

CORRESPONDENCE

For ourselves, we can acknowledge no faith but that which is given us, not by academic comparative study of the documents of bygone ages, but by the *living* Church: the *Una Catholica* which is animated by the indwelling Spirit and is in living continuity with Jesus Christ. To depart from this Church is to depart from the womb wherein the Holy Spirit begets us to Christ in faith.

M.-J. CONGAR, O.P.

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ART FOR ART'S SAKE

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—If I may reply to Mr. Ivan Brook's letter, I should like to point out that it is possible for a Catholic sacred art to develop without putting aside all work that has been done since the Reformation. It is the Catholic's fault, not the non-Catholic's, that sacred art has been allowed to go down the hill, whilst art in the sphere of the purely natural and human has advanced.

The Cubist picture placed against a Giotto can truly be similarly "organized." The difference lies in the fact that the Cubist is *only* interested in "organization"—a thing permissible in a purely abstract painting—whilst Giotto was using intuitively the same abstract principle of "organization" to express another thought and that his chief end. If the modern painter believes that Giotto never had any other end in view than that of "organization," taking the subject only as an excuse, the modern painter is wrong and must be corrected on that point, but it is ridiculous to wipe out all art since 1400.

I would suggest that very often criticism against art of the Reformation is due to a tendency to manicheism (art of the Reformation was rarely sacred, though often good profane art) rather than accuse Cubists of this. The Cubist does not consider matter evil, but he wants to talk about purely intellectual ideas. Of course sacred art can never be an abstract art, though it may use the principles discovered or made clear by abstract art. I desire "handiwork" to be considered more highly, but not by diminishing the value of the more purely intellectual side of art: action should arise out of contemplation. I am, etc.,

J. MORRIS, S.P.