines along the wall reduce and stabilize the movement. An angular quality pervades not only the composition but also the drawing of the individual figures and adds to the grim intensity of the theme. Blue and purple dominate the shadows, rust and orange, the light areas. Within this general scheme color is used for its psychological value; green, for example, expresses terror and evil, and rose, the spirit of the people.

Figure 31. Aage Storstein. City Hall, Oslo. West Gallery. 1940-49. Fresco. The History of the Norwegian Constitution. Detail of the south wall.

Figure 32. Aage Storstein. City Hall, Oslo. West Gallery. 1940-49. Fresco. The History of the Norwegian Constitution. Detail of the north wall.

Aage Storstein. City Hall, Oslo. West Gallery, 1940-49. Fresco. The History of the Norwegian Constitution. Figures 31-32.

Storstein's solution of the problem presented by the high, narrow proportions of the West Gallery is to minimize the effect of height by the use of a horizontal composition. He divides the space into several large motifs, emphasizing the lower register with smaller interesting details and leaving the upper area to simple patterns of sky, architecture, and foliage. The narrative moves from right to left horizontally around the room.

The south wall has a door in the left side which is balanced by painted architecture to the right. The center of the wall is filled with the Flame of Freedom (Figure 31). Actually a mass of figures and buildings is represented, but the breaking and twisting of planes as well as the four spurts of flame that are actually represented create an impression that the entire area is exploding. The light emanating from the explosion continues as a wide band around the room. It not only represents the path of the ideas of freedom but also divides the room into three horizontal sections and serves as a connective between the three walls.

The east wall is dominated by fanciful landscape and an intricate pattern of bowing, twisting branches. The center band is lighted by the torch of freedom as it is carried along by the goddesses who stand above but to the left of the central doorway and thus keep the eye moving to the left around the room.

On the long north wall the light patterns of the bands are reversed: the middle section becomes the darkest. This wall has a relatively independent composition in each half in contrast to the south wall which had the center of interest in the French Revolution. The right side is dominated by the Tree of Eidsvoll which ends the horizontal division of the room (Figure 32). To the left is a figure composition depicting the struggle for freedom in World War II.

Of the paintings in the City Hall, Storstein's is most influenced by abstract art. The entire complex destruction and reconstruction of the figures as well as the negation of Renaissance linear perspective in movement of planes is borrowed from Cubism. Storstein's use of color, on the other hand, is not influenced by the subdued tones of early Cubism. His technique approaches Neo-impressionism, for he gives the colors life and sparkle by laying on his paint in short dashes of contrasting color. The finest color is achieved

in the subdued but glowing areas of darkness: the French Revolution, Trolls and monsters, the Eidsvoll Tree, and the night sky. Storstein uses color decoratively and expressively with little concern for a direct representation of nature.

Figure 33. Per Krohg. City Hall, Oslo. East Gallery. 1940-50. Fresco. The City and Its Hinterland. West and north walls.

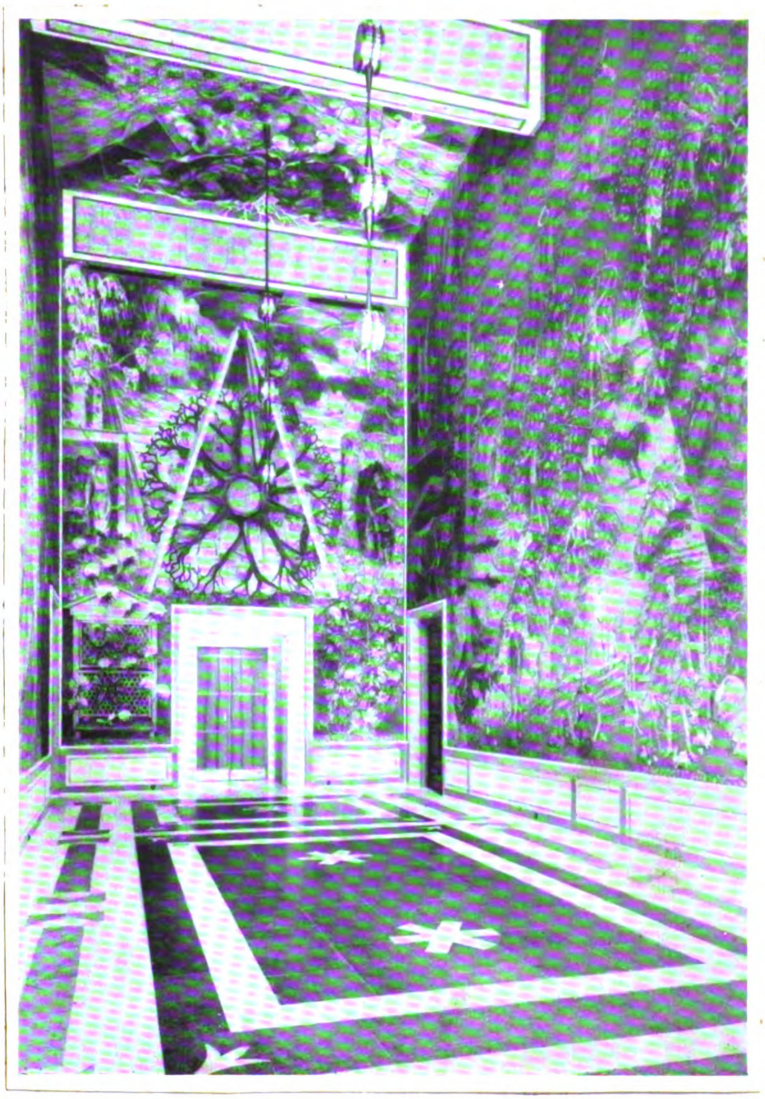
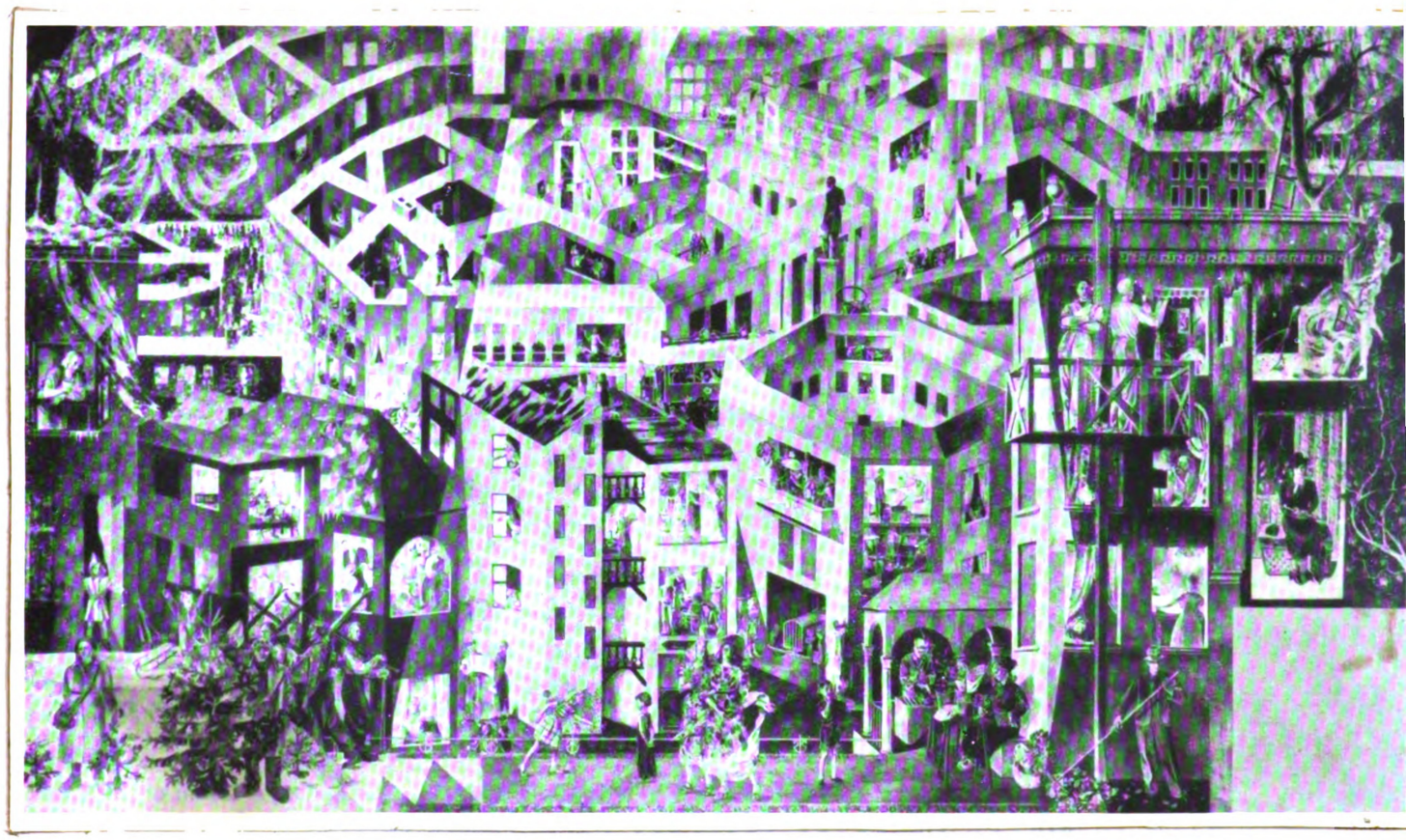


Figure 34. Per Krohg. City Hall, Oslo. East Gallery. 1940-50. Fresco. The City and Its Hinterland. Detail of the south wall.



Per Krohg. City Hall, Oslo. East Gallery. 1940-1950. Fresco. The City and Its Hinterland. Figures 33-34.

Per Krohg chose to emphasize theheight of the East Gallery by making all the major lines of the composition vertical. Both the formal and narrative movement crosses over the ceiling from the south to north wall while the end walls form separate decorative units. The wall on the east is painted in geometric patterns from early Norwegian decoration to establish a quasi-medieval atmosphere. The light blue with white, yellow, and grey accents provides a contrast to the dark, rich tones of the other walls. The entrance wall to the west is filled with the cross section of a huge tree root which forms the tracery of a "rose window" (Figure 33). Scenes of daily life take the place of stained glass panels.

The composition of the room actually begins in the central ceiling panel with symbolic representations of life and death encircled by the neck and head of a huge bird. The shadow of the bird fills the entire room. Its body rises up through the north wall; its wings spread out over the ceiling and continue down over the south wall dividing it into three sections. Within each shadow wing, the storm gods send down snow or rain forming another vertical panel.

The south wall represents city life (Figure 34). The town is seen as a series of hexagonal "cells" into which the spectator looks as though slightly above them. The entire wall thus seems to tip forward. The buildings are filled with humans of insect size busy with every sort of task and diversion. The effect is one of teeming life. Below the roof lines the walls drop straight down forming a series of parallel verticals accented by windows placed regularly above one another through which are seen the many small scenes of daily life. The north wall is composed in the same manner but depicts life in the country. The trees of the landscape form vertical elements in much the same way as the houses do in the city. The four seasons pass over the walls from winter at the east end of the room to autumn at the west.

In spite of the enormous number of small figures and busy scenes the paintings have a quiet effect which is induced by the religious connotations of the medieval decoration and vertical composition. The individual scenes are painted with humorous understanding; the figures have the life and vitality of individuals and yet convey the universality of commonplace activity. The room is a monument to the dignity of everyday existence.

Krohg's use of color in the painting contributes most to its effectiveness. In contrast to Storstein's decorative and expressive use of color in the West Gallery, Krohg's use of color is deliberately naturalistic. The color quality which is to be found in the Hersleb School painting appears again here after the alternating experiments ending in muddy or garish tones. The winter section, the section nearest the window, is painted in light blue and grey and provides a transition from the flat pastels of the window wall to the rich, glowing color of the rest of the room. The remaining walls of the East Gallery are dark even in the areas which do not lie in the shadow of the bird. A color combination of dark green with oranges, yellows, and browns gives the room a richness equaled by no other painting in the City Hall.

FOOTNOTES

1. Arne Holm, "Romutsmyknin, Belyst ved noen Eksempler fra vår Tid i Sverige og Norge," Norge Tekniske Hogskoles Årsberetning, 1946-47, Trondheim, 1950, p. 211.

2. Wilhelm Wetlesen, April 4, 1902. Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

3. Joachim Skovgaard, April 20, 1902, Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

4. Thorvald Erichsen to Erik Werenskield, June 2, 1909. Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

5. Vilhelm Wanscher to Andreas Aubert, April 3, 1911, Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

6. Oluf Wold-Torne to Gerhard Munthe, August 2, 1909. Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

7. Johan Rohde to Bernt Grönvold, May 14, 1910. Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

8. Harriet Backer to Erik Werenskield, August 16, 1911. Collection of Dr. Henning Gran, Oslo.

9. Edvard Munch as quoted by Pola Gauguin, Edvard Munch, Oslo, 1933, pp. 203-204.

10. Einar Lexow, "Konkurrancen om Börshallen i Bergen, Historik Program og Bedömmelse," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 7, No. 3-4, 1920, p. 262.

11. Einar Lexow, "Börskonkurrancen i Bergen," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 7, No. 3-4, 1920, pp. 200-206.

12. Per Krohg, "Freskene i Sjömannsskolen og Herslebs Skole," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1927, pp. 204-206.

13. Alf Rolfsen, "Freskene i Telegrafbygning, Håndverkersalen, og Herslebs Skole," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 7, 1927, p. 212.

14. Ibid., p. 215.

15. Per Krohg, op. cit., p. 208.

16. Axel Revold, "Freskene i Bergens Börs," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1927, p. 200.

17. Arne Holm, op. cit., p. 223.

18. Ibid., p. 213.

19. Alf Rolfsen, Dekorasjonen i det Nye Krematorium i Oslo, Oslo, 1931.

20. Johan Langaard, "Takmaleriene i Vår Frelsers Kirke," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 32, No. 3, 1949, pp. 129-142.

21. Harry Fett, editor, "Rådhuskonkurransene," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1938, pp. 190-191.

22. Henrik Sörensen, as quoted by Per Rom, Utsmykkingen av Oslo Rådhus, Oslo, 1952, p. 8-9.

23. Alf Rolfsen, as quoted by Per Rom, op. cit., p. 9.

24. Ibid., p. 9.

25. Ibid., p. 10.

26. Aage Storstein, as quoted by Per Rom, op. cit., pp. 12-13.

27. Aage Storstein, as quoted by Lief Östby, Ung Norsk Malerkunst, Oslo, 1949, pp. 196-199.

28. Per Krohg, as quoted by Per Rom, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

29. Henning Gran (trans. Christopher Norman), "Axel Revold," Kunsten Idag, No. 8, 1948-49, p. 19.

30. Per Krohg, op. cit., p. 208.

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16. Bildende Kunstneres Styre, editor, Norges Dekorative Malerkunst Gjennem 100 Ar, Oslo: Morten Johansens Boktrykkeri, 1952, 26 pp. 151 plates.

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1. Aulie, Reidar, "Per Krohg," Kunsten Idag, No. 10, 1949, pp. 3-29.

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3. _____, "Nyare Norskt Monumentalmåleri, II. Per Krohg," Konstrevy, Vol. 13, No. 3, 1937, pp. 107-118.

4. _____, "Nyare Norskt Monumentalmåleri, III. Alf Rolfsen," Konstrevy, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp. 41-53.

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6. Dalgard, Olav, "Edvard Munch," Syn og Segn, Vol. 9-10, 1934. Reprint, pp. 1-15.

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8. ____, "Nye Monumentalmalerier," Kunst og Kulture, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1933, p. 177.

9. ____, "Rådhuskonkurransene," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1938, pp. 183-208.

10. Gran, Henning, "Axel Revold," Kunsten Idag, No. 8, 1948-49, pp. 3-19.

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12. Krohg, Per, "Freskene i Sjömannsskolen og Herslebs Skole," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1927, pp. 201-210.

13. Langaard, Johan, "Takmalæriene i Vår Frelsers Kirke, Til Hugo Lous Mohr 60-Års Dag," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 32, No. 3, 1949, pp. 127-142.

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17. Nygaard-Nilssen, Arne, "Moderne Norsk Freskomaleri," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1927, pp. 221-254.

18. Revold, Axel, "Freskene i Bergens Börs," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1927, pp. 193-200.

19. Rolfsen, Alf, "Freskene i Telegrafbygninen, Håndverkersalen, og Herslebs Skole," Kunst og Kultur, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1927, pp. 211-220.

Letters from the personal notes of Dr. Henning Gran, Curator of Prints and Drawings, National Gallery, Oslo, Norway.

1. Backer, Harriet, to Erik Werenskiold, August 16, 1911.

2. Erichsen, Thorvald, to Erik Werenskiold, June 2, 1909.

3. Munthe, Gerhard, to Andreas Aubert, April 5, 1910.

4. Rohde, Johan to Bernt Grönvold, May 14, 1910.

5. Skovgaard, Joachim, April 20, 1902.

6. Wanscher, Vilhelm, to Andreas Aubert, April 3, 1911.

7. Werenskiold, Erik, to Bernt Grönvold, April 24, 1909.

8. Werenskiold, Erik, to Bernt Grönvold, December 25, 1911.

9. Wold-Torne, Oluf, to Gerhard Munthe, August 2, 1909.

10. Wetlesen, Wilhelm, April 4, 1902.

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Thue, Oscar, Teaching assistant, The National Gallery, Oslo, Norway.

Tschudi-Madson, Stefan, Acting Curator of the Vigeland Museum, Oslo, Norway.