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| Worringer, Wilhelm (1881-1965) |
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| Wilhelm Worringer was an art historian and art theorist whose writings had enormously wide-ranging influence. His dissertation for the University of Bern, *Abstraktion und Einfühlung: ein Beitrag zur Stilpsychologie* [*Abstraction and Empathy: Essays in the Psychology of Style*] (1907, trade edition 1908); was widely read and had significant influence on German expressionism. The book’s title suggests the deep impact that the aesthetic theories of Theodor Lipps (1851-1914) had on its genesis, for Lipps produced the first scientific theory of Einfühlung. Lipps led him to believe that, through artworks, we can experience artists’ spiritual states. From Alois Riegl (1858-1905), he adopted the idea that mimetic content counts for less than stylized form, which reflects an urge to form he termed *Kunstwollen*. Worringer maintained that commitment to realistic representation demonstrated a confidence in the material world, while interest in abstraction reveals insecurity about the material world and a greater trust in spirituality. He extended these ideas in *Formprobleme der Gotik* (1911), *Ägyptische Kunst* [*Egyptian Art*] (1927;) and *Griechentum und Gotik* (1928). T. E. Hulme (1883-1917) embraced many of Worringer’s ideas (including that of will to form) and, through Hulme, these ideas influenced early English modernism, especially Vorticism. |
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| Further reading:  (Arnheim)  (Donahue)  (Foster)  (Waite)  (Worringer, Abstraction and Empathy [Abstraktion und Einfühlung: ein Beitrag zur Stilpyschologie] (1907; 1908) )  (Worringer, Form in Gothic [Formprobleme der Gotik] (1912))  (Worringer, Egyptian Art [Ägyptische Kunst: Probleme ihrer Wertung] (1927))  (Worringer, Griechentum und Gotik: vom Weltreich des Hellenismus ) |