

Surviving the Modernist Paradigm: a fresh approach to the singular art of Anglada-Camarasa, from Symbolism to Abstraction

Maria Villalonga Cabeza de Vaca (2009)

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**OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of History of Art**

Doctoral Thesis

**SURVIVING THE MODERNIST PARADIGM:  
A FRESH APPROACH TO THE SINGULAR ART  
OF ANGLADA-CAMARASA,  
FROM SYMBOLISM TO ABSTRACTION**

Maria Villalonga Cabeza de Vaca

June 2009

**This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the award of Doctor of Philosophy**

To Egi, Max, Merlin and Martin.

## THESIS ABSTRACT

This thesis deals with the Spanish artist Anglada-Camarasa (Barcelona, 1871–Palma de Mallorca, 1959) during the twenty years he lived in Paris: 1894-1914, when he enjoyed overwhelming international success. Until the 1980s, there was little institutional interest in his work and, hence, a dearth of literature on him. In my thesis I first offer an explanation of this state of affairs and then attempt a re-evaluation of his work.

My explanation is articulated within the framework provided by the interpretation of early twentieth-century art history, originated in the 1970s, which emerged as an alternative to the dominating one defended by Modernist Paradigm supporters.

In my discussion I situate Anglada's development within the cultural currents of his time and show how he found pictorial solutions to some of the artistic concerns of his contemporaries. Once the origins of the main features of Anglada's technique are firmly grasped, both in relation to subject matter and to pictorial means, it becomes much easier to understand his success, especially among his Russian admirers. Some of these, such as Meyerhold and Diaghilev, who were leading figures of the Russian cultural world and who were well known for their pioneering taste, found inspiration in Anglada's work for their innovations.

Against the background of this historical and artistic analysis, I try to demonstrate that Anglada's figurative style influenced also Kandinsky's long transition into Abstraction, especially during the latter's stay in Murnau, before World War I, which constituted his most productive years.

My overarching aim in carrying out this original investigation is to locate Anglada in the place he deserves in the beginning of the twentieth-century History of Art. By doing this, I hope not only to contribute to the still much-debated character of this period. But, more importantly, I hope to make Anglada better known, for the beauty of his work that expresses his faith in mankind potential which deserves to be given much closer attention.

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## INTRODUCTION

The subject of this thesis is the Spanish painter Hermen Anglada-Camarasa (Barcelona, 1871– Palma de Mallorca, 1959). The investigation will be centred on the twenty years that Anglada-Camarasa lived in Paris (1894-1914) and its aim is to effect a re-evaluation of Anglada's work and of his place in the history of art. My discussion will focus both on the intrinsic value of Anglada's art and on his contribution to the development of Abstract painting. For the latter, I shall put special emphasis on his Russian connections and, in particular on his influence on Wassily Kandinsky's evolution towards Abstraction.

Anglada-Camarasa enjoyed great fame during the early twentieth century in Europe, the United States and Argentina – fame which, as far as Spanish artists were concerned, was to be surpassed later only by Picasso and Miró. The mystery that surrounds Anglada materializes in the dramatic contrast between the recognition he received during his lifetime and the oblivion to which he was relegated after his death. Apart from several articles but including exhibition catalogues, only eight books have been written about Anglada. This situation, as I shall explain later, is already changing and it is my hope that this thesis will contribute to the recovery of the artist.

Proof of Anglada's success is the list of awards and distinctions he achieved and the fact that the venues where he exhibited his work were among the most prestigious of the time. Further evidence of his success is the impact of his work on well-known artists living in Paris at the beginning of the century who went on to receive greater status in the history of art as we know it, for example Picasso, Kandinsky and Meyerhold. But the best proof of Anglada's right to be repositioned within that history is his own work. From his small sketches to his large oil paintings, Anglada's use of shape and colour

deserves the attention of anyone interested in a better understanding of the explosion of styles and interpretations of the meaning of art that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century. Arthur Danto, the art historian to whom I shall refer when explaining my methodology, has called this period of time “the age of manifestoes”. He leads the way in attempting to correct the views of linear explanations that have led to the exclusion of certain artists from the story of the emergence of artistic Modernism in Europe at the beginning of last century.

With this alternative art criticism in the background, my investigation will concentrate predominantly on the years that Anglada lived in Paris, from 1894 to 1914. It was during this period that Anglada’s work had its greatest international impact on fellow artists, including Kandinsky. Even though after 1914 he chose to retire in Mallorca, the momentum of the Parisian years meant that his success kept rolling on, until the beginning of the Spanish Civil War in 1936. In Mallorca he was visited by acquaintances and followed by pupils. His works were always in great demand and were exhibited from the Biennale to Buenos Aires. Notwithstanding the geographical spread of his success, Anglada hardly ever travelled. He organized the complicated transport arrangements for his works from the fishing village where he lived after the First World War but always refused to go personally to these places.<sup>1</sup> Even without his presence, as a result of these exhibitions, he was recognized internationally from Europe to North and South America.

The books that have been written about Anglada’s work differ in content and date of publication but, until recently, their main common point was their unavailability. I shall therefore take advantage of the vast uncharted territory that such scarce literature leaves for my own research.

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<sup>1</sup> The abundant correspondence that was exchanged while solving these matters suggests how highly appreciated he was. Anglada’s meticulous and expensive requirements were promptly granted. Palma de Mallorca. Archives Museo Anglada-Camarasa, Fundación la Caixa (MA-C). Private letters.



The earliest work, *The Art of H. Anglada-Camarasa*, was written in 1929, during Anglada's lifetime, by the English author Samuel Hutchinson Harris.<sup>2</sup> The book is by no means an exhaustive treatment of its subject matter. Its aim is more a portrayal of the artist than a thorough study of his work as part of its cultural environment. Harris was a great admirer of Anglada's talent. He gives a very intense description of the artist and his production, providing the contemporary reader with a satisfactory impression of Anglada's style and significance. The shortcomings of Harris' book arise from the fact that he was not acquainted with the totality of Anglada's works and also that Harris' final purpose was not an explanation of Anglada's works and its influences: it was rather to give the reader a vivid impression of some oil paintings that were not easily accessible.<sup>3</sup> The limitations of publishing at the time must also be taken into account. The 1929 black and white photographs were partly compensated for by the author's colourful descriptions – Harris' style of writing had to be passionate if he was to transmit to the reader the intense experience that every picture with vivid colours by Anglada produced in the spectator. However, Harris' study provides invaluable information for my present investigation. Although the book does not contain a lot of data on the subject of Anglada's first twenty years in Paris, its very existence gives proof that the subject of Anglada was interesting enough to be published so many years after his great moment of innovation, which ended approximately in 1914 with the beginning of the First World War. Harris' book supplies the reader with interesting asides, such as those on Picasso, the sole purpose of which are to describe the character and charisma of Anglada. The book also compares Anglada's colourful compositions with Wagner's music, which will be of great interest to me later on, when establishing

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel Hutchinson Harris, *The Art of H. Anglada-Camarasa – A Study in Modern Art*, (London: The Leicester Galleries, 1929).

<sup>3</sup> One must take into account that by 1929, at the time of the publication of Harris' book, Anglada had already exhibited in London in 1903, 1904 and 1908. He was to exhibit again in 1930 in both London and Liverpool.

parallels with Kandinsky. For these reasons, although Harris' book is somewhat dated, I shall use it in some of my arguments. It will be an important pillar to support my views on how, later in the century, art critics overlooked Anglada's contribution to art history.

The second book, which I shall mention only briefly, has been lost. It appears that this book was published in Mallorca in the 1950s. I have not seen a copy of it but have been informed of its existence by the curator of the Anglada-Camarasa Museum and by Beatriz Anglada Huelin, the daughter of the artist, although neither of them has ever owned a copy. Its subject was Anglada's time in Mallorca and the friends who either lived on the island or visited him there. Consequently the time period of the subject dealt with in this book was 1914-1936. Neither the time period nor the subject correspond to mine: Anglada's Parisian years 1900-1914 so its importance to my investigation is only tangential.

The third book, *Anglada-Camarasa en Argentina*, co-authored by Francesc Fontbona and Charo Sanjuán, was published in 2004.<sup>4</sup> This book deals with the subject of Anglada's presence in Argentinean collections, as well as the impact that Anglada's exhibitions had in Argentina on the period between the First and Second World Wars. It deals mainly with the Argentinean artists who followed Anglada-Camarasa from Paris to Mallorca. Like the previous work, it is a book that investigates the period from 1914 onwards and only mentions the Parisian years as the historical point when Anglada and all his Argentinean friends met.

The most thorough and complete publication still to date, *Anglada-Camarasa*, by Francesc Fontbona and Francesc Miralles, was published in 1981.<sup>5</sup> Miralles and Fontbona have been the first, and up to now the only, art historians to have attempted, successfully in my view, a careful but succinct chronological description of Anglada's

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<sup>4</sup> Francesc Miralles, Charo Sanjuán, *Anglada-Camarasa en Argentina*, (Barcelona: Editorial AUSA, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1981).

life and work. Notwithstanding the considerable value of their work, it has some important limitations. It reviews all of Anglada's life from his birth in 1871 to his death in 1959. The breadth of their scope naturally has restricted the depth of discussion: most importantly, facts regarding my theme of investigation are mentioned only superficially. In fact, this book would be described more accurately as a "catalogue raisonnée" than a deep study of Anglada's work. It has nevertheless provided me with an excellent starting-point and I have used it as a main point of reference during my research.

Chronologically, the next two books on Anglada are both catalogues of exhibitions. The first one, from 1993, *Anglada-Camarasa al Gran Hotel: Redescobrir una Epoca*, is a slim volume. Its relevance comes more from being the first exhibition catalogue after Anglada's death in 1959 than from its content.<sup>6</sup> However, it contains the first published information on the existence of Anglada's private correspondence to his friend Pere Llorc, which was not available at the time of the 1981 publication.

The second catalogue, from the 2002 exhibition *Anglada-Camarasa 1871-1959*, has a greater theoretical interest for my investigation. It comprises four articles from authors who are well acquainted with Anglada's work: in fact two of them are co-authors of the 1981 catalogue raisonnée.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless their scope is very reduced, in accordance with the purposes of an exhibition catalogue.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Anglada-Camarasa al Gran Hotel: Redescobrir una Epoca*, Exhibition Catalogue, Fundació La Caixa, 29 July – 31 October, 1993, (Illes Balears: Fundació La Caixa, 1993).

<sup>7</sup> Francesc Fontbona, 'La Fama de Anglada-Camarasa', in *Anglada-Camarasa 1871-1959, Exhibition Catalogue, Madrid, 31 January – 31 March, 2002*, (Madrid: Fundación Cultural Mapfre Vida, 2002), pp. 13 – 27.

<sup>8</sup> A small biographical work, *Hermen Anglada-Camarasa* by Francesc Fontbona, also was published in 2006. I mention it more as proof of the growing interest in Anglada than because of its content, which does not add any substantial information to previous publications  
Francesc Fontbona, *Hermen Anglada-Camarasa*, Fundación Mapfre, (Madrid: MAPFRE, 2006).

By contrast, the catalogue of the 2007 exhibition, *El Món D'Anglada-Camarasa*, contributes to the scarce literature with four articles that provide fresh information, especially on the subject of Anglada's Russian admirers.<sup>9</sup>

The same authors, Fontbona and Miralles, published in 2007 a catalogue raisonnée of Anglada's drawings: *Anglada-Camarasa. Dibujos. Catálogo Razonado*. Its publication coincided with a big exhibition presented in both Barcelona and Palma de Mallorca in 2007. The information that this book provides is limited. Still, some interesting conclusions can be extracted, as the character of the drawings was merely instrumental and, except in the case of large academies, it was not meant to be exhibited.

These publications, both older and more recent, provide support for launching an investigation, but not much more. It is my goal, with their help, to initiate the deeper research that the art of Anglada-Camarasa deserves.

This review of the somewhat exiguous scholarly literature on Anglada makes evident the vast territory left for investigation. Comparing it with the list of awards and distinctions and the numerous exhibitions in major art galleries of his time (see Appendix I) the first question that this thesis will try to answer is: Why has so little been published about Anglada-Camarasa? This thesis therefore will attempt to formulate why Anglada was ignored for so many years. I will examine the discrimination produced by the 'Modernist Paradigm', as developed around the creation of the famous New York's Museum of Modern Art - MoMA. I shall examine why, according to this paradigm, some artists were put forward as the only protagonists of the twentieth century. The MoMA's policies, inspired by the thoughts of its charismatic director Alfred H. Barr Jr,

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<sup>9</sup> *El Món d'Anglada-Camarasa*, Exhibition Catalogue, Caixaforum Barcelona, 29 November 2006 – 19 March 2007, Caixaforum Palma, 5 May – 29 July 2007, (Barcelona: Fundación La Caixa, 2007).

dominated the field with little opposition for more than fifty years. The MoMA's power came from being the first really modern museum of contemporary Western art.

Once I have addressed the way the history of Western art of the twentieth century was written and exposed some of its unwarranted dogmas and prejudices, I will proceed in the following chapters to describe Anglada's place in his socio-cultural context, his technique, artistic connections and influence. This analysis will culminate in the last chapter, which describes Anglada's artistic leading role among his contemporaries, particularly in relation to Kandinsky, whose importance in the history of European modern art has never been questioned.

The position of Anglada-Camarasa and the fact that minimal attention has been devoted to his life and work were the subject of my Master's dissertation. In it, I argued that the facts about him and his success were worthy of further study. I focused on Anglada's personal and political circumstances in order to explain his almost negligible presence in art history. In the present investigation I will continue along the same lines, developing the specific question of the value of Anglada's work to his contemporaries. With the distance that time gives us, and through the lens of more innovative points of view provided by alternative art critics, I hope that my investigation will position Anglada in the more prominent place in the history of art that he deserves.

The sequence of events in Anglada-Camarasa's life that Fontbona and Miralles include in their book, together with the invaluable information gained during my conversations with the painter's daughter, Beatriz Anglada Huelin, and with the use of both her archives and those of Anglada's Museum, have helped me to understand better some aspects of Anglada's personality that, to some extent, contributed to his exclusion from early twentieth-century European Modernism.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Beatriz Anglada Huelin in Polleça. June 2005.

According to his daughter, Anglada-Camarasa was not a political man. Nevertheless, being a man of his time, he was obliged to take political positions at certain stages of his life.<sup>11</sup> During his lifetime Spain and Europe went through deep transformations that were initially social but later became political and therefore affected all aspects of cultural expression. It is important to bear in mind that Anglada experienced three wars in his lifetime. Starting with the First World War (1914-1918), which turned inside out the Parisian artistic milieu in which Anglada was taking part, he had to live through the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and very soon after that, while he was living in France, where he had fled from Franco's army, yet again he had to put up with a direct experience of war in the Second World War (1940-1945). Anglada was always politically incorrect when positioning himself, particularly regarding the leading artistic currents. During most of the twentieth century, when all aspects of culture and especially art criticism were highly politicized, Anglada's political positions were, effectively, a handicap. His personality always led him to swim against the current of politics or art criticism, in direct contrast to Picasso. This ultimately led Anglada to being marginalized. Thus, we see that the political ideas that impregnated the writing of art history combined with Anglada's personality to cause his prolonged exclusion from recognition in the history of artistic achievements.

The highly politicized supporters of the Modernist Paradigm gave rise to the partiality of the art criticism which predominated from the 1930s, and which lasted throughout most of the past century. Its canon was followed and deeply believed in as an absolute truth by those scholars who would determine which artists were going to be known by posterity by choosing certain artists and leaving others aside. Fortunately, the

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<sup>11</sup> According to Fontbona and Miralles (1981, pp. 307 – 308) he signed to important political manifestos during his lifetime, one was "El Manifiesto de los Intelectuales Españoles" in 1915. This manifesto was to protest the official position of the Spanish Government in the First World War. The second, "Manifest dels Intelectuals Catalans" was from 1936 established the political position and worries of the main thinkers of Catalonia about the tragedy of the then five months old Spanish Civil War.

situation is not irreversible and an alternative art criticism, whose authority has been increasing for approximately the last thirty years, is challenging this exclusionary paradigm. In my investigation I use the views of the authors who have been involved in this challenge as the basis for my methodology.

Before establishing who these authors are and how I am going to apply their methods for my research, I should like to point out that the worth of Anglada-Camarasa could be defended even by the standards of the classical canon of the Modernist Paradigm as defined by its creator, Alfred H. Barr. After all, Anglada-Camarasa did contribute to the development of Abstract painting in Europe because, as I try to demonstrate during this thesis, he was, at least during a period of his creative life in Paris, artistically way ahead of his time. He was a technical innovator and contributed, unintentionally, to the move towards Abstraction which was so valued by Modernists. In addition, I shall argue that he was also an important influence on artists who actually reached the “summit” of Abstraction, Kandinsky in particular. So his relevance could be demonstrated even on these now somewhat discredited grounds. Nevertheless I have chosen to defend my arguments using the theories of the dissident (from the classic canon of Modernism) art critics that I have mentioned above because they offer a more nuanced view of art history. With their arguments, these authors uncover the social dimensions behind Anglada’s exclusion that as well as questions like race, gender or sexual orientation include stylistic reasons and politics. This line of argument erodes the theories of Alfred H. Barr, Roger Fry, Clive Bell and others, who set the stage for Harold Rosenberg, Robert Rosenblum and Clement Greenberg. The belief that art is an autochthonous way of human expression unrelated to its material surroundings is implicit in the theories of those thinkers. As I shall explain in Chapter One, the views of this oligarchy of art critics, thanks to a general admiration, reigned without strong

opposition for a long time. In fact it is because of their overwhelming domination in the cultural discourse that artists like Anglada-Camarasa were left aside. They chose to promote Cubist and Abstract artists such as Pollock, Rothko, Newman and Motherwell, excluding many others, who were in fact the large majority, from their narrative of art history.

To construct my argument I have chosen as my main tools the works of more recent art historians such as Arthur C. Danto, Linda Nochlin and Carol Duncan. They belong to different schools of art criticism but have as a common denominator the rejection of the narrow path of Abstraction that the old canon of Modernism established. I shall use first of all the ideas developed on the subject of the more complex account of Modernism found in the works of Arthur C. Danto.<sup>12</sup> Although Danto is a philosopher, he became famous worldwide after the publication in 1984 of his essay *The End of Art*, which was the origin of many other papers and the centre of a polemic that has been growing ever since.<sup>13</sup> I have found particularly important the ideas developed in what Danto calls “the age of manifestoes”, which runs from the beginning of the past century until the end of the 1950s. Anglada-Camarasa lived during the beginning of this period in Paris. The problem with Anglada is that he did not commit himself to any of the artistic currents or “isms” that started to proliferate during those years. The majority of these were driven by a perception of the philosophical truth of art. Their philosophical or theoretical principles were often materialized into a list of norms that artists who wanted to produce real pieces of art were meant to follow. Manifestoes were not simple

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<sup>12</sup> Arthur C. Danto (1924) is nowadays Emeritus Johnsonian Professor of Philosophy at Columbia University.

‘Arthur C. Danto’, in *Faculty Bio, Department of Philosophy, Columbia University*, <<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/philosophy/fac-bios/danto/faculty.htm>> [accessed 14 May 2009]

<sup>13</sup> The impact of this publication at the moment of maximum activity of the art market in the century put Danto in high demand and he was offered to work as art critic in important art magazines like the New-Yorker *The Nation*. It is from this work mainly that I shall extract many of the concepts that I shall use to shape my thesis. Danto’s thought on the subject of the evolution of art is being continuously used as food for debate in many universities.



guidelines to point the North to disorientated artists but rather instruction manuals which had a mandatory character. They were written with the force of martial law. They had an implied menace for their objectors or deserters: anyone who did not adhere to the principles established by their members was stamped out, like a heretic. Anglada-Camarasa never took a clear part in these currents. Although he accomplished most of the “musts” that one can find listed in the manifesto of Symbolism and had many points in common with the short-lived Nabis movement, he always followed his own independent path. This is particularly evident in his subjects inspired by works by Baudelaire like *Les Paradis Artificiels* and *Les Fleurs du Mal*. His technique followed the ideals of Symbolism, which promoted the rejection of reality and its subjective interpretation specific to every artist. As I shall explain in Chapters Two and Three, although Anglada’s oeuvre went beyond Symbolism, its values can still be clearly recognized in his works.

A possible reason for Anglada’s independence is that when many of the avant-gardist groups started he was already well established and therefore he needed neither the support nor the acceptance of other artists.

It is not my intention to apply all of Danto’s theories to my own research, as I differ with him on some important issues. One of these is the idea of the end of Modernism, which Danto dates as 1964, this being this the year of Warhol’s exhibition of the *Brillo Boxes*. After that, according to Danto, art was characterized by a pluralism of styles. I believe, on the contrary, that the freedom and multiplicity of styles is a phenomenon which had already started long before 1964, around the turn of the last century, and in which Anglada-Camarasa took part. In Anglada’s day, art production had already exploded into a profusion of styles. Like the delta that forms a river before it becomes part of the sea, it was not possible to establish one among the various as

mainstream and ignore the others. Therefore, I believe that the Modernist Paradigm is a theoretical construction that can never properly explain what happened in the twentieth century, because it was based on false assumptions and could not survive outside its academic parameters. However, I agree with Danto in crediting Greenberg with the merit of having found a new theoretical interpretation of the direction that some of the art producers were taking as a self-criticism through the limitations of the artistic media themselves. But I think that it was not only Abstract painters who took part in this process others, like Anglada, searched in this two-dimensional limitation or emphasized the physicality of painting in itself, showing through the colours and the textures of the brushstrokes that the subject matter was not as important as the materialization of the artwork. In this sense, Anglada was part of what was, to use Belting's terminology, "the art production after the end of the history of art" to which Danto often refers.<sup>14</sup> In my thesis and through the re-evaluation of Anglada-Camarasa's oeuvre I will try to prove that the ideologues of Modernism like Alfred H. Barr, Roger Fry, Clive Bell and Clement Greenberg were short-sighted in their methods of artists' selection and, as Danto shows, were wrong in their final conclusions.<sup>15</sup> According to Danto, Greenberg was an intolerant and dogmatic person, but dogmatism and intolerance were intrinsic to the nature of the age of manifestos. Most of the art critics who contributed to the idea of Modernism drew their energy from the spirit of the times. However, through their new ways to consider artworks, the theory of art criticism and the history of art have profited from some positive contributions, such as the provision, if somewhat limited, of academic structure to the discipline. Nevertheless it is also true that their scope was so narrow that these supporters of the Modernist Paradigm left out a considerable number

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<sup>14</sup> Hans Belting, *The End of the History of Art*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), quoted in Arthur C. Danto, *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 3-17.

<sup>15</sup> Danto, p. 70.

of important artists and still (and precisely because of this) were not able to provide a reasonable explanation of what had really happened in the development of art during the first sixty years of the twentieth century. It is hopefully with the inclusion of artists like Anglada-Camarasa and others who have been completely ignored as irrelevant or considered inside the rather generous understanding of “exceptions”, that we will progressively arrive at a broader picture of our artistic past and therefore understand better the process that brought us to where we are now. The scope of this investigation is limited to the case of Anglada during his Parisian years, I will read the significance of his works under the intense democratic light offered by the new art criticism.<sup>16</sup>

Apart from Danto the other two art critics whose methodology I intend to apply in my own investigation are Linda Nochlin and Carol Duncan. Both authors are associated more with gender studies of the History of Art, nevertheless their arguments can be extrapolated, enabling us to understand how other groups can be excluded from canonical accounts. Their approach to gender discrimination will be particularly helpful when reconsidering Anglada’s case. In the latter it was not gender but his artistic style, and later his chosen subjects, that formed the origin of the prejudice that kept him out of the art books as well as out of the leading museums.<sup>17</sup>

Carol Duncan is well known as one of the pioneers of the new socio-political approach to art history and criticism, her irreverent approach to the “sacred” theories of Modernism has been for me a source of great inspiration.<sup>18</sup> Her strength of argument has given me, like many others, the critical power to object to the policy of favouritism of the main institutions. I am referring especially to Duncan’s disapproval of the

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<sup>16</sup> I use the adjective “democratic” in opposition to Danto’s “totalitarianism” in the art criticism responsible for the creation of Modernism.

<sup>17</sup> One must remember that the representation of nature, as Anglada did it after 1914, became totally out of fashion.

<sup>18</sup> Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, (New York, London: Routledge, 1997). Carol Duncan, *The Aesthetics of Power – Essays in Critical Art History*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

MoMA's policies, led by Alfred H. Barr Jr. Technical originality and a tendency towards Abstraction were the two leading pillars on which the construction of twentieth-century Western art criticism was based. In her reappraisal of the canon of Modernism, Carol Duncan in many of her books and articles demolishes these two principles, arguing that they have been erratically applied in museums' selection policies, always with the purpose of proving the cultural message that the authorities in charge had previously defined. As Danto points out, like a chemical experiment that has been previously arranged in order to guarantee the results, reputable authors like Greenberg have asserted that in order to guarantee purity diversity should be repressed.<sup>19</sup> It is along the same lines that Danto criticizes Greenberg's narrative and characterization, saying that Picasso was never concerned with the limits of the medium when he painted the *Guernica*: he was more concerned, to an inestimable degree, with the meaning of war and suffering. Neither did Miró, when he conceived his *Still Life with Old Shoe* or his own *Guernica*, conceive them as Abstract works. He rejected being an Abstractionist and even denied that Mondrian was an Abstract painter at all.<sup>20</sup> Carol Duncan proves and emphasizes the importance of the fact that art is an integral part of a vast social reality. By a careful selection of what could be hung on the walls of museums on the part of these with power, the artistic styles left aside were deported to a sort of cultural silence. The reasons for these policies of artificial selection vary according to the authors. For Duncan, it is without any doubt a question of gender discrimination, not only because of the female artists that were not represented but also because of the selection of figurative subjects in a museum dedicated mainly to the evolution towards Abstraction. For Danto, not all of the Western white males were safe: in his opinion the

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<sup>19</sup> Arthur C. Danto, 'Modernism and the Critique of Pure Art: The Historical Vision of Clement Greenberg', *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 67-68.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p 73.

type of selection had political parallels with absolutism. Artists who failed to comply with the political tendencies of the left found life more difficult. After all, art was considered as an expression of the political discourse, therefore in a time of extremism artistic enemies were fought against with the most efficient weapon: oblivion. In some cases, like Surrealism, when this was impossible because artists were already too well known to the public, they were classified as exceptions. This category meant certain technical recognition together with a dismissal for not being part of the development of art defined by those in power and, consequently, irrelevant to history.

The relevant artistic institutions played their role by supporting with their policies the traditional social structure that sustained the established power. The initial part of my research, following Duncan, will try to look for the reasons that made Anglada's oeuvre, which was acclaimed by his contemporaries, not suitable for those in power in later years. Duncan not only has called into question the most revered assumptions of Modernism – innovation and abstraction – she has been an iconoclast when describing the most important works that have been selected in the past to be exposed in museums.<sup>21</sup>

I will finally use Linda Nochlin's studies on gender in the History of Art. Linda Nochlin is the Lila Acheson Wallace Professor of Modern Art at the New York University Institute for Fine Arts. Her article published in 1971, *Why There Have Been No Great Women Artists*, originated a new wave of scholarship that lasts till today and that, as in the present case, is not exclusively gender orientated.<sup>22</sup> This methodology that I intend to apply is compatible with both Danto's and Duncan's ideas. These authors

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<sup>21</sup> Carol Duncan, 'The Modern Art Museum it's a Man's World', in *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, (New York, London: Routledge, 1997).

Carol Duncan, 'Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting', in *The Aesthetics of Power*, (Cambridge Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>22</sup> Linda Nochlin, 'Why there Have Been no Great Women Artists', *Art News*, 69, January (1971). Reprinted in Linda Nochlin, *Women, Art and Power and Other Essays*, (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989).

find “environmental” explanations among the reasons that have driven the History of Art through certain courses and not through others. Politics, economics and sociology are, according to these authors, inevitable issues that must be taken into serious consideration if one holds the idea that art is not pure, in the sense that was characterized by the old canon of Modernism, but an inter-related product of culture and history. Related to this question, I shall also borrow arguments from more classical art historians, like Meyer Schapiro.<sup>23</sup> I shall apply Schapiro’s socio-historical explanation of the current conditions of the artistic practice. Instead of using Schapiro’s Marxist intellectual tradition I shall look at Anglada’s work through a more liberal lens that defends the bourgeoisie as the social engine that, in spite of its negative critics, has made artistic progress possible. According to Alfred H. Barr’s biographer, Sybil Gordon Cantor, Shapiro was opposed to Barr’s positions and views from the beginning in the late 1930s.<sup>24</sup>

Going back to Linda Nochlin, I shall try to apply her “collage” method of constructing a theory, in which she takes arguments out of their historical or social context and puts them together in a neutral (culturally aseptic) environment where she dissects their likely meaning. Although the present is not free from prejudices, I shall at least try to minimize them and, in any case, avoid the ones from the past. In Chapters Two and Five in particular, I shall dissect Anglada’s works in order to compare them, now in the politically isolated environment of the present day, with other contemporary masterpieces. Nochlin has studied in depth the manipulation of visual codes within a certain historical moment. I will examine whether the fact that Anglada had an antagonistic personality (in which he opposed major social trends) in a time of political

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<sup>23</sup> Meyer Schapiro, ‘The Nature of Abstract Art’, reprinted in M. Schapiro, *Modern Art: 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Selected Papers*, (New York: Georges Braziller, 1978).

<sup>24</sup> Sybil Gordon Cantor, *Alfred H. Barr Jr. and the Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art*, (Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press, 2002), pp. 221-222.

extremism that was reflected in art criticism is enough to explain the subtle variations among artists that produce the big difference between appearing in the pages of written art history or not.

Throughout her career, Nochlin has stated her discomfort with universal theories, single truths that explain the complexity of experience. This intellectual flexibility will be very helpful when applied to the question of revisiting Anglada's Paris years. The example that Nochlin and Duncan give is that it will often be the case that the reasons or motives of Anglada's actions or the implications of his work will be inferred from already known or easily available facts that just need to be viewed in a different analytical context to illuminate their significance. However, I will simultaneously research in depth the life and work of Anglada-Camarasa, a process which is vital in order to reach satisfactory conclusions. For that purpose I shall have at my disposal the archives both of the Mallorca museum and of Anglada's family. After my research, it will hopefully be clearer why a painter of his prestige decided to dissociate himself from the fashionable avant-gardes and why, after the Great War, he totally changed direction and decided to sail against the wind with his new landscapes.

Having explained the approach of different authors whose methodologies I shall be using for building my own, I would like now to specify the content that I have planned for my thesis, which is part of a growing interest in Anglada-Camarasa. There is evidence of progression in the understanding of Anglada-Camarasa's position during the last twenty-five years, as we have seen in the literature review. There has been also some regional progress, such as the creation of a new museum that houses a collection of Anglada's work in a Catalonian Modernist building, El Gran Hotel, in the centre of Palma de Mallorca. This museum substitutes the old one in the small town of Pollença, which opened in 1968, and the move is representative of the increasing local cultural

weight given to Anglada. It appears that there is something like an official remembrance of the artist on the part of the Spanish cultural authorities. I say “remembrance” and not “recognition”, because Anglada-Camarasa’s value had already been officially recognized in the past, as can be seen from the fact that in 1954 the highest cultural authorities granted him with the *Gran Cruz de Alfonso X el Sabio* and made him *Académico de Honor de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando* in the same year. He also received other prizes just a few years before his death.<sup>25</sup> But it is probable that the prizes and awards that Anglada appreciated most were those he obtained during his Parisian years, which form the subject of the present investigation.

As the title of my investigation implies, it is my intention to re-evaluate Anglada-Camarasa’s oeuvre from a fresh point of view, which I will construct on the basis of the new wave of art theorists whose work I have just described. The study has five chapters. The first will deal with the question of how the Modernist Paradigm affected Anglada. The remaining four chapters will research four different issues related to the life and work of Anglada in Paris. Each chapter will develop chronologically, approximately covering the 1894 -1914 period.

In Chapter One I will describe the root of the problem, principally the narrow scope implemented by the Modernist Paradigm’s supporters. I will explain the reasons behind their limited point of view and the grounds on which they built their academic as well as effective power. This will clarify why Anglada was left aside and simultaneously will try to show what the benefits of the present investigation will be. Having used the case of Anglada to shed extra light on some of the incongruities of the Modernist Paradigm, I will then explain how I plan to build up my own argument.

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<sup>25</sup> See the Anglada-Camarasa list of prizes and awards in Appendix I.



In Chapter Two I shall develop the cultural connection between Anglada and Symbolism. Apart from the novelty of the investigation, this will be relevant for the argument for various reasons, the most important of which is that its cultural background will give an inner meaning to the work of Anglada. Symbolism, despite its short life, had a wide influence and produced an indelible trace in many artists that experienced it in the formative stages of their careers. For Wassily Kandinsky it was Russian Symbolism, with a growing rejection of materialism, that gave him the values that grounded his thought.<sup>26</sup> In fact the idea of abstracting, considered innovative in the Modernist Paradigm, had originated with the Symbolist current and was included in the genetic codes of its numerous artistic descendants. Already by the end of the nineteenth century they rejected the materialism of capitalism. The main difference is that the progressive withdrawal from naturalism, that later became mandatory, was a natural development for artists like Anglada.

The mandate of modern art is thus represented as a mandate to turn away from the objective world to devalue its significance or deny its coherence – and concern oneself with some aspect of subjective experience, including the artist's struggle to renounce the exterior world.<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, the turning away from the objective world would not be an aim unique to Abstraction. Also, as we shall see in Chapter Two, originality obtained through subjectivity was a characteristic highly valued in Symbolism. Symbolism had inherited this appreciation from Romanticism, which proves how originality had had a past prior to its interpretation within the Modernist Paradigm.

In Chapter Three I shall describe how Anglada obtained the combination of different components that permitted him to achieve a successful artistic style, and I shall show that it was successful precisely because of its innovation. I shall also describe why

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<sup>26</sup> Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky and Old Russia: The Artist as Biographer and Shaman*, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1995).

<sup>27</sup> Duncan, 1997, p. 108.

Anglada's technique encouraged his international acclaim. In this chapter I will emphasize the fact that Anglada's talent developed as a result of his determination and hard work. I will explain how his ambition fuelled his motivation to overcome the material penury that he had to endure. It was his ambition, combined with his commercial motivation, amongst other things, that lay behind his success. This will be one of the most innovative parts of my research, as it will be one more stone thrown at the idea, carefully constructed in the past, that it is geniality that leads the artist towards universal recognition. This part of my research was inspired by the works of Nochlin and Duncan. In their writings both authors demystify the artist-hero.

In Chapter Four I shall explain how Anglada developed a wide clientele among the cultivated middle class, including artists and intellectuals, as well as among more renowned collectors. This justifies the wide spread of Anglada's fame, as he was the subject of many reviews in leading newspapers and art magazines. The fact that Anglada's technique contributed to solving some of his contemporaries' pictorial problems was at the root of his success.

In Chapter Five I shall try to show how Anglada's innovative technique during his time in Paris inspired Kandinsky over the period of approximately ten years that was to lead to his definitive step towards Abstraction. This will be the climax of my argument as, by showing Kandinsky's evolution, Anglada's influence and importance will become apparent. I will demonstrate that although art history benefited from its upgrading to the rank of an independent discipline, due to the narrow approach of the Modernist Paradigm, its interpretation of the artistic events of the first half of the twentieth century is extremely limited. Anglada's main achievement was not this distancing from concrete forms *per se*, but the very personal, unique artistic view of the world that could be found in his works. In fact, as I shall try to demonstrate, Kandinsky

was attracted by Anglada's technique, especially by his use of colours and, during Kandinsky's year in Sèvres, particularly by Anglada's subject matter. As I shall explain, Kandinsky's own evolution is not consistent with the "born genius" image that he liked to portray. Kandinsky's oeuvre, as well as his intellectual contribution to art history, were the result of tremendous struggles. Only his ambition and his passion for art were to sustain him in a process that lasted for more than ten years. In this chapter I will try to show how the two main characteristics promoted by the Modernist Paradigm developed in Kandinsky: to be more precise, Kandinsky's own "originality" was probably greatly inspired by Anglada's. Regarding Kandinsky's abstraction, I will expose its contradictory relationship with the object, as well as its possible inspiration from Anglada's forms and colours.

I will not construct this research on the grounds criticized by Ducan, of finding in Anglada's work "minutiae" that justify his contribution to Abstraction.<sup>28</sup> I want to show that, if he did indeed contribute, he did not find it satisfying. Furthermore, as soon as he realized the direction that "modern" art was taking, he furthered himself rationally from it. But, most importantly, I want to show that Anglada's work deserves to be historically reallocated because of its own artistic merit.

All these chapters will create the necessary base upon which I will build the last chapter, which will end my investigation. Hopefully, in it I shall be able to demonstrate

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There is a little-remarked aspect of this history – or rather of the many histories of individual artists that make it up – and that is a recurrent narrative pattern that identifies artistic invention with *moral* achievement. According to this pattern, the more artists free themselves from representing recognizable objects in space, the more exemplary they become as moral beings and the more pious and *spiritually* meaningful their artistic efforts. The pursuit of abstraction (or the distance achieved from traditional pictorial constructions) thus becomes the supreme sign of an artist's liberation from the mundane and commonplace. Given the symbolic import of abstraction, it is not surprising that the literature of art history has been obsessed with chronicling the formal development of abstract artists. Indeed, much of the most admired art-historical enquiry has consisted in meticulously sifting the slightest minutia of an artist's production in order to grasp the uniqueness and originality of his contribution to modern art's progress toward abstraction.

Ibid. pp. 108-109.

finally the depth and the avant-gardism, in its most literal sense, of Anglada's works belonging to the period of my research.

While there is a considerable number of works published on the different stages of the life of Kandinsky, the subject of how well he knew and whether he admired Anglada-Camarasa has hardly been explored. Peg Weiss, one of Kandinsky's biographers, is the only contemporary writer who mentions this question, though she diminishes its importance.<sup>29</sup> Dr Weiss seems to endorse the old line of argument that says that geniuses like Kandinsky practically sprang out of nowhere, accepting the idea that great artists had an innate component of their personalities that made them what they were, a myth strongly supported by artists themselves. This romantic idea of the person being born already a genius with genetic capabilities, only waiting for the first opportunity to sprout, had already started with Vasari, writing about the artists of the Renaissance.<sup>30</sup> According to Linda Nochlin, this erroneous starting point for writing art history has enormously damaged the case for women artists in particular. I believe that her conclusions can be extrapolated to others.<sup>31</sup> Artists do not turn into geniuses or not out of the blue: they feed on their surroundings and historical state of affairs, which include various things, such as what has been created up to the moment and what is being promoted within the artistic milieu at the time, together with their personal circumstances that build up their character, as does the socio-political situation at the place and time of the development of their creative process. Even if art critics like

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<sup>29</sup> Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky in Munich: The Formative Years*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 77.

<sup>30</sup> Whitney Chadwick, *Women Art and Society*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), pp.17-42.

<sup>31</sup> She demonstrates how artists happened to be so mainly because they had the ambition that has been considered a quality in men, but most of all because they had access to professional training. This technical education was possible in the past because they belonged to artistic families or to families that were somehow related to this trade. With few exceptions, women, due to their compulsory social role, were excluded from this training. With this reasoning, Nochlin, along the same lines as Duncan and Schapiro, proves that artists are the result first of a learning and training period and then of their cultural and social environment.  
Nochlin, 1971.

Schapiro had already pointed out some of these questions in the first half of the past century, the problem was never so neatly defined until Nochlin started her gender studies on art history.<sup>32</sup>

The reason why I have chosen Kandinsky is that he has been considered the great theoretician of Abstraction by those art who have shaped the history of art of the twentieth century.<sup>33</sup> Of course, I do not deny the importance of Kandinsky. As Carol Duncan suggests, the intention is not to degrade the artists who already inhabit museums but to reconsider the many who, for some arbitrary selection that reflected a particular value system, have been left out.<sup>34</sup> With the present investigation I try to follow the trend towards the recovery of Anglada-Camarasa that has already started.

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<sup>32</sup> Schapiro had written more on the question of how art was and should be a reflection of the socio-historical tradition always under a Marxist point of view. He criticized the Modernist approach of Alfred Barr, according to which art works should be evaluated in an isolated way, taking into account only what they considered was their pure artistic value.

'Meyer Schapiro', in *Columbia 250 / Columbia University*,  
<[http://www.c250.columbia.edu/c250\\_celebrates/remarkable\\_columbians/meyer\\_schapiro.html](http://www.c250.columbia.edu/c250_celebrates/remarkable_columbians/meyer_schapiro.html)>  
[accessed 14 May 2009]

<sup>33</sup> 'Wassily Kandinsky', in *Encyclopedia Britannica online*,  
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/310922/Wassily-Kandinsky>> [accessed 14 May 2009]  
'Wassily Kandinsky – The Biography / Bauhaus 1922-1933', in *wassilykandinsky.net*,  
<<http://www.wassilykandinsky.net/>> [accessed 15 May 2009]

<sup>34</sup> Carol Duncan, 'The MoMA's Hot Mamas', *Art Journal*, Summer, (1989), pp.171-178.

## CHAPTER ONE:

### MODIFYING THE SCRIPT OF THE HISTORY OF ART

When one thinks about the Spanish painter Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, the question that immediately comes to mind is how is it possible that an artist who achieved such critical acclaim in his lifetime has for so many years attracted so little attention? The fact is that until only very recently there was a void in the place that Anglada arguably should have occupied in the books of art history. For example, Anglada was absent from the pages of the *Summa Artis*, the best-known and most widely used art encyclopaedia in Spain until 1991.<sup>1</sup> A possible explanation could be found in the following quotation relating to Anglada-Camarasa from the *Museo Reina Sofia* webpage:

Anglada-Camarasa, was one of the Spanish painters who during the turn of the century achieved a large international success. His focus concentrated on the upper echelons of society, elegance, exquisiteness and all things related to a luxurious quality of life, which was exactly the opposite to what were the main interests of the artistic currents of the avant-gardes.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Anglada-Camarasa appeared for the first time in the *Summa Artis* in the XXXVI volume, which was printed in 1991. It is a remarkable fact, given that the first volumes of this encyclopaedia were published in 1931. When Anglada was finally included, the author of the pages devoted to him acknowledges his past fame and notes the unjustified oblivion to which for so many years his work was confined. But, immediately after that, the reader finds Anglada's work described in pejorative terms: "the artist emulates himself"; "... his subjects always excessively anecdotal and narrative ... trivial"; "compared with Toulouse-Lautrec his linearity is abusive". This is followed by a passage where, referring to the landscapes that Anglada painted during his stay in Montserrat Monastery between 1936 and 1938, the author declares that: "not even the sober settings of Montserrat and its scenery can liberate us from his [Anglada's] *barroquismo*". It is impressive that the amount of dislike concentrated into this brief description could be used as proof that Anglada's style is not widely appreciated.

*Summa Artis*, 'Pintores y Escultores Españoles 1900-1939', 49 volumes, (Madrid: Editorial Espasa Calpe, 1991), XXXVI, pp. 45-49.

<sup>2</sup> Anglada Camarasa es uno de los pintores españoles que más éxito internacional alcanzó en el cambio de siglo. Su punto de mira se centra en las clases acomodadas, lo exquisito, lo sibarita y elegante, es decir, todo lo opuesto a los parámetros que manejan las tendencias vanguardistas.

'Retrato de Sonia de Klamery, Condesa de Pradère ; Anglada Camarasa, Hermenegildo', in *Colección Permanente / Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*,

<[http://www.museoreinasofia.es/museoreinasofia/live/coleccion/obras/retratosoniaklamery\\_es.html](http://www.museoreinasofia.es/museoreinasofia/live/coleccion/obras/retratosoniaklamery_es.html)>  
[accessed 8 May 2009]

This description is an example of real imprecision as Anglada, as we shall see, particularly in Chapter Two, dealt with all social layers. Not even in portraiture is that assertion true, as Anglada generally used gypsy women as models. But what is most interesting is that, of all the things that can be said about Anglada, what is most stressed as relevant is that he did not join the avant-gardes. It is surprisingly inaccurate specially coming from one of Spain's main museums. It is not only what is said but what is omitted, which proves the necessity of re-evaluating Anglada's oeuvre.

In this chapter I will explain how we have arrived at this situation. First of all I shall show how Anglada-Camarasa has not been the only artist to be affected by this selective oblivion. I shall also explain what the consequences of such a flawed theoretical construction have been on the history of art. I shall go on to describe how the Modernist Paradigm, the afore-mentioned theoretical construction that supported nearly fifty years of a certain absolutism in Western art, was created. In so doing, I shall inevitably introduce Alfred Barr and discuss his role in the birth of the MoMA, New York's Museum of Modern Art. I shall explain why the MoMA itself became a way of looking at art and, going into more depth in the case of Spain in particular, why other countries imported its spirit. I will then explain how after the death of Stalin in 1953 the first cracks in this theoretical construction started to appear, although it remained solid enough to resist the immense cultural change that took place in the 1960s. I shall very briefly consider Barr's ideological heirs, such as Greenberg, and how Barr chose his successors to perpetuate his ideology in the twenty-first century. I will go on to explain how new criticism of the MoMA's policies started to build up in the 1970s, although it was not until later, curiously enough at the same time that Anglada's first catalogue raisonnée was published, that it would achieve its full strength. I shall outline some of

the many contradictions and partialities that were uncovered in the MoMA's policies and in Barr's theories.

Anglada-Camarasa was not the only artist who disappeared into the void. Over the last thirty years, many scholars have denounced other cases of cultural marginalization that left many artists outside the main current of art history. Looking at artistic styles, for example, French Academicism has for many years been wiped off the artistic map. As far as genre is concerned, artistic prejudices and discriminations have been denounced by art historians like Carol Duncan and Linda Nochlin. Also, Sarah Wilson in the exhibition "Paris: Capital of the Arts 1900-1968", at the Royal Academy of the Arts in London 2002, gave new historical space to artists like Anglada-Camarasa by means of her innovative way of curating it.<sup>3</sup> Instead of exhibiting only artists who were internationally renowned, she included others who were less well known yet who had at least as much "contributed to the extraordinary narrative of Paris as capital of the arts". Examples from the period 1900 to 1914 are: Kees van Dongen, Auguste Chabaud, André Derain, Maurice de Vlaminck, Suzanne Valadon, Maurice Utrillo and Marie Laurencin, among others.

Since Anglada's case has not been an isolated one, it must be studied within the perspective and the stream of general events that shaped the Western world view on art. Apart from the injustice that it implies for the artists affected, this situation has other undesirable consequences. The most obvious one is a lack of consensus about the history of art that created enormous confusion in the 1970s and 1980s, when the first

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<sup>3</sup> Carol Duncan, 'The Modern Art Museum it's a Man's World', in *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, (New York, London: Routledge, 1997).

Carol Duncan, 'Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting', in *The Aesthetics of Power*, (New York, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Sarah Wilson, *Paris Capital of the Arts*, Exhibition Catalogue, (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2002).

Linda Nochlin, 'Why there have been no great women artists', *Art News*, 69, January (1971). Reprinted in Linda Nochlin, *Women, Art and Power and Other Essays*, (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1989).



dissenting art historians tried to present a less simplified picture of what had happened during the explosion of artistic styles that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> The problem is not only a lack of understanding of our recent artistic past; it is also that the biased selection of a few artists as the protagonists of the history of art completely skews our understanding of the present. As Carol Duncan in *Civilizing Rituals*, 1977, says:

The “history of modern art,” as it is generally understood in our society, is a highly selective history. To be more exact, it is a cultural construct that is collectively produced and perpetuated by all those professionals who work in art schools, universities, museums, publishing houses, and any other place where modern art is taught, exhibited, or interpreted. The first thing that needs to be said here is that this world of art professionals is enormously fragmented and often fails to arrive at any simple or clear consensus about the history of modern art. Especially in the higher, more difficult reaches of critical and art-historical discourse – in university classrooms, academic conferences, and journal articles – conflicting concepts of the field openly dispute one another. Not only are there disagreements about where the boundaries of the field lie and what comprises its most important incidents; there are also competing ideas about what its basic intellectual tools should be and what fundamental questions it should be addressing.<sup>5</sup>

History of art, like other branches of human history, is permanently open to reinterpretation. Information that becomes visible only over time raises new queries, the solutions to which are hidden in the amorphous historical mass that needs to be reshaped through a new reading of facts. In the particular case of Anglada-Camarasa, I will turn my attention to the past in order to try to answer questions such as: who wrote the history of art of the twentieth century? And, what were their motivations? Both these questions inevitably lead us to the Modernist Paradigm, the theoretical structure fathered by Alfred Barr Jr., the first director of the MoMA, New York’s Museum of Modern Art.

For us in the twenty-first century, studying the origins of a value system that shaped our culture for so long that it began to be thought of as “natural”, will help us both to understand why Anglada-Camarasa was relegated and also to see the great value

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<sup>4</sup> Even Arthur Danto in his *Theory of the Manifestoes*, didn’t completely free himself from Clement Greenberg’s methodology. The result was that he could not find a satisfactory explanation of ulterior artistic events. I am referring to the new forms of artistic expression of the 1980s and 1990s.

<sup>5</sup> Duncan, 1977, p. 102.

in recovering him. I am referring specifically to the implications that revisiting Anglada's Parisian years has for this period of art history.

One of the many reasons why the legendary Alfred H. Barr occupies a place on the podium of twentieth century art history is that he actively participated in the creation of the first museum of modern art. Both in its content and in its conception New York's Museum of Modern Art implied a revolution, which spread quickly and the side effects of which, direct as well as indirect, have lasted until the present day. Barr was not a visionary: his credo was so well anchored on Earth that while he was gestating his idea he convinced others of his own capability to give birth to the MoMA's revolutionary project. He found very influential allies, who enthusiastically provided the necessary material support. But the MoMA's was not a straightforward birth. The project required all of Barr's influence in the New York cultural circles of the 1920s as well as the help of his Harvard friend Lincoln Kirstein.<sup>6</sup> Monroe Wheeler, a trustee of the MoMA, was quoted as saying: "make no mistake, the Museum of Modern Art began in Harvard".<sup>7</sup>

Once the museum had been created, in order to become its director in 1929, Barr had the very important back-up of his friend and sponsor Abby Rockefeller.<sup>8</sup> Barr held

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<sup>6</sup> The New York Times called Lincoln Kirstein "one of the most valuable of living Americans," and Susan Sontag suggested he should be named a national treasure. His actual titles were President Emeritus, School of American Ballet, and General Manager Emeritus, New York City Ballet. He founded both institutions with choreographer George Balanchine. Kirstein's career dates from his days at Harvard, from where he graduated in 1930. While there, he founded and edited the seminal literary magazine *Hound and Horn* and founded the Harvard Society for Contemporary Art, the forerunner of New York's Museum of Modern Art. Nurturing the dream of an American ballet, Kirstein brought Balanchine to America in the early 1930s. With Edward M.M. Warburg, he founded the School of American Ballet. Performing companies soon followed, culminating in the establishment of New York City Ballet in 1948.

'Biography of Lincoln Kirstein', in *The Kennedy Center*, <[http://www.kennedy-center.org/calendar/index.cfm?fuseaction=showIndividual&entity\\_id=4919&source\\_type=A](http://www.kennedy-center.org/calendar/index.cfm?fuseaction=showIndividual&entity_id=4919&source_type=A)>

[accessed 15 May 2009]

<sup>7</sup> Russell Lynes, *Good Old Modern: an Intimate Portrait of The Museum of Modern Art*, (New York: Atheneum 1973), p. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, (26 October 1874 – 5 April 1948), was a prominent socialite and philanthropist and the second-generation matriarch of the renowned Rockefeller industrialist (oil) and philanthropic family. Referred to as the "woman in the family", she was especially noteworthy for being the driving force behind the establishment of the Museum of Modern Art, on 53rd Street in New York, in November, 1929.

the post until 1943 when, according to his biographer Sybil Gordon Kantor, “his taste was running ahead of the trustees”.<sup>9</sup> He also lost Abby Rockefeller’s support in the same year, after a Surrealist show at the museum.<sup>10</sup> The relevance of this for our subject is that Barr was considered the creator of taste par excellence in the twentieth century and his numerous followers were seen to have wielded overwhelming power until well into the 1960s. And, even later in the twentieth century, although admittedly they had lost a lot of their initial authority, Modernism’s sympathisers’ weight could still be felt. As Hal Foster explains:

In my reading of critical models in art and theory since 1960 I have stressed the minimalist genealogy of the neo-avant-garde. For the most part, artists and critics in this genealogy remained sceptical of realism and illusionism. In this way they continued the war of abstraction against representation by other means ....Significantly, this anti-illusionist posture was retained by many artists and critics involved in conceptual, institution-critical, body, performance, site-specific, feminist, and appropriation art. Even if realism and illusionism meant additional things in the 1970s and 1980s – the problematic pleasures of Hollywood cinema, for example, or the ideological blandishments of mass culture – they remained *bad* things.<sup>11</sup>

In order to become the guru of Modernism, Barr had to build up a theoretical support, for without it his views might have seemed to lack intellectual substance and would have appeared to be only a matter of “taste”, in the shallowest possible sense. His approach was that art should be interpreted rationally, and in order to reinforce this argument, he produced a totally new language. It was used first of all to choose which artists would be exhibited in the MoMA and this new language, or specific way of interpreting symbols, became the Modernist Paradigm: all art works were examined through it.

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‘The Rockefellers / Selected Biographies: Abby Aldrich Rockefeller’, in *The Rockefeller Archive Center*, <<http://www.rockarch.org/bio/abby.php>> [accessed 30 July 2007]

<sup>9</sup> Sybil Gordon Kantor, *Alfred H. Barr and the Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art*, (Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press, 2002), p. 354, p. 357.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real – The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*, (Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press, 1996).

Barr had first studied art history at Harvard where, like other fellow students such as Paul Sachs and Lincoln Kirstein, he had been initiated by Charles Eliot Norton in what had yet to become an academic discipline. Through Norton, all of them had absorbed, more or less consciously, Ruskin's art criticism:

In obeisance to Ruskin, Norton imbued art with moral overtones, but neither man neglected its formal aspects. Norton followed Ruskin's responses to art as expressed in his book *The Stones of Venice* of 1851 in which Ruskin adumbrated the formalist approach to aesthetics: "The arrangement of colours and lines is an art analogous to the composition of music, and entirely independent of the representation of facts. Good colouring does not necessarily convey the image of anything but itself."<sup>12</sup>

Ruskin's defence of Turner's late landscapes, among his other theories of the mid-1800s, would prepare the ground for the new approach to art history of the 1930s. Unfortunately for some artists, art history as a discipline was born at the same time as the narrow Modernist Paradigm. According to Rosalind Krauss:

...this distinction between critic and art historian would seem to be a false distinction. Art history as an academic discipline, shares its historical moment with the birth and development of modernist art. The perceptions out of which history grew - perceptions that immediately widened the field of inquiry - depended in turn on the radicalizing experience of modernist art.<sup>13</sup>

In order to create his theory, Barr used concepts such as originality, genius and freedom, inherited from the Romantic epoch. In Barr's theory these concepts were applied to political and moral concerns. These above-mentioned qualities were to become necessary conditions of Modernist theory, as well as the basis of a system of stylistic evaluation that aspired to be at the same level as a scientific model.

In due course, the ambitions of the art world and the art history academy to approximate the rigors of scientific structure prepared the way for a school like Harvard to accept modernism as a subject for serious consideration.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Kantor, p. 42. Quoting John Ruskin, 'The Stones of Venice', in *The Complete Works of John Ruskin*, 30 volumes, (NY: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1907), II, p. 92.

<sup>13</sup> Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modern Myths*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), p. 221.

<sup>14</sup> Courses on modernism entered the Fine Arts department at Harvard in the 1930s. Kantor, p. 85.

To gain a better grasp of what the situation was at the time of the birth of the MoMA one must bear in mind that art has always had political applications. Symbols expressed through art have been ideologically manipulated throughout history. So, no matter how pure Barr's initial intentions in isolating art from any other concern might have been, there was nothing politically or ideologically neutral about the works selected for the MoMA.

The first issue that comes up is the practical importance of the history of art. For my line of argument we need to look at what incentives there might have been to try to manipulate the development of the history of art. It is clear that there must have been an expectation of some kind of profit for anyone to invest so much effort into manipulating facts so as to obtain a desired shape out of history. To find a satisfactory answer I will not go into the direct use of art as propaganda; I will instead concentrate on a more subtle use of art, which although growing out of a leftist seed, was later in the twentieth century used as a cultural symbol of all that was politically desirable in a capitalist society like the United States. It was an ideological symbol imported by many countries that wanted to impregnate their society at a deeper level.

Carol Duncan has investigated this sophisticated process in depth. In her book *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums*, Duncan analyses the social meanings of museums.<sup>15</sup> She carefully demonstrates the links between exhibited art and prevailing social values, from the creation of the first public museum, the Louvre, to the foundation of the MoMA. The Louvre, created after the French Revolution to replace the princely collections, was viewed as proof of a national identity: an identity that materialized in the display of the works of art that suddenly became accessible to the general public. The rising bourgeois values – namely, the concepts of national identity, freedom and

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<sup>15</sup> Duncan, 1997.

equality – were here represented in a chronological succession of styles, and a new emerging social class materialized in the national performance that took place at the museum. Everybody who went into this new temple would absorb more or less consciously the outcome of the French Revolution.

Historians of museums often see the new art-historical hang as the triumph of an advanced, Enlightenment thinking that sought to replace earlier systems of classification with a more rational one. To be sure, the new construct was more in keeping with Enlightenment rationality. But more significant to the concerns of this study was its ideological usefulness to emerging bourgeois states, all of which, in the course of the nineteenth century, adopted it for their public art museums. Although still pitched to an educated elite and still built on a universal and international standard, the new system, by giving special emphasis to the “genius” of national schools, could both acknowledge and promote the growth of state power and national identity.<sup>16</sup>

In England, the revolutionary events that brought swift changes to the distribution of political power in the nineteenth century were linked also to the establishment of the first public museum. The National Gallery first opened its doors at the same time, more or less, as male suffrage was obtained in most of Britain. According to Duncan, the National Gallery marked the end of absolute monarchy:

The founding of the National Gallery did not change the distribution of real political power – it did not give more people the vote – but it did remove a portion of prestigious symbolism from the exclusive control of the elite class and gave it to the nation as a whole. An impressive art gallery, a type of ceremonial space deeply associated with social privilege and exclusivity, became national property and was opened to all. The transference of the property as well as the shift in its symbolic meaning came about through the mediation of bourgeois wealth and enterprise and was legitimated by a state that had begun to recognize the advantages of such symbolic space.<sup>17</sup>

Since the French Revolution and during the nineteenth century, art became a substitute for religion: it was the spiritual experience that acted as the cohesive force needed by societies. Museums replaced temples. In the nineteenth century the new values were absorbed so strongly that it was not only public art collections that had to meet certain constraints in their arrangements: royal art collections were also required to be ordered

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p 26.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p 42.

chronologically. And this was no passing phenomenon: a century later, Alfred Barr wrote the following to his friend Dwight Macdonald:

...in our civilization a general decline in religious, ethical and moral convictions, [has taken place] art may well have increasing importance quite outside aesthetic enjoyment.<sup>18</sup>

Before the foundation of the MoMA, Barr had in his travels through Europe studied the ways of exhibiting works as well as other museum policies. He was very conscious that, in order to maximize a museum's effect and its spiritual message on viewers, the way paintings were laid out was of fundamental importance. As a result, Barr would implement what Krauss, in her theoretical construction on modern art, has called "temporal linearity". Part of the reason for this was that the new discipline of art history was trying to be, in a certain sense, more scientific. Evolution, which had become such a successful theory in the sciences, seemed irrefutable and was therefore also thought to be natural in the arts. In the past the main reason for applying this historical evolution had been a rejection of the classic values that the old princely collections embodied. National styles were clearly separated and the Renaissance was celebrated, and has been ever since, on both sides of the Atlantic, as the beginning of civilization. Barr applied the same evolutionary concept, rejecting past styles. The policy of imposing a politically correct order in galleries in order to enforce certain values, an order which had to be respected by the galleries and museums, would, thanks to Alfred H. Barr, develop during the nineteenth century and then, through the example of the MoMA, well into the twentieth.

Having established how important the imposition of a particular shape on Western art history in general was, I can now turn back again to my first question, which concerns the authorship of twentieth-century art history. As should be clear by now, it

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<sup>18</sup> Kantor, p. 376. Quoting Barr to Dwight Macdonald, *Macdonald Papers*, YUL.

was, without any doubt, Alfred H. Barr who led the way and who had most influence, from the beginning of the 1930s to the 1960s. Even after that, Barr used his power to find himself a suitable successor in William S. Rubin. In order to get Rubin into his new position as director of the MoMA (from 1973 to 1988), Barr “jumped over” William S. Lieberman, who had worked in the MoMA since 1949, and who had quite reasonably expected to succeed Barr. Rubin, following Barr’s spirit, devoted himself to the masters of the old collection, especially Picasso, as well as exploring the New York School. Rubin improved the representation of Abstract Expressionism, while being openly uninterested in any other styles.<sup>19</sup>

Alfred Barr’s position as first Director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York gave him the authority necessary to impose his theoretical views. Barr’s character and intellectual drive also contributed to an explanation of why his theories on the history of art were so overwhelmingly accepted, while his exquisite prose definitely played an important role in delivering his very own evangelical message. In fact, the web of thought that would configure the Modernist Paradigm saw the light for the first time in the MoMA’s catalogues. The intellectual standard of the latter was so high that they became a lasting contribution to the literature of Modern Art. Sybil Gordon Kantor, speaking about Barr’s first catalogue, says:

In this first of many publications, Barr used descriptive, emotionally charged language laden with poetic flourishes. This was a rare indulgence discarded in later writings, in which the austerity of objective formal analysis within a context of historical continuity prevailed. Out of the chaos inherent in modernism – a label he insisted was more descriptive of the period than “contemporary” – he fashioned a narrative of synchronic movements in an effort to impose order on recent artistic developments. What to some appeared limited and arbitrary designations in fact reflected his urge to classify and thus place the modern period in a historical continuum.<sup>20</sup>

Barr’s primacy in the field gave him a comparative advantage that ensured that his intellectual influence has lasted almost up to the present day. The theoretical base

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<sup>19</sup> Pepe Karmel, ‘William S. Rubin, 1927-2006’, *Art in America*, 94, 3, March (2006), p. 37.

<sup>20</sup> Kantor, p. 214, p. 215.



with which he supported his views had the merit of being solidly constructed. Nobody before him had taken such a canonical approach to art history. Through the MoMA's catalogues people learned how to interpret the new symbols, how to appreciate the new artistic styles. The MoMA became a way to look at modern art.

Barr's theoretical structure rested on two main pillars: abstraction and originality. Both acted as symbols of desirable attainments for humankind – namely freedom and progress – values that in those days had been successfully monopolized by the political left. But rather than thinking that Barr politicized art, it might be more accurate to say that it was the political left which exploited the contents of the MoMA. This monopoly remained quite intact until the end of the Second World War, when internal discrepancies between the old and the new left weakened the position of all. Precisely because history does not have a linear explanation, what had started as a monopoly of the left soon acquired a more universal character. Still, the left continued to dominate the epicentre of modern art politics until the late 1960s.

However, the MoMA became an international phenomenon, as freedom and progress based on individuality were values intrinsic to all liberal societies. Even countries with right-wing dictatorships, like Spain or the Philippines, tried to import the MoMA's model. Any country that wanted to follow the example of the United States promoted abstract art as a symbol of modernity in a progressive society.

In fact, the relationship between the political left and the avant-garde had always been contradictory. The crisis between the left and artistic production had been aggravated in 1953 after Stalin's death. Until then, more or less artificially and in a somewhat contradictory manner, it had stuck to Barr's ideals. Abstract art was banned across the Eastern Bloc and highly discouraged within Western communist parties. Socialist Realism became compulsory because it was considered as the art of the

working classes. In France and Italy it had started after the Second World War, but in Russia this process had already begun in the 1930s. Since then, Socialist Realism had become the official art for the masses, and artists such as the Abstract master Malevich, whose belief in Communism was deeply rooted, had to change his style. In his own words, justifying the situation to a friend:

But at the moment, in this phase of building socialism in which all the arts must participate, art must return to backward areas and become figurative. Painting has turned back from the non-objective way to the object, and the development of painting has returned to the figurative part of the way that had led to the destruction of the object. But on the way back, painting came across a new object that the proletarian revolution had brought to the fore and which had to be given form, which means that it had to be raised to the level of a work of art.<sup>21</sup>

The matter was so serious that, Malevich never brought back to Russia his former Abstract works after they had left the country for an exhibition abroad. That was a far-sighted decision on his part because Abstraction was soon to be declared bourgeois and therefore had to disappear. Barr profited from the situation and acquired an important collection of Malevich's Suprematist works and exhibited them at the famous 1936 "Cubism and Abstract Art" exhibition, as proof of the vitality of the Russian avant-garde.<sup>22</sup> Barr elevated Malevich to fame in the Western world;<sup>23</sup> unfortunately, the artist lived in Russia, where he died a few years later in a situation of extreme poverty.

Alfred Barr's efforts to create a theoretical structure that would help to understand and organize modern art necessitated the imposition of a strict discipline in order to extract logic from the apparent chaos in the multiplicity of artistic styles that simultaneously coexisted. He must be acknowledged with the ultimate success of

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<sup>21</sup> Kasimir Malevich, 'Letter to Meyerhold, April 1932', *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), pp. 506-507.

<sup>22</sup> Alfred H. Barr Jr., *Cubism and Abstract Art: Painting, Sculpture, Constructions, Photography, Architecture, Industrial Art, Theatre, Films, Posters, Typography / Alfred H. Barr*, (New York: MoMA, 1936; repr. London, Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1986), p. 120-128.

<sup>23</sup> Barr placed the beginnings of abstract art before World War I, with a painting by Malevich in 1913 that had absolutely no dependence in natural forms "In the history of abstract art Malevich is a figure of fundamental importance ... he stands at the heart of the movement that swept westward from Russia after the War ..."  
Kantor, p. 320, p. 331.

elevating the history of art into an autonomous discipline. Unfortunately, as with all kinds of dictatorships, no matter how justifiable the ultimate goal was, disproportionate collateral damage was done. Once in action, Barr's methodology functioned with surgical accuracy; he removed from the theoretical creation that materialized in the MoMA any artists who did not comply with his theories, because he regarded them as disturbing elements.

At the beginning of his reign, Barr ruled with an iron hand. He tried to isolate art from any other type of consideration and to place it in a pure aesthetic limbo. It was, paradoxically enough, this aseptic quality that was to be charged with political significance. He therefore rejected psychoanalytic approaches to art as well as socio-historical ones. Nevertheless, many of the most relevant followers of Barr, like Clement Greenberg and Michael Fried, as well as other important art historians of the twentieth century like Meyer Schapiro, although keeping Barr's basic principle alive, with variations, always interpreted art inside the socio-economic moment of its production.

This socio-historical approach did not benefit Anglada who, since his retirement to Mallorca, had openly joined the ranks of the bourgeois so abhorred in those days by the art critic ruling elites, though, contradictorily enough, they themselves belonged to the middle classes.<sup>24</sup> As a consequence, Anglada's works were excluded from the newborn "modern art museums", such as the Spanish Modern Art Museum in Cuenca, basically because this museum did not hang that type of art on its walls.

Anglada's political positions before the Spanish Civil War began in 1936, such as his affiliation to a Union or his support of and signature on different manifestoes, were not taken into account by posterity. After all, he was a republican but of the kind that would today be a "liberal". To make matters worse, in 1948 Anglada went back to

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<sup>24</sup> Meyer Shapiro, 'The Social Basis of Art', in *Social Realism-Art as a Weapon: Critical Studies in American Art*, (New York: UNGAR, 1973), pp. 120-127.

Spain, from Paris where he was in exile, accepting the invitation by the government, which implied backing Franco's regime up. This completely cancelled out his former leftist good deeds. Most of the influential art critics and art historians belonged to the more radical left:

Most importantly, the early social historians of art (Marxist scholars like the Anglo-German Francis Klingender [1907 – 55] and the Anglo-Hungarian Frederick Antal [1887 – 1954]) tried to situate cultural representation within the existing communication structures of society, primarily within the field of ideological production under the rise of industrial capitalism. After all, social art history's philosophical inspiration was the scientificity of Marxism itself, a philosophy that had aimed from the very beginning not only to analyze and interpret economic, political, and ideological relations, but also to make the writing of history itself – its historicity – contribute to the larger project of social and political change.<sup>25</sup>

Barr's writings in the catalogue for the exhibition "Cubism and Abstract Art" became a theoretical departure point for many important scholars of twentieth-century art history. His passion for abstraction and originality were so well argued and supported that this book became the bible of art criticism.

The author was the first director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Barr's innovations in many ways set the terms in which modern art has continued to be viewed, both as regards the physical display of works of art and the scholarly apparatus - notably the exhibition catalogue - which surrounds them. To accompany the exhibition *Cubism and Abstract Art* of 1936 Barr produced for the catalogue a complex diagram to illustrate the dominance of two trends in modern art: one fantastic in purport and largely curvilinear or biomorphic in execution; the other rationalist and principally rectilinear.<sup>26</sup>

The MoMA became so important because all the dreams of the visionary Barr materialized in it. The museum, through its didactic approach, achieved more than even Barr could have predicted. His canonical approach became a long-lasting policy. According to Dominic Ricciotti, it was not limited to painting and sculpture:

The Founders established the new Museum under the laws of New York State as an educational institution. Barr, therefore, programmed it with a variety of activities designed to promote public understanding of all the modern arts; besides painting and sculpture, the Museum was the first to embrace the newer media of photography, film, and industrial design. Consonant with Barr's revolutionary agenda was the cause of advanced architecture. In 1932 MoMA held its historic "Modern Architecture:

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<sup>25</sup> Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yves-Alain Bois, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), p.22.

<sup>26</sup> Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, 'Alfred H. Barr Jr (1902-1981) from "Cubism and Abstract Art"', *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), p. 381.

International Exhibition,” organized by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and the young Philip Johnson.<sup>27</sup>

Unfortunately, Barr’s intellectual approach to painting left out of official history many artists who did not fit in with his explanations on the evolution of art. Any artist whose style retained any of the past could be disqualified as academic. Barr first and his followers later were more particularly interested in demonstrating the artistic vitality of abstraction and the United States. Even in the late 1960s and 1970s, William Rubin followed this trend during his fifteen-year reign.<sup>28</sup> The collection of American Expressionism improved immensely as a consequence - but to the detriment of other styles. This meant that Barr’s very influential theory, which was meant to cover all, to be universal in its scope, ended up being rather incomplete. And this was the origin of much of the confusion that is still being washed up on shore today. A good example of a very recent lack of consensus is an article by Franco Moretti in which he cites the MoMA’s recent policies as a betrayal of the critical purport of Modernism itself. Not only does he criticize the actual policy as a surrender of the citadel of Modernism to market forces, he also accuses the MoMA of having turned its back on artistic freedom. A good contemporary example of these much-criticized policies is the exhibition of George Lois’s *Squire* magazine covers, from April 2008 to March 2009.<sup>29</sup> A figurative

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<sup>27</sup> Dominic Ricciotti, ‘The 1939 Building of the Museum of Modern Art: The Goodwin-Stone Collaboration’, *American Art Journal*, 17, 3, Summer, (1985), p. 51.

<sup>28</sup> Rubin also left his imprint on the reinstallation of MOMA’s permanent collection after the expansion of 1984. Rubin’s hanging offered a compelling narrative of the development of modern art but was criticized as reductive, oversimplified and unilinear. When the Museum of Modern Art undertook its recent rebuilding campaign, it responded to these criticisms by redesigning the collection galleries so that visitors can pursue different trajectories through them. (Ironically, the new installation has been criticized for not offering a clear enough sense of direction.)

Karmel, p. 37.

<sup>29</sup> From 1962 to 1972, George Lois changed the face of magazine design with his ninety-two covers for Esquire magazine. He stripped the cover down to a graphically concise yet conceptually potent image that ventured beyond the mere illustration of a feature article. Lois exploited the communicative power of the mass-circulated front page to stimulate and provoke the public into debate, pressing Americans to confront controversial issues like racism, feminism, and the Vietnam War. Viewed as a collection, the covers serve as a visual timeline and a window onto the turbulent events of the 1960s. Initially received as jarring and prescient statements of their time, the covers have since become essential to the iconography of American culture.

artist such as George Lois, with his commercial pop touch, would never have been exhibited at the time when the Modernist Paradigm was enjoying the absolute power that characterized its early years. According to Moretti:

It's an amazing restoration of order – of the market, as Perry Anderson writes in his recent *Origins of Postmodernity*: the market had somehow been eluded in the Modernist years. For a brief moment, the gate of the iron cage had remained open, and a season of incredible technical freedom ensued. Then the market slowly resumed its control of aesthetic production (as of everything else), and the gate was shut down again. Now the Museum of Modern Art has locked it, and congratulated itself for doing so.<sup>30</sup>

Moretti is regretting the MoMA's orthodox past, when Barr was reigning and only artists such as Pollock or Rothko deserved the honour of being exhibited inside the same sacred walls that housed the works of the Cubism masters as well as, for example, Malevich. But, most interestingly, Moretti admits that "...we are still looking for a coherent explanation of the Modernist big bang of ninety years ago".<sup>31</sup> This affirmation proves that, even amongst strong supporters of the Modernist Paradigm, the official explanation of past facts regarding artistic evolution is unsatisfactory.

Criticism of the MoMA's policies began to appear during the 1970s. Much of this criticism had its base in the inadequacy of Modernism to explain the present. Art historians began to ask themselves what the alternative might be to the linear explanation that had been taken for granted since the MoMA's birth. And they did this with different degrees of intensity and with different approaches: for instance, people like Linda Nochlin, Carol Duncan and Jacqueline Rose asked the question from a gender point of view; Arthur Danto and Hans Belting through structural analysis; and Rosalind Krauss, Craig Owens and Hal Foster by attacking directly its basic principles.<sup>32</sup> Thanks

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'Exhibitions & The Collection', in *MoMA*,

<[http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/index.php#collection\\_galleries](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/index.php#collection_galleries)> [accessed 20 March 2009]

<sup>30</sup> Franco Moretti, 'MoMA2000: The Capitulation', *New Left Review*, July-August, (2000), p. 102.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>32</sup> As an illustrative example of how during years to come MoMa was to be an ideological battleground this fragment from Frascina's article about Schapiro, "My Lai and *Guernica*" is a telling example that is representative of these struggles over the control of democratic values in the 1970s and the importance that art still had to the political left. It was taken for granted in certain sectors of the left

to this diversity, during the last thirty years or so a new approach to art has been developed which has tried to solve the past contradictions and limitations and which culminated in the MoMA re-hanging its collection in 2005.<sup>33</sup> Up to this point, Barr's influence had remained.

The MoMA had undergone a previous far-reaching renovation and expansion between 1980 and 1984. Being the most influential institution of its time, it very much needed to keep pace with the progress of that moment in time. Of course there was no universal consensus regarding how to solve the problem. There was criticism on the part of the orthodox Modernists, such as Ana Mendieta, who supported a strict, narrow application of the Modernist Paradigm regarding the proliferating new styles that contradicted the whole idea of Modernism. Those new ways of artistic expression were ferociously disqualified as being imperialist instruments used by the ruling classes with the final purposes of domination. According to Ana Mendieta:

[...] authentic cultural traditions and manifestations in the arts denounce the falsehood of the civilizing mission of the ruling class. So, to mention what I said in my opening remarks, that to me art is a matter of vocation, must seem ridiculous to the bourgeois. The risk that real culture is running today is that if the cultural institutions are governed by people who are part of the ruling class, then art can become invisible because they will refuse to assimilate it.<sup>34</sup>

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that MoMA had to take an active position de-hanging Guernica as a reaction against American actions in Vietnam:

There were several issues which paradoxically united representatives of the Old Left with those agents of corporate USA who subscribed to an official modernist culture, as represented by museums, such as MoMA, and a "free press", however compromised, as represented by Walter Cronkite and CBS news. One of these issues was a fear of losing what were perceived as liberal-democratic gains in culture and education if "left-wing" (the New Left) protesters, with "an infantile disorder", were allowed to go unchecked.

<sup>33</sup> J.L. Marzo, 'The new MoMa and the Ultimate ism: Tour-ism', *Art Papers Magazine*, 29, 2, (2005), pp. 11-16.

J. Saltz, 'MoMA One Year after', *Modern Painters*, Dec/Jan, (2005), pp. 40 – 43.

S.C. Munson, 'Inside the new MoMA', *Commentary – New York – American Jewish Committee*, 119, 2, (2005), pp. 69 – 73.

R. Zamudio, 'The new MoMA', *Art Nexus*, 58, (2005), p. 76.

Wigley, M.; Davidson, C.; Bois, Y.-A.; Buhloh, B., 'The New MoMA', *Art Forum*, 43, 6, (2005,) pp. 130 – 143.

A.C. Danto, 'The new MoMA', *Nation – New York*, 280, 4, (2005), pp. 32 – 35.

<sup>34</sup> Ana Mendieta, 'Art and Politics', in *Ana Mendieta*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Poligrafa, 1996), p.168.

Mendieta seems to fail to realize that cultural institutions have always been controlled by the ruling class (this fact being part of the definition of "ruling class"). In fact, this dissertation is principally about artists who became invisible precisely as a consequence of the MoMA's ruling-class policy.

The MoMA was, according to certain authors like Alan Wallach, going through a new stage in its history.<sup>35</sup> Others thought that it changed things only in order to stay fundamentally the same. After all, this new stage had the imprint on it of William S. Rubin who, in turn, had been selected as heir by Barr. Nevertheless, one must admit that some assumptions were finally abandoned, such as the idea of art as something temporally and historically linear, as well as its inevitable evolution, and visitors could pursue different trajectories in the Museum galleries.<sup>36</sup> Still, Rubin had been severely criticized in previous years for trying desperately to maintain the MoMA as the bastion of Modernism, when the latter was clearly losing ground.<sup>37</sup>

Finally, in 2005, the MoMA undertook its most recent and most drastic change. Maybe the most representative factor of its will to improve, to keep alive its majestic intellectual status of former times, is its new building. Designed by the Japanese architect Yoshio Taniguchi, the new MoMA has massively increased in size, nearly doubling the capacity of the original building.<sup>38</sup> The fact that there is physical room for many more works can be seen as a symbol of the MoMA's will to recover artists who were excluded from the Modernist Paradigm, or at least of the view that a greater effort towards impartiality now and in the future would achieve a more complete result.

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<sup>35</sup> Alan Wallach, 'The Museum of Modern Art: The Past's Future', *Journal of Design History*, 5, 3, (1992), pp. 207-215.

<sup>36</sup> Karmel, p. 37.

<sup>37</sup> As an example this is a letter in which Rubin defends his position:

William Rubin, 'Further Reflections on Cezanne at MoMA', *Art Journal*, 38, 2, Winter, (1978-1979), pp. 119-120.

<sup>38</sup> Franz Schulze, 'Taniguchi's MOMA: An Architectural Close-Up', *Art in America*, 93, 3, March, (2005), p. 53.



Barr's Modernism was not limited to the United States: it became mandatory in all the Western world. Spain, throughout the Franco's dictatorship and even later, was a country that wanted to be "modern" above all. The Spanish authorities competent in artistic matters followed Modernism by the book. A perfect example of the consequences of the above-mentioned approach, as well as of the incompleteness of the Modernist approach, is Anglada-Camarasa, who was left aside for many years. Part of the explanation for this can be found in the Spanish interpretation of the Modernist Paradigm. Anglada's art, full of colours and melting shapes, which is still today a sensual experience, at least initially, would have been appalling in the 1930s to the spirit of the MoMA, which had been imported by Spain, amongst other countries such as Iran and Sweden. Its director, Barr, was, according to Sybil Gordon Kantor, a man deeply criticized for his incapacity to experience the world of art through his senses. And as we have seen, although Barr left the direction of the MoMA in 1943, his influence continued at full power during the 1950s.

Rosalind Kraus criticizes, from the inside, this situation, where artists were not the only victims:

In the '50s we had been alternately tyrannized and depressed by the psychologizing whine of 'Existentialist' criticism. It had seemed evasive to us – the impenetrable hedge of subjectivity whose prerogatives we could no assent to. The remedy had to have, for us, the clear provability of an 'if x then y'. The syllogism we took up was historical in character, which meant that it read only in one direction; it was progressive. No *à rebours* was possible, no going backward against the grain. The history we saw from Manet to the Impressionists to Cézanne and then to Picasso was like a series of rooms *en filade*. Within each room the individual artist explored, to the limits of his experience and his formal intelligence, the separate constituents of his medium. The effect of his pictorial act was to open simultaneously the door to the next space and close out access to the one behind him. The shape and dimensions of the new space were discovered by the next pictorial act; the only thing about that unstable position that was clearly determined beforehand was its point of entrance.[...] Insofar as modernism was tied to the objective datum of that history, it had, I thought, nothing to do with 'sensibility'.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Rosalind Krauss, 'A View of Modernism', *Artforum*, September, (1972), pp. 48-51. As quoted in: *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, ed. by George Harrison and Paul Wood, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing), 2004. p. 978.

According to people who knew him well, the director of the MoMA was incapable of just enjoying art. Barr, as defined by his contemporaries, was somebody who could only experience art through the intellect:

Years later a staff member, Alan Porter, commented: "Barr has absolutely no sense of enjoyment. I don't think it has ever occurred to him that art is something to enjoy. He turned down a since famous Matisse because it was just a pretty picture, didn't offer any problems at all." (...) "Pretty" was, indeed, a pejorative term in Barr's lexicon; "difficult" was an unqualified description he often used for paintings that held his interest.<sup>40</sup>

Matisse, whom Barr described in 1928 as "decorative",<sup>41</sup> was not the only artist he had problems accepting: it took him a very long time to appreciate Kandinsky, whom he disliked immensely at the beginning. An example of his opinions on the subject of Kandinsky can be found in the comments that he made after visiting the exhibition that Katherine Dreier mounted at the Société Anonyme in 1923. A local newspaper published Barr's impressions:

The editor (of the *Vasar Miscellany News*) wrote that the quality of newness could be legitimate but dangerous because it allowed so many poseurs who paint "tortured cubes and inebriate squares and call them "The Temptation of St. Anthony" ". The writer reported on the reaction of a Mr. Chatterton, a professor of art at the college, who said that the language of the pictures was "unintelligible": "Both (Chatterton) and Mr. Barr are unable to look at the pictures emotionally. ... Barr gets the outer sensation of an emotion which he can qualify but cannot name. Both agree that the color is the best thing about the pictures, particularly in water-colors; and therefore their chief value is a decorative one [...]"<sup>42</sup>

In the same publication Barr summed up his dislike of Kandinsky's work in an even more negative term than his previous "decorativeness", which became ubiquitous from the time he first used it and has retained its pejorative connotations since the 1930s and 1940s right up to the present day, although, admittedly, nowadays it is relegated only to a few circles. According to the same newspaper, Barr's final remark was that Kandinsky's work was "hashish".

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<sup>40</sup> Kantor, p. XXII. Quoting Alan Porter, interviewed by Macdonald, Macdonald Papers, YUL.

<sup>41</sup> Although in those days the adjective "decorative" hadn't yet acquired its pejorative connotation and Barr still used to describe "paintings whose forms were flattened".

Ibid., p. 79, p. 187.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

Mr. Barr on the other hand thinks that they lack rhythm and hence lose some of their decorative quality.... Barr however thinks the artist has failed because he does not give an emotion to the observer.<sup>43</sup>

A couple of years later, in 1931, Barr diluted his remark, though only to a slight extent, when, on the occasion of the opening of the German Art Exhibition at the MoMA, he said that German artists indulged in romantic feelings and emotional values and even in moral, social and philosophical considerations. For these reasons, he concluded, German art was not, as a rule, pure art. He said of *Die Brücke* artists that they used unnatural colours, frequently in a decorative pattern. He described the second generation of German Expressionists, *Der Blaue Reiter*, to which Kandinsky belonged, as less naïve, more belligerent and more doctrinaire.<sup>44</sup>

Later on, Barr changed his initial opinion of both Kandinsky and Matisse. However, Barr still chose to overlook the fact that for Kandinsky, as well as for other of his favourite artists such as Malevich, art was a means to enrich the viewer morally. Barr ignored this metaphysical or transcendental content in the work of both Malevich and Kandinsky in his quest not to burden the arts with social and political responsibility, in the sense that they might serve as a substitute for ethical, moral or religious factors.<sup>45</sup> This is particularly important for Anglada who saw art as having a redemptive quality as we shall see in Chapter Two.

The Russian Kazimir Malevich, who was the ideologue of Suprematism as well as being one of Barr's favourite artists, was, according to Rose-Carol Washton Long, an artist whose work was charged with metaphysical and transcendental content. Malevich pursued what turned out to be a maximum degree of purity in his content through a work

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p 32.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-13, p. 330, p. 331.

of thorough simplification. He depurated colour and form from symbols and tried to renew perception:

For the painter this meant “de-automatizing” vision so as to confront the viewer with the fact that pictorial signs are not transparent to their referents but have an existence of their own they are “palpable”...<sup>46</sup>

Malevich was seeking this “zero degree”, the irreducible core, the essential minimum of painting. Contrary to Kandinsky, who was also trying to express spirituality through art, for Malevich the process was not determined by the artist’s “inner life” but by the logic of the “zero”. Malevich, through the isolation of colour and by using very simple geometrical shapes, got close to a mystical position.<sup>47</sup>

No wonder Barr’s admiration for Malevich was so strong. The latter, in his determined pursuit of unadulterated abstraction as well as in his extreme defence of the linear creed of Modernist evolution, changed the dates of his own works in order to adapt them to a temporally increasing degree of purity.<sup>48</sup> Malevich was also keen on the idea of originality as the only way to make progress towards the artistic and political ideal:

None of the forms of economic development and of human consciousness that were found in the old world can exist any longer, for a new meaning has appeared...we leave the old form because we are serving counter revolutionary perfection. Each day in economic and political life, brings purification from what is old – this is where perfection lies.<sup>49</sup>

He believed that each work of art had to define its own essence by eliminating those unnecessary conventions. Each had to be a step beyond the preceding one.<sup>50</sup>

Barr’s theories about the kind of art that had value were very specific. Works of art, he thought, had to fulfil certain theoretical conditions, without which they should be

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<sup>46</sup> Foster, Krauss, Bois and Buchloh, p. 131.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.132.

<sup>48</sup> Mondrian also antedated some flowers that he was obliged to paint for economic reasons around 1920, to the turn of the century.

Ibid., p.134.

<sup>49</sup> Kasimir Malevich, ‘The Question of Imitative Art’, in *K. S. Malevich: Essays on Art 1915-1933*, ed. by T. Andersen, 3 volumes, (Copenhagen: Borgens, 1969), I, p. 177.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

rejected. These conditions were abstraction and originality. The first had a spiritual value, which I shall discuss further later. The second involved a real worship of novelty. This meant that only artists in the most innovative periods of their careers were appreciated. In the first catalogue that Barr wrote, the first of many similar publications, on the occasion of the first loan exhibition that took place at the MoMA in 1929, he sustained his admiration for Cézanne on the basis of his capacity for innovation. He shared this point of view with the British critic Roger Fry, whom he had met in London in 1927. Cézanne's originality had the quality of synthesizing the Baroque and Impressionism, rooting novelty in tradition – exactly what Barr needed for his linear explanation of artistic evolution.<sup>51</sup> In the opinion of Kantor:

(...) what appealed to Barr's sense of order: "twice (Cézanne) defined his program(...) : 'what we must do is paint Poussin over again from nature.' In this pregnant sentence he insists both upon the importance of tradition and the validity of contemporary discovery."<sup>52</sup>

Barr particularly appreciated Picasso's and Braque's creation of Cubism. Understanding the complexities of Picasso's work became, in fact, one of Barr's life-long preoccupations. He admired Picasso for having what he described as "the most inventive intelligence in modern art".<sup>53</sup> He consistently sustained this line of judgement throughout his life. The rate of change in the "right" direction was what he valued most in an artist; for example, many years later he appreciated Rothko's change into abstraction. Barr aspired to establish Modernism in a historical framework.

Originality as the prime mover of modern art was highlighted in his (Barr's) claim that "in several cases the earlier and more creative years of a movement or individual have been emphasized at the expense of later work which may be fine in quality but comparatively unimportant historically"<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Alfred H. Barr, *First Loan Exhibition: Cézanne, Gauguin, Seurat, van Gogh*, Exhibition Catalogue, New York, MoMA, November 1929, (New York: MoMa, 1929), p. 18, p. 23.

<sup>52</sup> Kantor, p. 217.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p.81

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p 320.

Once that period was over, these artists lost pace in the “relay race” that the art world in the first half of the twentieth century had become.

In the case of Anglada, only the first years in Paris are considered innovative, the rest of his work being a mere “emulation of himself”.<sup>55</sup> In fact, as we shall see in Chapter Four, Anglada’s subject matter, together with his technique, had already changed since 1904. He had abandoned his blurred images to depict more defined figures, therefore evolving away from abstraction, in the “opposite” way to the path that Barr had established as the correct and only one.

What is so striking about this historical situation is that the majority of scholars blindly accepted these selective conditions. They became ingrained and therefore implicit in most value judgements in criticism and in the discipline of art history. As Carol Duncan says:

For many decades, now, in both American and European art museums, the central narrative of twentieth-century art – let us call it the narrative of modernism – has been remarkably fixed. One of its first effective advocates was Alfred Barr, the founding curator of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), who adopted it (beginning in 1929) as his organizing narrative. Barr did not invent single-handedly what would become the MoMA’s central art-historical narrative; but under his direction, the MoMA would develop it more than any other institution and promote it through a vigorous program of acquisitions, exhibitions, and publications. Eventually, the history of modern art as told in the MoMA would come to stand for the definitive story of “mainstream modernism.” As the core narrative of the Western world’s premier collection of modern art for over half a century, it constituted the most authoritative history of modern art for generations of professional as well as non-professional people. To this day, modern museums (and modern wings in older museums) continue to retell its central gospel, as do almost all history of art textbooks.<sup>56</sup>

As can be expected with any theoretical construction, despite the severity of its initial intentions, the criteria of abstraction and originality were often applied in a very elastic way. Barr admired Picasso’s inventiveness but his bias nonetheless prevented him for extending similar treatment to Chagall.<sup>57</sup> This irrationality becomes quite obvious in the study of Anglada’s work, but the asymmetry of judgement happened even

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<sup>55</sup> *Summa Artis*, XXXVI, pp. 45-49.

<sup>56</sup> Duncan, 1997, p. 103.

<sup>57</sup> Kantor, p. 81.

in the sacred environment of the MoMA. Carol Duncan has criticized deeply the breach of the law of abstraction that can be observed in the figurative works of Picasso and De Kooning.<sup>58</sup> If one studies this question in depth, one immediately sees that there are so many exceptions to the rule that the boundaries between both groups, the rules and the exceptions, become blurred. Miró himself refused to be considered an Abstractionist and he rejected the same classification for Mondrian. Returning to Kandinsky, even if he claimed the honour of being the author of the first consciously produced abstract painting, it becomes clear that the degree of purity of abstraction in his work is also questionable, as I will show in Chapter Five. This issue could be the subject of another dissertation. My point in bringing this up is to show that this lack of consistency in the application of the criteria becomes quite obvious in the study of Anglada's work. But it is also clear that there must have been other reasons for the discrimination against him besides judgements about pictorial technicalities. At this stage it can be said, with only a small margin for error, that it was Anglada's politically incorrect character that erased from art books his natural tendency to abstraction as well as his technical innovations, not to mention other less Modernist qualities.

Alfred Barr, who led the way in the codification of art criticism, justified the privileges of abstraction and originality in art creation by making them representatives of higher values.

For an 'abstract' painting is really a most positively concrete painting since it confines the attention to its immediate, sensuous, physical surface far more than does the canvas of a sunset or a portrait. The adjective is confusing, too, because it has the implications of both a verb and a noun. The verb is *to abstract* means *to draw out of* or *away from*. But the noun *abstraction* is already something drawn out of away from-so much so like a geometrical figure or an amorphous silhouette it may no have apparent relation to concrete reality. "Abstract" is therefore an adjective which can be applied to works of art with a certain latitude, [...]<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Duncan, 1993.

<sup>59</sup> Barr, 1986, p. 11.

For him, abstraction was the artistic representation of freedom. Artists had to free themselves from the tyranny of objective reality. The exaltation of the individual over the establishment and the representation of his subjective experience could only be channelled through abstraction. Besides, Barr was obsessed with purity. He argued that natural forms polluted the deep meaning of the work of art. They were basically unnecessary.

Alfred Barr's passion for, or rather obsession with, abstraction is studied in depth by Sybil Gordon Kantor. She also quotes from the catalogue of the exhibition "Cubism and Abstract Art" of 1936:

He found the rationale for abstraction in a formalist aesthetic: "a work of art ... is worth looking at primarily because it presents a composition or organization of color, line, light and shade. Resemblance to natural objects, while it does not necessarily destroy these aesthetic values, may easily adulterate their purity. Therefore, since resemblance to nature is at best superfluous and at worst distracting, it might as well be eliminated."<sup>60</sup>

Regarding the concept of originality, Barr considered it the proof of progress. It meant the possibility of transcending former styles. This race of art towards an independent future was run in the narrow track of abstraction. Originality represented the dynamism of modern times, the capacity to liberate first the artist and then society from their material chains. It implied that only the most innovative, creative periods in the life of an artist were really part of history. In practice, it required a speed of change that accelerated until it became untenable. Cubism was Barr's favourite example of meaningful innovation and it lasted for a much shorter time than the director of the MoMA would have considered adequate. Abstract Expressionism in the United States was his next beloved style, protected and thrown into fame by the MoMA.

Flatness, another much sought-after plastic characteristic of Modernism, had an emblematic value precisely because it represented originality. The lack of pictorial depth

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<sup>60</sup> Sybil Gordon Kantor, 'Barr, Cubism and Abstract Art', in *Alfred H. Barr Jr. and the Intellectual Origins of the Museum of Modern Art*, (Cambridge, Mass., London: MIT Press, 2002), p. 11-13, p. 318.



symbolized a total detachment from past art. Flatness stood for the origin in its strictest sense, as being the beginning of the future. Modern paintings, with their flatness and avoidance of the laws of perspective, were consciously trying to delineate the starting point of a new artistic style that could represent the progress of humanity.

Later in the twentieth century Clement Greenberg would inherit this admiration for flatness and would revere it for its own sake and for being specific to a canvas. Greenberg's formalist ideas were succinctly expressed in the essay "Modernist Painting" in 1965: "Because flatness was the only condition painting shared with no other art, modernist painting oriented itself to flatness as it did to nothing else."<sup>61</sup> For the same reason, because every art should use only what is unique to its medium, and because illusionist art had dissembled art to conceal art whereas Modernism used art to call attention to art, Greenberg also rejected the "literary" in a painting.<sup>62</sup> He praised the absence of narrative as a desirable quality of modern art precisely because a painting was detached from time and should not therefore try to represent either the evolution of an event or "an instant of beauty". The latter, as I shall show in Chapters Two and Three, was a concept inherited from Baudelaire that was to prove crucial in the development of art at the turn of the century. Greenberg's influence was immense and, so as far as I am aware, nobody contradicted him by pointing out the fact that sculpture could be flat, as photography is flat, not to mention the art of writing and calligraphy. His intellectual charisma was so powerful that not even during the 1960s, with for instance the birth of Pop Art, did many dare to raise their voices against his principles.

However, the expression of this desire to aim towards human liberation and progress could not be monopolized, as it had many artistic manifestations and not only

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<sup>61</sup> Clement Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', in *Clement Greenberg: The Collected Essays and Criticism: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957 – 1969*, ed. by John O'Brien, 4 volumes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), IV, p. 87.

<sup>62</sup> Clement Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting', in *Art in Theory 1900-2000*, ed. by George Harrison and Paul Wood, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 775, p. 776.

the ones that had been promoted by the supporters of the Modernist Paradigm. Criticism of the theoretical structure that had developed simultaneously with the history of art discipline started in the 1970s. As I said at the beginning of this chapter, it grew from different theoretical standpoints. Now that I have explained how the Modernist Paradigm developed, I will show how Anglada-Camarasa benefited from its crisis.

Criticism of the Modernist Paradigm started by unveiling its multiple flaws and contradictions. I shall start by quoting Rosalind Krauss, who in 1972 studied some weak points of the Modernist theory:

The flatness that modernist criticism reveres may have expunged spatial perspective, but it has substituted a temporal one – i.e. history. It is this history that the modernist critic contemplates looking into the vortex of [...] a perspective view that opens backward into that receding vista of past doors and rooms, which because they are not re-enterable, can only manifest themselves in the present by means of diagrammatic flatness.<sup>63</sup>

Krauss continued her research, which sought to demythologize Modernist criticism, well into the 1980s. She helped deconstruct also the notion of originality. Finally, these alternative ways of thinking about art spread, eroding the authority of the Modernist Paradigm, motivating new research.

It is at the same time as this revolution in art criticism (of which other examples are Danto and Belting), that a catalogue raisonnée on Anglada was published (1981).<sup>64</sup> This was not a simple coincidence: now that the Modernist Paradigm veil was being lifted, like a fading magic spell its theories lost power in the countries like Spain that had adopted them, and different possibilities started being considered. Therefore, the revolution of art criticism and the publication of Anglada's catalogue were different proofs of the same phenomenon. Concepts that had been taken for granted were exposed

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<sup>63</sup> Krauss, 1972, pp. 48-51.

<sup>64</sup> Hans Belting was the European Chair of the Collège de France at Paris for 2002-03 and an Honorary Chair at the University of Heidelberg. He is currently teaching at Northwestern University. 'Hans Belting', in *Faculty, Department of Art History, Northwestern University*, <<http://www.arthistory.northwestern.edu/faculty/belting.htm>> [accessed 8 June 2009]

in their fictitious condition in order to eliminate them. Assorted interests that, through the years, had become entangled in Barr's initial originality ideal were revealed. In the following quotation, Krauss reallocates the concept of originality from an art history point of view:

From this perspective we can see that modernism and the avant-garde are functions of what we could call the discourse of originality, and that that discourse serves much wider interests – and is thus fuelled by more diverse institutions – than the restricted circle of professional art-making. The theme of originality, encompassing as it does the notions of authenticity, originals, and origins, is the shared discursive practice of the museum, the historian, and the maker of art. And throughout the nineteenth century all of these institutions were concerted, together, to find the mark, the warrant, the certification of the original.<sup>65</sup>

Both abstraction and originality are characteristics that in themselves present no harm for the production of art. However, for painters such as Anglada, the problem was that those measurements were imposed and randomly applied as the only measure of quality and conceptual or spiritual depth. As I shall prove in the following chapters, during his Parisian years Anglada developed a style where colours and forms progressively became the only protagonists, overpowering the subject matter. His palette as well as his interpretation of subjects, were as original as they could be. These issues will be developed in Chapters Two and Three. In Chapters Four and Five I will explain how during his early Parisian years Anglada was participating in the development of Modernism and through his international success was exerting considerable artistic influence on others. His extremely independent personality, expressed through his works, was a perfect source of inspiration in a time when subjectivity – a personal expression of originality – was the only perspective accepted in paintings. This means that even from the restrictive point of view of the Modernist Paradigm, Anglada, at least during his first years in Paris, collaborated with the building up of Modernism,

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<sup>65</sup> Rosalind Krauss, 'The Originality of the Avant-Garde', in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modern Myths*, (London, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986, repr. 1999), p. 162.

contributing a large dose of originality and abundant inspiration to those searching for abstraction.

Central to all of this history of individual achievement, then, is an idea of progress. But progress toward what? In the nineteenth century, progress in art was progress toward an ideal that, brilliantly realized in the past, could now measure the achievements of the present. In the twentieth century (that is, in most twentieth-century art history), progress in modern art, especially the art of the first two-thirds of the century, is gauged by the degree to which art achieved greater abstraction – the distance it travelled in emancipating itself from the imperative to represent convincingly or coherently a natural, presumably objective world. Modern art's most important figures rejected the commitment to illusionism that was for so long central to western painting and sculpture.<sup>66</sup>

To prove that even by the standards of the Modernist Paradigm Anglada has been undeservedly neglected, consider the following examples of the relevant artistic technicalities of Modernism provided by Paul Wood in the following text:

It may be helpful to think of modern art as having developed a language. We have already considered factors like increasingly shallow pictorial space; an increasing attention to surface, to facture; an increasing distance from conventional picturing either through the employment of brighter colours or distorted forms; increasing reliance on the concept of 'expression'.<sup>67</sup>

These features are precisely what characterized Anglada's paintings. One realizes that those works of Anglada's that date from his Parisian period (1900-1914) have flatness, attention to surface to the point of forgetting everything else, bright colours and distorted forms. In fact, this is why Anglada's paintings enjoyed such overwhelming acceptance in contemporary artistic circles: to use Kandinsky's words, Anglada's work was "a child of its time".<sup>68</sup> Given that Anglada so clearly complied with the basic laws laid down by Modernism, the explanation of why he was punished with the indifference of art historians must be that he was thought to have fallen short of its true spirit. However, Anglada's influence on others was absolutely unconscious and, by Modernist

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<sup>66</sup> Duncan, 1997, p. 108.

<sup>67</sup> Paul Wood (ed.), *Art and its Histories – the Challenge of the Avant-Garde*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press & Open University, 1999), p. 190.

About this subject Carol Duncan's 'The MoMA's Hot Mamas' is still unbeatable.

<sup>68</sup> Carol Duncan, 'The MoMA's Hot Mamas', *Art Journal*, 48, 2, Summer, (1989), pp. 171-178.

Wassily Kandinsky, 'On the Spiritual in Art', in *Kandinsky, Complete Writings on Art*, ed. by Kenneth C. Lindsay, Peter Vergo, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 127.

standards, this lack of rational purpose was a minus when evaluating the final result. The artist had to be heroic in the pursuit of his (not her) aim. The fact that Anglada later in life explicitly discredited Abstraction could also be given as a proof of his abomination of the damage that he considered the Modernist dictatorship had done to many artists of his time.<sup>69</sup>

In explaining why, for such a prolonged period, Anglada's work did not interest art historians, the combination of subject matter and his own character need also to be considered. His increasing figurativism showed Anglada's indifference to the socialist ideals favoured by the Modernist Paradigm. Anglada's social criticism as depicted in his paintings showing the unfair destiny of prostitutes, as we shall see in Chapter Two, was ignored. Also, the fact that Anglada praised the social and spiritual values remaining in peasants, which is treated in Chapter Three, was not taken into account by latter leftist art historians. Only the Soviet socialist realism of the 1920s seemed to be aware of the fact that the sophisticated language of Abstraction was incomprehensible to the majority of the masses, whereas paintings such as Anglada's were readable even for the uncultivated crowd.

The socialist message was therefore unattainable by the very people for which socialism was supposed to care the most. According to Paul Wood:

The problem for a conception of the avant-garde is that the very move into technical unorthodoxy – in picturing, or writing, or music – in the nature of the case undermines the possibility of widespread comprehension. One cannot critique deep-seated cultural and artistic conventions and address a majority public at the same time. This is perhaps the central dilemma of modern avant-gardism, and it is one with implications for both the artistic and the political dimensions of the concept. For the inference is that the avant-garde will be a minority, and the relationship between a leading minority and an elite is one fraught with problems for a concept that, after all, originates in a socialist – and hence democratic – tradition.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> According to Anglada's daughter, Beatriz Anglada Huelin. Interview with Beatriz Anglada Huelin. Pollença, Mallorca. June 2005.

<sup>70</sup> Wood, p. 195.

The technical characteristic that was thought to encapsulate all the evils of the *Ancien Régime* was its figurative character, or the need to link art with the material world as the main purpose of art's existence. Thus, Modernist leaders such as Barr declared their rejection of this link in a dictatorial way that admitted no qualification or nuances about its implications. Progressively, abstraction drifted from its original leftist political motivation into a symbol of the freedom that characterizes market economy driven societies, such as the United States'.

Anglada, since the First World War retired to Mallorca, where he mainly painted landscapes. Being a republican he had to flee to France in 1938 and only came back in 1948, already in his seventies. Anglada-Camarasa never had a politically correct style, nor did he collaborate with the dominating political powers of his lifetime. Therefore, at a time when modern art was highly politicized, he was sidelined by historians.<sup>71</sup> Towards the end of his life Anglada accepted the invitation of Franco's regime to come back from exile. He was 75 years old and tired; he wanted to spend his last years in his homeland. It was then that the regime showered him with medals and awards.<sup>72</sup> It is true that it was in Franco's interest to attract as many artists and intellectuals as possible: he needed them in order to try to whitewash the brutalities of the regime. Anglada was a good political catch because he was a successful artist who deserved the prizes awarded him by Franco's regime. Quoting Francesc Fontbona:

... in 1954 he exhibited for the first time in the Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes de Madrid, where even the dictator Francisco Franco came to greet him, conscious of the artist's international prestige. It was around these years that he was literally covered in official honours (Gran Cruz de Alfonso X El Sabio, Académico de Honor de San Fernando, Premio Juan March) by the then new Spanish government as well as its sympathizers. In recovering Anglada, they played a good hand in their effort of propping up the beleaguered Spanish official credibility at that historical moment.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Picasso, for example, did collaborate with the French Communist Party although he never used in his works their officially imposed artistic style. The FCP decided to oversee that fact. Picasso's international fame made him too important element of propaganda.

<sup>72</sup> One can easily notice that Anglada got more Spanish national prizes in the last ten years of his life than ever before. See attached list of awards in Appendix I.

<sup>73</sup> Francesc Fontbona, *Hermen Anglada-Camarasa*, (Madrid: Fundación MAPFRE, 2006), p. 89.

These prizes were after all in recognition of a life's work. However, in the following twenty years or so this acknowledgement from a fascist regime did Anglada at least as much harm as good. The political right took possession of Anglada's name on the strength of the latter's acceptance of its favours. This was not going to benefit Anglada's reputation, as in later years the sympathies of most of the people involved in the writing of art history were on the political left. Valeriano Bozal and Julian Gallego are representative examples of these Spanish art historians. The former wrote, among other texts, a very popular *History of Spanish Art* and the latter was a well-known art critic. Bozal is also the author of the negative text about Anglada-Camarasa that I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter.<sup>74</sup> The leftist political sympathies of both authors were beyond doubt.<sup>75</sup> In general, sympathy was not felt for the exiled artists who had surrendered to Franco's power.

Spain had also during the dictatorship "imported" the Modernist Paradigm as a symbol of its willingness to belong to the free world led by the United States. This cultural import materialized in the creation of the Museo Español de Arte Abstracto de Cuenca, which opened its doors in 1966, although the project had started at least eight years earlier.<sup>76</sup> The political background behind can be found in the fact that Spain's economy had been isolated as a punishment for Franco's role in the Second World War against the Allies. To end this situation as well as to obtain some of the financial help

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<sup>74</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>75</sup> More information about Valeriano Bozal can be found at:

'Valeriano Bozal Fernández', in *Proyecto Filosofía en Español*, <<http://www.filosofia.org/ave/001/a071.htm>> [accessed 20 March 2009]

Valeriano Bozal, *Historia del Arte en España: Desde Goya hasta nuestros días*. (Madrid: Ediciones ISTMO, 1972, repr. 1973, 1977).

Valeriano Bozal, *Marx-Engels: Textos sobre la producción artística*, (Madrid: Editor Alberto Corazón, 1972, repr. 1976).

Julián Gallego, *Arte Abstracto Español*, Exhibition Catalogue, (Madrid: Fundación Juan March, 1983).

<sup>76</sup> 'Colección Permanente: El Museo y las Obras: Historia', in *Fundación Juan March / Museo de Cuenca*, <<http://www.march.es/arte/cuenca/coleccion/museo/museo.asp>> [accessed 10 May 2009]

that the United States was giving to Europe, Spain had to prove its political worthiness.

According to Maria Dolores Jiménez-Blanco:

From that moment onwards and during many years to come, (Spanish) avant-guard art found in the State not only not an enemy but even a supporter. The new *franquismo* of the 1950's, understood the impossibility of having an official (fascist) art at the same time as understanding the advantages of a cultural opening, from which it (the State) would soon learn how to obtain substantial advantages both in foreign and home policies.<sup>77</sup>

During the 1950s those in charge of cultural policy in Franco's regime, like the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the director of the Contemporary Spanish Art Museum, decided to follow the Abstract trend. They concentrated on exporting the most famous Spanish Abstract artists such as Antoni Tàpies, Rafael Canogar, Antonio Saura, Luis Feito and Manolo Miralles.<sup>78</sup> According to Genoveva Tusell García:

...the political scene of the 1950s can be seen as transitional, moving towards a different international status. Diplomatic relations with the United States resumed and in the artistic sphere this decade broke once and for all the post-war isolationist cycle by initiating something new.... After the long period of isolation into which Spain was plunged after the Civil War, the regime in the 1950s demonstrated a cultural openness to the outside world as well as willingness to embrace modernisation.<sup>79</sup>

Franco, by opening the first museum of Abstract art, skilfully manipulated his international image. However, instead of locating it in the capital Madrid, it was placed in the small town of Cuenca, approximately 200 km from Madrid. Franco understood the need to create a modern image for his regime but was very watchful of the leftist artists whom he was, through extreme political need, obliged to promote. Madrid did not have a museum for contemporary art, the MEAC, until the early Seventies. Even then it was located in a secure place inside the campus of the university, so that it could be

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<sup>77</sup> A partir de este momento, y durante algunos años, pues, el arte de vanguardia encontrará en el Estado no sólo no un enemigo sino, hasta cierto punto, un promotor. El nuevo franquismo de los años cincuenta había comprendido al mismo tiempo la imposibilidad de un arte oficial áulico y las ventajas que podía ofrecer la nueva apertura cultural, de la que muy pronto aprendería a obtener rentables resultados de prestigio tanto interior como exterior.

María Dolores Jiménez-Blanco Carrillo de Albornoz, *Arte y Estado en la España del Siglo XX*, (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989), pp. 68-69.

<sup>78</sup> Genoveva Tusell García, 'The Internationalisation of Spanish Abstract Art (1950-1962)', *Third Text*, 20, 2, (2006), p. 242.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 241.



easily surrounded by police. It was a time of great political disturbance among dissident students seeking greater liberties.<sup>80</sup> This time, the new museum included Figurativism and works of Anglada.

As a result, although his fame had surpassed a certain critical level which meant he could not be totally forgotten, Anglada was dismissed as just a clever colourist. He was not to be rediscovered until the publication of the catalogue raisonné in 1982. This was an effect of the increasing challenge to the Modernist Paradigm that had started a decade before.

The collection of the MEAC was inherited by the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, which opened its doors in 1995. Anglada's paintings are nowadays disseminated in some of the main museums of Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao and Palma de Mallorca. However, Anglada has not yet been allocated the rightful place that he should occupy in the history of twentieth-century art, nor has his role been fully appreciated. Hopefully the following chapters will help to confirm Anglada's contribution to art as well as the influence that he exerted on his contemporaries.

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<sup>80</sup> [...] Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo que, como ya sabemos, aparecía por decreto de 21 de noviembre de 1968 de la fusión de los anteriores Museo Nacional de Arte Moderno y Museo Nacional de Arte Contemporáneo. [...] desmontado desde 1969 a la espera de la inauguración de su nueva sede, que no tendría lugar hasta el 11 de julio de 1975, en medio de un ambiente social de encendida polémica.  
Jiménez-Blanco Carrillo de Albornoz, p. 132.

## CHAPTER TWO:

### ANGLADA-CAMARASA AND SYMBOLISM

The main aim of this chapter is to explain how Anglada-Camarasa played a pivotal role between two centuries through his relationship with Symbolism. This chapter will deal only with the Symbolist principles that were translated into Anglada's art and the socio-economic environment that made it possible. The technical aspects will be dealt within the next chapter.

In the few existing publications on the subject, that I have described in the literature review, none of the authors have established any direct link between Anglada-Camarasa and Symbolism. Some have put Anglada-Camarasa together with some the Catalan artistic currents from the turn of the last century, such as Neocentism. In other cases Anglada has been associated, in general terms, with the Belle Epoque.<sup>1</sup> But, although Symbolism was the main artistic current of the time, nobody has related him to the philosophical spirit of his Symbolist contemporaries. The aim of the present chapter is to fill this gap. Contextualizing Anglada's early Parisian production within the Symbolist spirit of the time is especially important today, when research is showing a

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<sup>1</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1981), p. 13.

Neocentism was a cultural movement that influenced all areas of artistic activity in Catalonia between 1908 and 1923. The term was coined by the philosopher Eugenio D'Ors, who used it to refer to a new '20th-century' spirit that he perceived in Catalan art at the beginning of the century. In a series of articles in periodicals d'Ors qualified as Noucentistes those artists and writers whose work in his opinion was characterized by a new sensibility, and the designation was established in 1911 with the publication of the *Almanac dels Noucentistes*. Noucentisme was influential in Catalan art for more than two decades and constituted a parallel movement to that of avant-garde art, towards which, however, it showed only a detached curiosity. Noucentisme encouraged a return to order and normality after the radicalism, bohemianism and individualism that had characterized some of the major figures of modernism.

'Noucentisme', Artnet, <<http://www.artnet.com/library//06/0628/T062896.ASP>> [accessed 15 April 2009]

continuous and increasing interest in Symbolism's relevance to the origin of the different artistic currents of the first half of the twentieth century.

In the first part of this chapter I shall explain this renewed interest in Symbolism.<sup>2</sup> I shall go on to describe why, during the first half of the twentieth century, Symbolism was put to one side by the theoreticians who supported the Modernist Paradigm. Reconsidering Symbolism is of the utmost relevance for artists like Anglada because it demonstrates his common roots with the main contemporary artistic currents. I will show how the Catalan artist slotted into Symbolism's historical moment from a personal as well as a social point of view.

Then I will consider the crucial role that Baudelaire's writings on art played in Symbolism and more specifically in Anglada's art, I will first explain the concept of the symbol and, second, the perfect positioning, emotionally as well as intellectually, of poets (because of their skill at using words as symbols) as art critics. I will then go into Baudelaire's art theories and criticism particularly on transcendence, as it arguably informs Anglada's style.

Before turning back to Anglada, I will emphasize the extemporal quality of Baudelaire's art criticism. Symbolism had originated in literature but its principles were to be adopted subsequently by the plastic arts. Anglada-Camarasa played an important role in the transmission of Symbolism's ideas from literature to the visual arts. All of them - i.e., disillusionment with material progress, the curative power of art, extreme individualism as a necessity for artistic expression, priority of technique over subject

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<sup>2</sup> Some examples of the many publications that appeared during from the late 1960s are:

Charles Chadwick, *Symbolism*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 1971). Alaister Mckintosh, *Symbolism and Art Nouveau*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975). R. N. Stromberg, *Realism, Naturalism and Symbolism: Modes of Thought and Expression in Europe 1848-1914*, (London: Macmillan, 1968). Edward Lucie-Smith, *Symbolist Art*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972). T.G. West (ed.), *Symbolism - An Anthology*, (London: Methuen, 1980).

The increasing interest in Symbolism, coincidental with the critical assault on the Modernist Paradigm, can also be proved by the many exhibitions of Symbolist Art that took place from the 1970s.

matter and the Wagnerian idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk* - will all be seen and interpreted from Anglada's point of view, which will lead us to the main concluding point of this chapter: namely that Anglada never belonged to Symbolism in spite of its undeniable influence on him; his art went several steps forwards into the following century. I shall describe these steps in more detail throughout the thesis, but they can be distilled into the total pre-eminence of line and colour over subject matter.

In the second part of the present chapter I will concentrate on Symbolist subject matter. I will show how Anglada, although being concerned by the main preoccupations of Symbolism, interprets them in a very personal way. I shall focus on the polemical depiction of women, as this was Anglada's dominant subject matter as well as a key subject for Symbolism. If this common interest links Anglada with Symbolism their handling of this subject was so different that separates him from it. Starting with the points in which Anglada differed from the main current, I will continue by describing the features that Anglada shared with Symbolism, always focusing on women as subject matter.

I will then analyze two folkloric types of subject matters – flamenco dancers and Valencian peasants – both of which also have women as the main protagonists. Finally, I will end the chapter with Anglada's interpretation of the androgene, which became the source of abundant polemics.

For many years the historical importance of Symbolism had been underrated. For different reasons that I have already mentioned in the preceding chapter, Symbolism had been considered a relative of whom the rest of the family members – mainly the supporters of the Modernist Paradigm – felt ashamed. The full meaning of its decorativism was not understood and it was devalued as an easy-to-read style. Accused of lack of conceptual depth, Symbolism's influence on the avant-gardes was overlooked

as non-existent. The advocates of Modernism chose not to be in debt to the past and, thanks to their power, monopolized all the originality that their ideas were supposed to contain. According to Robert L. Delevoy:

This new interest (in Symbolism) is a natural reaction against stereotyped views which have prevailed in the arts and literature for a good half a century or more; during which time the critical intelligence was too exclusively focused on signifiers, too much occupied with artistic and poetic language as such, with their formal phenomena alone.<sup>3</sup>

This uni-directional interest on the part of the Modernist theoreticians was responsible for Symbolism having been left aside as a frivolous movement, lacking in intellectual substance and not worthy of serious consideration. It was only when art scholars and critics started calling the Modernist Paradigm into question that Symbolism began to attract new attention. This happened even from within the MoMA, as is shown in the following extract from the presentation by Peter Selz (at that time the MoMA's curator) of some papers that were delivered at the Baltimore Meeting of the College Art Association in 1963:

Increasingly Symbolism appears as one of the pivotal forces of the beginning of the modern movement and many of the younger scholars in the modern field are devoting their attention to it...It is hoped that these three essays will provide a basis for further consideration of Symbolism as a major force in modern art.<sup>4</sup>

The study of artistic trends that had undeniably taken part in avant-gardism at the beginning of the last century, such as the Nabis movement, created an interest in the role that Symbolism had played their development. According to George Maunier: "Increasingly Symbolism appears as one of the pivotal forces at the beginning of the modern movement..."<sup>5</sup> From all sides of art creation and from different countries there grew a new interest in Symbolism as a valuable rediscovery that could shed light on different aspects of twentieth-century art. Curiously enough, as we shall see later, it

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<sup>3</sup> Robert L. Delevoy, *Symbolists and Symbolism*, (London: MacMillan London LTD, 1982), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Selz, 'Introduction to Three Enquiries into the Effects of Symbolism', in *Baltimore Meeting of the College Art Association*, 1963, in *Art Journal*, 23, 2 (Winter, 1963-1964), p. 96.

<sup>5</sup> George Maunier, 'The Nature of Nabi Symbolism', *Art Journal*, 23, 2, Winter (1963-1964), p. 96.

threw light particularly on Abstraction, the fans of which had been the most ferocious detractors of Symbolism.

So matters stood when, in the 1950s and 1960s, a need was felt for a fresh look at another side of the nineteenth-century, at its symbols and the desires that shaped them, its dream mystique and longing intimations with the gods....Then began the over-due re-exploration of the wealth of late nineteenth century...the neglected world of symbolist imagery and the passions and spiritual aspirations behind it.<sup>6</sup>

But it was not until the 1970s that Symbolism's rehabilitation really took off. Nowadays, the relevance of Symbolism to the birth of the twentieth-century avant-garde is an accepted view which encounters hardly any opposition. The existence of artists whose work was impregnated with the Symbolist spirit and its main beliefs, which subverted the strict artistic principles of their time liberating creativity from all academic principles, is a fact the relevance of which has been growing since the 1970s-a relevance that has not yet reached its peak. In any case, it should not be a surprise that the progressive reappearance of forgotten figures like Anglada coincides with this relatively new appreciation of Symbolism.<sup>7</sup>

Symbolism was an artistic movement that grew internationally on the fertile ground of social unrest. The last decade of the nineteenth century was one of social and political instability in the main capitals of Europe. The new social circumstances emerging throughout the nineteenth century as a result of the changing of agricultural economies into industrial ones had created a new urban society of which a large proportion was the urban proletariat. New political parties were trying to foster self-

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<sup>6</sup> Delevoy, p.7.

<sup>7</sup> The following text is a representative example of the new tendency regarding Symbolism:

“And a new generation of Danish art historians managed to bring Danish symbolists out of obscurity in both special studies and exhibitions and in the general literature on art history. In 1988, when we were to rehang the collections in the new *Statens Museum for Kunst*, we consciously chose to give the Danish symbolists a striking presence, which necessarily had to be done at the expense of Nordic Naturalism.”

Allis Helleland, 'Foreword', in *Symbolism in Danish and European Painting*, Exhibition Catalogue, Statens Museum for Kunst, 29 September – 14 January, 2000/2001, ed. by Sven Bjerkhof, (Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 2000), p. 4.

awareness in this new segment of society. The injustices and incongruence of the new social order were being felt and witnessed not only among workers but also among members of other social layers. The latter, from their different intellectual standpoints, tried to interpret the situation and imagine solutions:

It was to halt the growing ascendancy of a world evidently disillusioned and godforsaken, but also devoid of all magic, good or bad, that Symbolism employed its sorcery - visual, musical and poetic. Could words colour or sound, succeed in reuniting what science had torn asunder? It was art as the final bastion of the loss of meaning, art for art's sake as the ultimate response to the emptiness of appearances.<sup>8</sup>

The wind of social unrest was blowing especially strongly in the main industrial capitals of Europe. Anglada's Catalonia, the most industrialized region of Spain, was at the centre of the storm.

During the late 1880s and the 1890s an epidemic of bombings and terrorist actions began. Nevertheless, the nature of some of these actions pointed to the possible activity of *agent provocateurs* on the authorities' payroll. Some of the bombs had clear bourgeois or military targets, but others were indiscriminate attacks in which the labouring classes were on the receiving end and whose perpetrators were never identified. In fact, the perpetuation of a climate of terror provided the authorities with an excuse to crash the labour movement while reminding a frightened Catalan bourgeoisie how much they were dependent on central governments for the restoration of social peace.<sup>9</sup>

A look at Anglada's biography will give a better understanding of his character and ulterior development. He was born in an industrious but politically unsettled Barcelona, where he also spent his youth. Anglada's early and clear will to become an artist was seen as catastrophic by his mother. As a consequence, before achieving his dream he had to overcome numerous personal struggles resulting from the fact that he was the only son of a middle-class family. In the 1890s Catalonia, where the concept of *Mayorazgo* (primogeniture) was more well rooted in tradition than it was even in law, the young Anglada had to fight general family opposition, especially from his widowed mother, to travel to Paris, which was considered to be the city of vice and sin. Anglada's

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<sup>8</sup> Jean Clair, 'Lost paradise', in *Lost Paradise: Symbolist Europe*, Exhibition Catalogue Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, (June 8 to October 15, 1995), (Montreal: Montreal Museum of fine Arts, 1995), p.18.

<sup>9</sup> Francisco J. Romero Salvadó, *Twentieth-Century Spain*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1999), pp.15-16.

despair confronting what appeared to be a lost battle debilitated him to the point of falling seriously ill. After the doctor diagnosed Anglada's sickness as being caused by his overwhelming necessity to be an artist, his mother finally gave in.<sup>10</sup> Anglada was allowed to travel to Paris, but without any financial support. According to the historian Theda Shapiro:

The characteristic social attitudes and political sympathies of the early twentieth-century avant-garde painters, like their artistic vocations, originated during their childhood and adolescence were largely the products of deep dissatisfactions with their family situations and early educational experiences....In many cases their radicalism influenced their choice of career. Although the period, that is the 1890s, was relatively prosperous and peaceful, it was also filled with political violence, and with intellectual ferment caused by the now highly politicized working classes in all Western countries.<sup>11</sup>

Anglada-Camarasa finally left Barcelona and arrived for the first time in Paris in 1894.<sup>12</sup> It was the climax of the French anarchist movement: a bomb had killed the President.

On the left socialism took root among the growing population of France's industrializing cities. Although socialists won seats in parliament, some on the left felt that the pace of reform was too sluggish, the republic insufficiently progressive. Strikes and mass demonstrations proliferated. During the early 1890s anarchists even unleashed a terrorist campaign, which saw a bomb thrown into the chamber of Deputies and, in 1894, the assassination of President Sadi Carnot, after which harsh repression followed.<sup>13</sup>

It was probably also approaching the climax of the Symbolist movement. Symbolism, that had started as a pure literary phenomenon, proved soon to be extremely contagious, spreading to other artistic expressions until it finally became a powerful trend in the visual arts, including sculpture but more particularly in painting:

Symbolism – above all a movement in French poetry – soon influenced painting (Gauguin as well as Redon and Moreau), sculpture (certain aspects of Rodin, Minne), and the decorative arts (Art Nouveau). Its atmosphere of mysticism and religious revival, its anti-positivist attitude, its Wagnerian attempt to fuse all the arts, and its fervent desire to integrate art and life by means of symbolic form naturally made a decisive impact on the

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<sup>10</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> Theda Shapiro, *Painters and Politics: The European Avant-Garde and Society, 1900-1925*, (New York/Oxford/Amsterdam: 1976), p.19.

<sup>12</sup> Anglada-Camarasa arrived in Paris for the first time in 1894 but due to financial difficulties had to go back to Catalonia and settled down definitely in Paris only in 1897.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Thomson, 'Toulouse-Lautrec & Montmartre: Depicting Decadence in Fin-de-Siècle Paris', in *Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre*, Exhibition Catalogue, National Gallery of Art Washington, 20 March -22 June, 2005, The Art Institute of Chicago, 16 July – 10 October, 2005, (Woodstock, Oxfordshire: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 3.



next generation. The Nabis, treated in Mr. Mauner's essay, grew directly from the Symbolist movement and were related particularly to the Symbolist theatre.<sup>14</sup>

Although this civil unrest was commonplace in big urban centres across Europe, Barcelona, Anglada-Camarasa's home town, was without doubt in the forefront. La Sagrada Familia, Gaudi's cathedral, had been baptized "the crown of the city of the bombs".<sup>15</sup> During his youth, therefore, Anglada was both a spectator and victim of this situation - victim, if we consider that, thanks to "progress", his own father's business as a carriage decorator was a disappearing trade.<sup>16</sup> It was his father's taste that Anglada had acquired while using his colours and brushes in his workshop. And it is also for this reason that Anglada's painting career was disapproved of so wholeheartedly by his mother, who wanted her only son to join another more respectable, profitable, and non-artistic family business.<sup>17</sup>

Anglada was in those early years still painting under the Naturalist influence of his maestro, Modest Urgell. His interest in nature's details was such that he was teased by the nickname *branqueta*, meaning little branch.<sup>18</sup> Anglada later in life always hated being reminded of this anecdote. He found it unsettling to be taken back to his artistic origins, at a time when genius was considered a gift from birth.<sup>19</sup>

Judging by Anglada's tenacity in proving his value, as well as by his ferocious reaction in later years against the Catalonian artistic establishment, it is highly probable that the artistic personalities whom Anglada's family might have approached for an

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<sup>14</sup> Mauner, p. 96.

<sup>15</sup> Judith C. Rohrer, 'Gaudí: Exploring Form, Gaudí: Art and Design, Gaudí's Universe', *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, ed. by The Society of Architectural Historians, 62, 3, Chicago, September 2003, p. 392.

<sup>16</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>19</sup> Only in the 1970s this myth proved to be wrong thanks mainly to:

Linda Nochlin, 'Why there Have Been no Great Women Artists', *Art News*, 69, January (1971).

Reprinted in: Linda Nochlin, *Women, Art and Power and Other Essays*, (New York, Thames and Hudson, 1989).

assessment of the young Anglada's capabilities did not predict him a particularly brilliant future. However, he had such faith in his own capabilities and sense of his potential that he behaved like a star even before he achieved success.<sup>20</sup> His belief in his art combined with the simultaneous feeling of being rejected produced a strong, life-long resentment in Anglada. His personal dissatisfaction and rage against his native Catalonia meant that throughout his long life he never settled back there. For at least twenty years this rage was extended to the whole of Spain, to the point that he had a French passport until 1914 and never exhibited his works in the Spanish pavilion of the Venice Biennale.<sup>21</sup> Anglada fought his personal war against his family and the Spanish institutions with a private anarchism, the main weapons of which were his powerful paintings. In addition, his actions, declarations and stubbornness not to bend when confronted with situations with which he did not agree, were felt like explosions in all kind of different Spanish artistic establishments.

For all these reasons, relating to his personal artistic rebellion, Anglada felt at ease in the Symbolist atmosphere of Paris right from his first arrival there. His way of using colours, his technique of painting without drawing underneath, his scabrous models shining like mystical apparitions, were all used as personal weapons with which to express his private anarchism. But, best of all, his success fuelled these artistic missiles so they could fly across the continent, often landing in Spain. From 1900 onwards, Anglada's fame grew exponentially until the outbreak of the First World War.

According to Fontbona and Miralles, it was thanks to Anglada's individualism as well as to his strong character that he managed to liberate himself from his family's

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<sup>20</sup> In his brief visit to Valencia in the summer of 1904, Anglada had a lot of press coverage. According to Fontbona and Miralles this could be due to the fact that he invented a banker father and also said that he was going to exhibit in a special salon of the Vienna Secession, where the truth is that he took part only as an ordinary exhibitor. He also talked about the places where he had rejected exhibiting like New York, St Petersburg, Warsaw or Hamburg. No proof has yet been found of the latter invitations. Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 36.

<sup>21</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981.

ties and their social expectations. Anglada was to maintain this attitude of a fighter throughout his life. The subjectivism and the rejection of materialism characteristic of Symbolism perfectly suited this position. Anglada's subjectivism was at the root of his attitude towards artistic currents. It motivated him to behave as an artistic loner, never giving his name to any of the "isms" that characterized the start of the twentieth century.

As in Symbolism, there was in Anglada's manner an ambivalence towards progress. On the one hand, there were admittedly material improvements, such as the invention of certain drugs and electric light, but, on the other hand, they came hand in hand with a moral decadence. Charles Baudelaire, to whom Anglada certainly paid homage in his early works, differentiated thus sharply between industrial and moral progress. According to S. A. Rhodes in his famous 1929 work *The Cult of Beauty in Charles Baudelaire*:

For shall industrialism be taken as an expression of it? Surely not, if progress and civilization are to be measured by other than material criteria. Baudelaire looked upon the industrial age as a period of moral decadence and social decline. The commercial spirit, he believed, will ultimately destroy the soul of humanity.<sup>22</sup>

And explaining Baudelaire's point of view:

In proportion as new inventions bring new comforts and enjoyments, we get not nearer but farther from the liberation of our spirits. Our skins get thinner and more sensitive in things of the flesh, and thicker and coarser in things of the mind. We become more inclined toward light-heartedness and superficiality in the moral and spiritual tasks of life, and more engrossed in its material pursuits.<sup>23</sup>

This duality towards progress would disappear only when progress drew humanity towards the "good" goal of moral elevation. According to Baudelaire, with

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<sup>22</sup> S. A. Rhodes, *The Cult of Beauty in Charles Baudelaire*, 2 volumes, Institute of French Studies, (New York: Columbia University, 1929), II, p. 396. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, 'Lettre à Alphonse Toussenel, Jan. 21, 1856', *Lettres 1841-1866*, (Paris: Mercure de France, 1906), p. 84. Charles Baudelaire, *De L'Amour*, (Paris: Société Anonyme d'Édition et de Librairies, 1919), p. 190.

<sup>23</sup> Rhodes, II, p. 397. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, 'Journaux Intimes', in *Oeuvres Posthumes*, (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1908), pp. 89, 94-95, 125, 127. Charles Baudelaire, *Les Paradis Artificiels, suivis des Petits Poèmes en Prose*, (Paris: D. M. France ed., 1926), p. 220.

whom, as we shall see, Anglada would later agree, given the circumstances at the time, this goal could only be achieved through art.

Real progress seemed to him [Baudelaire] possible only when the individual strives consciously to exalt his moral and aesthetic faculties.<sup>24</sup>

As far as Anglada-Camarasa's aesthetic faculties were concerned, as I have already mentioned, he had taken his first artistic steps under the maestro Modest Urgell, who, like Léon Bonnat, Toulouse-Lautrec's first teacher, was a Naturalist.<sup>25</sup> Naturalism had been the mode of representation that best suited foreign artists working in Paris during the 1880s like the Catalans Ramón Casas and Santiago Rusiñol.

[Casas and Rusiñol] Excited as they were by their alien surroundings, their paintings settled into the reassuring aesthetic of accuracy, charting sites such as the church of the Sacré-Coeur, seen under construction ....and the garden of the Moulin de la Galette dance hall. As foreigners, they tended to observe from a distance.<sup>26</sup>

It was the work of these artists in particular, seen by the young Anglada in Barcelona, together with other factors, that had triggered his decision to move to the capital of the arts.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, Anglada was going to abandon the aesthetics of Naturalism immediately on his arrival in the French capital and, although he would revert at a later stage to the observation of nature as a source of inspiration, he would develop his particular, non-Naturalist style from an early stage of his life in Paris. And, unlike his compatriots, he would be watching Parisian life at very close range, taking an active part in it.

To understand why Anglada adapted so well to the principles of Symbolism, let us turn our attention to its origins. It is nowadays accepted by scholars that Symbolism constituted a pan-European movement and was not, as was traditionally thought, a

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<sup>24</sup> Rhodes, II, p. 399. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, 'Journaux Intimes', in *Oeuvres Posthumes*, (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1908), pp. 104-105, 11-119, 128-129; Charles Baudelaire, 'Exposition Universelle de 1855', in *Curiosités Esthétiques*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), pp. 218-222.

<sup>25</sup> Thomson, pp. 4-5.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 24.

specifically Parisian or French current that had later spread to other countries.<sup>28</sup> It affected with different intensities several countries, including Belgium, Austria, Poland and Scandinavia. This apparent lack of precision is in fact as accurate as we can get, as the borders of Symbolism cannot be defined. Neither can its birth. According to Delevoy:

Mankind does not live in periods of a year or a decade or a generation, or even in what Focillon has vividly described as "secular spasms". So apart from the occasional texts which stand like outcrops in time, we cannot date the first appearance of a superstructure, a trend in art, or a variation in taste as we can date the rise and fall of an empire. It would be therefore pointless to try and give the exact date of the birth of Symbolism, especially as the mythical discourse the word denotes began to disperse and ramify even before it could be identified.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless, for the sake of the argument of the present dissertation, I am going to concentrate on French Symbolism during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

There are different reasons that propitiated the birth of this new artistic current, but the main one was the disappointment experienced by artists as a consequence of the new scientific advancements that had generated the new industrial societies. This disappointment had multiple manifestations, which built up and comprised the essence of Symbolism. Unresolved disappointment from the turn of the century gave way to man's humiliation. Jean Clair, finding inspiration in Freud, explains as follows the problems of modern man:<sup>30</sup>

In 1917, Freud pointed out that during its history, human narcissism has undergone three profound humiliations. The first, the cosmological humiliation, came from man's discovery that he was not the centre of the universe: the abandonment of geocentrism cast man out from the heart of creation. The second, the biological humiliation, came with the publication of Darwin's writings: man was not made in God's image but was the dubious and fortuitous result of the evolution of species. The third humiliation was psychological:

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<sup>28</sup> Clair, p. 19.

<sup>29</sup> Delevoy, p. 14.

<sup>30</sup> Jean Clair (nom de plume of Gérard Régner) was director of the Journal "*L'art vivant*" from 1970- 1975. He became Chief Curator at the George Pompidou Centre, in Paris, from 1975-1989. The same year, he became the director of the Picasso Museum in Paris where he remained until his retirement in 2005. He has been responsible for mounting numerous, significant national and international exhibitions in France, Canada, Switzerland and Italy. He was engaged by the Palazzo Grassi in Venice and was also director of the Biennale for several years. In 1995, he curated an exhibition entitled *Identity and Altérité*, which marked the Biennale's 100th anniversary. Jean Clair was one of the first curators to introduce a multidisciplinary approach to exhibitions. For more information: 'Authors - Jean Clair', in *UNjobs + a swiss assotiation*, <<http://unjobs.org/authors/jean-clair>> [accessed 18 June 2009]

the discovery of the unconscious (which, we should recall, predated Freud's theories) showed that man is not even master in his own house; his ego is nothing but the exposed area of a vast submerged psychological continent of which he knows nothing.<sup>31</sup>

For the purpose of the present investigation I shall now review some of the most important characteristics of Symbolism, which have been defined as such because they were shared, totally or at least mostly, by the majority of the artists. As my aim is to demonstrate how Anglada's art fitted into the Symbolist trend, its characteristics will therefore be studied in relation to Anglada-Camarasa's works.

Symbolism developed thanks to the frustration of what industrialization had not achieved. Material progress, although it had many advantages, was still far from paradise. It is beyond doubt that artists had been experiencing an emptiness that needed to be filled with something that the better understanding of nature had not achieved.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Denis (like Kahn and Gauguin before him) observed that society was being dehumanised by the levelling effects of modern urban life – mechanisation, standardization and social regulation – all leading to impoverishment of both intellectual and spiritual experience. Because life was hard, sensitive souls turned to art (...).<sup>32</sup>

Artists' reactions differed according to their place of origin. Whereas the term *Kulturpessimismus* grew in German speaking countries, in France the Nabis had a more optimistic approach.

But they (the Nabis) never lapsed into what German and Austrian artists of the period labelled as *Kulturpessimismus*. Their vision of the world always evaded the inevitable catastrophe, and their art, sensitive and intellectual, was invariably imbued with a sort of benevolence towards reality, a total confidence in life. It was no doubt this latter quality that, at the dawn of the twentieth century, lent their creative approach its unifying logic.<sup>33</sup>

Artists felt that human beings had something eternal or mystical which defined and located them in the universe and which could not be grasped through science. It was something behind or beyond what could be directly observed. They therefore felt that

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<sup>31</sup> Clair, pp. 21-22.

<sup>32</sup> *Gauguin and the Origins of Symbolism*, Exhibition Catalogue, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, 28 September 2004 – 9 January 2005, (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, Fundación Colección Thyssen-Bornemisza, 2004), pp. 76-77.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p.85.

they had to create symbols behind which this human essence was hidden. Although they were always inspired by the relatively new theories of Darwinism, the new medical discoveries related to the illnesses that diminished the population and the new studies of the human mind, they turned their backs on reality as it had been understood by Realism and Naturalism, in order to look for their own new dimension.<sup>34</sup>

The symbol, which had a sense of magic and at the same time seemed to offer a window on to the immaterial, was chosen as the best tool to find this new dimension.<sup>35</sup>

As Ole Thyssen explains:

The symbol mediates between sensing and meaning. With its preferred metaphor, psychoanalysis regarded the symbol as a transformer of psychical energy. Sensing and meaning, the conscious and the unconscious pulsate in the symbol, fusing, separating and being transformed into each other again.<sup>36</sup>

The initial problem was how to represent and therefore embody this faith in the existence of something immaterial characteristic of the human essence. The question was first solved by poets and their solution was soon taken up by painters, and all of them took their inspiration from the work of Richard Wagner and his idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, the total work of art:

And if the Wagnerian notion of the total artwork, the fusion of all the arts and all the great myths, was the ideal towards which it strove, it was because, faithful to the notion of *sym-bolom*, Symbolism saw it as the only way of combating the compartmentalization, the fragmentation of knowledge that increased as science advanced, and the steady crumbling of confidence as the few remaining corners of darkness were illuminated by the light of Reason.<sup>37</sup>

Poets were so well placed at the starting point of what was to become Modernists movements of the early twentieth century because, like painters, poets arrange symbolic codes (in their case, words) to create meaning. In poetry, the language

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<sup>34</sup> Charles Darwin *The Origin of Species* was first published in Britain in 1859. Its French translation *L'Orgine des Espèces par Sélection Naturel* was published in 1866.

<sup>35</sup> Ole Thyssen, *Symbolism in Danish and European Painting*, Exhibition Catalogue, Statens Museum for Kunst, 29 September 2000 – 14 January, 2001, ed. by Sven Bjerkhof, (Copenhagen: Statens Museum for Kunst, 2000), p. 149.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> Clair, p. 20.

of images is not transmitted through the eyes but through the mind. For this reason, the poet has an added insight into seeing abstracted images in paintings. He or she treats them as symbolic codes that, once reassembled, all make sense. Artists felt art could aspire to be the spiritual medicine (cure) that would free humanity from its miseries.

By the mid-nineteenth century, art was becoming a quasi-religion composed of these secular symbols of color and shape, and art critics as the modern "priests" to decipher these symbolic codes for the public emerged.... Thus, while the human psyche was supposedly rejecting faith as a viable life force, the poet-art critic began seeing in the abstracted images of art the redemption formerly reserved for religion.<sup>38</sup>

As Mary Dezember states, too often art critics who have trained to be art critics have approached art almost combatively, looking for nothing but its technical flaws.<sup>39</sup> In order to side-step this problem, without even needing to enter into it, Anglada-Camarasa throughout his life dedicated one room of his exhibitions to a series of exquisitely finished academic drawings.<sup>40</sup> Following the spirit of his age, Anglada wanted his paintings to be seen as global artworks, promoting the importance of the compositional elements in their own right. Anybody who wanted to discuss his technical capability was sent to look at the academic drawings.

Poets and painters are bound by a common mission: to communicate to others "the spirit of his age". Therefore, informing the viewing public about the art that holds inspiration, innovation, and even redemption is what interests the poet-art critic more than negatively criticizing the ability, or inability, of the artist.<sup>41</sup>

Baudelaire can be chosen among all the Symbolist poets as the precursor of this new way of interpreting life, and therefore art. According to Frank Anderson Trapp, Baudelaire wrote "what may well be the most brilliant criticism of the century".<sup>42</sup> His poems as well as his writings on art enormously influenced the best-known artists of the time. Even though this is not the place to enumerate them all, I cannot continue without

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<sup>38</sup> Mary Dezember, 'Poets as Modern Art Critics: Stating the "Redemptive Power" of the Abstracted Image', *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature*, 58, 1, (2004), p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, p.10

<sup>40</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 30.

<sup>41</sup> Dezember, p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Frank Anderson Trapp, *The Attainment of Delacroix*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1971). As quoted in Dezember, p. 9.



mentioning the influence that the author of *Les Fleurs du Mal* had on Gauguin and consequently on all his followers, not only the ones related to the group of Pont-Aven. As I will show in the following chapter, Anglada-Camarasa found considerable inspiration in the composition and use of colour initiated by Gauguin. One could even draw a parallel between Gauguin's travels to Tahiti and Anglada's escape from civilization to what in those days was an extremely simple life among the fishermen in Mallorca.

But Baudelaire's thought also exerted an influence on Anglada. For, it reached Anglada through the indirect channels of other artists whom he admired, such as, for example, Gauguin and Rodin; and, it also came directly through Baudelaire's poetry.<sup>43</sup> The result is that Baudelaire's theories can be felt in the subjects Anglada chose, as well as in the technique with which he interpreted them. Regarding his subjects, Anglada – following Baudelaire's precept – always chose his themes from "modern" life. Some of them were as Baudelairean as can be, as in the case of *The Morphine-Addict*, *The Drug*, or the works in which models seem to float in their own *paradis artificiels*.<sup>44</sup> No less Baudelairean were the ones depicting Parisian *cocottes* at night, to the point that one famous painting, *Fleurs du Mal*, is named after Baudelaire's oeuvre. Apart from these obvious connections there are other aspects, which implied not only an artistic technique, but a whole way of approaching life, where Anglada adopted Baudelaire's thought, taming it through his personal style and bringing it into the twentieth century. I am referring to the search for beauty as a moral goal. In this search the artist was obliged to extract beauty from situations that seemed at first sight to lack it. According to Rhodes:

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<sup>43</sup> Regarding Anglada's admiration for Rodin:

Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Answer to Miguel De Unamuno published in Barcelona 15 February 1901, reproduced in Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 306.

<sup>44</sup> *The Morphine-Addict*, oil on canvas, 33x40 cm, (1902). *The Drug*, oil on canvas, 70x91 cm, (1901-03).

Baudelaire possessed what he attributed to Eugène Fromentin, the faculty of seizing the threads of the beautiful wherever he found them, and of trailing them to their sources in the labyrinth of life...Through art he sought to raise his sensations and his instincts to the level of artistic expression. The ugly, the irrational are perverted forces in the cosmic world and in the heart of man, and to create art and beauty is to conquer the blind forces of disorder and destruction.<sup>45</sup>

Anglada kept this Baudelairean spirit throughout his life. He followed the poet's advice to look for inspiration without stopping on the threshold of the morally polluted environment of the night. Anglada acted like Baudelaire, who according to Rhodes:

... was ever on the lookout for any manifestation of his senses that could give him the key to a new aspect of art and beauty. He was forever waylaying his heart and his instincts to catch them in their moments of intense absorption in the act of feeling and living. He brought them thus panting with emotion into the laboratory of his mind, to make the part of what was beautiful and of what was not, analyzing, destroying, beautifying.<sup>46</sup>

According to friends who visited Anglada in Paris, his search for subjects often lasted until the first morning light. In his search for Baudelairean beauty, cabarets, taverns and vegetable markets were carefully explored. A journalist friend of Anglada, who visited him in Paris, wrote an article entitled "Anglada eats and lives but only at night". In those years Anglada was a celebrity and people in Catalonia would have probably been most curious about his creative process. The author is describing a stroll by night in Anglada's company:

We crossed in our way (to a tavern) a luxurious car, whose passengers, typical cabaret-elegant people, are used always to see the sun rising before thinking of going to bed. They are, like us, out on the look for a contrast, a new sensation.<sup>47</sup>

Baudelaire's theory, that explains why beauty would have this redeeming effect on the viewer, rests on the idea that beauty can come out into the work of art only if it

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<sup>45</sup> Rhodes, I, p. 9. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, *Curiosités Esthétiques*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 310.

<sup>46</sup> Rhodes, I, p. 9. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, *Curiosités Esthétiques*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 310. Charles Baudelaire, 'Laquelle est Vraie', *Petits Poèmes en Prose*, (Paris: Excelsior, 1926) p. 116.

<sup>47</sup> 'Nos cruzamos con un lujoso automóvil; sus ocupantes son elegantes de cabaret acostumbrados a ver amanecer antes de ir a la cama. Buscan como nosotros un contraste, una sensación nueva'. Povo, 'Anglada come y vive de noche', *La voz de Buñol*, 16 June 1906, Palma de Mallorca. Archives Museo Anglada-Camarasa (MA-C), Fundación la Caixa. Press cutting.

already exists in the spirit of the artist. Therefore it does not have any profound effect on the viewer when the artist merely copies a beautiful subject from reality without daring to add a personal interpretation. In the opinion of Baudelaire:

Ordinary artists evade the issue by copying beauty from external nature. That is what is called being true to nature. They escape thus from themselves and even from nature [...].<sup>48</sup>

Beauty for Baudelaire is equivalent to moral integrity or inner goodness, which elevates man (but not woman) above the misery of life.<sup>49</sup> Once the artist manages to produce this beauty within himself, he (from now on, not she) can transmit it through the harmony of colours to the viewer no matter what the subject chosen is, as he has “conquered the blind forces of disorder and destruction”.<sup>50</sup>

Nevertheless, as the purpose of beauty is to redeem the maximum number of viewers, it is advisable to choose subjects from modern life, with which the viewer can identify more. Anglada achieved this goal: from his representations of *demimondaines* to his cockfights, he tried to embellish all with the help of his ample palette. This Baudelairean theory, that elevates technique over subject matter, takes all its followers into the modernity of the twentieth century.

And in effect, beauty, according to Baudelaire, is composed of an eternal and invariable element, and of a relative, circumstantial element which derives from the fashion, the morality, the passions of the times. The former comes from the temperament, the soul of the artist, while the latter comes from the peculiar taste, refinement, and idiosyncrasies of the day. Without either element, beauty would be incomprehensible and would remain unappreciated. For one forms the soul or art while the other forms its body. Baudelaire analyzes the second by the light of the first, and in the crucible of his mind and heart he fuses the one with the other. The second and distinctly modern element of

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<sup>48</sup> Rhodes, I, p. 28. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, *Les Paradis Artificiels*. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1922), p. 312.

<sup>49</sup> Baudelaire had a remarkably low opinion of women, as it proves his introductory note for *Les Fleurs du Mal* in which to explain that is a work of quality he says that it is not written for women. Charles Baudelaire, *Les Fleurs du Mal: Texte de la Seconde Édition Suivi des Pièces supprimées en 1857 et des Additions de 1868*, ed. by Jacques Crépet, Georges Blin (Paris: J. Corti, 1942, repr. 1950). Charles Baudelaire, ‘The painter of Modern Life’, in *The painter of Modern Life and other Essays*, ed. and trans. by Jonathan Mayne, (London: Phaidon Press, 1967), p. 29, p. 38.

<sup>50</sup> Rhodes, I, p. 9. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, *Curiosités Esthétiques*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 310. Charles Baudelaire, ‘Laquelle est Vraie’, *Petits Poèmes en Prose*, (Paris: Excelsior, 1926) p. 116.

beauty which he rediscovered and introduced into art forms a new trend in modern aesthetics.<sup>51</sup>

The idea of the eternal and invariable element of art would be crucial in the theories of the Mir Iskusstva movement and in those of Kandinsky's, as I shall show in Chapter Five.

Baudelaire found inspiration in Wagner's novel approach to musical composition. Through Wagner's influence, the link between poetry and painting extended to music. In their effort to find Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk*, artists looked for inspiration in the composer's works. Kandinsky's *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* (*Concerning the Spiritual in Art*) published in 1911, is a perfect example of a book on art criticism written in a very poetical way. It states that painting should aspire to the perfection of expression found in music.<sup>52</sup> This shared sensibility among the so-called sister arts – poetry and painting – that tried to get inspiration from music, permitted poets to be the best interpreters of the meaning of paintings. Many aspects of this trend have continued until the present day, in that even today many art critics are poets.

In our postmodern society, art continues to evoke hidden aspects of the psyche, and, worldwide, art critics still are often poets: news articles dated from 1974 to 2003 name more than thirty poet-art critics.<sup>53</sup>

Before describing in detail the similarities between the works of Anglada and Symbolism, I will first explain why Baudelaire's art criticism was so modern by today's standards, to the extent that his methods are still applied. This will vindicate the decorativism and subject matter in Anglada's works. Through symbols, colours and blurred images artists tried to describe what, later, Abstraction found indescribable.

The poet's notoriously vexed relationship to reference, his disarticulation of self, meaning, and history, captures our sense of the "modern" as a breach with all preceding

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<sup>51</sup> Charles Baudelaire, *L'Art Romantique*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 55. As quoted in Rhodes, I, p. 18.

<sup>52</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, (Munich: 1911; repr. New York: Dover Publications, 1977).

<sup>53</sup> Dezember, p. 8.

framework for interpreting consciousness and experience, as a moment when "all that is solid melts into air".<sup>54</sup>

Anglada, as a follower of Baudelaire in his quest for beauty, inherited his disapproval for any sort of deviation (including political) from the main artistic goal. Anglada's perceptible political indifference was later in the century to be wrongly translated as superficiality. That Anglada shared Baudelaire's fundamental respect for the transcendence of art, which forbids it to bend to any other interests, is suggested in Alejandro Soler's review on Anglada's 1915 exhibition in Barcelona:

In all the artistic centres of the world there exist 'Circles', coteries and sets, but in few other countries does there exist such an odious tyranny and a cliquish spirit so systematically absurd and extreme. And as, further, there exists here the tradition, or the custom, or the prejudice, of making everything political, even such things as have least to do with politics, it follows that to produce 'art' (read 'arrive') in our country one must be ardently political, trumpeted naturally, but at bottom political, and if not, catch on to this or that tendency or group, and without hesitating to swallow its dogmas. No agreement or compromise with another tendency; such insubordination would be considered a crime. One must be adamant and condemn everything that is not within the accepted belief. Enthusiasm must be reserved for the manifestations of those who live within the group, that in the end becomes practically nothing more than a mutual admiration society; as for him who lives outside it, he must not be acknowledged, or even his existence recognized, as not being 'it', in the accepted phrase. Here one must be Guelph or Ghibeline, Mountain or Gironist, or to speak more clearly: Catalanist or radical, or monarchical or Jacobin, and failing that, Fifteenth Century, Nineteenth Century, Futurist, Mediterraneo, or the like. If one belongs to one of these 'sects', whatever it may be, sooner or later one will arrive, with talent or without it, since *esprit de corps* will invent it or discover it in those who do not possess it; but that which you must on no account be is precisely that which Anglada is: an aristocrat of art who hates promiscuity and wangling, which are not necessary, and who pursues his solitary way without other arms than his talent and his brush.<sup>55</sup>

Anglada therefore, regarding the independence of art, acted in a similar way to Baudelaire, for whom, according to Rhodes:

It must regard as equally pernicious the bourgeois morality of the middle-classes, and the socialist morality of the social reformers, for, otherwise, it would be at the mercy of quack politicians and reformers, and become merely a medium for propaganda. It must, in short, establish its own aesthetic standards which will be for artists the *summum bonum* of all moral guidance in life.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Sanyal Debarati, *The Violence of Modernity – Baudelaire, Irony, and the Politics of Form*, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Univ. Press, 2006), pp. 1-2.

<sup>55</sup> Alejandro Soler as quoted in Samuel Hutchinson Harris, *The Art of H. Anglada-Camarasa – A Study in Modern Art*, (London: The Leicester Galleries, 1929), p. 26.

<sup>56</sup> Rhodes, II, pp. 406-407. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, 'Notes et Documents pour mon Avocat', in *in Oeuvres Complètes – I Les Fleurs du Mal*, ed. Jacques Crépet, 18 volumes, (Paris: Louis Conard, Lirairie Éditeur, 1922), I, p. 60.

Scholars nowadays recognize the prevailing quality of Baudelaire's theory regarding political as well as economic influence on the individual and therefore on art:

For Baudelaire, the individual's abdication before the forces of history was one of the most terrifying faces of capitalist modernity. His ironic denunciations of power's deployment – through new post-revolutionary political and economic configurations – retain their critical relevance today.<sup>57</sup>

In his resistance not to surrender to the ugliness that he found in capitalism, Baudelaire found solace in what he viewed as modern art, for it offered “*spiritualité*” and “*aspiration vers l’infini*”. The practical guide to this spiritual ecstasy, that necessarily precedes artistic creation, requires an opening of the senses to the beauty of the instant. Anglada became a master of this technique in both his nocturnal Parisian époque and later in his landscapes. This is why Anglada was a pivotal figure between the centuries, as the main point is that once this “*ivresse*”, or intoxication of the senses, is achieved, colours will take over from other sensations and shapes will become independent from the meaning of the figure that originated them. According to Yves Bonnefoy:

Baudelaire était attentif aux perceptions les plus immédiatement sensorielles, et aussi bien fut-il tout à fait sensible aux rapports de simple beauté qui peuvent s'établir entre des couleurs. Il pouvait trouver là le bonheur d'un instant, et même ce qu'il n'hésita pas quelquefois à dire une sorte d'ivresse. C'est ce qui apparaît, par exemple, dans ses réflexions sur Boudin. «À la fin, écrit-il dans le *Salon de 1859*, tous ces nuages aux formes fantastiques et lumineuses, ces ténèbres chaotiques, ces immensités vertes et roses, suspendues et ajoutées les unes aux autres, ces fournaises béantes, ces firmaments de satin noir ou violet, fripé, roulé ou déchiré, ces horizons en deuil ou ruisselant de métal fondu, toutes ces profondeurs, toutes ces splendeurs me montèrent au cerveau comme une boisson capiteuse ou comme l'éloquence de l'opium.»<sup>58</sup>

Anglada mastered this technique of perceiving colour and stretching chromatic limits to its maximum extent. His palette was overwhelming and he applied colours with the geniality of a conductor who overpowers an enormous orchestra. The result

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<sup>57</sup> Debarati, p. 2.

<sup>58</sup> Charles Baudelaire, 'Salon de 1859', *Revue Française*, 10 June, 20 June, 28 July, (1859). As quoted in Yves Bonnefoy, 'La belle Dorothée ou poésie et peinture', in *L'Année Baudelaire – De la Belle Odrade aux Bons Chiens*, 6, (Paris : Honoré Champion Éditeur, 2002), p.11.

was astonishing and, for conservative tastes, even strident. When questioned by journalists on where he found these colours, he would always answer that they were not an invention, as he perceived them in reality.

According to Baudelaire:

Peindre, c'est certes se confier à l'imagination tout d'abord : cette «reine du vrai», «apparentée positivement avec l'infini» que cherche à délivrer la vie de sa gangue de finitude et lui substitue un monde où l'Idéal se profile.<sup>59</sup>

Anglada's work was often described by his contemporaries through musical analogies, normally related to Wagner, but in my opinion one should associate it at least as much to Baudelaire's theory on colours.<sup>60</sup> The predominance of a multiplicity of tones over the shapes, the final harmony of the finished work, all, in Anglada's paintings, could be used to illustrate a modern interpretation of Baudelaire's ideology.

According to the poet:

[...] l'art n'étant qu'une abstraction et un sacrifice du détail à l'ensemble, il est important de s'occuper surtout des masses. Mais je voulais prouver que, si le cas était possible, les tons, quelques nombreux qu'ils fussent, mais logiquement juxtaposés, se fondraient naturellement par la loi que les régite.<sup>61</sup>

Referring to Baudelaire's "*De la Couleur*", a piece of art criticism that he wrote for the

Salon de 1846, Mary Dezimmer states:<sup>62</sup>

Baudelaire extolled color and its effects on the viewer, and in this sense he, as art critic, explained and promoted the use of color rather than critiqued a particular artist. In this "prose poem" of section III,... emphasized is the art element of color rather than what the color represents, which is what non-representational art will do nearly seventy years later, as well as his suggestion of the redemptive power that color has on the psyche.<sup>63</sup>

Anglada's strong personality that had helped him succeed in other battles, guided him victoriously through this creative process that required, as Baudelaire put it,

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p.13.

<sup>60</sup> Harris.

<sup>61</sup> Charles Baudelaire, 'Le Salon de 1846', in *Œuvres Complètes – II Curiosités Esthétiques*, ed. Jacques Crépet, 18 volumes, (Paris : Louis Conard, Librairie-Éditeur, 1923), II, p. 95.

<sup>62</sup> Charles Baudelaire, 'Salon de 1845', in *Oeuvres Complètes*, (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1961), pp 813-866. As quoted in Dezimmer, p. 14.

<sup>63</sup> Dezimmer, p. 14.

all the power that comes from the individual. As we shall see, this is also the fertile ground of originality. According to Baudelaire:

Le style et le sentiment dans la couleur viennent du choix, et le choix vient du tempérament.<sup>64</sup>

Before Baudelaire's theories on art were known, paintings in museums and exhibitions had been organized by genre, following the manner of the Academy. Baudelaire was the first to ask the viewer of art to reconsider how paintings should be seen and assessed. He even mentioned "*l'originalité*" as a desirable factor. He also pioneered the significance of colour in its own right. He established a novel ranking, giving colour the first place and leaving the image in a qualitative second position for the first time in history. Everything was unified by harmony. The unity contained the meaning, an abstract idea the existence of which could be demonstrated only by the fact that it pervaded in the memory:

La bonne manière de savoir si un tableau est mélodieux est de le regarder d'assez loin pour n'en comprendre ni le sujet ni les lignes. S'il est mélodieux, il a déjà un sens, et il a déjà pris sa place dans le répertoire des souvenirs.<sup>65</sup>

These concepts, shocking as they were at the time, were a clue to the young Anglada to create his own style. No less important was Baudelaire's discussion of synaesthesia in art. Baudelaire quotes Hoffmann:

J'ignore si quelque analogiste a établi solidement une gamme compète des couleurs et des sentiments, mais je me rappelle un passage d'Hoffmann qui exprime parfaitement mon idée, et qui plaira à tous ceux qui aiment sincèrement la nature : « Ce n'est pas seulement en rêve, et dans le léger délire qui précède le sommeil, c'est encore éveillé, lorsque j'entends de la musique, que je trouve une analogie et une réunion intime entre les couleurs, les sons et les parfums. Il me semble que toutes ces choses ont été engendrées par un même rayon de lumière, et qu'elles doivent se réunir dans un merveilleux concert. L'odeur des soucis bruns et rouges produit surtout un effet magique sur ma personne. Elle me fait tomber dans une profonde rêverie, et j'entends alors comme dans le lointain les sons graves et profonds du hautbois ». <sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Baudelaire, 1923, II, p. 97. This idea had also been developed by Diderot according to whom: (La couleur) ajoute à ce que serait le spectacle dans la nature, cet élément que vérifie et que choisit, l'âme du peintre, son style particulier. Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 97-98. Quoting: E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*.



Although Anglada would not go to the theoretical extreme of Kandinsky, he did, according to contemporary critics, arrange his colours in a symphonic way. In 1929 the British art critic Samuel Hutchinson Harris wrote an elaborate description of Anglada's style, comparing his paintings to Wagner's music:

The picture, in fact, is orchestral, and Anglada uses colour as Wagner used instruments, in a manner which appeared extravagant in his day, but which gave a new impetus to music. Before these decorative pictures, if, releasing ourselves from the enchantment, we relapse into an analysis of the cause of it, we may visualize a conductor, with brush for bâton, solicitous, not to concentrate the attention on a point, not to throw into prominence the brilliance of the prima donna's voice, but to evoke a scintillating note from there, and here, and there, binding them to contribute to one effect. As Wagner found in the Sagas of the dim past in the Northern mists a favourable vehicle for the musician's expression through the ear of the passions of mankind, so Anglada, after strenuous years of the study of the qualities of light and colour in the highly-civilized Paris of to-day, turned to the surviving relics of Spain's golden chivalry, on a background of Mediterranean blue, the same to-day as then, for the painter's expression through the eye of the emotions of mankind which are stirred by beautiful colour.<sup>67</sup>

Anglada was also influenced in the formation of his palette and his very individual style by other artists whom he came across during his first years in Paris. When he arrived in Paris in the mid-1890s, he went to the Académie Julian.<sup>68</sup> There he came in contact with the works of the Nabis.

The group of painters at the Académie Julian, who called themselves the Nabis, or prophets, began to have meetings on a weekly basis at the home of Paul Ranson ....Maurice Denis, Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard... they shared its [Symbolism's] problem of preserving the essence of the invisible while giving it tangible form. The Nabis' decors have all disappeared, but their paintings show their efforts to find a solution to the symbolist paradox.<sup>69</sup>

This Symbolist paradox would soon develop into, among other styles, Abstraction, which was to be considered by the Modernist Paradigm's supporters as the main solution to the problem of representing the invisible.

All these artistic currents, prior and posterior to Anglada's artistic development, were grounded in Baudelaire's idea of the healing power of colours. By healing, it was

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<sup>67</sup> Harris, p. 14.

<sup>68</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 24.

<sup>69</sup> Mauner, p. 97.

meant the capacity not only to calm the spirit of the spectator but to go even further by changing his point of view. According to Moss:

Delacroix avait copié dans un carnet un long passage d'un roman d'Alphonse Karr où l'idée des correspondances était développée : [...]

[...] Les couleurs ont une telle influence sur l'esprit qu'il suffit de regarder pendant quelque temps une couleur pour se laisser entraîner à un ordre d'idées tout différent de celui dans lequel on se trouvait auparavant. [...]

[...] Les couleurs sont la musique des yeux ; elles se combinent comme les notes ; il y a sept couleurs comme il y a sept notes, il y a des nuances comme il y a des demi-tons.<sup>70</sup>

Anglada's chosen colours aspired to amend the judgement of spectators of his works regarding subject matter. As I shall later clarify, Anglada redeemed his portraits of prostitutes through his use of bright whites and pastels. It was not the model but the viewer of Anglada's painting who could be reconverted.<sup>71</sup>

Anglada's models inspired more compassion and pity than horror: because of the way they were painted one could see how enslaved these women were to their materiality. In *Le Paon Blanc*, the model's body language expresses despair more than boredom (see illustration 15 in Appendix II). Quoting Samuel H. Harris in relation to Anglada's courtesans' paintings:

The tragedy of the courtesan may be read in them, from the pretty girls of the foyer in *Les Opales*, through *Le Pan Blanc* [sic] and *Le Jardin de Paris*, to the tragedy of the *Morphine Victim*.<sup>72</sup>

White was the symbolic colour traditionally used to represent purity.<sup>73</sup> Anglada's *cocottes*, depicted in mother-of-pearl whites, seemed liberated from their own corporality, going through a transcendental metamorphosis and themselves

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<sup>70</sup> Armand Moss, *Baudelaire et Delacroix*, (Paris : A. G. Nizet, 1973), pp. 98-99.

<sup>71</sup> Art is useful because it is beautiful. It is pernicious when it disturbs the aesthetic balance of a perfect life. If vice is seducing it must be painted so, together with the diseases and the pains it entails. If the artist has been true to the ideal of his art, it will then inspire horror of vice.

Rhodes, II, p. 404, p. 405. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, 'Notes et Documents pour mon Avocat', in Appendix to *Les Fleurs du Mal*, ed. Jacques Crépet, vol. I of *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris: Louis Conard, Librairie Éditeur, 1922).

<sup>72</sup> Harris, p. 23.

<sup>73</sup> Malevich would use white to represent infinity more than twenty years later.

becoming the carriers of light (see illustration 12 in Appendix II). According to Mary Dezimmer, those colours were among “the redemptive symbols of modern art”.<sup>74</sup>

The moral judgement of society implied in Anglada’s paintings leads us to Toulouse-Lautrec. As well as the Nabis, in those days Anglada also came into contact with the works of Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, which in the last decade of the nineteenth century would have been literally inevitable. At that time, the latter was at the height of his fame. His works were extremely popular and difficult to avoid, mainly due to the fact that they were being used for commercial purposes. It is reasonable to assume that Anglada absorbed all this “visual information”. According to the *New York Herald*:

M. Anglada Camarasa made his début with a series of small pictures, in which he displayed the temperament of the tumultuous colourist much influenced by Toulouse-Lautrec ...<sup>75</sup>

After all the effort it had cost him to finally live in Paris, and after all he had heard about Parisian artistic wonders, it is not surprising that Anglada submerged himself as deeply as he could in the Parisian art world, from museums to modern tendencies. Even so, Anglada never belonged to any of the many artistic currents and groups that were later to produce so many manifestos.

The pioneers of modern art . . . apparently understood how much they were asking of the public. Never have artists published so many 'manifestoes' and explanations of their aims.<sup>76</sup>

Realizing that it had always served him well, Anglada kept his independence, almost as a flag, throughout his career. And yet, absorbing inspiration from his artistic surroundings, he adopted many of the Nabis principles, which he found most useful in developing his own style. From Toulouse-Lautrec he was to adopt the critical vision of the Parisian nightlife, which in itself was a compendium of the misery and decadence of the *fin-de-siècle* society. Richard Thomson explains that:

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<sup>74</sup> Dezimmer, p. 8, p. 12.

<sup>75</sup> *New York Herald*, 14 April 1905. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin (BAH). Press cutting.

<sup>76</sup> Dezimmer, p. 12.

... rising alcoholism all seemed to point, in the terms of the social Darwinism so prevalent at the time, to a nation evolving not positively but rather in decadence ....The critique of decadence – drawing attention to society’s class divisions, moral corruption, and sexual exploitation – came from various quarters. Conservative forces might use it to condemn modernity in relation to the superior values of the past, while the left used it to promote its own radical agenda.<sup>77</sup>

Nonetheless, Anglada-Camarasa found the artistic style that was to define his work throughout his career, soon after his arrival in Paris, as I shall explain in Chapter Three. He was not a Symbolist but a “child of the time” of Symbolism. Individualism was the Symbolist principle that he adhered to from the very beginning, because it was already in his own nature. Baudelaire had been the main defender of individualism against academicism as the driving force of the creative process:

For if art is content to submit to erudition and academic systems, and does not answer the call of individual inspiration and originality, then the beautiful itself stands in danger of vanishing from the earth, since all ideas, sensations, and emotions would be drowned in one vast, impersonal, monotonous unity.<sup>78</sup>

But it was precisely this Baudelairian individualism, nurtured by Symbolism, that was to drive Anglada away from the epicentre of the intellectual current that had initiated his Parisian career. According to Jean Clair:

Like the Romanticism of which it was the direct descendent, Symbolism was rooted in the cult of the Self. But it remained distinct from it to the extent that this cult – the obsession with the individual mind, dandyism, the exquisite extenuations of eccentricity – became the only possible response to the threat posed to fin-de siècle man’s narcissism by the invasion of an autonomous technical world that functioned quite separately from him and that was neither the reflection of his being, nor even the instrument of his power, but the cause of his extinction.<sup>79</sup>

In my opinion, it is also Symbolism’s cult of individualism that provoked the many “isms” that constitute its descendants. These avant-garde offspring fought for dominance with their manifestos. Anglada’s self produced a novel technique that reflected his singular approach to life. It was this Baudelairean approach to artistic creativity that was at the base of what would become at the beginning of the twentieth

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<sup>77</sup> Thomson, p 99.

<sup>78</sup> Charles Baudelaire, ‘Salon de 1859’, in *Curiosités Esthétiques*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 278. As quoted in Rhodes, II, p. 279.

<sup>79</sup> Clair, p. 21.

century the race towards originality, which kept artists in a state of permanent change.

Rhodes described Baudelaire's conception of the genius:

For him [Baudelaire] the individual was the main factor in artistic creation. A genius is a miracle in the universe, and what he brings into art is of value because it is distinctive and original. It has its value because of its uniqueness; because nothing in the past was like it, and nothing in the future could be like it. And the greater is the individual's contribution to the world of the beautiful, the bitterer, Baudelaire found, is the condemnation of the crowd.<sup>80</sup>

It was individualism that authorized artists to follow their creative instincts and to disregard the approaches to art that had been compulsory in the academic Naturalism.

The notion of art and the artist underlying this image lays primary emphasis on originality and individuality: the artist is fundamentally different from other people, and it is by working out this individual difference that he discovers his identity as an artist.<sup>81</sup>

Artists could achieve the highly valued subjectivism, which was the root of modern art, only through individualism. The Modernist Paradigm wanted art above all to be original: in its strictest sense, it wanted to construct a new epoch that had no connections with the past. Unfortunately for this theoretical structure, the necessity to be original had, as we have seen, already been thoroughly promoted by Baudelaire:

And so, because of his (Baudelaire's) dislike of dogmatic erudition, of his preference for artistic individuality, he was in favour of artistic innovations that infuse new life into the hardened arteries of conventionalized art.<sup>82</sup>

It was the overdevelopment of this principle of individuality, the only road to originality, a concept as I said, although not unique to modernist art critics, that was a much sought-after characteristic of modernity.

Anglada approached originality in a pragmatic way. As one can see in his works of the beginning of the century, the individualism of his technique and his original way of depicting subjects were the result of professional considerations, as I shall

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<sup>80</sup> Rhodes, II, p. 285. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, 'Lettre à Mme. F. Meurice, May 24, 1865', in *Lettres 1841-1865*, (Paris: Mercure de France, 1906), pp. 438-439.

<sup>81</sup> Dario Gamboni, "'On Oneself', 'To Oneself' – Symbolism, Individualism and Communication", in *Lost Paradise*, p. 242.

<sup>82</sup> Rhodes, II, p. 287. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, *L'Art Romantique*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 44.

demonstrate in Chapter Three. My point is that Symbolism and Baudelaire inspired Anglada's subjects but his way of representing them was totally original.

According to Baudelaire, the work of art is a compendium of the artist's individuality and his character traits. It contains more information about the author than any biography that might be written about him could:

To analyze the idea that underlies a work of art, its development, its affiliations, its inspiration, its composition, is to write a spiritual biography more dramatic than one filled with events and adventures.<sup>83</sup>

According to this theory, we could translate Anglada's freedom, and his personal dignity that refuses to surrender to greater powers, into his paintings through his originality. I shall study Anglada's original technique in depth in the following chapter. His treatment of his subject matter was always original. One example of his natural originality is the way he substituted fashionable medieval subjects for folkloric ones which, while being reminiscent of the past, are still very much alive. Purity, which according to Symbolism's disappointment with progress and industrialization had to be sought in a remote, more idealistic, past, was for Anglada found in a present that still retained past values and traditions. It is true that other artists, including Gauguin, portrayed country people from La Bretagne (for example in the famous *View After the Sermon*, 1888) but, as we shall see in Chapter Five, they were not ready, like Anglada's peasants, to parade in their best *fiesta* outfits, recreating the splendour of ancient traditions. There is a bright optimism in these works, as they mean not only that paradise was not lost in the past but that there are reasons to celebrate its eternal survival, as the values through which paradise is attainable were still alive.

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<sup>83</sup> Rhodes, II, p. 268. Discussing: Charles Baudelaire, *L'Art Romantique*, (Paris: Michel-Lévy, 1868), p. 152. Charles Baudelaire, 'Edgar Allen Poe, sa Vie et ses Ouvrages', in *Oeuvres Posthumes*, (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1908), p. 222.

Anglada's views on Parisian nightlife show also the much-valued originality. Compared – even by his own contemporaries – with Toulouse-Lautrec's, they show (without taking technique into account) Anglada's personal views.<sup>84</sup> Anglada produced beautiful portraits of people and situations that might not have been in reality beautiful (see illustration 5 and 14 in Appendix II). Neither the female figures nor their companions were depicted in the unflattering manner that Lautrec often adopted. The contemporary spectator of Anglada's works felt the rejection of the subject exacerbated by the contrast between the sordidness of the subject and its beautiful representation. To achieve this, Anglada does not need to show an inch of his models' feminine flesh, nor does he need to caricature the individuals as Lautrec did.

Anglada always followed Baudelaire's idea of modernity, according to which artists had to depict as subject matter themes from the everyday life: "La modernité dans la tradition littéraire est la conscience d'aujourd'hui".<sup>85</sup> Anglada never turned his back on reality. This might seem a contradiction of pure Symbolist principles, which proposed rejecting reality in the search for the sublime in one's own imaginative subjects. As we shall see, Anglada-Camarasa did apply Symbolist techniques to achieve his goals but, while following Baudelaire, never lost focus on reality – extraordinary Parisian reality – when it came to subjects. It is important not to lose perspective regarding Anglada and to try to empathize with a Catalonian arriving in *fin-de-siècle* Paris and understand that for him its reality must have seemed already quite unreal. The following fragment from a much longer article that describes Anglada's Paris gives a colourful description of a modern Babylonia, where decent bourgeois citizens completely lost their north (moral orientation), giving an idea of what impression the

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<sup>84</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 39

<sup>85</sup> Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. by Timothy Bahti, (Brighton : Harvester, 1982), p. 173. Discussing Charles Baudelaire.

capital of the arts gave to external spectators. Such were the intoxicating powers of Paris described that no virtue could be strong enough to fight against them:

[...] and exactly by their [of the demimondaines] side, grabbing them by the waist, chained even before being slaved, these serious and decent foreign men, some of them also from Paris, that in their normal life would normally growl against this modern Babylonia and would probably forbid their dignified young sons to go, maybe not to have themselves witnesses or even more likely not to have rivals.<sup>86</sup>

Modern bacchanals and Parisian artistic vice are among the terms used in this article. Compared with Paris, therefore, even Barcelona was immensely provincial. Paris' electric lights, its new culture of entertainment, its multicultural society all added up to a fascinating ensemble that, particularly at night, must have seemed unreal. For example Anglada's *Jardin de Paris/ Jardin du Théâtre* shows the artist's fascination with the electric lights that illuminated decorated most sites of amusement (see illustration 4 in Appendix II, p. 305). As quoted by Samuel H. Harris:

Many, as they have listened to the words familiar from childhood, may have compared modern cosmopolitan Paris (not the Paris which is the capital of France, but the Paris which draws the pleasure-seekers of the world) in their minds with ancient Ephesus, the world-famed centre which drew to it also the West and the East in search of pleasure, the beauty of its temple one of the seven wonders of the world, the Lydian luxury of its dress and its dissipation proverbial, its schools of painting and sculpture, of philosophy and literature, not less famous. And over all reigned Woman, not the chaste Artemis of Attica, but rather the Asiatic fecund Mother of the Gods.<sup>87</sup>

Anglada found Paris and its female inhabitants so inspiring that he said that he could see more colours at night than by day:

[...] Anglada is a loyal and crazy lover of the night, this queen of mystery, that has for him the charm of existence and in which, following his own and brilliant quotation «he sees more colours than during the day»; and this appreciation, product of a creative mind, mixes thinker and poet, [...].<sup>88</sup>

The theory that the incredible colours with which you interpret your feelings come more from shade than from full sunlight is also Symbolist. In the sunlight you can “only” perceive colours from Nature. According to Baudelaire:

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<sup>86</sup> Utrillo (Miguel de Utrillo i Molins, father of Maurice Utrillo) “Academies I pintures de l’Hermen Anglada”, *Pel & Ploma*, ( Barcelona, 5<sup>th</sup> of May 1900), Archives Beatriz Anglada, press-cutting.

<sup>87</sup> Harris, p. 22.

<sup>88</sup> *La Correspondencia*, Valencia, 4 Octubre 1904. BAH. Press cutting.



Que la couleur joue un rôle très-important dans l'art moderne, quoi d'étonnant ? Le romantisme est fils du Nord, et le Nord est coloriste ; les rêves et les féeries sont enfants de la brume. [...] En revanche le Midi est naturaliste, car la nature y est si belle et si claire que l'homme n'ayant rien à désirer, ne trouve rien de plus beau à inventer que ce qu'il voit.<sup>89</sup>

The splendour of the settings and the attractiveness of the Parisian night did not blind Anglada to the real situation once he revisited it in daylight. A good example is *Glow-worm/Ver Luisant* 1904 (see illustration 16 in Appendix II). Harris quoting Beruete on the subject:

As señor Aureliano de Beruete has pointed out, "in all of them an intensity which is typical of nightlife activities prevails, making interesting situations and people whose attractiveness fades as soon as the ambiguous mystery of the night disappears". "Glow-worm", in the Stockholm Gallery, affords a typical example. The figures appear with relentless reality, neither rendered repulsive with a drab realism, nor "sprinkled with the rose-water" of sentimentality.<sup>90</sup>

His disenchantment with the physical and/or moral decay of people, a consequence of the new ways of life, did not prevent him, in his search for chromatic solutions, from keeping his feet well grounded in reality. He was aware of the fake quality and sadness of the places in which he depicted his subjects. According to Anglada's friend, who gives voice to the spirit of their night-walks:

We passed by some grotty cabarets that were hardly trying to shine under its shabby facades framed with lights. Some financially impotent man passes by melancholically looking up to these small paradises of fake and stupid joy.<sup>91</sup>

Anglada therefore was very much aware of the false joy and depressing reality that impregnated these cabarets. As I have said, Anglada observed and represented his subjects, looking in them for Baudelairean beauty, which would redeem the viewers and, possibly, even the painter. As far as his models were concerned, if, also according to Baudelaire, one can tell more about an artist from his work than from his biography, then, in contrast to some of his contemporaries, Anglada always treated his models with

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<sup>89</sup> Baudelaire, 1923, II, p. 91.

<sup>90</sup> Harris, p. 23.

<sup>91</sup> "Pasamos ante algunos cabarets que lucen sus raquiticas fachadas festoneadas de luces. Algún transeúnte de impotencia económica, mira melancólicamente hacia los pequeños paraísos de engañosa y estúpida alegría". Povo, 1906. MA-C. Press cutting.

great dignity, by his merciful judgement, which tried to extend some redemption to them. This impression where the model waiting for a client keeps a certain distinction can be very well appreciated in *Fleurs de Paris/Fleurs du Mal* (see illustration 9 in Appendix II).<sup>92</sup>

Anglada, like many artists before the First World War, was trying to extract beauty from a fast-changing world. As I quoted in pg 68:

It was to halt the growing ascendancy of a world evidently disillusioned and godforsaken, but also devoid of all magic, good or bad, that Symbolism employed its sorcery – visual, musical and poetic. Could words, colour, sound, succeed in reuniting what science had torn asunder? It was art as the final bastion against loss of meaning, art for art's sake as the ultimate response to the emptiness of appearances.<sup>93</sup>

Like the Nabis with whom he had become acquainted at the Académie Julian, Anglada believed in the idea promoted by Symbolism of the redemptive power of art. In his own words:

I would like to paint Spain as it should be, I would like to instruct in the spirits of people the pedagogy of colour. I wish through that I could find the solution of all problems that afflict our society but only after having achieved an artistic verbal optimism.<sup>94</sup>

Similarly, Mary Dezember quotes Kandinsky from *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, which was published in 1911, a few years after the Nabis movement was over:

... when humanity had come to the edge of the world and faced a modern age that left behind tightly executed representational images that for thousands of years signified faith and soul-beliefs, modern age artists were stating on canvas that religious ideas were not lost. Rather, they were to be found in the elements of our lives, as in the elements of art, the "color" and "shape" of our lives. Redemption could happen, through recognizing and feeling the joy of the color of the yellow pulsing sunshine or the red blazing sunset or the blue vibrating curves of a river - or, specifically, of yellow pulsing in circles or red blazing in arches or blue vibrating in curves.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Debarati studies the question of the right of the artist to represent a victim of a situation without diminishing or betraying the victim's experience, in:

Debarati, p. 9.

<sup>93</sup> Clair, p. 18.

<sup>94</sup> Anglada Camarasa as quoted by José Francés, *El año artístico 1915*, (Madrid: Editorial Mundo Latino, 1916), p.189. MA-C.

<sup>95</sup> Dezember, p. 23.

Symbolism, therefore, believed in the deep impression that colours produce on the human psyche and advocated the healing power of colour. As a consequence, Nabis artists always gave priority to technique over subject matter. Talking about Maurice Denis, George Mauner stated that his dictum was:

... that a painting is first of all a flat surface with colors arranged in a certain order. Denis never said that the formal considerations of painting should replace representational subject matter, but that they should take precedence in the painter's thought.<sup>96</sup>

Anglada, as part of this trend, gave so much priority to colour over shape that he had to overcome severe criticism in most of the places where he exhibited his works, despite nevertheless achieving immense success. The following quotation is a curious example of the former, that summarizes at once both rejection and admiration:

He [A-C] is, among modern colorists, the worst and daring as well as insolent against nature, truth and good-taste and that means a lot. Among all artistic works that are known to us none as further it self so much from reality as Anglada's [...] [Regarding the night scenes] He has created this aparitions sometimes with an overwhelming orgy of shiny colours that achieve the greatest effect, others, in the same paintings everything is against nature with colours that would suit a rotten cadavre shining and matching the idea that we have of horrendous figures from beyond the grave.<sup>97</sup>

From Vienna to Venice, acclaim mixed with ferocious criticism, though it was always the former that prevailed. Together with Anglada's style, his indifference

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<sup>96</sup> Mauner, p. 98.

<sup>97</sup> [...] Hermen Anglada [...] , ist unter den modernen Koloristen vielleicht der schlimmste und verwegenste Frevler gegen Natur, Wahrheit und Geschmack – was viel sagen will. So weit wie er hat es wenigstens unter allen, mit deren künstlerischen Schöpfungen wir hisher bekannt geworden sind, doch noch keiner in der Abkehr davon gebracht. In seinen Bildern sollen wir den Triumph des Impressionismus sehen. Aber das, was diese Gemälde zeigen, kann unmöglich die Wiedergabe von Impressionen sein, die der Maler in der wirklichen Welt empfangen hat. Die Bildflächen sind mit formlosen, hingeklexten und geschmierten Flecken unmöglicher Farben bedeckt und beanspruchten doch, als Darstellungen von Menschen, Tieren, Früchten, Bäumen, Interieurs angesehen zu werden, mit deren wirklicher Erscheinung sie nichts gemein haben. Er kann uns schlechterdings nicht glauben machen, daß er diese Dinge wirklich so gesehen habe, - diese Hähne und Hähnehändler, diese Alte Und diese Granatäpfel, diese Zigeunerinnen und diese Hündchen, diese Pariser Frauenzimmer, „Balaveusen“ des Boulevards, „ces dames“ der Konzertgärten, Besucherinnen der Nachtrestaurants, der Theaterlogen, der „Music Halls“, - wie sie auf den betreffenden Bildern dargestellt sind. Zügellose phantastische Willkür hat diese Erscheinungen gebildet, die bald in überschwänglicher Farbenpracht von stärkster Wirkung glänzen, bald in ebenso unnatürlichen Leichen- und Verwesungsfarben schimmern, die freilich hanz gut zu den greulichen gespenstischen Gesichtern mit Augen und Gesichtsteilen von ganz unmöglichen Formen passen, während willkürliche weiße oder farbige Klumpen und Wulste, welche die Kleider, Boas und Überwürfe dieser Damen bedeuten zu sollen scheinen, die Stele der Gestalten vertreten müssen.

*Siebente Beilage Boffitchen*, 8 May, 1904. MA-C. Press cutting and translation.

towards the limited chromatic range considered by some as the only colours that exist in Nature, was interpreted by some as bad taste, while others thought it was a proof of his genius. Anglada once again was painting in accordance with Baudelaire's idea that:

... il n'y a dans la nature ni ligne ni couleur. C'est l'homme qui crée la ligne et la couleur.<sup>98</sup>

Only in his native Barcelona were Anglada's feelings hurt by the criticism: although mildly compensated for by the acclaim he also received, it always weighed disproportionately more for him. Judging by his strong reaction never to give way in his negotiations with the cultural authorities, it was like having the final word in a sensitive, long-standing debate.<sup>99</sup>

Anglada shared with the Nabis the spirit of Symbolism in relation to painting technique but not to subjects. The Nabis always had their own motives and symbols, which were very much related to Theosophy, a movement which in those days exerted an enormous influence on Kandinsky, among others.<sup>100</sup> To quote Mauner on Theosophy:

The synthesis of mystic elements of the great religions that their letters and paintings reveal, was not original with them, but the established dogma of Theosophy. In the 1890s, Paris saw the Theosophists in coexistence with numerous more or less universalist cults... These splinters of a massive anti-positivist sentiment had varying degrees of success. Certainly, the Theosophical Society had the greatest influence.<sup>101</sup>

There has never been any proof that Anglada had any direct contact with the Theosophical Society. On the contrary, there is evidence that he believed deeply in the healing powers of art. He maintained this opinion throughout his life, even when

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<sup>98</sup> Frank Anderson Trapp, *The Attainment of Delacroix*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1971), as quoted in Dezember, p. 129.

<sup>99</sup> Anglada confronted not only the Catalan conservative authorities, in the rest of Spain the incomprehension towards modern art was even greater. Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 30.

<sup>100</sup> Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky and Old Russia: The artist as Biographer and Shaman*, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1995).

<sup>101</sup> Mauner, pp. 99-100.

Symbolism began to look a thing of the past. An example of his attitude can be found in the book written in 1916 by José Francés, Anglada's friend.<sup>102</sup> According to the author, Anglada was in those days deeply immersed in the euphoria that dominated the political and artistic atmosphere in Spain and he quotes Anglada as saying that he wanted to save Spain through the spirit of colour.<sup>103</sup>

Now that Anglada's art has been contextualized in its socio-historical background and the links between Anglada and Symbolism have been established, I will go on to explain how, in this context, he applied its principles to his subject matter.

Apart from the healing power of art, his disenchantment produced by modern society, the high valuing of individualism, the adherence to Wagnerian concept of the global artwork and the priority of technique and composition over subject matter, Anglada had many other points in common with the Symbolist current. A compendium of these can be found in his works from the beginning of the twentieth century, which represent scenes of Parisian nightlife. These common points can be studied in the context of one of the most important Symbolist subjects: women.

Throughout his life Anglada developed the subject of women. His progress and point of view can be studied through his representations of female subjects: prostitutes, dancers, gypsies and bourgeois. In the Parisian period of Anglada's career, 1894 to 1914, which is the subject of this investigation, Anglada's portraits of women highlight many of Symbolism's concerns.

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<sup>102</sup> José Francés y Sánchez-Herederó (Madrid 1883-Areyns d'Empordá 1964) was a Spanish journalist, art-critic, translator and writer. He defended Catalan modernist artists as well as those related with Symbolism.

María Villalba Salvador, 'El Académico José Francés. Actas, Documentos y Escritos para la Reconstrucción de una Historia', in Biblioteca Virtual – Miguel de Cervantes (2006), <<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/FichaClasificacionMaterias.html?Ref=06&idGrupo=Todo&PO=4&portal=0>> [accessed 21 April 2009]

<sup>103</sup> Francés, p.189. MA-C.

Instead of starting my discussion with the points Anglada and Symbolism had in common, I shall first highlight one very important aspect regarding women where Anglada differed completely from both Symbolism and, later, from its descendants in the Modernist Paradigm. In contrast to the Symbolists, Anglada never felt women were a threat. This constitutes a most significant characteristic of the Spanish artist's works as, according to Guy Gogeval:

The male at the end of the nineteenth century was terrorized by the female. This commonplace certainly applies to Symbolist artists; it applies, in fact, to the entire decadent era. Whereas the male hero of Byronic Romanticism was a willing Sadian actor, in late Romanticism he was considered a victim.<sup>104</sup>

Throughout his career, Anglada's portraits of women reflect different emotional states of the artist towards the models, which include, for example, compassion, sorrow, admiration and tenderness. But nowhere does the artist ever seem to feel threatened. By contrast, the Symbolists, together with many other artists of the early twentieth century, represented women as a menace. Anglada, however, as I shall explain later in this chapter, painted his *cocottes* with a carnal distance. His models had the unusual feature of always being fully dressed (see illustration 21 in Appendix II). The much-criticized disrespectful treatment of human anatomy in Anglada's works is a means of cooling down to a certain extent any possible erotic attraction. The viewer is confronted more with the idea of a situation than with the physical reality of a woman. Once the main danger of losing concentration is annulled, the viewer can focus on other aspects of the artwork. According to a contemporary description:

Anglada's works are songs of colour about the dances of the modern (bacanales) which give a much better picture and a much more complete image of what is the Parisian artistic vice than the most realistic photos have ever achieved. The impression that *Evening of Olympia*, of *Moulin Rouge* or of the *Jardin de Paris* in the spirit of the viewer, is exactly what Anglada wants to represent. [...] For the young painter from Barcelona [...] more than a dream seems like a nightmare.

If, going back to Paris, good men of honour would like to see coldly but artistically these saturnals of elegant movement and good company, they will be able to

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<sup>104</sup> Guy Gogeval, 'The Cycles of Life, Lost paradise' in *Lost Paradise*, p. 303.

appreciate how exquisite and to which point is right the fine painter that is Anglada-Camarasa.<sup>105</sup>

The fact that Anglada did not feel threatened by women needs to be stressed as a remarkable characteristic of his paintings. The following description, from a Catalonian writer this time, of these inhabitants of cabarets is a good example of the danger and risks thought to be run by men at the time:

... the theatrical looks of these enemies of man; changing under the symbolically viable colours playing with the lights that vary, escaping only the one from day time.<sup>106</sup>

The uni-directional origin of evil was always implied. This vampire allusion to avoiding natural sunlight describes well the bloodsucking habit of the *femme fatale*, confronted with which the most virtuous man could perish. It calls attention to the fact that Anglada, no matter how much he had immersed himself in the “spirit of the age”, was not susceptible to over-generalized opinions, like this idea of all women potential absorbers of masculine vital energy, if he did not truly agree with them. Anglada was a “freelancer” at a time when most artists, with a gregarious survival instinct, grouped themselves under various manifestos.<sup>107</sup> This individualism, although one of the principal traits of Symbolism and its derivatives, had nevertheless the contradictory effect of furthering Anglada from the main currents (see illustration 5 in Appendix II).

The fact that women did not pose a threat to Anglada can be studied in his pictures from both a psychological and a physical point of view. As I have just said,

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<sup>105</sup> [...] Aquells cants de color a les dances quasi hieratiques de les bacants modernes donen més complerta imatge de lo que és l'essencia del vici artistic parisenc que ls més fotografics realismes. L'impressió que deixa un vespre d'*Olimpia*, de *Moulin Rouge* o del *Jardí de París* en l'esperit d'un espectador de clara visió, és exactament lo que ns representa l'Anglada. Pera ls que en lloc de mirar prenen part en aquells espectacles, lo del jove pintor barceloní deu semblar, més que un somni, una pesadilla.

Si, al tornar a París, els homes de bona voluntat volen mirar-se freda però artisticament aquelles saturnals d'elegants moviments i de bona companyia, veuran quant i fins a quin punt té raó l'fi pintor que és l'Hermen Anglada.

'Academies i pintures de l'Hermen Anglada', *Pel & Ploma*, 5 May 1900. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>106</sup> [...] sota de les que se mueen les teatrals mirades d'aquelles sociables enemigues de l'home; aquelles teles de colors simbolicament canviants, jugant am les llums de tots colors i que fugen unicament de la del dia.

'Academies i pintures de l'Hermen Anglada', *Pel & Ploma*, (5 May 1900). BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>107</sup> About the time of the manifestos see Arthur C. Danto, *After the End of Art: Contemporary Art and the Pale of History*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997).

there are no vestiges of a sense of psychological masculine danger in any of Anglada's works. But another type of real threat was physical: at the *fin-de-siècle* there were various sexually transmitted diseases which were, for some unscientific reason, believed to originate from women. In those days, of course, the Catholic Church was behind this.

Quoting Gogeval again:

Owing to the prejudices inculcated by religion, the Catholic religion in particular, the female appeared as the vector of earthly evil, the objective ally of the devil.<sup>108</sup>

Women in general, as potential carriers of a more abstract evil, as well as prostitutes, as the carriers of real illnesses, have been depicted in art works since the Book of Genesis. The concept implied was the one already contained in the Old Testament, according to which woman is man's source of perdition. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the problem became more concrete. According to Barbara Larson:

The female, especially the prostitute, could be a tempting trap of contamination. The untrustworthy *femme fatale*, a common Symbolist theme, found inspiration in the high anxiety associated with the possibility of contracting a venereal disease. Syphilis found numerous victims in the bohemian community, from Baudelaire to the young Picasso, whose lurid prostitutes in *Les Femmes d'Alger* (1907) have been interpreted as carriers of the disease. Although syphilis had haunted generations of Europeans, its golden age was the period from 1885 to 1914.<sup>109</sup>

In some cases it was even thought that the contagion of sexually transmissible diseases was a semiconscious vengeance for the sexual exploitation into which many poor women were forced.

Henri Royer's *On the Slope* of 1891 is a hard-hitting image of urban poverty: a truculent-looking pubescent girl in old boots and a grubby dress staring out over her grim *quartier*, perhaps even the rear slopes of Montmartre. The critic of the left-wing newspaper *Le Progrès de l'Est* imagined that one day this girl would be a beautiful dancer and would get her revenge for the appalling conditions of her childhood, implicitly by exploiting the rich through prostitution.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Barbara Larson, 'Microbes and Maladies – Bacteriology and Health at the Fin de Siècle', in *Lost Paradise*, p. 390.

<sup>110</sup> Thomson, p. 13.



Anglada's models are represented by elongated shapes that imply a thinness which would generally make the viewer doubt that the women would have any energy left for revenge. Anglada-Camarasa painted all these public women who surrounded him with a very personal palette of colours, which was going to become characteristic of his work and a reflection of his personal views. Instead of using red or black, the first one traditionally associated by Baudelaire with passion and the second with evil, Anglada's models are depicted in pastel colours that are so pale that they could be more accurately defined as shades of polar white. Regarding the correspondence between physical colours and more spiritual states of the soul, Jean Clair states:

The new culture destroyed the links between humans and their inner self or man and the external world. The great sensualists: Baudelaire (and Debussy) studied the correspondences that, in human physiology, are evidence of the harmony that exists between our senses and the outside world. Border states of consciousness that offer inklings of that irreducible heart of our being that we call curiously the "spirit", "the mind", the "imagination".<sup>111</sup>

In the chiaroscuro of their surroundings, Anglada's women shine like fireworks about to disappear before you have even had time to appreciate the complete rainbow of colours of which they are made, before you have really seen them, and always leaving behind the Symbolist impression that perhaps they were not real. The technique of blurred contours and the lack of identity of the models created by the absence of personalized facial features help to create this impression of being in a dream.

The absence of red can be interpreted, too, as a lack of passion on the part of the painter. Although Anglada observes this human trade from close up, he does so without carnal interest. Anglada's ladies of the night do not look at all tempting to the viewer and therefore they do not represent any risk of either physical or moral contagion. One sees them only like beautiful flowers that unfortunately are about to fade. They are always fully dressed, an original way to represent prostitutes and another of Anglada's

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<sup>111</sup> Clair, p. 20.

idiosyncrasies. Unlike Toulouse-Lautrec's prostitutes, who are often depicted in shabby surroundings with very unflattering outfits, or half naked, Anglada's *Fleurs du Mal* parade in the streets and dark gardens well groomed and fully dressed in their astonishing, client-hunting garments, only their piercing eyes betraying their ancient trade. When they are in over-bright interiors, waiting sometimes hieratically for their clients, in contrast to Toulouse-Lautrec's women, their attires are so bright that the spectator has the impression they could dissolve at any minute into the general atmosphere. Therefore, although sharing subject matter with Toulouse-Lautrec, Anglada had a very different interpretation of the decadence in society implied in *fin-de-siècle* prostitution. Anglada's ladies of the night are more Symbolist in this sense, as they are so ethereal. They illuminate their decadent surroundings with their short-lived light. On the other hand, they do not represent any of the Symbolist threats associated with the *femme fatale*. Toulouse-Lautrec's models, on the contrary, represent an immediate danger, first of moral and psychological decadence, and second of physical corruption. The idea that even the most respectable bourgeois man could be deceived by feminine charms and fall into this pit of dementia was very successful, as it was a perfect excuse for all who were tempted to party, as well as for all who were tempted to forgive them:

Symbolist portraits have often explored the paroxysms of consciousness, those borderline states in which an individual who is abruptly torn from his status of "bourgeois" subject connected to a community, a milieu, a *socius*, realizes that he is alienated and disassociated from himself, and sees himself as *homo demens*. Witkiewicz systematically represents the dissolution of the personality ("the systematic disordering of all the senses") under the influence of drugs, intoxicants and alcohol.<sup>112</sup>

The grubby interiors where the action develops are so obviously full of germs that the general lack of hygiene guarantees some kind of contagion. Taking into account that Toulouse-Lautrec died a victim of syphilis, which together with alcoholism ended

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<sup>112</sup> Jean Clair, 'The Self Beyond Recovery', in *Lost Paradise*, p. 130.

his life at the early age of thirty-six, it is obvious that he had good reason to feel the threat so characteristic of Symbolism.<sup>113</sup>

This Biblical panic produced by woman that has travelled forward through the centuries with different intensities, passed from Symbolism to its multiple heirs, Modernism being the one that unquestionably inherited the bulk of the primogeniture. Some of the works of Modernism's main figures are most clear examples, in particular William De Kooning's paintings that have a feminine subject and Picasso's *Demoiselles D'Avignon*, the latter's case being particularly interesting because of the Catalonian origins he had in common with Anglada as well as the fact that they were good friends during the early years of Picasso's life in Paris.<sup>114</sup> Although, according to Hélène Seckel, Picasso took his inspiration for his models from paintings by Ingres, Cezanne and even El Bosco, and from sculptures by Gauguin, the resulting "Philosophical Brothel", as Leo Steinberg called this painting in 1972, has an uniquely obscene character, with which Picasso inaugurated a new artistic era.<sup>115</sup> As in the case of Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso also had his reasons to feel the dangers and risks implied in relations with women, as he acknowledged himself to have suffered from some kind of venereal disease.<sup>116</sup> The *Demoiselles D'Avignon*'s protagonists represent a Modernist version of the Symbolist dualism embodied in the feminine character, where *femme*

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<sup>113</sup> Henri Marie de Toulouse-Lautrec (Albi, 24 November 1864 – Malrome, 9 September 1901) contracted syphilis from Rosa la Rouge who lived in a brothel. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica: "[...] His frequently ironic tone failed to mask a fundamental dislike of his physical appearance, and his letters contain many derogatory remarks about his body and references to an increasing number of ailments, including syphilis. Drinking heavily in the late 1890s, when he reputedly helped popularize the cocktail, he suffered a mental collapse at the beginning of 1899.[...]" 'Henri de Toulouse Lautrec', *Britannica Online Encyclopedia*, <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/600695/Henri-de-Toulouse-Lautrec>> [accessed 21 April 2009]

<sup>114</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1981), p. 38.

Fernande Olivier, *Picasso and his Friends*, (London: Heinemann, 1964), pp. 29-32.

<sup>115</sup> Hélène Seckel, 'Introduction', in *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, Exhibition Catalogue, Paris, Musée Picasso, 26 January – 18 April, 1988, (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musees Nationaux, 1988), p. XIV.

<sup>116</sup> John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso, Volume 1: 1881-1906*, 3 volumes, (London: Pimlico, 1991), I, p. 218.

*fatale* and *sorcière* cohabit in the same canvas with other female characters. The importance of Symbolism in Picasso's development has already been acknowledged. According to Rosenthal, Boardingham and Weiss:

His [Picasso's] allegiance to the Catalan *modernista* movement in turn-of-the-century Barcelona and his subsequent introduction to post-impressionist and symbolist painting in Paris each had an impact, however brief, on his art.<sup>117</sup>

Anglada's attitude towards his prostitute models leads us to the next question. Here he shared completely with Toulouse-Lautrec a critical vision of the decadence of Parisian society. From the low-class perspective of Montmartre, both artists felt the characteristic disappointment with progress in its widest meaning that was promoted by Symbolism.

Toward the top of the Montmartre hill, "the butte", rents were cheaper for younger artists because it was a more proletarian district, and the combination of low life and low costs suited Lautrec and his peers. Finally, Montmartre already had its vernacular entertainments: working-class bars and dance halls. And as a porous frontier where there was seepage between the smarter classes of central Paris and the proletariat of the outer suburbs, where the two might meet in the commerce of leisure and prostitution, it was a habitat where the egalitarian rhetoric of the Third republic came under scrutiny. Class mixture was less an expression of fraternity than nervous, temporary *cross-quartier* tourism, less an expression of equality than evidence of the hypocrisy and exploitation of much social exchange. In any event, Montmartre was the ideal terrain for the development of up-to-the-minute cultural forms.<sup>118</sup>

However, rejection was represented from different points of view. Anglada-Camarasa had a certain optimism, derived from a hope in humanity. He believed that redemption was possible through art. As we have seen, the way he paints his night scenes, where the prostitutes, as in *La Droga* 1901-1903, are illuminated almost as if they had an aura, something traditionally used only when representing saints (see illustration 6 in Appendix II). Anglada's famous whites have an antiseptic effect that

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<sup>117</sup> Robert J. Boardingham, Mark Rosenthal, Jeffrey Weiss, 'Curators' Preface', in *Picasso - the Early Years, 1892-1906*, Exhibition Catalogue, Washington, National Gallery of Art, 10 September 1997 – 4 January 1998, (Washington: 1997), p. 11.

The role that Anglada's 1900 exhibition in Sala Pares in Barcelona, played in the decision of Picasso to make his first move to Paris has been mentioned by Fontbona and Miralles.

<sup>118</sup> Thomson, p. 6.

not only cleanses the women who have been depicted but, more importantly, they cleanse the view the spectator gets of them by modifying his or her opinion. Through Anglada's pictures these women, whose eyes, a premonition of which can be found in Egyptian art, are seen as timeless victims. Toulouse-Lautrec, in contrast to Anglada's vision, criticizes the world that surrounds them but with the pessimism of a total lack of hope in humanity. He seemed to prefer to indulge in the decadence of the situation, making the most of it until the party was over. His drawings, sketches and paintings, accentuated by their characteristic one trait black lines, silhouettes that are a summary of the moving figures, represented the fleetingness of life.

Anglada settled in Paris in 1895. He started his life in Montmartre as it was the only place he could afford.<sup>119</sup> It was convenient enough, as from there he could immerse himself in the *milieu artistique*. Montmartre, although separated by time, was another common point between Anglada-Camarasa and Toulouse-Lautrec, who had been living there since the beginning of his artistic career but was soon to move from the famous *quartier* to Montparnasse. It is highly likely that Lily Grenier, the model who has been depicted by both artists, also lived in Montmartre.

The decadent critique was central to the "Montmartre" culture of cabarets, illustrated periodicals, and popular song within which Lautrec's work developed and to which it contributed. The easing of the censorship laws in 1881 gave scope for the younger generation's perception of the bourgeois republic as corrupt and venal, stuffy and hypocritical. During the early 1880s Montmartre rapidly developed into the locale where such anti-establishment attitudes were stridently voiced.<sup>120</sup>

Anglada benefited from and enjoyed the general freedom as well as the freedom of expression, but he was soon to realize that protests did not ameliorate living conditions for women, in what Gauguin had already defined as a misogynist society.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> He lived in 10 Rue du Buci until 1901.

Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 36.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>121</sup> August Strindberg, Paul Gauguin, 'Exchange of Letters', *Letters de Gauguin à sa Femme et ses Amis*, (Paris: 1946), quoted from 'The Idea of Modern Art', *Art in Theory 1815-1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1998), p. 1037.

Anglada's compassion can be seen in the subject of some of his paintings. Value judgements are also implicit in the titles that he gave to some of his works. The most direct example is *Herederos y Deseheredadas*, which can be translated as "Heirs and Disinherited Women". It represents some gentlemen standing and dealing with some sitting women, naturally alluding to the fact that for these women there is no other way out.<sup>122</sup> Anglada states this social injustice but through his luminous whites sheds a light of hope that is not shared in the Nietzschean *Kulturpessimismus* of the works of Toulouse-Lautrec.

An illustration of the fundamental Nietzschean idea that modernity is simply the most acute fear of decadence, Symbolism grew out of a *Kulturpessimismus* that undoubtedly saw the end of the century as a decline, but a decline of unrivalled brilliance. It was a movement in which nostalgia and neophilia were inextricably interwoven.<sup>123</sup>

This Symbolist extreme *malheur de vivre* had its philosophical roots in the early nineteenth century. According to Jean Clair:

In *The World as Will and Representation* of 1819, Schopenhauer, the philosopher of Symbolism *par excellence*, placed the sexual instinct at the core of the will to live, just as Freud would do with the concept of the libido. However, it was from the teachings of Buddhism that he drew the most pessimistic aspects of his worldview. According to Schopenhauer, the world consists merely of appearances, veils and illusions; it is an infinite succession of transitory phenomena that owe whatever semblance of continuity and meaning they may have exclusively to our erotic desires. Everything is in constant movement, like labile images upon a screen or the play of light upon water. Everything is transformed and gives way to the void that essentially forms the basis of all that we call reality.<sup>124</sup>

Anglada fitted perfectly into the spirit of his time, which he was always to interpret in a very subjective way. If he agreed with the idea that sexual instinct is the core of the will to live, it cannot be found in his nocturnal inspirations. There were probably other works that were destroyed, the precise content of which we do not know. In fact, among the paintings that have survived to the present day, this basic human force can be found in only a few of Anglada's portraits of women, such as *Sonia de Klamery* or *La Gata Rosa* (see illustrations 36 and 35 in Appendix II). It could also be

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<sup>122</sup> *Herederos y Deseheredadas*, oil on canvas, (ca. 1902).

<sup>123</sup> Jean Clair, 'Lost paradise', in *Lost Paradise*, p. 18.

<sup>124</sup> Jean Clair, 'The Self Beyond Recovery', in *Lost Paradise*, p. 135.

somewhere in the paintings of flamenco dancers, if dance is associated with sexuality – a connection that I would not immediately establish in this case. On the contrary, Anglada believed in the transitory essence of life and, as we shall see shortly, he represented this concept through movement. However, the interpretation of the emptiness of appearances, although leaving more space to hope, is felt in Anglada's paintings as strongly as it is in Toulouse-Lautrec's works.

Anglada, therefore, did not have to turn his back on reality to find the Symbolist ideal. He had the merit of looking for this ideal precisely in the subjects that he implicitly criticized. Anglada interpreted the subject of evil, one of the main concerns of Symbolism, in his critical visions of Parisian society. At least it was not only in these degraded ladies of the night but also in their clients that he focused his inspiration. The latter are often depicted only with what could be described as a black Mephistophelic silhouette. At other times they are represented more accurately but their dominant colour is always black, contrasting with the artificial brightness of the women's whites.

In Anglada's works representing Parisian night scenes one can find many points in common with the dominant Symbolism, which impregnated all the following artistic currents and the artistic DNA of which can be traced well into the twentieth century. Another characteristic of great concern for the *fin-de-siècle* artists was duality. The world of Anglada-Camarasa in Paris was a Symbolist world of duality, where the so-called good and evil, black and white, or the pure and the perverse coexisted in every picture.<sup>125</sup>

The very embodiment of the world's duality and ambiguity, women, play a major role in Symbolism....The inexhaustible theme of woman produced many variations among the Symbolists.... Baudelaire, also defined in his poems different types of women....Angel or demon these women are always solitary and inaccessible prisoners of themselves.... Life is denied to her.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Gisèle Ollinger-Zinque, 'Belgium at the Turn of the Century: A very International Nationalism', in *Lost Paradise*, pp. 264 -273.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p.267.

As we have seen, Anglada-Camarasa deals with the question of moral duality generally by contrasting the subject matter evil, with the bright colour palette representing good, the latter embodying the healing and redemptive power of art. Also, Anglada reproduced the moral disparity of duality by representing both clients and prostitutes in contrasting colours, black for the men and white for the women. In this last version he implies a moral condemnation of clients similar to the one that is nowadays legally employed in some countries.<sup>127</sup> Finally, as far duality is concerned, in a minority of cases Anglada painted several prostitutes where half of them were dressed in black and half in whites, highlighting the fact that good and evil coexist in the nature of these anonymous women. Examples of this last case are: *Mur Céramique*, *Champs Elysées*, *La Espera* and *Entre Loge et Promenoir* ( see illustration 14 in Appendix II). Only in rare cases is there a single lady portrayed in black.

Another important subject dealt with by the artists that adhere to the principles of Symbolism was the use and abuse of drugs. Although this is a subject as old as humankind, towards the end of the nineteenth century it became highly popularized. The new scientific discoveries had developed new forms of anaesthesia like morphine, that had uses beyond the medical:

The fin de siècle was not only the period that discovered the virtues of tranquilizers and anaesthetics (chloroform began to be used in dental surgery towards 1880); there was also the eruption of *paradis artificiels*: hashish, opium, nicotine, absinthe, cocaine and morphine. Loved and feared in turn, pharmacology henceforth became the bedfellow of creative genius.<sup>128</sup>

In a few cases Anglada deals directly with the subject of drugs. It could also be argued that he treats this very *fin-de-siècle* question in most of his pictures where the viewer encounters the direct sight of the models. Their wide eyes are always surrounded

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<sup>127</sup> The 1999 Swedish Prostitution Law in order to counteract violence against women criminalizes the purchase of sexual services. Attempt to purchase sexual services is punishable under Chapter 23 of the Swedish Penal Code

<sup>128</sup> Jean Clair, 'The Self Beyond Recovery', in *Lost Paradise*, p. 133.



by dark circles, implying the use of stimulants, possibly to give them the courage for their trade or maybe just to keep them awake throughout the night. Absinthe, rather than morphine, was the most consumed drug. Because of its low price and its easy availability it was the favourite palliative for the difficulties of life. Absinthe was a very Symbolist subject and inspired many artists (see illustration 8 in Appendix III). It claimed many victims before people realized that it was a shortcut to the grave, because of its high toxicity (it was finally banned in 1910). In Anglada's *Le Paon Blanc*, the model has absent eyes; in front of her is a telling empty glass. According to Richard W. Olsen:

Absinthe is an emerald-green liqueur that achieved fantastic popularity at the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was associated with the Bohemian lifestyle and was credited with the inspiration of famous artists and poets. Because of its widespread abuse and the associated toxicity of its content of oil of wormwood, absinthe was made illegal in most countries in the 1910s. The most likely ingredient responsible for toxicity is believed to be the terpenoid alpha-thujone. Oil of wormwood has convulsant activity as well as activity in killing worms and insects.<sup>129</sup>

This sinister insecticide aspect of absinthe can be associated with the title of one of Anglada's most beautiful works, *Vers Luisant/Glow-worm* (see illustration 16 in Appendix II). These insects are well known for their association with the magical fairy world. In real life, only the female is actually a worm, whereas the male can also fly. Both have a light in their abdomen that permits them to find each other at night to mate. The parallels from natural history with Anglada's oil painting, which depicts a prostitute parading in her ravishing white outfit in the darkness of a garden, are immediate.<sup>130</sup> The decadence of society seemed very real and was not only the product of the imagination of artists like Anglada, judging by the following figures:

Its magical powers worshiped by the masses, absinthe became the national drink of France in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, with workers and artists alike awaiting l'heure verte, 5-7 p.m., when they all headed for the cafes of Paris for their glass of absinthe, drinking 36-221 million litres per year around 1910 (1,2). In 1906, Paris had 33,330 bars (and drink

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<sup>129</sup> Richard W. Olsen, 'Absinthe and gamma-aminobutyric acid receptors', *PNAS*, 97, 9, April 25, (2000), 4417 – 4418.

<sup>130</sup> Anglada-Camarasa, *Vers Luisant*, oil on canvas, 79 x 122 cm.

sellers) for 2,601,000 people, compared with 17,000 bakers. Alcohol was a major economic force.<sup>131</sup>

One must not forget that some of these women who inspired Anglada were only part-time prostitutes. They also had day jobs and prostitution was a way of complementing very low wages that in many cases were not enough to live on. There are two paintings where a drug addict is the main subject: *La Morfinómana* and *La Droga*. It is possible that there were other works dealing with the subject that have not survived to the present day after the big self-censorship that Anglada personally carried out in the last years of his life. According to his daughter, Beatriz Anglada, most of the destroyed works were of an erotic nature.<sup>132</sup>

After 1904, another subject which Anglada pursued with as much tenacity and even more success than his nocturnal scenes was Spanish folklore: Spanish flamenco dancers and Valencian peasants with festive outfits. The reasons for this change of subject are dealt in more depth in Chapter Four.

Flamenco and gypsies enjoyed an enormous popularity as subject matter at the end of the nineteenth century. From the Symbolist point of view, gypsies had the attraction of people who lived in a parallel world, with different values from those of bourgeois society. The fact that gypsies were impervious to bourgeois values, even though they lived in contact with progress, made them less susceptible to bourgeois decadence and less hypocritical, therefore very interesting as Symbolist subjects. They became very fashionable as a subject for opera and music as well as for painting.<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Richard W. Olsen, 'Absinthe and gamma-aminobutyric acid receptors', *PNAS*, 97, 9, April 25, (2000), 4417 – 4418.

<sup>132</sup> Beatriz Anglada Huelin in a personal interview, Puerto de Pollença, Mallorca, June 2006.

<sup>133</sup> During most of the nineteenth century Spanish themes had been popular subjects of operas. From Mozart's *The wedding of Figaro* based on the theatre piece by Caron de Baumarchais, also Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, *El Barbero de Sevilla* by Rossini. Even *Fidelio* by Beethoven happens in Spain. Also with a Spanish subject, the *Duca di Alba* by Donizetti, although this last one takes place in Flanders. Donizetti, Cherubini and Debussy have several works inspired in Spain. *Carmen* by George Bizet is a particularly good example as the protagonist is a gypsy. But even more interesting for the symbolist period is Wagner's *Parsifal* of which many think happens in Catalonia.

Anglada liked them particularly because they came from his homeland and for the fact that dancers entered a trance while performing. This made them especially interesting in a society that was discovering the unconscious for the first time. Hysteria, although not a subject in itself for Symbolism, was perceived as the unconscious rebellion. Following Rapetti:

The interest aroused by these attacks can be perceived as symbolic, although its meaning remained relatively obscure. This is coherent behaviours vis a vis the outside world were tantamount an objective negation of that world. In this hidden recesses of the Psyche, Symbolism found the innermost secrets of the mind opposed to the vision of Naturalism, orientated towards the matter. It was the negating idealism of exterior reality.<sup>134</sup>

In Anglada's works, the idea of the *fiesta* that ends after dawn is again extremely appropriate to depict the fleeting essence of human life. It is not only, as it has traditionally been seen by his critics, a superficial, colourful celebration of Spanish folklore. Anglada's subjects were criticized in Spain by some critics with the pejorative adjective *españolada*: an intellectually low Spanish product meant for the consumption of foreigners; also a topic creator of a Spanish identity that no longer existed. Some critics were irritated that Anglada's paintings were the idea of Spain that was being exported. Anglada's supporters defended him on the grounds that he had done more abroad for Spain than most of the contemporary politicians. Anglada's blurred gypsy dancers, with the drama and frustrated eroticism of their lyrics, embody the Symbolist concept of the world as a succession of transitory phenomena that give the impression

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What is certain is that in the libretto, in the second act it is clearly specified that the gardens are inspired in the gardens of the "España musulmana".

Russian composers like Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov will be treated in the next chapter.

The list is so long that I will last mention Oscar Wilde's *The Birthday of the Infanta*, that was used for the libretto of *Die Zwerg* by Zenlimsky and Ravel that apart from the *Bolero* composed an opera called *L'Heure Espagnole*.

<sup>134</sup> Rodolphe Rapetti, 'From Anguish to Ecstasy Symbolism and the Study of Hysteria', in *Lost Paradise*, p. 229.

of continuity.<sup>135</sup> By turning their backs on the tough reality, as expressed in their lyrics, Flamenco dancers symbolically exorcized through music the injustice of life and its sorrows, changing the drama directly into a celebration. This substantiates Anglada's paintings, filling them with content. By representing the music of these *fiestas* in his paintings, Anglada was aiming towards the Wagnerian idea of a total work of art. Extracting an incredibly ample palette of colours out of the darkness of the night, as these parties normally took place close to a bonfire, Anglada achieved a masterly decorative final product. The best examples of this type of work are: *El Tango de la Corona* and *Enamorados de Jaca*.<sup>136</sup>

One of the basic principles of Symbolism was to be decorative, which did not in fact detract from any of its intellectual substance. The figures in movement in their forced postures, apart from representing all that has been mentioned in the preceding paragraph, were a technical innovation in the representation of the human body probably never used in Western art before. Not even Gustav Klimt's drawings have this type and degree of contortion. This apparent exaggeration is achievable in reality in the paroxysms of flamenco. Anglada was without doubt, in this sense, a mould breaker, an avant-gardist:

With Symbolism came a marked propensity for capturing paralytic tension, nervous contraction and a certain ostentation with regard to sexual pleasure: the body frozen in a significant gesture. These images generally conveyed something of a feeling of terror towards women, the anatomical frenzy most often being limited to the female form; in Symbolist iconography, they were thus the counterpart of the saintly figures who symbolized chastity or meditative serenity. Set against these images of purity (mother, fiancée, wife) were images of feminine perversity and temptation, a pre-eminent theme in the art and literature of the time.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> About the lyrics of flamenco songs, they are normally extremely sad stories about loves that never have been fulfilled. *Sevillanas*, on the contrary tend to be merrier but always related to the flirting stages never to fulfilled physical love.

<sup>136</sup> *El Tango de la Corona*, oil on canvas, 360 x 512 cm. (ca. 1910), and *Enamorados de Jaca*, oil on canvas, 184 x 422 cm. (ca. 1910). The latter depicts a different kind of folkloric musical tradition. However, even if it is not flamenco it also takes place under the stars.

<sup>137</sup> Rapetti, p. 225.

The inspiration that other artists went to search for in special institutions for mentally unbalanced people, Anglada in his optimism, or at least lack of pessimism, found in the much more pleasant and happier subject of flamenco gypsy dancers.<sup>138</sup> In a sense, they were going to play for Anglada the role that the inhabitants of Tahiti had played in Gauguin's Symbolist representations of a society that did not follow any of the known rules, a society untouched by the *fin-de-siècle* decadence.

The second folklore subject that also achieved great success was the Valencian peasantry. I will deal in more depth with the meaning of this subject, and the influence that it had on Kandinsky, in Chapter Five. In their quest for purity as a means to overcome the evils brought about by the much-criticized decadence, artists turned their attention to other more primitive cultures as well as to the past. In the Spanish folkloric traditions, which miraculously were still practised in some parts of Spain, Anglada found the purity that others were looking for in remote cultures and/or in history.

According to Samuel H. Harris:

In Valencia he [Anglada] was just in time to see in the fiestas of the conservative peasantry, though fast disappearing, the last natural survival of the gorgeous pageantry of the medieval past.<sup>139</sup>

Valencian peasants and flamenco dancers were the subjects on which Anglada concentrated his creative efforts from 1904. These works, where women were protagonists, had an incredible success and toured the main capitals of Europe.<sup>140</sup> The relevance of this is shown in Chapter Four and, in the case of Kandinsky, who became familiar with Anglada's works thanks to the latter's exposure in press and exhibitions,

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<sup>138</sup> "Spectacle de l'Hystérie, Mayeul Magnus, lui, le photographie. Réputé pour ses images obscènes, le photographe se partage entre le service photographique de l'hôpital et un bordel où il prend ses quartiers."

'Abstract – *La Pornographie de l'Âme*', in *Le Passage Editions*,

<[http://www.lepassage-editions.fr/litterature/a\\_pornome.htm](http://www.lepassage-editions.fr/litterature/a_pornome.htm)> [accessed 21 April 2009]

<sup>139</sup> Harris, p. 12.

<sup>140</sup> See list of exhibitions.

in Chapter Five. According to the Comte de Pradère, Anglada celebrated womanhood through his paintings:

It would be still more exact to affirm that all the work of this artist, master as he is of all the secrets of art, is a glorification of woman: everywhere she appears sumptuously clad, *coiffée* with great combs and with superb mantillas, excitable, seductive, and always dominating.<sup>141</sup>

Russian artists were particularly interested in Spanish folklore. Musicians found in it matter for inspiration. As we shall see in Chapter Four, Anglada enjoyed enormous popularity within the Russian community of turn-of-the-century Paris. Kandinsky found not only in the subject of Valencian peasants but also in the multiplicity of colours of Anglada's technique, as I shall demonstrate, plenty to help his personal artistic development. Harris quotes Margarita Nelken:<sup>142</sup>

The painting of Anglada-Camarasa – let us take *Valencia* as a prototype – is a tapestry. It is interwoven as all Oriental art is, and it is also the relation that exists fatally between the East and Spain. If the essential expression of Spain is the spirituality of Castile, her visual expression, her appearance, is Eastern luxuriance. Bad art has prostituted this aspect in creating the Spain of triviality. The instinctive art of Anglada-Camarasa has made of it a wise and refined sensualism like the mixture of tones in a Byzantine mosaic or a Persian carpet. And this is because Anglada-Camarasa has understood and has felt that a mosaic of Ravenna, a carpet of Bagdad, and the sumptuous skirts of the women of Valencia, were a triple signification of a single affinity.

If *Valencia*, in its orgy of colours, is the unalterable vision of the East that sleeps in Spain, *El Tango de la Corona* in its orgy of curves is the dynamic vision of the East that vibrates in the Peninsula. This picture is Oriental, as the Russian ballets are, and if those ballets manifest all that is oriental in the very mystical Slav race, *El Tango de la Corona* is eloquent of all that the very mystical art of Spain contains of the East.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Il serait encore plus exact d'affirmer que toute l'oeuvre de cet artiste si maître de tous les secrets de l'art, est une glorification de la femme ; partout elle apparaît somptueusement habillée, coiffée de grands peinetas et de superbes mantilles, violente, séduisante et toujours dominatrice. Harris, p. 22.

<sup>142</sup> Margarita Nelken Mansberger (Madrid 1896- Mexico 1968) was a Spanish politician, first socialist and then communist. She was one of the main representatives of the young feminist movement in Spain. She became famous for her participation in the Second Republic and in the Spanish Civil War, but she also outshone as an art critic, journalist and writer. She combined these activities until her death in exile.

<sup>143</sup> La pintura de Anglada-Camarasa – pongamos 'Valencia' por prototipo – es una tela. Es una tela como lo es todo el arte oriental, y es también la relación que existe fatalmente entre el Oriente y España. Si la expresión esencial de España es el espiritualismo de Castilla, su expresión visual, su aspecto, es la jugosidad oriental. El arte malo ha prostituído este aspecto creando la España de pandereta. El arte instintivo de Anglada-Camarasa, ha hecho de él un sensualismo sabio y refinado como la mezcla de tonos en un mosaico bizantino o en un tapiz persa. Y es que Angalda-Camarasa ha comprendido y ha sentido que un mosaico de Rabean, un tapiz de Bagdad y las faldas pomposas – 17 – de las mujeres de Valencia, eran una triple significación de una sola intimidad.

Si 'Valencia', en su orgía de colores, es la visión inmóvil del Oriente que duerme en España, el 'Tango de la Corona' en su orgía de curvas, es la visión dinámica del

The last of Anglada's Symbolist subjects that I will treat in this chapter is the androgyne. It is a subject that Anglada developed nearly exclusively in the last ten years of his life in Paris. The adolescent androgynous model became fashionable at the *fin-de-siècle*, arguably as a side-effect of men's fear of the new, decadent women. These androgynous youths were an idealization: feminine as real women but yet without their threatening attributes. Women's emancipation led to the fabrication of pseudo-scientific theories to prove women's natural incapability:

At a time when society thought that thanks to Darwinian theories there existed scientific proof of the inferiority of women as well as their fixed role for the correct functioning of a society, the growingly independent women were seen as a threat to the survival of society as a whole. Adopting the Darwinian doctrine of natural selection and the liberal idea, developed by Milne-Edwards among others, of the psychological division of work, Herbert Spencer suggested that society was a living organism, dependent upon certain dynamic relationships ranging from homogeneity to heterogeneity and in which the differentiation of tasks, as a sign of progress, must result in a harmonious co-operation among all individuals. At the end of the century, when women were fighting for emancipation and the right to vote, when they had to be accompanied by their husbands if they wanted to take a university course, the gradual imposition of these Darwinian laws – “Darwin and his followers asserted that men were katabolic (or energetic), while women were anabolic (or lazy),” etc. – was tantamount to freezing the status quo and perpetuating the traditional reactionary perception of the male-female relationship as “aerial-terrestrial”. The majority of Symbolist artists shared this view. In a famous article, August Strindberg inveighed against the lack of courage, the duplicity, the dependency on the man, all of which proved the “inferiority” of women.”<sup>144</sup>

Anglada, as I said above, judging from his paintings, never felt this threat. On the contrary, his female models, from gypsies to bourgeois ladies, are represented full of dignity and personality, enjoying perfect health and in most cases reflecting a strong trait of their character. Dancers look powerful, their knotty working hands full of expression proud of their tanned skins, which in those days were still a symbol of labourers who worked under the sun. Some ladies are portrayed among a rainforest type of vegetation, implying what a prodigy of nature they were. In the case of the famous

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Oriente que vibra en la Península. Es oriental este cuadro, como lo son los 'ballets' rusos, y, si estos 'ballets' presentan todo lo que tiene de Oriente la muy mística raza eslava, el 'Tango e la Corona' grita todo lo que tiene de Oriente el muy místico arte español.

Harris, p. 16.

<sup>144</sup> Guy Gogeval, p. 306.

*Sonia de Klamery*, graciously elongated on a branch, she is covered by a *mantón de Manila* showing for once, her naked arms, neck and décolleté (see illustration 36 in Appendix II). Her skin has the quality of marble, which puts the necessary carnal distance between her and regular mortals; instead of morbidity there is the coldness of a statue that, together with her mocking look, makes a contrast to be admired. She has been described as a modern Eve. It is very precise, as Sonya de Klamery did not need an Adam to be recognised as Eve, nor has she left any forbidden fruit, and the famous Biblical snake in this painting has evolved into a magnificent bird. Quoting the contemporary art commentator, le Comte de Pradère:<sup>145</sup>

In all his (Anglada's) great decorations, where a geometrical severity balances the composition, there always emerges the most intense sensuality, the most ardent love not only of colour, of form, or of material beauty, but also, and above all, of woman.

The art of Anglada, owing to its expending itself in a paroxysm of love of reality, reaches manifestations of a synthetic importance almost symbolical.<sup>146</sup>

In the cases where Anglada painted a partial female nude – a gypsy with bare breasts or Klamery's marble skin – the hieratic posture of the former or the marmoreal skin of the latter created the necessary respectful distance between viewer and model.

All the women portrayed live in their own sufficient world without threatening their neighbours in any way. Anglada's paintings do not create a confusion of attraction and rejection in the viewer. In no case, although the subject is always powerfully depicted, does the viewer have the impression that a danger is being represented; he or she is more likely to feel that the artist admires his models and has chosen them precisely for their worthy qualities. This vision of woman is the opposite of his paintings of prostitutes, where Anglada shows their fragility and not their carnality by

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<sup>145</sup> The Comte de Pradère was as well as a contemporary art critique, the husband of Sonia de Klamery.

<sup>146</sup> Dans ses plus grandes décorations, où la sévérité de la géométrie équilibre la composition, se dégage toujours la plus intense sensualité, l'amour le plus ardent non seulement de la couleur, de la forme ou de la beauté de la matière, mais aussi, et surtout, de la femme.

L'art d'Anglada, à force de s'exhaler dans un paroxysme d'amour pour la réalité, arrive à des manifestations d'une importance synthétique presque symbolique.

Harris, p. 122.



painting only the evanescent quality of their existence. Their anonymity is shown by the absence of features. Anglada illustrates their condition as victims.

The question that arises is why if a feminine threat is not traceable in Anglada's work, he nevertheless liked androgynous models. He created some highly polemic works in which the sexual identity of the sitter was wholly ambiguous. But, characteristic of Anglada, he interpreted the subject in a totally different way. The reason why Anglada liked the androgynous subject was not because they were creatures without their adult gender attributes, who gained in purity thereby minimizing the physical and moral risk that they represented towards men. On the contrary, by painting physically powerful women, he emphasized their integrity, their completeness. He had different reasons for liking the androgynous model. Making use of the fashionable subject of ambiguous gender, Anglada painted some portraits of women in folkloric outfits whose androgynous character was revealed in the fact that some of them are rather muscular and, in that sense, look like men: *La Maja de la Pagoda*, *Chula de Ojos Verdes*, *Bailarina Española* and *Sevillana* are good examples.<sup>147</sup> Anglada also portrayed a woman in the very masculine role of a *matador* in *El Ídolo* (see illustration 31 in Appendix II). The androgynous subject here has a somewhat "tongue-in-cheek" quality. The model is dressed in the outfit of a masculine (naturally) bullfighter - this time it is her androgynous adolescent body that does the trick.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> *La Maja de la Pagoda*, oil on canvas, 205 x 135 cm, (ca. 1913). *Chula de Ojos Verdes*, oil on canvas, (ca.1913), known only from archive's photo. *Sevillana*, oil on canvas, 175 x 98 cm (ca.1913). *Bailarina Española*, oil on canvas, 152,5 x 134 cm, (1906).

<sup>148</sup> Bull fighting is still today a very male world, where very gifted female bullfighters had to give up their careers eventually for all sorts of reasons related to male domination. Other bullfighters refuse to work with them because: they would look ridiculous, they bring bad luck like in ships ... and others. Managers earn not enough money and have too many problems when signing contracts with women, which finally leads female bull fighters to give up, choose a different job and ... marry, to prove straightness.

These works by Anglada provoked an uproar of protest when they were shown in Madrid.<sup>149</sup> There are many reasons why Anglada, who was never shy of scandals, could have done this deliberately. I could elaborate on this issue at length, but the immediately obvious deduction is that Anglada wanted to underline the fact of how fine, or at least how hidden, the distinction between man and woman really is, if it exists at all. He made this point through his art and, because he was already at the peak of his fame, he made it really loudly. It must have been an important issue for him as he knew that his own sexuality was going to be called into question. According to Gogeval:

...consciously or not, it became a metaphor of homosexuality, that scourge and terror of Victorian society. The adolescent symbolized Adam before the Fall. Here again we see a dual movement: psychiatry used the most normative and humiliating categories to define homosexuality, while its repression gave it the status of a curse or plague.<sup>150</sup>

As expected, Anglada's own sexuality and "manliness" fell under suspicion and he was even accused in the Spanish press of inspiring "homosexual perversions".<sup>151</sup> I think that, in Anglada's case, it would be more appropriate to interpret the obvious lack of sex-appeal of these androgynous models as what Joséphine Peladan called in 1891 the "sex of eternity": "The androgyne was considered the sex that denies sex, the sex of eternity."<sup>152</sup> It should be noted that in Anglada's pictures it is not the men who are being "weakened" by being depicted in more feminine attitudes or with feminine clothes but rather the opposite – women are dressed as such with the physical power (and maybe attributes) of men. Or, in the case of *El Ídolo*, a slender and fragile woman not only dressed as a normal man but as a *matador*, who represents the apotheosis of masculine courage. In all cases, Anglada is inviting the viewer to consider a different approach to the gender issue. It is, therefore, more logical to interpret Anglada's works as a

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<sup>149</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 140.

<sup>150</sup> Gogeval, p. 309.

<sup>151</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 141.

<sup>152</sup> Joséphine Péladan, 'L'Androgyne', *La Plume*, 45, March 1, (1891), pp. 83-84. As quoted in Gogeval, p. 308.

celebration of the equality of women and men as against their supposedly scientifically proven inferiority.<sup>153</sup> Anglada was rather paying homage to the, also very Symbolist, theory of unity, according to which man and woman had been separated but belonged to the same unity and therefore contained the same potential towards good or evil.

The Rosicrucians, and the Symbolist generation in general, cherished the Platonic notion that man and woman were the victims of the painful division of the original androgyny. The mystical and sensual quest for the ideal was thus a search for a primordial unity.<sup>154</sup>

Anglada's works are a reliable testimony to his attitude towards women and to his opinions regarding related issues of his time. Other facts from his life are consistent with that statement. There are some photos of Anglada surrounded by his art students, the overwhelming majority of whom were female, at a time when most academies were restricted to men.<sup>155</sup> Furthermore, Anglada was married for a while to Isabel Beaubois, who was also a painter, and as such broke with the scientific Darwinian order. Both examples – his female pupils as well as his working wife (who, further, worked in the same trade as himself) – set in the turn-of-the-century context, situate Anglada more in the above-mentioned “search for primordial unity” than anything else.

There are, however, two early works – *Salomé* and *Presentación de la Cabeza de San Juan Bautista* – the subject of which is directly associated with the potential danger represented by women, and therefore very popular in Symbolism.<sup>156</sup> The first, a feminine torso, is connected to *Salomé* only by the title. The second, more narrative and also with an extreme chiaroscuro, consists of several figures, one of which holds a tray with the head. This last painting has been lost, so not even the measurements are known. The photo that is available shows *Salomé*, her back to the light, looking into the

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<sup>153</sup> Gogeval, p. 303.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 309.

<sup>155</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p.70.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

darkness of the tray. I am inclined to think both works were only a one-off experiment of a fashionable subject.

To conclude this chapter I would like to reconsider the initial question of Anglada's role in the art world of his time. The parallel that has been drawn throughout this chapter between Anglada and the dominant artistic current can be extended into one of the final questions regarding Symbolism that has not yet been resolved: Was it a decadent movement or a modern one? This question is posed by Jean Clair:

Was it a decadent movement or a modern one? To what extent was it, like the Nazarene and Pre-Raphaelite movements that preceded it, a movement of *renovatio*. To what extent, through its chromatic and formal audacities, one of *innovatio*? Was it the conclusion of the nineteenth century or the beginning of the twentieth?<sup>157</sup>

It must be acknowledged that the question posed in such a linear manner is oversimplistic in its relation both to Symbolism and to Anglada, as it supports the Modernist approach to art history, where doors are successively closed during artistic evolution, never to be reopened. Nonetheless, it may be illuminating to attempt to answer this question.

As far as Symbolism is concerned, it is indisputable nowadays that its importance was for long overlooked, as were many of its followers. As has been demonstrated recently, the linear approach to art history that Modernism claimed as a unique truth did not in fact exist. Doors were not closed when Abstraction began: other artistic practices, although not admitted by its main theoreticians, fully coexisted with Modernism. The spirit as well as the concerns that had been raised by Symbolism existed for a long time and, in part, still exist today.

As far as Anglada is affected, the recovery of Symbolism, with its Baudelairian search for beauty as a representation of moral perfection, gave a theoretical basis to

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<sup>157</sup> Clair, p. 18.

“beautiful” styles that had been misinterpreted as shallow, simple, or decorative for their superficial prettiness. Explaining the Symbolist roots of Anglada’s subject matter provides the Spanish artist with the depth of meaning that his oeuvre deserves. Also it gives Anglada’s work a timeless quality inherent in true art, spreading its value into the future. The fact that he stepped outside the main trend after the First World War by retiring to Mallorca also explains why posterity forgot about him for so many years, during which time he was classified as an artist of the nineteenth century, whose superficial decorativism bore no relation to further developments in art.

To end this chapter I would like to clarify that the connections that I have outlined between Anglada and Symbolism regarding subject matter are only the first half of my argument, which aims to prove Anglada’s pivotal role between two centuries. The second half will be related to the way in which he physically achieved his final results, namely his technique. I will describe Anglada’s *modus operandi* in the next chapter. The effect that both subject matter and technique had on his contemporaries will be the topic of the fourth chapter. In the final chapter, to close my argument and show how Anglada’s art may have been born in the nineteenth century but lived and spread its DNA into the next century, I will explain the specific influence that Anglada’s art had on Kandinsky’s development.

Anglada’s attitude towards art was “modern”, as he conceived it as the manifestation of a hidden dimension of humanity and a way to overcome reality’s material limitations. This was to be the main idea behind modern art, both in its official conception from Modernism, and by the many artists that out of the official circles were working on the sidelines. This Symbolist conception can be summarized in the following paragraph by Clair:

And it was artistic activity, rather than science investigation, that was needed to effect a successful cure by restoring man to the three crucial positions he was conscious of having lost: to the centre of the cosmos through the reactivation of the *myths*, beliefs

and religious syncretisms that had been the source of this pre-eminences; to the top of the biological hierarchy through the exercise – unique in the animal kingdom – of his capacity for abstract thought and his awareness of his own *death*; and to the heart of his own self through the *presentiment* of the most deeply buried secrets of his soul. After the collapse of religion and politics, it was art, in the final analysis, that was selected *in ultimis* by the science of the mind to serve as the satisfaction through phantasy”, the “mild narcosis”, the “sedative” that would assuage modern man’s wounded pride.<sup>158</sup>

I think that it was Anglada’s belief that art had more than a soothing power, his belief in the importance of art and its crucial role in the progress of mankind, that projected his work into the twentieth century. Anglada was, like his work, a “child of his age”. As Kandinsky puts it:

Every work of art is the “child of its age”, and, in many cases, the mother of our emotions. It follows that each period of culture produces an art of its own which can never be repeated. Efforts to revive the art/principles of the past will at best produce an art that is stillborn.<sup>159</sup>

Anglada’s style was definitely a “child” of Symbolism. Throughout his active life as a painter Anglada would develop different aspects of his Symbolist origin. However, his style matured away from it. During his Parisian years, the field of this dissertation, his scenes of nightlife together with his folkloric subjects were, as we shall see, a product of a cultural period that could never be repeated. Anglada’s style, his subject and his technique had their capacity for survival questioned once his era had been wiped out by the First World War. The Catalanian critic Eugeni Ors wrote in 1915:

One must bid farewell to this kind of art whose beauty is exalted to the extreme in the heat of the feverish rapture that precedes death, as one would bid farewell to a sin of youth.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>158</sup> Clair, p. 22.

<sup>159</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, (Munich: 1912; repr. London: TATE Publishing, 2006), p. 5.

<sup>160</sup> Xenius (pseudonim), ‘La Gràcia i el Pecat del Pintor Anglada’, *La Veu de Catalunya*, 23 de Mayo, 1915. MA-C.

## CHAPTER THREE:

### THE TRIUMPH OF INDIVIDUALISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SUCCESSFUL TECHNIQUE

The subject of this chapter is the development of Anglada-Camarasa's professional skills. I shall explain how Anglada arrived at the technique that was going to make him an artist of international significance.

First I will describe how he came to Paris, having already acquired knowledge of drawing and oil painting in his native Catalonia. I will explain the reasons why, in spite of being an accomplished artist by that time, he decided to take more lessons by enrolling in the popular Académie Julian. In the course of this chapter, I shall provide evidence of Anglada's ambition, which was deeply rooted in his character. In fact, as I am going to prove, the situation in Paris by that time was such that artists required a strong will if they were going to survive and not be dissolved in the art world's dense fluid of professionals and dilettantes. Attracted by the famous potential of the French capital, most of them failed in their aim to build some kind of artistic career. To achieve recognition in such a competitive environment the artist needed external help in order to give direction to this necessarily Herculean effort of endurance. If an artist did not want to depend only on his or her luck, he or she had to go a step further and design a plan of how to develop the indispensable connections. I shall demonstrate how Anglada managed to overcome all these difficulties with the support he obtained from the Académie Julian.

However, I will also point out that it was his individualism expressing itself in his art that attracted the attention of his patrons. The fact that he mastered drawing techniques but nonetheless decided not to use them in his paintings was much criticized

but at the same time respected: this shows the relatively open-minded atmosphere of the Académie Julian, where individualism was promoted. As we shall see, Anglada produced from the depth of his creative power what would often be called a “fireworks” technique, a reference to the multiplicity and luminosity of his palette as well as to the apparent spontaneity of the final result.

After describing the origins of Anglada’s technique, the second part of this chapter will give a detailed description of its main components. During my explanation, I shall place Anglada’s work in context by mentioning some of the contemporary philosophical currents and scientific discoveries.

In my analysis of the origins of Anglada’s technique I shall focus on three points: his sketching technique; the hanging policy of crowded Salons; and a commercial approach towards survival. As far as the components of Anglada’s technique are concerned, for the purposes of clarity I shall divide my theory into two sections: firstly, I will develop a new theory as to the commercial origin of his chosen subjects; secondly, I will explain his use of colours and brushes on the canvas. All of this will give consistency to the main argument of the present research because it will explain the basis of Anglada’s novelty. Due to the international exposure of his work, Anglada’s new way of treating forms and colour, ahead of the main artistic currents of his time, was going to become a source of inspiration for contemporary artists, like Kandinsky, who would play a leading role in the art of the twentieth century.

It is important to make clear, at this introductory stage, that Anglada found his perfect means of artistic expression quite quickly and went on to develop them for personal communication. In contrast to Matisse, he never attempted rationally to develop a theoretical approach to painting; neither could he be accused of forcing his original technique. Alaister Wright writes:



The suspicion was that Matisse was deliberately trying to be new. Delcourt saw the artist's changeability as a strategy – one aimed implicitly at the marketplace – and similar accusations were levelled at others in Matisse's circle. Albert Marquet was singled out by Leblond at the 1905 Indépendants for trying “to create for himself a personality,” a self-conscious approach that “would only ever constitute an artificial originality”. Matisse himself had already been charged, at least implicitly, with this offence: in a review of the 1903 Indépendants, Morice had moved directly from an attack on those who, seeking mere newness, fell prey to the “banal passion for artifice,” to a criticism of Matisse's entries, in whose “useless, inexpressive, and ugly deformations” he detected a “feigned ignorance, a deliberate, learned, studied awkwardness.”<sup>1</sup>

Although it is impossible to evaluate exactly the degree of consciousness implied in his artistic process, Anglada was without doubt an artist who belonged to his time. I shall try to contextualize his development as the same concerns, regarding the expression of the artist's inner world as a more complete way of representation through a canvas, were sprouting in the souls of many other artists in Europe.

However, Anglada pioneered many ground-breaking innovations. The absence of a basic drawing under the oils, the freedom in mixing colours, the multiple shades of white, the disappearing shapes and contours and the total pre-eminence of form and colour over subject matter, are Anglada's most important technical improvements: they constituted new tools which led to a new pictorial language. Anglada's original techniques would unintentionally contribute to giving form to the emerging artistic concerns of the avant-garde artists. Fauvism, lead by Matisse, was breathing the same Parisian artistic air and coincided with many of Anglada's interests. But his art, as we shall see, was especially appreciated in Germany, where artists who identified with the German Expressionism current were consciously trying to create a new type of art.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Morice, ‘Le XIX Salon des Indépendants’, *Mercur de France*, 46, May 1903, p. 391, as well as, Marius-Ary Leblond, ‘La Peinture nouvelle : À propos des « Indépendants »’, *Les Arts de la Vie*, 3, 16, April 1905, p. 285. As quoted in Alastair Wright, *Matisse and the Subject of Modernism*, (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 25.

The precise date of Anglada-Camarasa's settling down in Paris can be quite accurately defined by the dates of his correspondence to his best friend Pere Lloret.<sup>2</sup> According to these sources, he arrived in Paris for the first time around November 1894 but did not finally settle down there until at least one year later. His initial lack of resources and family support meant that he had to travel back and forth from his home country to the capital of the arts. Finally, in 1897, with the help of an artist friend from the Académie Julian, the Peruvian Carlos Baca-Flor (1867-1941), Anglada managed to obtain an allowance from his own wealthy brother-in-law, Carlos Rocamora Pujolá.<sup>3</sup> Together with the money gained from the sale of one painting, this fixed income permitted him to keep afloat long enough to accomplish the success of which he had dreamed.<sup>4</sup>

These harsh beginnings were not uncommon among artists arriving in Paris for the first time. Most of them did not have any support and had to struggle for a living. In fact, the opposite case was exceptional: rare were those artists who, like Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, received financial support from their family for their artistic production. Anglada-Camarasa's success was, however, relatively quick: by 1898, he obtained his first prizes and from 1900 onwards, his career and prestige rocketed to maximum heights. Apart from the prizes obtained in 1898 and 1900 at the Académie Julian and the Académie Colarossi, he successively received, among others, the following appointments and prizes:

- Associé du Salon Nationale de Paris (1902)

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<sup>2</sup> Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, private correspondence to Pere Lloret. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin (BAH).

<sup>3</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1981), p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> According to Fontbona and Miralles it was somebody called Roger who bought a landscape from Anglada. He advanced him two hundred and fifty francs with which the artist not only paid the rent but also the money that he owed to the concierge. Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 27.

- Societaire du Salon Nationale de Paris (1903)
- Societaire of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Engravers (New Gallery, Regent Street, London W), 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1905.
- Member of the Munich Artistic Union, “Secession” (Königsplatz 1), 15<sup>th</sup> of March 1905.
- Master of the Venice Biennale, 1905.<sup>5</sup>

In comparison to Anglada, other artists, including those who were later to enjoy glory and fame, had to fight their way for much longer. Picasso, who arrived in Paris a few years later, is a perfect example. He moved to the French capital during the very first years of the twentieth century and, according to his lover Fernande Olivier, they were so poor that they depended on the goodwill of their friends and their gifts of canned sardines:

(...).One day, when he was completely broke, Picasso found a tin of sardines, a loaf and a bottle of wine on his doorstep; they had been left there by Durio. Indeed, at this time Picasso used to accept as due homage anything his friends tried to do to help ease his day-to-day life a little.

Other friends besides Durio were Etchevarria, Sunyar, Anglada, Zuloaga, Fabiano the guitarist, who became a painter in an effort to emulate Picasso, and Pichot who looked like Don Quixote, and was a humorous kind hearted man, though he could be sharply ironical at times.<sup>6</sup>

Picasso’s poverty was really extreme. Olivier in her book writes often about situations where food was scarce:

Life was hard for artists. There weren’t many collectors and the dealers were still suspicious and kept away.

Canal’s companion, the beautiful Roman Benedetta, who had once been a model for Degas and for Bartholomé, (she sat for his *Monument aux Morts*) used to make the most ingenious and touching efforts to feed us all. The menus were uncomplicated and unvaried, based for the most part on the traditional macaroni. We would make up for this at Zuloaga’s dinners, when Etchevarria, Pichot and Anglada, who were richer than he was, would help him pay for the food.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See the complete list of Anglada’s prizes and awards in Appendix I.

Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 313.

<sup>6</sup> Fernande Olivier, *Picasso and his Friends*, (London: Heinemann, 1964), pp. 29-30.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

Picasso's penury lasted for the seven years that he spent with Olivier. In 1908 Picasso received a visit from Shchukin, a Russian collector, who was shocked by the appalling condition of the house-studio that Picasso shared with Olivier.<sup>8</sup>

Paris, which was accepted by an overwhelming majority as the capital of the arts, attracted aspiring artists by the hundreds. Thus, artists constituted an important proportion of the Parisian population at the turn of the twentieth century.

... Paris as a centre for artists, with its conflicts and competition, its successes and failures, a city in which artists were a considerable element of the population, striving for recognition and success against formidable odds.<sup>9</sup>

However, even Paris could not absorb the output of this permanently increasing artistic population. The immediate result was, on the one hand, enormous competition and, as a consequence, on the other, a scarcity of buyers. For many this situation was a deterrent, whereas for others it acted as a real motivation. According to John Milner:

...there (Montmartre) existed the Maquis, a warren of wooden sheds, more like an allotment than a studio complex where painters and sculptors shared accommodation with rag pickers and chickens. Here it was possible to work even in poverty which, if it was of any use at all to the artist, provided a driving and often desperate incentive to work and to succeed.<sup>10</sup>

This was clearly the case with Anglada. His ambition was nurtured in all probability by his initially penurious situation, which inspired him to form a plan: he decided to enrol in a prestigious institution where he would learn the latest techniques as well as formally enter the art world. At that time, artists frequently used to enrol as students in studios related with the Academy in order to profit from these connections.

This participation of the masters themselves to judge the competitions produced that it was generally their pupils who carried off the awards. This induced art students to seek the support of Academic masters by enrolling in their ateliers. Even experienced

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<sup>8</sup> Beverly Whitney Kean, *All the Empty Places: The Merchant Patrons of Modern Art in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*, (London/Melbourne/Sydney/Auckland/Johannesburg: Barrie&Jenkins, 1983), pp. 166-167.

<sup>9</sup> John Milner, *The Studios of Paris – The Capital of Art in the Late Nineteenth Century*, (New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 1988), p. 111.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

artists with several years of provincial training enrolled in the atelier of a recognized master before competing for the Prix-de-Rome.<sup>11</sup>

When Anglada arrived in Paris he carried many years of formal training in his luggage. To begin with, he had studied from around 1886 in Barcelona in the Escola de Belles Arts also known as *Llotja*.<sup>12</sup> In this school, he had formally developed his drawing skills and painted in the Naturalist style that was fashionable in those days. Just before going to Paris, Anglada also spent four years in Arbúcies, Gerona, where he worked with other painters while recovering his damaged health in the mountains.

It was Anglada's determination to pursue his dream that exacerbated his family's total opposition. They tried with all their might to keep him in the family home in charge of all the mercantile ventures that constituted the family's wealth. As he ran out of arguments, his body, thus eloquently proving his feelings towards his vocation, suffered a grave accident that put Anglada's life in serious danger. The sensible and prudent family doctor, joining forces with Anglada's professor, advised to forget commercial and literary (?) business and to open the frontiers of his mother land for him so that he could, with his baggage full of dreams, hopes and will, fight his way along the thorny path of glory.

He needed to spend four more years in the Catalonian mountains, recovering his broken health and exhausted energies, contemplating nature, shooting and practising with his brushes before he could travel to Paris.<sup>13</sup>

Therefore, Anglada was not in strict need of formal training when he arrived in Paris; nonetheless, he chose to attend the famous Académie Julian. The reasons for taking this step had been carefully considered. The Académie Julian had acquired international fame for the novelty of its teaching methods. Its founder, Rodolphe Julian (1839-1907), was a painter who had enjoyed some success in the art world of his time. He had exhibited in the Salon des Refusés in 1863. From 1865 to 1878, Julian continuously exhibited one or several paintings in the Salons.<sup>14</sup> During his active professional life as an artist, Julian had developed many friendships among other artists as well as many connections that he would later use for the benefit of his students. Julian did not act for philanthropic reasons alone, but also because, through the success

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<sup>11</sup> Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century*, (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 23.

<sup>12</sup> Exact dates are not available as the *Llotja* archives were absurdly destroyed about 30 years ago.

<sup>13</sup> Antonio de Cidón, 'Hermen Anglada-Camarasa', *La Correspondencia*, 4 October 1904. BAH. press cutting.

<sup>14</sup> Milner, pp. 11-14.

of its students in such a competitive environment, the Académie Julian had achieved an international reputation. Fame obtained by former students' glory resulted in highly appreciated pecuniary profits for Julian.

The numerous triumphs of students admitted to the *École des Beaux-Arts*, accepted in the Salons or recipients of the prix de Rome were a source of delight for Julian and enhanced the Academy's reputation which became world-wide.<sup>15</sup>

The Académie Julian was financially successful from its very beginning and, due to the good management of Julian's widow, it remained a profitable business well after its founder's death in 1907. Abundant criticism was written on the subject of artists' mercantile approach to art, a problem that seemed to have been aggravated in the last half of the nineteenth century. Alaister Wright states:

Instead, the logic of the marketplace seemed to take over. With artists aiming at easy (and thus reprehensible) financial gain, art was reduced to a mere commodity. [...]

Many wanted art to resist, or at least to appear to, the commercialization and commodification of the modern world. These demands were not new, and neither was the suspicion that artists were all too willing to work (for) the market.<sup>16</sup>

Anglada believed in his art as such; however he was aware of the unavoidable necessity of converting it into material success in order to be able to produce it. As we shall see in the last part of this chapter, the way he lived his life proves how he used that success initially only in order to become known but turned his back on it later, when other vital needs took priority.

He may have been introduced into the Académie Julian by his Peruvian friend Carlos Baca-Flor, who was more experienced as he had been living in Paris since 1893.

At the *Académie Julian* students had to pay tuition, but women, foreigners, French citizens, fifty year olds and twelve year olds were all equally admitted without examination. The name of a fellow-artist, a friend, or even a landlord sufficed as reference.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *The Julian Academy: Paris 1868-1939*, Spring Exhibition 1989, Exhibition Catalogue, Shepherd Gallery, (New York: Shepherd Gallery, 1989), p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> Wright, p. 36.

<sup>17</sup> *The Julian Academy*, p. IV.

In those the days, the greatest aspiration for any artist who wanted to obtain general recognition was to enter the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, which throughout its history had gained the highest reputation. Entrance was very restricted: only male French citizens were admitted. Although exceptions were possible, the system of rigid examinations and administrative obstacles acted as a very efficient deterrent. Julian cleverly profited from this situation, at the same time giving a unique opportunity to artists like Anglada-Camarasa and his older friend Baca-Flor.

Julian flourished at a time when the old tenets of the *École* were under attack which led to reforms but not to an immediate change of an overall attitude, deeply rooted in a system of competition and privilege. The studios at the *Académie Julian* were populated by students of very different nationalities and very different walks of life. Most of them being new comers to the city, they naturally helped each other. While at the *École* a new student was put through a humiliating and often dangerous period of hazing and at best ignored by the advanced students. At the *Académie Julian* he was welcomed and would turn for advice to a more experienced fellow student. Reports of studio life at Julian's abound with tales of the friendship, openness and democratic atmosphere that reigned there. The *massier*, a student who was in charge of finances and discipline of the "masses", was elected, not appointed as in other ateliers. The choice of the weekly model was decided by vote, not by the professor.<sup>18</sup>

According to Antonio de Cidón, who wrote for the Valencian newspaper *La Correspondencia*, Anglada enrolled in the day-time academy (*Académie Julian*) immediately on his arrival in Paris, where he studied under the supervision of Jean Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constans.<sup>19</sup> The important role that the *Académie Julian* played in launching Anglada's career cannot be overemphasized. Neither Fontbona and Miralles in the recent past, nor Harris in the 1920s, nor any other author had researched this subject before. The present investigation is therefore a neat contribution to the life and work of Anglada. The *Académie Julian* is where Anglada met his influential professors, who were artists who had already built a name and a reputation from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

Although the initial idea of the *Académie Julian* was to prepare its students for entry into the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Julian soon had to broaden his goals, because

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. V.

<sup>19</sup> Cidón, BAH. press cutting.

many of his students were excluded *ipso facto* because they were women and/or foreigners. In any case, parts of the syllabus were very similar to the Ecole and the teaching principles were identical. According to Catherine Fehrer, Julian chose his professors from those who had won honours and fame in the art world.<sup>20</sup> But as the motivation of some of Julian's students, such as Anglada, went beyond the mere goal of entering the Ecole, there was an extra component of freedom and a respect for individualism that added to the formal education.

The teachers seem to have been more benign on their students' new ideas on the aesthetics of painting. The professors went on to teach them how to paint "truth from nature". The students learned how to draw a figure, to model volume, to create the impression of space, to focus on proportion, anatomical correctness, etc. , but the students were also at liberty to paint like Gauguin, Cézanne, or the impressionists, as long as they paid their fees and did not depend on the active support of the professor.<sup>21</sup>

As an example of this liberal spirit we might mention the fact that Anglada produced a copy of Bessnard's *Woman in the Bath*<sup>22</sup> while simultaneously making numerous copies from the Louvre. This open-minded atmosphere was most convenient for Anglada's discovery of his own style. The teachers of the Académie were very strict about drawing but they were also famous for searching the artistic potential of each individual.

Julian provided not only strict academic training but also improvisation and artistic freedom....Since they did not enforce an overbearing system, Julian and the other instructors could allow students to evolve their personal styles within a nurturing yet professional atmosphere.<sup>23</sup>

Due to his former training in Spain that had boosted his natural talents, Anglada knew how to draw properly when he arrived in Paris, as we may see from drawings such as his masterly *Cabeza de Viejo* from 1897.<sup>24</sup> An even earlier example is the oil

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<sup>20</sup> Catherine Fehrer, 'New Light on the Académie Julian', *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 103, May-June, (1984), p. 208.

<sup>21</sup> *The Julian Academy*, p. V.

<sup>22</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 24.

<sup>23</sup> Gabriel P. Weisberg, Jane R. Becker, (ed.), *Overcoming all Obstacles – The Women of the Académie Julian*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey, London: Rutgers University Press, 2000), p. 20, p. 21.

<sup>24</sup> *Cabeza de Viejo* (Old man's head), charcoal on paper, 55x48 cm., (1897). Private collection.



portrait of *El Teniente Coronel Alvarez de Ardanuy*, which dates as far back as 1890. During his initial years in Paris, Anglada not only improved his drawing technique, but he also won the sought-after prizes of both the Académie Julian, which he attended during the day, and the Académie Colarossi, where he took drawing courses in the evenings.

There (in the *Académie Julian*), without any special effort, he won in two consecutive years, the first prizes in composition. Notwithstanding the fact that in the evenings he also attended another drawing academy where only after three years he also won the highly disputed first prize.<sup>25</sup>

My point is that Anglada, by attending drawing lessons and winning these prizes, attracted the attention of his teachers. Additionally, he was able to show his capabilities and thus he obtained not only the prizes but also his teachers' admiration and, consequently, their protection. Furthermore and best of all, the prizes were passports that were to facilitate his entrance into the Salon.

As soon as he (Julian) had recognized a true vocation in one of those male or female students who came to him, he perceived the strong perseverance by which one achieves success, he would do anything in his power to help him, either materially by opening the atelier at minimal or no cost, or morally by his advice, encouragement, or the benevolent way in which he knew how, by one word, to create a special link between the professor and the student. His interest, once the student had deserved it, never flagged. He was aware of the progress and work of each one.<sup>26</sup>

Anglada knew that he needed contacts to progress. Although in later years he sometimes liked to give an impression of idleness, which corresponded more closely to the image of a bohemian artist, the fact that he worked day and night, simultaneously attending two academies, demonstrates his eagerness to succeed and a most respectable sense of professional direction. Anglada's tendency to get up late, which Antonio Cidón mentions in his article, does not prove indolence.<sup>27</sup> His late mornings were just the logical consequence of his work at night, which as I have explained in the previous

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<sup>25</sup> Cidón, BAH. press cutting.

<sup>26</sup> 'Obituary', *L'Académie Julian*, (Paris: March, 1907). Paris. Archives de la Bibliothèque National de Paris.

<sup>27</sup> Cidón, BAH. press cutting.

chapter, was motivated mainly by his chosen subjects and most of all by his interest in electric light, a question that absorbed Anglada during the first part of his life in Paris. This interest in electric light was most unusual in a world still concerned with Impressionism's decomposition of natural light. There is ample evidence of Anglada's night-time activities to be found in different contemporary press-cuttings from the family archives as well as from the Anglada-Camarasa Museum archives, which today belong to the Fundació La Caixa in Palma de Mallorca.<sup>28</sup> Anglada worked day and night to find his style and to prove his professional value to the people who could introduce him into the art market. Anglada's daughter, Beatriz Anglada-Huelin, states that it was only by extreme personal sacrifice and hard work that her father was able to make his lifelong dream of becoming a recognized artist come true.<sup>29</sup> In his book on the studios of Paris in the late nineteenth century, John Milner quotes a contemporary as saying:

“[...] that no man makes a success in painting or sculpture, however great his talents may be, unless those talents happen to be associated with worldly wisdom and commercial astuteness, for genius in painting ... cannot succeed in a practical sense unless it be associated with businesslike qualities. I did not say these qualities and genius must necessarily be combined in the same person, I meant that genius must have these aids at its disposal, whether supplied personally or vicariously.”<sup>30</sup>

Anglada's daughter stated in a private interview that her father was driven by his passion for art. I believe that this statement means that Anglada's passion for art was his main reason for living and what gave him the necessary strength to pursue his

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<sup>28</sup> Some examples are:

- Povo, 'Anglada come y vive de noche', *La voz de Buñol*, 16 June 1906, Palma de Mallorca. Archives Museo Anglada-Camarasa (MA-C), Fundació la Caixa.
- "It is said that he (Anglada) sleeps all day and works all night, which probably explains the existence of the extraordinary females he portrays, for I have never known anyone who has met their like in broad daylight!"  
*Westminster Gazette*, 18 May 1904. BAH. press cutting.
- Povo, 'En el Estudio del Pintor Anglada-Camarasa', *La voz de Buñol*, (n. d.). MA-C.
- Povo, 'El Mercado de Paris', *La voz de Buñol*, (n. d.), MA-C.
- Alejandro Christophersen, 'Una Tarde con Anglada: La Bohemia de los Artistas Españoles en París', *La Tribuna Española*, 19 July 1913. BAH. press cutting.

<sup>29</sup> Telephone interview with Beatriz Anglada Huelin. Oxford-Pollença, 27 February 2008.

<sup>30</sup> 'The Lay Figure', *The Studio*, 16, (1899), p. 218. As quoted in Milner, p. 2.

ambition.<sup>31</sup> Only ambition could fuel somebody's will to succeed in the competitive art world of Paris in those early days. According to Milner:

So many painters, sculptors and printmakers crowded Paris that patronage was inevitably inadequate to support more than a chosen few; the means to that selection and recognition were fiercely guarded and access to them was ruthlessly competitive.<sup>32</sup>

As we have seen, Anglada's determination "to climb the thorny path to Glory" was much admired by his contemporaries.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, an article about the three Spanish front-runners in the international art arena which was published in Barcelona just ten years after Anglada's struggle for success, states:

The Basque Ignacio Zuloaga, the Valencian Joaquín Sorolla and the Catalán Hermen Anglada ..... with the impulse originated by their frenetic ambition, the three of them have ascended to the highs of European recognition, by discovering in their own selves the direct road to the future.<sup>34</sup>

Anglada knew that he had to prove to his teachers, and especially to Julian, that he was a good investment and worth taking care of. Julian was well known for having a good eye to spot talent, which was the main reason of his success:

Most of all the success of the academy is a result of the discernment with which the director chose his professors. One must be an artist in order to know how to distinguish true merit, which is often self-effacing, from noisy notoriety.<sup>35</sup>

Anglada was a hard-working student with an extraordinary gift for academic drawing. The fact that he won the composition prizes at the Académie Julian and immediately afterwards exhibited at the Salon proves that he managed to get on the right track. There was probably an additional element of luck in the fact that he became a very good friend of Zuloaga, who was already a recognized artist. Besides, the Catalan origins of Julian's artist wife, Amélie Beaury-Saurel, presumably added to the sympathy

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Beatriz Anglada Huelin in Puerto de Polleca, Mallorca. June 2005.

<sup>32</sup> Milner, p. 106.

<sup>33</sup> Cidón, BAH, press cutting.

<sup>34</sup> 'Exposició Anglada', *La Voz de Cataluña*, Barcelona, 10 April 1909. BAH. press cutting.

<sup>35</sup> *The Julian Academy*, p. 14.

that the Julian family had for Anglada.<sup>36</sup> In those days, compatriots in Paris were often very happy to find each other and could normally rely on mutual help.

However, connections were not the only benefit Anglada obtained in the Académie Julian: even more important, thanks to Julian's liberal spirit, it was that there he eventually found his specific and definite style and technique. Julian's academy pioneered many of the teaching methods that were to be taken for granted soon afterwards and that have lasted to the present day. One of Julian's most innovative ideas was to invite well-known artists to teach the students and supervise their progress, which was a new approach beneficial to all sides: knowledge and experience were given to the students in exchange for a fixed salary, a pecuniary stability most welcome even to well-known artists. Furthermore, Julian mixed levels of learning and made advanced students take care of beginners; thus he created a new democratic atmosphere which had a good effect on everybody and was very different from the Ecole, where more traditional methods were used. Carl Goldstein argues:

The (academic) method itself, as taught by a Gérôme or Cabanel or Pils, had changed little, still conforming to the same basic philosophy waving through the history of the academy from the later seventeenth century on. In other words, the teaching of the Ecole after 1863, no less than before, recapitulated the motifs of the academic tradition: the copy, the antique, the live model, and history painting in a Renaissance mould. The ideology of the academy remained substantially unaffected by reform at this time, and indeed well into the next century.<sup>37</sup>

Julian's teaching methods perfectly suited Anglada. Finally, the most revolutionary improvement at all levels was the idea of opening the Académie Julian to women as well as to men. This was absolutely ground breaking: until then, women had

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<sup>36</sup> Even Amélie Beury-Saurel, who later married Julian, completed highly finished half-length portraits in charcoal, as seen in her study of Louise Breslau. Amélie Beury-Saurel was born in Barcelona of French parents. She was trained by Robert-Fleury and had an active Salon career beginning in the 1880s.

Weisberg and Becker, p. 25, p. 28.

<sup>37</sup> Carl Goldstein, *Teaching Art – Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 61.

been deprived of formal training and had been allowed to draw and paint only as a form of light entertainment:

The time was the later nineteenth century, when many traditional institutions were under attack. One that was not was the home, a space reserved for, and under the sway of, virgin and mother. It was not at all uncommon for middle-class families to engage a drawing master to instruct young women in their homes as part of their general education, but strictly as part of a regime including music and deportment and, most of all, sewing – all understood as “arts” of domestic harmony. Or, no less respectable, such instruction might take place at designated times in the artist’s studio. Artists no less eminent than David and Ingres had taught women pupils by arrangement, though Morisot’s first teacher, Geoffrey-Alphonse Chocarne, was not of this rank. The thinking was that these were suitable diversions for young women until marriage, when art, piano-playing, and singing would be put aside for the sake of more important domestic responsibilities and, of course, child-rearing.<sup>38</sup>

Due to the social unrest that the mixed training provoked, genders were soon separated and Julian provided a special academy just for women. Even so, this experience of initially having many female colleagues and later in life many female pupils, arguably had an effect on Anglada’s views about women.

As far as Anglada’s career was concerned, however, the most significant of all the Académie Julian’s teaching innovations was the freedom to develop a personal style.

A prize-winning student at the Academy sums up the discernment of the professors there: *Ils ont bien soin de ne pas imposer à leurs élèves des systèmes préconçus, des principes étroits, guindés, intransigeants: Ils s’efforcent avec un zèle admirable, en vrais artistes qu’ils sont, d’éveiller le sentiment personnel de la nature chez ceux auxquels ils transmettent leur science technique. –« Comprenez la nature », ne cessent-ils de répéter ; « copiez-la comme vous la comprenez ... oubliez les œuvres que vous avez longuement contemplées et admirées; sachez alors regarder votre modèle et rendre ce que vous avez vu tel que vous l’avez vu »* . Such teaching inspired confidence among the students for their professors and developed originality.<sup>39</sup>

Therefore Anglada was not only free but actively encouraged to materialize his own way of seeing things. As a consequence, he developed a personal style that would take him into the twentieth century. It is not therefore coincidence but, rather, this liberty to research artistic techniques that explains the fact that many of the various future branches of the avant-garde were born at the Académie Julian, including the

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 63, p. 64.

<sup>39</sup> Fehrer, p. 210.

Nabis and even Fauvism, if we take into account that Matisse worked for some time at Julian's establishment. Emil Nolde also studied in Paris at the Académie Julian in 1900.<sup>40</sup> Creativity based on the artist's individualism could hardly have developed in a purely academic environment.

Although it is clear that the rationale of devoting much of the curriculum at the Academy to copying was designed, on the one hand, to lead students through imitation to invention, was making copies the best way to achieve this aim? If, on the other hand, the goal was to perpetuate the reputation of a select band of artists through replication, and by these means to associate themselves, as latecomers, with a tradition then under threat from a nascent modernism, how did this translate into producing an art free of servile imitations?<sup>41</sup>

In fact, many of the artists from this period whose fame has survived up to the present day viscerally rejected academic tuition. Matisse, for instance, states:

There is no such thing as teaching painting. At the Ecole des Beaux-Arts one learns what not to do. It is the perfect example of what to avoid .... L'Ecole des Beaux-Arts? A machine for making Prix de Rome scholars ... it only exists in its own surroundings. It will die a lonely death.<sup>42</sup>

Anglada who, like Matisse, would become less revolutionary in the later stages of his artistic career, made the most of the situation by taking advantage of all the available, and non-available, technical liberties in the Académie Julian to develop his bright pictorial language. With this assertion I want to emphasize that Anglada went much further than his mentors, who were, after all, themselves academically trained,

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<sup>40</sup> Martin Urban, *Emil Nolde. Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil-Paintings, Volume 1: 1895-1914*, 2 volumes, (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), I, p. 45.

<sup>41</sup> Denis Cardoso, Rafael Trodd, *Art and the academy in the nineteenth century*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 134.

<sup>42</sup> Carl Goldstein, *Teaching Art – Academies and Schools from Vasari to Albers*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 73.

Matisse changed his opinion regarding the evils of academic teaching in a letter to a friend in 1908 he wrote:

The few exhibitions that I have had the opportunity of seeing during these last years, makes me fear that the young painters are avoiding the slow and painful preparation which is necessary for the education of any contemporary painter who claims to construct by color alone. ...

An artist must possess Nature. He must identify himself with her rhythms, by efforts that will prepare the mastery which will later enable him to express himself in his own language. The future painter must feel what is useful for his development – drawing or even sculpture – everything that will let him become one with Nature, identifying himself with her, by entering into the things which is what I call Nature – that arouse his feelings. I believe study by means of drawing is most essential. ...

Letter to Henry Clifford, 1948, as quoted in H. B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics*. (Berkley, Los Angeles: 1968), p. 140.

could have suspected. I believe that when Anglada's style was born, the ideal combination between commercial motivation and true artistic talent found a common ground in his canvases.

Before diving into a deep study of Anglada's technique, I will briefly focus on Anglada's concern for the market, which will prove further the Académie Julian's business orientation. I am going to show that Anglada's artistic evolution was triggered by commercial and economic motivations. In fact, a close observation of Anglada's development during the years 1897, 1898 and 1899 immediately reveals three main evolutionary changes: the broadening and brightening of the palette; the blurring of the image; and the introduction of the night-life subjects. After the academically correct *Cabeza de Viejo* and *Cabeza de mi Cocinera* or *Torso de Mujer*, all of them dated 1897 and 1898, Anglada started the series of *Madame Berthe*, in which, surprisingly, drawing, which was his strong point, became less important. This seems to be the preparatory stage for his Parisian ladies at night, the subject which brought him the desired recognition.<sup>43</sup> Apart from artistic reasons, such as the impact of Symbolist ideas and the increasing importance in the act of painting *per se*, Anglada's new style was designed to make the most of the policy of Salon exhibitions, the inevitable target for those who wanted to climb the career ladder. The free-market economic theory behind the Salon is therefore at the centre of Anglada's formative years.

The way in which works of art were hung in Salon exhibitions required a different type of painting from that which had been seen up till then. In Salon exhibitions, pictures covered the wall literally from floor to ceiling, without the necessary space between works. These overcrowded surfaces made it very difficult for a single painting to stand out. As walls could easily be over five metres high, small

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<sup>43</sup> I am not taking into account the previous Spanish period former to the artist's travel to Paris as it belongs to a previous life of which Anglada so much wanted to break apart. Neither in technique nor in spirit the gloomy naturalist landscapes of his early youth ever resurface again.

paintings at the top, considered to be “skyed”, could not be properly appreciated by the viewers. Lights were also far worse than even the most mediocre ones seen today. To the dismay of both viewers and exhibitors, natural light, with its intrinsic volubility, had to be trusted as the main source of illumination. I consider that these were all good reasons to try and use more as well as brighter colours in order to improve the visual impact and to catch the viewers’ eye. Details of fine drawing became minutiae which utterly failed to attract the visitors’ attention.

It is hardly surprising that in this market-place of art, painters and sculptors who were witnessing competition at its fiercest and most direct sought spectacular and eye-catching effects, often on a gigantic scale.<sup>44</sup>

Artists had a strong desire to exhibit in the Salon because this was considered to confirm their status as recognized professionals, firstly among their peers and, as a consequence, among the rest of the public, especially among potential buyers, collectors and merchants. Milner quotes Renoir in the following passage:

The Salon was a social event with high potential as a market place, and the Salon accorded a degree of respectability to the works exhibited as Renoir pointed out to his dealer Durand-Ruel in 1881: ‘I am going to try and explain to you why I exhibit at the Salon. In Paris there are scarcely fifteen collectors capable of liking a painter without the backing of the Salon. And there are another eighty thousand who won’t buy so much as a postcard unless the painter exhibits there. That’s why every year I send two portraits, however small .... This entry is entirely of a commercial nature. Anyway, it’s like some medicine – if it does you no good, it won’t do you any harm’.<sup>45</sup>

Anglada, who was imprinted with the commercial spirit of the institution that had treated him so well, probably did not need any efforts to convince him. Some of Anglada’s teachers, such as Benjamin Constant, who is quoted by Milner, apparently shared Renoir’s opinion about the importance of the Salon:

Benjamin-Constant similarly believed that the Salon was an aid not only to glory but to survival. ‘The Salon is our only means of publicity, through it we acquire honour, glory, money. For many of us it provides our livelihood, and without it more than one of the great masters that we admire today would have died wretched without anyone knowing.’<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Milner, p. 55.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 48.



After winning the composition prizes of the Académie Julian for two consecutive years, Anglada found the doors of the Salon open to him. He probably also received help, in the form of a special presentation, from his mentors in the Académie: they had many friends in the Salon's jury, who had the final decision as to who was allowed to exhibit. In fact, pupils of the Académie were sometimes criticized for favouritism:

This year the rules have changed. Now there is a commission of eight to ten people that can do what ever they want and appoint with the title of *sociétaire* any mule in France. Just imagine that even the "genious" Casas, just because he is student of Mr. Carolus-Duran president of the Salon has become *sociétaire* ! (*merde de clan*).<sup>47</sup>

Anglada finally exhibited at the Salon in 1898 and 1899.<sup>48</sup> This success would trigger his international demand. According to an article in the *New York Herald* at the time:

In the vestibule, after traversing leagues of "line", one suddenly happens upon Señor Anglada. He is a very great painter, who should have been better hung, and this applies to his neighbour, M. Hochard. Señor Anglada contorted dancers, whose savage movements resemble those of some strange blooded animals, announce the rise of a new Spanish school. Few painters have his broad color scheme, his powerful coloring. Two years hence Señor Anglada will be one of the masters of modern painting, and, as such, he will have assembled a following of pupils intent upon discrediting his process.<sup>49</sup>

Julian kept in contact with many of his former foreign pupils after they had become professionally established in their own countries, thus creating an international network of connections. Once again, it is very likely that Anglada enjoyed the help of his mentors, who probably recommended him to European galleries and salons, such as the famous Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon in Berlin.<sup>50</sup> The following fragment from a 1900

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<sup>47</sup> Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, 'Letter from Paris', *Private correspondence to Pere Lloret*, 25 July 1903, p. 5. BAH.

<sup>48</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 309.

<sup>49</sup> 'A Masterpiece from Spain', *New York Herald*, 20 April 1898. BAH.

<sup>50</sup> The following statement which refers particularly to women can be extended to all students:

Since most of the women who came to him were financially secure and from diverse countries, he hired well established academicians with extensive international reputations, such as William Bouguereau, Tony Robert-Fleury, Gustave Boulanger, Jean-

Catalan newspaper demonstrates how very happy Anglada's teachers were with the achievements of their former student and how eager they were to help him regardless of national borders:

It is not in vain that he [Anglada-Camarasa] studied in the *Académie Julian* during the four years he stayed in Paris, ... Thanks to his effort and hard work, he has made impressive progress. He managed to withstand the temptation of immediate gain and preferred better to firmly establish the basis of his artistic future. Besides, he has earned well deserved prizes as well as the admiration of his teachers, the aforementioned Jean Paul Laurens, Benjamin Constant, René Prinet y Giradoa.

From some of these masters, he has brought passionate recommendations addressed to the City Council of Barcelona, encouraging them to give an allowance to a man that has proved his extraordinary artistic aptitudes and love of research and study(...)<sup>51</sup>

Nonetheless, life was still not easy for Anglada, and not all his efforts were immediately translated into triumphs. He never obtained the pension from the authorities in Barcelona and, even worse, he did not exhibit at the Exposition Universelle that took place in Paris in 1900:

The 1900 Exposition Universelle attracted considerably greater international participation than its 1889 predecessor, which had celebrated the centenary of the French Revolution and was therefore shunned by countries less enamoured of such overtly republican sentiment. In 1900, over forty countries were represented, including many with extensive colonial interests around the globe.<sup>52</sup>

It was a unique opportunity for artists working in Paris to become known and sell their works:

Such Exhibitions concentrated enormous crowds of people of many nationalities into the hotels, hostelrys, galleries and museums of a Paris that was expanding. New building was encompassing Montmartre to the north, Montparnasse to the south, and new suburbs were rising at Auteuil, St. Cloud and Neuilly. If the Exhibitions had a national purpose in re-establishing confidence in the Republic after the disaster of the Franco-

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Paul Laurens and Jules Lefebvre, to direct his studios and critique students' works. His hiring such widely recognized artists indicates that Julian well understood how to attract potential clients and students without raising concerns about excessive costs. These instructors, with their own professional contacts, were in advantageous positions to introduce the female students to potential clients and to gain them access to exhibitions and governmental sales, thus ensuring that they were on the right track when their training was finished. Both Bouguereau and Lefebvre, with their lifetime of creative work, enjoyed extensive contacts with artists and collectors throughout Europe and beyond.

Weisberg and Becker, pp. 15-16.

<sup>51</sup> J. Roca y Roca, *La Opinión de Cataluña, 1898-1900*. BAH.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Rosenblum, Maryanne Stevens, Ann Dumas, *1900 Art at the Crossroads, Exhibition Catalogue*, Royal Academy of Arts, (16 January – 3 April 2000), (London: RA, 2000), p. 56.

Prussian war and the Commune, they also had a corresponding international purpose to increase trade and establish Paris as a busy and elegant capital in a productive France.<sup>53</sup>

It seems that the highly ambitious Anglada, just like his close friend Zuloaga, tried to take part in this once-in-a-life-time event.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, they were both rejected, as the technical taste of those in charge of the selection for the Spanish section was too traditional.<sup>55</sup>

According to Fontbona and Miralles, neither of the two rejected Spanish artists exhibited in the Spanish Pavilion ever again because of what they considered to be an arbitrary decision of the Spanish Jury.<sup>56</sup>

The selection of the artists to represent each country was the responsibility of each participating nation, which normally established a commission to undertake the task. The selection of works was governed by the principle that all should have been created since 1889.<sup>57</sup>

In general, those who organized the exhibition were too much rooted in the past to accept new artistic techniques. It must be said that even in the French Pavilion, the nationally biased dimensions of which were considerably larger than those of other pavilions, tradition was so pre-eminent that the organizers did not find it worthwhile to waste any space on the Impressionists:

Competition manifested itself overtly in the selection process. Alexandre continued: 'Juries are chosen from among the most celebrated men. Those who, so to speak, have "arrived". Now, those who have "arrived" do not always understand those

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<sup>53</sup> Milner, p. 96, p. 97.

<sup>54</sup> The art of Paris was itself a draw to visitors and the visual arts had a central place in these enormous Exhibitions. The effect upon artists was two-fold. There were many commissions arising from the staging of these Exhibitions and there were enormous displays of art organised as part of the events themselves.

Milner, p. 97.

<sup>55</sup> Vittorio Pica, member of the Board of Directors of the Rome and Venice Exhibitions, wrote:

The unbelievable partiality of the stupid jury that was designated by Spain in the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris 1900, rejected with full responsibility both Zuloaga and Anglada, forcing them to fail by preventing them from exhibiting. However, with all their stupidity, they could not prevent the success of the two abhorred artists in all the exhibitions that were to follow, in which they participated together with other artists.

Vittorio Pica, 'Hermen Anglada y Camarasa', *Die Kunst Für Alle*, 9, XXVII, 1 February (1912), 197-204, p. 202. BAH. Fotocopy and translation.

<sup>56</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 30.

<sup>57</sup> Rosenblum, Stevens and Dumas, p. 57, p. 58.

who are about to “arrive”. The vagaries of the selection process, and particularly the exclusion of the Impressionists from the *Décennale*, were deplored by many critics.<sup>58</sup>

Nothing can excuse the final disastrous result in the Spanish Pavilion.<sup>59</sup> The artists who were selected, with the exception of Sorolla who earned a *medaille d'honneur* with his *Triste Herencia* (“Sad Inheritance”), were not exactly innovative: Casas had a very academic technique and Rusiñol a Naturalist style (see illustrations 4,5,6 in Appendix III). In the opinion of Robert Rosenblum, written in 2000:

[...] and Austria with the pre- and post-Secession tendencies in their section, the later dominated by Klimt, whose contribution to the *Décennale* was by no means uniformly acclaimed. Italy and Spain, both inheritors of magisterial artistic traditions, were also viewed as problematic; with the notable exceptions of Segantini and Boldini for Italy, and of Sorolla and, with certain reservations, Rusiñol for Spain, neither presented a strong hand.<sup>60</sup>

This opinion was shared by Anglada-Camarasa in 1900, who expressed his dissatisfaction in even stronger terms in a letter to his best friend Pere Llort:<sup>61</sup>

The *Exposition* is deliciously wonderful, as you can imagine I have seen it all and now my brain is completely full of paintings: France, Germany, Belgium the Low Countries, are even better than opium. Spain is on the contrary the biggest calamity that could befall us, horrible! Horrible!<sup>62</sup>

No matter how terrible the Spanish Pavilion might have been, it would have been very helpful to Anglada if he could have taken part at this early stage in his career, when real clients were scarce. In spite of these setbacks, however, Anglada did not lose

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>59</sup> In the Paris 1900 *Exposition Universelle* Spanish Pavillion, Joaquín Sorolla exhibited *Triste Herencia*, Ramón Casas *Retrato de Sati*, and Santiago Rusiñol *Jardines de Granada*, among other works. I have included some examples of these artists oeuvre in the annex to have an idea of the selection criteria for the pavilion of the Spanish jury. See also:

‘Arte y Artistas – Ramón Casas y Carbó’, in *La Pinacoteca de Ninona*,

<<http://arteninona.wordpress.com/2008/03/02/ramon-casas-i-carbo/>>, [accessed 7 May 2009]

‘Santiago Rusiñol Prats’, in *The Atheneum*,

<[http://the-atheneum.org/art/by\\_artist.php?id=3057](http://the-atheneum.org/art/by_artist.php?id=3057)>, [accessed 7 May 2009]

<sup>60</sup> Rosenblum, Stevens and Dumas, p. 67.

<sup>61</sup> In this letter, Anglada asked Llort to help him to act as his Barcelona connection, as he frequently did. But, even more importantly, he asked him to write a model letter for him because he had great difficulty with spelling in his mother tongue. At a time when written letters and notes were the chief means of communication, Anglada’s handicap was all the more inconvenient. Therefore, Llort’s friendship and help was most valuable in what must have seemed to Anglada to be a never-ending struggle for recognition.

<sup>62</sup> The syntaxes in the translation of this text has been corrected, in order that the English reader can make better sense of its content. For obvious reasons, neither have been spelling mistakes in Spanish been transferred to the translation.

Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, ‘Letter from Paris’, *Private correspondence to Pere Llort*, 17 June 1900, p. 3. BAH. Private correspondence.

the momentum he had obtained through the initial prizes. He continued fighting on other fronts, where he won most of the battles. In the same letter to Llord, for instance, he states:

... As you know the offer that Mr Maristany made to me, consisted in giving me 5000 francs now with the sole condition that by the end of the year I would give him two or three paintings. I would like to write him a letter, as I believe the situation requires, repeating my gratitude for his offer and how willing I am to prove it. As we were about to say goodbye this gentleman said that we would meet again in Paris in eight or fifteen days. He would then write me but as I have not heard from him ever since I went to the *Hotel de la Terrasse* and they have told me that he has not arrived yet.

As you can imagine I am really worried and I will keep being so until this is over. This gentleman does not inspire any confidence in me, in fact I could even say he does not look precisely trustworthy. I have been through so much that I do not want to see things in pink until it is really bright. Would you please do me the favour of writing a letter saying how very thankful I am, how much I would like to offer him something according to my gratitude and how much I would appreciate the opportunity to repeat these my most sincere feelings in person? I beg you dearest Pedro(...)<sup>63</sup>

Anglada's letters to Llord and the anecdote of his failure to participate in the Exposition Universelle prove how persistent and impatient Anglada was. To continue with previous military metaphors, we could say that in the fight for recognition Anglada's most powerful artistic ammunition proved to be his own style and the warheads with which he delivered it were his professional contacts.

Now that I have explained the fertile ground in which Anglada's abilities grew, I will study the development of his powerful style. As I have just shown, Anglada found his technique thanks to the relatively liberal atmosphere of the Académie Julian. In spite of the academic technical training of this institution, there was enough freedom to let each individual genius flourish.

Through spontaneous execution the artist's sincerity and individuality emerged – unmediated by the trappings of Academic requirement. The removal of this conventional interference with perception corresponded to the advanced conceptions of originality.<sup>64</sup>

Compared to the strict atmosphere of the Ecole des Beaux Arts, the Académie Julian was a paradise for personal creativity. Nevertheless, Anglada went beyond even the limited liberal spirit of this institution, embarking on pictorial adventures that met

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 3, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Boime, p. 166.

with his professors' opposition; after all, they themselves had had an academic education.<sup>65</sup>

Among other things, Anglada learnt how important it was to capture the instants that characterized Baudelairean modern life through sketches, as opposed to the traditional history academic (studio based) painting which restricted the genres available to artists. Sketching was the most efficient technique to encapsulate the intrinsic spontaneity of Baudelairean subject matters that lived outside the walls of the studio. Albert Boime describes the artistic situation in Paris during that period as follows:

The transformation of pictorial techniques and the breakdown of traditional studio routine resulted in the establishment of innumerable artistic styles, creeds and dogmas. Despite their disorder and complexity these styles exhibit certain general features that can be aptly classified under the heading of the aesthetics of the sketch.<sup>66</sup>

This development of aesthetics proved to be most relevant to Anglada's own case because his technique resulted directly from this fashionable sketching trend, the origins of which lay in the ideas of Baudelaire.<sup>67</sup> This artistic trend had started well before the time of Anglada's arrival in Paris. According to Michael Fried, Manet had been a pioneer:

The conjunction of the two statements is not fortuitous: more than any other formal or stylistic feature of Manet's paintings of the 1860s it was the unprecedented "instantaneization" of contrasting values, colours, lines and contours that compelled the attention of contemporary viewers even as they experienced it as an act of sheerest aggression.<sup>68</sup>

The point was that, through a free and spontaneous approach, art should capture the flashes of beauty that, according to Baudelaire, characterized modern life:

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<sup>65</sup> Anglada's anarchic way of working despaired his tutors at the Academy Julian according to Cidón, BAH. press cutting.

<sup>66</sup> Boime, p. 166.

<sup>67</sup> See previous chapter.

<sup>68</sup> Michael Fried, *Manet's Modernism or the Face of Painting in the 1860s*, (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 329, p. 331.

By “modernity” I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable.<sup>69</sup>

Émile Zola, describing Manet’s art, in the following paragraph explains this theory, which is also Baudelairian:

(...) le beau devient la vie humaine elle-même, l’élément humain se mêlant à l’élément fixe de la réalité et mettant au jour une création qui appartient à l’humanité. C’est dans nous que vit la beauté, et non en dehors de nous.<sup>70</sup>

It was an urban approach similar to the rural one that, a generation earlier, artists of the Barbizon group such as Rousseau, Courbet or Millet had had. Also Impressionism, by concentrating mainly on light, was at the origins of upcoming techniques that tried to capture the instant.

Anglada’s generation went further by elevating the spontaneity of the sketch to the status of a finished work of art. The reason for this apparent excess was that it was the best way into the soul of the artist, where the real source of beauty could be found. This disdain for detail and this new positive evaluation of the first impression was at the time at the root not only of German Expressionism: as far afield as the United States one could find artists defending the new credo. Take Albert Pinkham Ryder (1847–1917), for example:

The artist should fear to become the slave of detail. He should strive to express his thought and not the surface of it [...] It is the first vision that counts. The artist has only to remain true to his dream and it will possess his work in such a manner that it will resemble the work of no other man – for no two visions are alike, [...] <sup>71</sup>

Neither Fontbona and Miralles in 1981 nor Harris in 1929 in their respective works have pointed out that Anglada’s innovative technique of shapes and forms, which

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<sup>69</sup> Charles Baudelaire, *Painter of Modern Life*, in *Oeuvres Complètes*, 1163, (Paris: 1961), p. 13. As quoted in Anne Coffin Hanson, *Manet and the Modern Tradition*, (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 96.

<sup>70</sup> Emile Zola, ‘Édouard Manet Raconté par Emile Zola’, in *Manet – Raconté par lui-même et par ses Amis*, 2 volumes, (Genève : Pierre Cailler Éditeur, 1953), II, p.32, p. 33.

<sup>71</sup> Albert Pinkham Ryder, ‘Paragraphs from the Studio of a Recluse’, in *Art in Theory 1900 – 2000 – An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 62.

was made possible by the most un-academic mixture of colours, was the surprising evolution of a sketch.

As a consequence of the sketching technique, shortly after his arrival in Paris, Anglada changed his style from short to long brushstrokes, a style that he kept for the rest of his life.<sup>72</sup> Anglada's works were always subject to alteration if he considered it necessary. Some were significantly changed after one exhibition before being sent to the next one; in *Mur Ceramique*, for instance, Anglada added new figures and changed existing ones.<sup>73</sup> Also the face of *La Gata Rosa* was changed a few years later to adapt it to the taste of the Belle Epoque and/or to the physical changes of the model's features.<sup>74</sup> Anglada's use of colour paste was heavy: he combined the long brushstrokes with the use of big quantities of oils in the elaboration of most of his paintings. Fontbona and Miralles merely state that Anglada's technique of painting without a previous drawing was severely criticized by his mentors:

He [Anglada] was the pupil of the academics Jean-Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constant in the *Académie Julian*, where he, it seems, won the first prize for the best composition in two consecutive years: and all that in spite of the discussions he had with his professors. Additionally he attended the evening classes of the *Académie Colarossi*, which was said to be more advanced. There he had the professors René Prinnet and Louis-Auguste Girardot. Also there, after three years of assistance, he obtained the first medal. And all that in spite of introducing heterodox innovations, like painting directly on the canvas without previously sketching the composition with charcoal.<sup>75</sup>

Soon after his arrival in Paris, Anglada entered a creative rhythm that would last for years. The procedure involved developing some of the many sketches that he used to produce during his Parisian night wanderings by just adding successive degrees of complexity to the original idea. Those initial impressions, created by blotches of oil painting on the carton cover of an empty cigar box, were technically independent from

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<sup>72</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 69.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>74</sup> Francesc Fontbona, *Spanish Art Sale*, Christie's auction catalogue, 2 October 2008, (Madrid: Christie's, 2008). Pp. 76, 77.

<sup>75</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 24.



proper drawing. Therefore he did not need a formal drawing as a foundation on which to construct the final result. Anglada produced many sketches during his professional life. This was not incompatible with the fact that, especially at a later stage in his life, he carried out extensive preparations, particularly in the composition of large-dimensional works. However, every time he was confronted with a white canvas, he applied the oils directly. This artistic process enabled him not to lose any meaning or feelings on the road towards painting. Spontaneity would capture the momentum and would maximize the expression. The German contemporary press always showed intense feelings regarding the Spaniard's technique.<sup>76</sup> No wonder the German Expressionists were so receptive to Anglada's art, which they found most inspiring in its disdain for detail.

According to Peter Vergo:

They [the Expressionist artists] believed – and here once again the influence of Schopenhauerian philosophy is clearly seen – that the task of art was to give voice to an inner world, and that the inner experience of the artist and the inner nature of the world itself were in essence the same. Hence their disdain for everything external since it was the internal, not the external aspect of art that was important. The material differences between the different art forms were merely external; it was the inner message that was of crucial significance, and all that mattered was to choose the external form most appropriate to the inner message which it was the task of art to convey.<sup>77</sup>

By combining the extraordinary use of colour and the choice of subjects with the spontaneity of his sketching technique, Anglada achieved the sincerity (honesty in the expression of true feelings) and singularity that gave weight to his oeuvre and made it different from that of others who tried unsuccessfully to be original *per se*. By taking quick pictorial notes through the sketches, he managed to capture his own emotional instants attaining originality. Albert Boime states:

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<sup>76</sup> Some of the German contemporary newspapers that publishes reviews on Anglada's work, are: *Siebente Beilage Boffitcher*; (8th May. 1904); *Rheinisch-Westfälische Zeitung* (3rd. April 1904); *Hamburger Correspondenz* (1902?); *Berliner Börsen Courir* (28th. February. 1904); *Das Kleine Journal* (29<sup>th</sup>. February 1904)

<sup>77</sup> Peter Vergo, 'The Origins of Expressionism and the Notion of the Gesamtkunstwerk', *Expressionism Reassessed*, ed. by Behr Shulamith, David Fanning, Douglas Jarman, (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 14.

Originality in the sense of the *première pensée* specifically refers to its embodiment in the generative steps of creation, the note, the sketch and the *ébauche*. It is self-expression without self-consciousness, freedom from premeditation of deliberate and reflective design (as in Rousseau's 'sketch-confession'). The sketch and the *ébauche* being synonymous with both composition and invention, originality then denominates the spontaneous form of an original idea.

Originality in material execution refers to the retention of the sketch qualities in the finished work: the more sketchy the surface texture, the more self-expressive and hence original appears the artist's execution.<sup>78</sup>

Sure of the power of his visions, Anglada fought back against criticism from the staff in the Académie Julian. Judging by the stubbornness of Anglada's artistic counter-attacks, it did not cost him too much to disagree with his professors. Sure of his potential, Anglada was very experienced at overcoming emotional pressure. Early on, Anglada had had to oppose his mother whom, according to his daughter, he loved dearly throughout his life, making this opposition particularly painful.<sup>79</sup> Under the spell of his own dream, Anglada fought against anybody who stood in his way: first his family, then his supportive but scandalized teachers. His tenacity was well recorded in the contemporary Catalan press, which described it as heroism:

Hermenegildo Anglada, author and hero of this real success is a young man from Barcelona in the prime of the age. He is 26 years old and in his body, characterized with a round head full of kindness and intelligence as well as a big beard, black like sloe, breathes the soul of a real artist and the determination of those who propose themselves to be something and feel the power to get somewhere.<sup>80</sup>

Anglada's search for a personal style came to an end when he combined the technique that he had started using during the last years of the nineteenth century in his *Madame Berthe* series with a different and most successful subject: nightlife.<sup>81</sup> There are several reasons why this change of subject was such a brilliant move. First of all, it was a fashionable subject. I shall briefly recall some of the characteristics relating to the subject's inherent Symbolism which I have developed in the previous chapter: the threat of the new femme fatale with all the moral and physical dangers involved; the subject of

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<sup>78</sup> Boime, p. 173.

<sup>79</sup> Telephone interview with Beatriz Anglada Huelin. Oxford-Pollença, 27 February 2008.

<sup>80</sup> Roca y Roca, (n. n.), (n. p.), (n. d.). BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>81</sup> According to Fontbona and Miralles it seems that Mdme. Berthe was Anglada's land lady during those first years in Paris.

good and evil in the same painting; the redemption of the subject through art; the modern vision of the *paradies artificielles* – to mention some of the most important. A contemporary chronicle-writer, overwhelmed by Anglada's whites, was much impressed by the nacre pallor of the unhealthy models, which so clearly expressed the situation of those that, unlike St Anthony, had succumbed to earthly temptations - a very fashionable subject at the time:

Those women that give the impression of being dead souls buried in bodies that are falling apart, sickly languid, neurotics, possessed by all the refinements typical of the elegant vicious life, pierced by morphine needles, ill of spleen and of luxury, good-for-nothings useless to propagate the race (reproduction), slaves of the gold that sustains an artificial beauty for them, a trap, that exaggerated with make-up, accentuated by artificial powder-blush, by which the sun is of course not deceived, are wrapped in rich silks, precious furs, covered with diamonds, pearls and emeralds. All have made an impression on the artist, who has managed to transcribe them onto the canvas, everything shining over the creepy darkness of these unpleasant old men, tanned by their crapulous life, enriched by exploiting humble workers through business that lack in scruples...<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, there was a second motivation for the change of subject matter: publicity. The subject of prostitution and of the degeneration that existed in the completely new culture of leisure was extremely commercial due to its morbidity. Anglada was not the first to exploit this shocking method. Edouard Manet had tried to attract attention in 1865 by exhibiting *Olympia*. Manet wanted to achieve the popular success that would justify his artistic career and so content his conservative family:

[...] while hoping that it [the exhibition of *Olympia* in 1865] would be admired as modern version of a traditional genre, he fully expected to provoke the public, in keeping with his Baudelairian cult of dandyism, his enjoyment of the pleasure of astounding people combined with the arrogant satisfaction of never being astounded oneself.<sup>83</sup>

As I have mentioned before, the Salon exhibitions necessitated a tough contest for the public's interest, which obliged painters to do their best, in both technique and subject, to attract the viewers' attention. In this kind of exhibition Anglada's bright night scenes managed to overshadow completely neighbouring pictures. A contemporary art commentator stated: "Next to Anglada there were other painters who

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<sup>82</sup> 'Crónica Saló Parés – Hermen Anglada', *Lo Teatro Regional*, 12 May 1900. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>83</sup> Theodore Reff, *Manet Olympia*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1976), p. 44.

simply passed unnoticed".<sup>84</sup> This was also confirmed in a letter from Anglada to his friend Llorc:

... the shapes and forms blotched in these paintings [exhibited by Anglada at the *Salon* in 1902] were very piquant and spicy (stimulating), and they were really original regarding subject matter and composition, which is at once realist and very decorative. They had the most amazing success you could imagine, but of course, they were not hung in the salon; instead, they exhibited them in the gallery which is by the stairs because nobody wanted to put their works next to mine. My painting style can turn out to be dangerous for the wretched chap that must hang his oeuvre in my vicinity...<sup>85</sup>

Anglada's *demi-mondaines* perfectly achieved their goal by causing polemic wherever they appeared. The archives contain numerous examples of these scandals and of the rejection which Anglada's paintings met, for instance in this extract from a German newspaper:

What these pictures show to us cannot be, in any sense, the reproduction of an impression obtained by the artist [Anglada] from the real world. Shapeless forms pretending to be fruits, animals, trees or interiors that have no connection with reality, cover the canvas. He cannot try to make us believe that this is how he perceives reality.... He has composed these apparitions with forms created with a orgy of overwhelming colours, that shine producing a strong effect and often in the same pictures, everything is unnatural, with the colours of a rotten corpse that shine like terrible beings coming from further as the grave. These formless ladies are only eyes...<sup>86</sup>

It is revealing that the author of this article rejects particularly the shapelessness of Anglada's paintings. However, the lack of detail does not prevent them from producing a strong effect. This is a very important point, as it supports my argument that Anglada's intensity of expression was an involuntary source of inspiration for artists on their way to twentieth-century Abstraction, as it went beyond the Symbolist character of the subject, with its nineteenth-century aftertaste. Anglada was, as I have said at the beginning of this chapter and now using Kandinsky's terminology, "a child of his time". What he started to do was in the same spirit in which many other artists were working. Examples are Matisse first and Nolde later. Anglada with his public exposure might have therefore exerted an influence on his contemporaries, as he himself

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<sup>84</sup> *Hamburger Correspondenz*, 3 April 1904. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>85</sup> Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, 'Letter from Paris', *Private correspondence to Pere Llorc*. BAH. Private correspondence.

<sup>86</sup> *Siebente Beilage Boffitichen*, 8 May 1904, p.14. BAH. Press cutting and translation.

was breathing the same creative artistic air that impregnated Europe at the turn of the century. August Endell in Munich, defending “shapeless art” from criticism stated:

To those with understanding, this despondency is simply laughable. For they can clearly see, that we are not only at the beginning of a new stylistic phase, but at the same time on the threshold of the development of a completely new Art. An Art with forms which signify nothing, represent nothing and remind us of nothing, which arouse our souls as deeply and as strongly as music has always been able to do.<sup>87</sup>

Understandably, as it is Endell’s statement, one must cool down its temperature with the fresh perspective given by more modern studies. One must not forget the leading role played by Richard Wagner:

It is difficult to overestimate the influence of Wagner – as an aesthetic model to be followed or consciously rejected – on the art of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>88</sup>

Neither must one forget the Symbolist idea of looking behind the image for a deeper meaning. According to Raymond Furness:

(...) whatever else Expressionism was, it was not such a radical break with the past as has hitherto been suggested, and it frequently betrays symbolist, neo-romantic or indeed romantic elements.<sup>89</sup>

After all, this new art referred to by Endell was not completely new: it is precisely their past common ground of Symbolism that caused optimistic artists like Anglada and Derain in their pursuit of happiness to come closer to German Expressionists, who were impregnated by a contagious *Kulturpessimismus*.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> August Endell, ‘The Beauty of Form and Decorative Art’, *Dekorative Kunst*, Munich, 1897-8, pp. 75-7, pp. 119-25. Translated by Charlotte Benton, Dennis Sharp, *Form and Function: a source book for the History of architecture and design 1890-1939*, (London: Open University, 1975).

<sup>88</sup> Shulamith, Fanning and Jarman, p. 7.

<sup>89</sup> Raymond Furness, ‘The Religious Element in Expressionist Theatre’, in *Expressionism Reassessed*, ed. by Behr Shulamith, David Fanning, Douglas Jarman, (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 163.

<sup>90</sup> I want to talk to you about what interests me, the modern view of life. I think about it intensely here. It seems to me that everything converges on the search for happiness.

André Derain, “Letters to Vlaminck”, Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, *Art in Theory 1900-2000 – An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 63.

A very unpleasant but morbidly commercial description of Anglada's oeuvre, which contrasts with the one from the *Siebente Beilage Boffitchen*, can be found in the following article from a French newspaper:

M. Anglada (...) presents us with the terrifying spectral *goules*, from which a sour perfume of cantharides emanates, of rotting corpses and of death. All of them are well rapped in soft *fanchons*, the flesh of the cheeks fluffy and green, the mouth is as a frozen pepper, the fix stare from their heavy hallucinated eyes is hysterical; even if the drawing is dubious, the colours are extremely beautiful; M. Anglada should have illustrated *Basile et Sophia*; he would probably have been wonderful at reconstructing the Manichean rites of the orgies with the Byzantine priestesses.<sup>91</sup>

It is also important to underline that in both articles the collision of the forces of attraction and revulsion is perceptible in the rejection of the subject that is compensated, sometimes by far, by the beauty of the combination of colours. Again, the expressive power of the colours storms the viewer's consciousness and overcomes the subject. It was this ability that was to impress Kandinsky, as I shall show in Chapter Five.

With the decadent subjects he chose, Anglada achieved the important goal of attracting the attention which was necessary to make his viewers appreciate the technical quality of his works as well as his artistic vision, full of symbolic significance.

Although Anglada did not produce his own version of Manet's *Olympia*, it is not far-fetched to suggest that Manet's work offered him some inspiration. After all, *Olympia* had been hanging at the Luxemburg Museum for years by the time that Anglada arrived in Paris and logically was a must-see for any artist who was interested in painting prostitutes. Even Zola, in 1866, already a well-known writer by that time, had raised his voice in the Manet scandal in order to achieve some notoriety as a journalist. He was trying to extend his fame into his new career:

When his article on Manet appeared in *L'Événement* in May 1866, the two men were barely acquainted. Zola had of course been a close friend of Cézanne's for many years and, perhaps guided by him, had written occasionally on art, but without attracting any attention. Now, as part of his ambitious plan to establish a reputation in journalism as well as fiction, he became almost over night a champion of advanced art, a courageous

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<sup>91</sup> Vauxelles, 'Société Nationale Salle III: MM. Anglada, Jeannot, Bunny, Willette, Lavery', *Gil Blas*, 16 April 1904. BAH. Press cutting.

defender of Manet and others in the Realist movement: and as result he soon gained a much greater renown and soon lost his job in *L'Événement*.<sup>92</sup>

Zola wrote an extensive article defending Manet's *Olympia* as well as his technique.<sup>93</sup> Manet was most grateful and cordially thanked Zola in a letter where he also expressed his desire to make his acquaintance, proving that they had not even met before. Zola in later life admitted that he never really understood Manet's art and that he had written his defence mainly for tactical reasons. Besides, Zola was more interested in proclaiming his own aesthetic theory, on which his books were based, than in explaining Manet's work.<sup>94</sup> These examples once again prove the importance of some kind of shocking publicity in order to achieve acknowledgement and material success.

Anglada continued to profit from it even at a later stage when he did not really need it any longer. In Anglada's career, one of the biggest scandals produced by his paintings of elegant prostitution took place in 1905, at the Venice Biennale. I do not believe that by then Anglada was still searching for attention through his subjects. He was already at the centre of the public's attention in the Salons, at the peak of his success, enjoying a well-merited recognition in what was maybe the most relevant artistic arena of the world: the Venice Biennale. However, he still liked to be talked about, as this was the main source of publicity for potential clients as well as an inspiration for other artists.<sup>95</sup>

Unlike Manet, who suffered immensely from his contemporaries' mockery and criticism, as well as from a lack of support and understanding from the educated art

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<sup>92</sup> Reff, p. 44.

<sup>93</sup> Émile Zola, *Édouard Manet: Étude Biographique et Critique Accompagnée d'un Portrait d'Éd. Manet par Bracquemond et d'une Eau-Forte d'Éd. Manet d'après Olympia*, (Paris: E. Dentu Éditeur, Librairie de la Société des Gens des Lettres, 1867).

<sup>94</sup> Reff, p. 24, p. 25.

<sup>95</sup> As Oscar Wilde says in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*: "There is only one thing worse than being talked about and that is not being talked about." 'The Picture of Dorian Gray – Oscar Wilde', in *Litquotes*, <[http://www.litquotes.com/quote\\_title\\_resp.php?TName=The%20Picture%20of%20Dorian%20Gray&page=1](http://www.litquotes.com/quote_title_resp.php?TName=The%20Picture%20of%20Dorian%20Gray&page=1)> [accessed 30 April 2009]

world, Anglada handled the situation very well and there is no proof that he suffered much from it. After all, comparatively, he was in a better situation: the criticism emanated from the Catholic church and conservative parts of society, which gave only more consistency to Anglada's artistic vanguardism. In the following extract, Fontbona and Miralles summarize the scandal instigated by Anglada's *demi-mondaines* as it was described by the Italian publication, *L'Arte a Venezia*:<sup>96</sup>

Anglada was the Biennale's *enfant terrible*. According to Vittorio Pica, the public did not accept the novelties introduced by the artist [Anglada]. They were negatively surprised by the decadence of the Parisian night subjects. According to the publication *L'Arte a Venezia*, "all the ladies in Venice deemed it necessary to be shocked when they were confronted with Hermen Anglada-Camarasa's works". The journalist stated that although the artist depicted his models fully dressed, only rarely with a small and decent décolleté, his paintings were classified as highly immoral. He recalled what had happened in the first edition of the Biennale, where the work *Supremo Convegno* by Giacomo Grasso was the object of an anathema by the Venice patriarch (the afterwards Pope Pio X) with much less motive than the one by Anglada in the present edition. The anathema, according to the chronicle writer, was one of the main reasons of the enormous success of the 1895 exhibition, as the curious public attended massively in order to observe the forbidden work from close range. As a consequence, Monsignore Cavallari finally decided not to throw the anathema in 1905. In any case, expectations were colossal.<sup>97</sup>

Besides, as a collateral effect, the publicity surrounding the Venice Biennale resulting from the disagreement of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church was most welcomed. Even if Anglada's exhibition was not formally forbidden by the Vatican, it had many visitors and received a lot of attention from the press. In fact, ecclesiastical authorities had rejected the idea of prohibiting Anglada's exhibition because, a few years earlier, a similar initiative had exerted such a pull on the public's interest that the result had turned out to be just the opposite of the one desired: the number of visitors to the forbidden show had multiplied. Although, as I mentioned before, Anglada had already arrived at the summit of public acknowledgement, he kept the wheel of fame turning with the help of this sort of event.

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<sup>96</sup> 'Epistola Seconda', *L'Art a Venezia*, 1905. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin. Press cutting.

<sup>97</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1981), p. 39.



There are similarities between the scandal instigated by Anglada's works at the Venice Biennale and the one that exploded when *Olympia* was exhibited for the first time, but there are even more differences. When Manet exhibited *Olympia* together with a *Christ Being Mocked* in the 1865 Salon, he provoked his contemporaries to the verge of violence. By exposing the naked (not nude) portrait of a well-known courtesan under the name of a goddess, he unleashed the fury of the mob to the point that he needed official protection to avoid physical damage to the painting.

Si la toile de *l'Olympia* ne fut pas lacérée et crevée, ce fut grâce aux précautions prises par l'administration du Salon de 1865. Les colères étaient telles que l'on en était arrivé à dire que Manet était plein de talent quand il peignait *l'Homme mort*, qu'on avait trouvé détestable l'année précédente, mais qu'il se moquait du public en lui présentant *l'Olympia*(...)J'ai rarement vu Manet plus attristé que ce jour-là. Si ses convictions n'ont pas été altérées après *l'Olympia* par les attaques dont il était l'objet, il ne serait pas vrai de dire que les heureux du jour ne l'aient pas rendu profondément malheureux. La douleur ne tue pas, ce sont les efforts que l'on fait pour la refouler qui usent la vie et qui brisent la volonté dont elle est faite. L'œuvre de Manet, qui est considérable, l'eût été plus encore, si l'acharnement de ces contemporains contre lui n'avait été aussi violent.<sup>98</sup>

If it is true that Manet suffered from this absolute incomprehension from both the educated as well as the un-educated public, it is also true that for years he became a source of talk and inspiration, which often go together.<sup>99</sup> Manet's friend Proust recalls:

C'était en 1882 ; il était déjà très souffrant du mal qui devait l'emporter d'année suivante. « Cette guerre au couteau, me dit-il, m'a fait le plus grand mal. J'en ai cruellement souffert, mais elle m'a donné le coup de fouet. Je ne souhaite à aucun artiste d'être loué et encensé à ses débuts. Ce serait pour lui l'anéantissement de sa personnalité. » Puis, souriant, il ajouta : « Les imbéciles ! ils n'ont cessé de me dire que j'étais inégal : ils ne pouvaient rien dire de plus élogieux. Cela a toujours été mon ambition de ne pas demeurer égal à moi-même, de ne pas refaire, le lendemain, ce que j'avais fait la veille, de m'inspirer constamment d'un aspect nouveau, de chercher à faire entendre une note nouvelle.<sup>100</sup>

Anglada's scandal of 1905 came at a historical stage when one would have thought that the audience would already be used to certain subjects. As Geffroy points out, *Olympia* had had the primacy "of being the first painting of a Parisian prostitute of our time embodying the habits of a city", whose exhibition in 1865 caused a massive

<sup>98</sup> Antonin Proust, *Édouard Manet Souvenirs*, (Caen : L'Échoppe, 1988), p. 32, p. 33.

<sup>99</sup> Not only did Picasso later caricature *Olympia* but even Dubuffet produced his own pictorial translation of Manet's work.

<sup>100</sup> Antonin Proust, 'L'Art d'Édouard Manet', *Le Studio*, January 1901. As quoted in *Manet – Raconté par lui-même et par ses Amis*, 2 volumes, (Genève : Pierre Cailler éditeur, 1953), I, p. 38, p. 39.

outburst of public outrage.<sup>101</sup> Although Anglada's scandal was comparable to the one caused by *Olympia*, the two events differ in several points. First of all, both Olympia and Anglada's women were prostitutes, but in Anglada's paintings they were neither naked nor adorned, toned down nor contrasted with mythical names: they were exhibited fully covered by their characteristic anonymity. Secondly, the Venetian public's shock in 1905 got out of control only because the visitors anticipated an intervention from the Church. Without this expected ecclesiastical censorship, the degree of scandal would have been kept at the same convenient level as in former exhibitions. However, there was just enough public arousal to motivate all the participants in these important exhibitions: organizers, artists, visitors, press, and even other exhibitors benefited from the right amount of artistic spice.

Finally, the most important achievement of Anglada's new subject-matter was that in these paintings his technique could be appreciated at its best. In his former subjects, such as the gloomy interiors of Madame Berthe's nineteenth-century, private, humble home where Anglada lodged, the artist could not find the stimulation of the abundant electric lights of big public locales. Yet, in the famous cabarets to which Anglada was introduced to by his friend Baca-Flor, he was struck by the decorative illumination which he perceived like a new lens through which colours were enriched. The new technique, applied to the Parisian night subjects, made Anglada's contemporaries enter a new world, especially in Barcelona, where an art critic wrote after the exhibition of Salon Parés in 1900:

(...) of course he[Anglada] has looked into nature to find the right subjects that adapted to such procedure. The diffuse artificial light, golden like in theatres, cold and bluish like the one projected by voltaic arcs in pleasure gardens, women in vaporous dresses, in clear tones, all of this has been condensed, representing the world of the vicious night owls of Paris, they have been the elements of that means of pictorial

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<sup>101</sup> Gustave Geffroy, 'Olympia', *La Vie Artistique*, première série, (Paris: 1892), pp. 17-18. As quoted in Reff, p. 28.

expression completely new for us and which Anglada has succeeded in revealing to us (...).<sup>102</sup>

Colours were Anglada's most unique motivation. It was his capacity for visualizing colours in a totally new way that constituted the main professional achievement of Anglada's life. Of course not everybody approved of Anglada's so-called pyrotechnic skill with colours. As noted earlier, despite being called "insolent against nature" among other epithets, Anglada's exhibitions always attracted new admirers.<sup>103</sup>

Anglada's treatment of colours was therefore the main source of both praise from the artistic milieu and harsh criticism from more conservative contemporaries. A look at the press reviews after Anglada's participation in the Vienna Secession exhibition reveals how radically critics differed in their judgements. It is worth noting that conservative papers like the royalist *Das Vaterland – Zeitung für die Österreichische Monarchie*, criticized both the event and the selection of artists:

The Union of fine arts of Austria „Sezession“, that's how the hosts call themselves, has left its place to the foreigners, keeping only one room for one of their own. The catalogue, normally striking with a bizarre layout, wears a decent dress, grey like a Cinderella is its colour. The walls are painted in quiet colours too, no decorations, no wooden curves and flowerpots any more, everything simple and unobtrusive. The intensive chessboard decorations in black and white have disappeared, which was bound to blunt all sensitivity right away. ...

....The choice of pictures also shows a similar change. The exhibition is composed mainly by foreigners, with only one room reserved for a member of the union....

....We meet now with an «strange fish», as an Englishman would express it. It's the Spaniard Hermen Anglada-Camarasa.... One can say it is interesting how far you can go in making one single colour glow, but on the other hand it is this virtuosity that leaves the observer cold. It really would not have been necessary to represent all the female faces as if the ladies were wearing masks, with thickly painted features.<sup>104</sup>

On the other hand, the worker's newspaper, a leftist publication, had the opposite reaction, praising both the organization and the exhibiting artists:

Yesterday opened the exhibition of the Sezession which brought together some works of foreign painters of European reputation. There is above all a specially valuable collection of pictures of the in our country little known Jaques-Emile [sic] Blanche, who is nowadays one of the finest portrait painters in Paris. There are also some works of the not less famous compatriot Besnard and of a third Frenchman, Gaston Latouche, whose

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<sup>102</sup> *La Publicidad*, Barcelona, 3 May 1900. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin.

<sup>103</sup> *Siebente Beilage Boffitchen*, 8 May 1904. BAH. Press cutting and translation.

<sup>104</sup> ‚Sezession‘, *Das Vaterland – Zeitung für die Österreichische Monarchie*, 45, 315, 13 November 1904, p. 1-2. Vienna. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ONB).

colourful experiments nearly can be compared with the audacity of the Spaniard Anglada, to whom a whole hall has been dedicated .... The wonderful exhibition, which we will present more profoundly in another occasion, is also this time elegantly and practically organized, as we are used to in the Sezession.<sup>105</sup>

Apparently, the eyes of both the supporters and the detractors were blinded by the same light source: Anglada's surprising colour technique. The novelty of his treatment of colours sprang from the way in which he combined them. His pyrotechnical freedom of colour harmonies was to be a source of inspiration for some of his contemporaries. They found in Anglada's colour compositions the example of how the viewer can forget the subject matter to the point where it is not needed to achieve the final purpose of the work.

Through the novel subject of Parisian nights, everybody suddenly saw how Anglada's work disregarded the subject matter and rejoiced in a hedonistic colour technique that, far from being empty, reflected a "poetry of the soul", as a contemporary put it. A review in *La Vanguardia*, still today Catalonia's most important newspaper, points out:

With that, a wonderful capacity for mixing the most dissonant tones, intonations that are as full of harmony as of difficulty, a most refined sense for colour that manages to combine the liveliest but opposite colour notes.

One doesn't have to bother with the literal reality of these scenes in gardens and cafés, either with daylight or artificial light; Herman Anglada binds visions to his colourist fantasies; maybe the figures themselves seem of secondary importance, a sacrifice to the light and the colour, but – so what? It is all about creative art, eminently colourist; about a extremely poignant perception of the shades on the canvas, the trees, the light and the atmosphere. Many horizons and the mist can be seen like mother-of-pearl; there is a cave, in bluish turquoise, which leaves behind the most strange of magic visions; ruins in cherry red that wake the idea of the background of an active crater, but above all, some yellowish shades which are the pure essence of elegance in colour. It is possible that all that is only mere hallucination but it's a delicious hallucination; an exquisite firework, a confusion of painting and the enamel that impresses in a most delicious and new way (...).<sup>106</sup>

Before describing the particularities of Anglada's use of colour, I would like to emphasize once again that Anglada achieved his goal by captivating everybody's attention at the Salons: thus he achieved the necessary step of being first seen in order to

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<sup>105</sup> *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 313, 11 November 1904, p.8. ONB.

<sup>106</sup> 'Bellas Artes', *La Vanguardia*, (n. d.), 1900. BAH.

be admired. In fact, the result was literally explosive. The following extract from 1903, a time when Anglada was already famous, explains how his bright colour technique drowned in shadows all other paintings that dared to hang in its surroundings:

... while not far from him sparkle in all their diamond like glitter the *Fleurs de Paris* [read *Les Fleurs du mal*], of the prestigious Anglada, whose incredibly wonderful colours, whose incomparable whites, the deep blues and the audacious reds are bathed in a cold and brilliant artificial light, have a cruel and annihilating effect on the neighbour canvases. Judge whichever you want some meters around this strange and grabbing image where its audaciously composed values harmonize with a haunting power and clutch all the dreary paintings around....<sup>107</sup>

Although Anglada's technique came after Impressionism, it was nonetheless independent from it. Anglada's harmonies were not based on the physical decomposition of colour.

Among the tales created by light, the layers of sun attracted above all the attention of artists. The impressionists were not really interested on the effects of the sky of twilight; they preferred to analyze the metallic logic of the midday light and the diaphaneity of objects seen through the semi-transparent layers of fog.

Pierced by radiant needles melted stones, the night of the city awaited its conqueror. Mr. Anglada was the first in planting his multicoloured flag in this field. He had an unrestrained passion for radiance. The figures lit by the southern sun did not satisfy him.<sup>108</sup>

His technique had no "scientific" basis, unlike in Impressionism, where artists separated on the canvas colours which were reunited again in the viewer's eye.

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...pendant que non loin de lui rayonnent de tout leur éclat diamanté les *Fleurs de Paris* (lisez les *Fleurs du mal*), de ce prestigieux Anglada, dont le coloris infiniment précieux, dont les blancs incomparables, les bleus profonds et les rouges insolents baignés d'une froide et brillante lumière artificielle, sont d'un si cruel et si annihilant effet sur les toiles voisines. Jugez-en en vous plaçant à quelques mètres de cet étrange et saisissant tableau dont les valeurs audacieusement orchestrées s'harmonisent avec une puissance obsédante, et étreignent toutes les mornes peintures d'alentour...

<sup>108</sup> *Gil Blas*, 15 April 1903, Paris, Société Nationale Salle XVI. BAH.

Parmi les contes créés par la lumière, les couchers du soleil attirèrent sur eux avant tout l'attention des artistes. Les impressionistes travaillaient peu les effets du ciel de crépuscule ; ils analysaient la logique métallique de la lumière de midi et la diaphanéité des objets à travers les nappes de brouillards à demi transparentes.

Percée des aiguilles rayonnantes des pierres fondues, la nuit de la ville attendait son conquérant. M. Anglada planta le premier son drapeau multicolore dans ce domaine.

Il avait un passion effrénée pour l'éclatant. Les figures éclairés par le soleil méridional ne le satisfaisaient pas.

Naks Voloakine, 'Une lettre de Paris à S. Anglada', *La Balance*, Octobre 1904, (translation from Russian). BAH.

Impressionism's technique was based on Newtonian optical theory,<sup>109</sup> according to which a person who looks at the canvas from a minimal distance obtains an "impression" of a final colour. However, he or she cannot discern the components, like someone who tastes a dish but cannot recognize the ingredients. In Anglada's paintings this was not the case and, if necessary, colours could be differentiated.

Contemporary art critics made various comments regarding this indifference towards Newtonian optics, claiming that Anglada had a powerful imagination: they wondered whether it was possible to get so far away from (their) reality and characterized Anglada as an inventor. Anglada always denied this fact, to the complete puzzlement of his interviewers, who claimed that his works progressively went beyond truth and reality: "How can you sustain that I am not a realist artist Mr. Christophersen? My work consists only of reality."<sup>110</sup> Anglada, by defending his right to a subjective personal vision, was therefore more in line with the defendants of the Philosophy of Nature:

En particulier, avec Goethe et les Naturphilosophen (ici, principalement Schelling, Hegel et Schopenhauer), on assiste à une tentative de réappropriation d'un domaine qui, depuis le XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle au moins, a été objet d'étude physico-mathématique, en particulier pour Newton, celui de la lumière et des couleurs. Et, au-delà de cet objet particulier, de ce «moment» de la nature, c'est une autre vision du monde, une autre philosophie, non mécaniste, et même une autre «science», que Goethe et (...) les philosophes de la nature allemands ont voulu opposer à la science de type newtonien, ou à l'idée qu'ils s'en faisaient.<sup>111</sup>

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The English scientist Sir Isaac Newton clarified the relation between light and colour. In 1669 he showed that white light can be split into the spectrum of colours by a prism, and then reunited by a second prism to make white again. Newton claimed that the fundamental colours of the rainbow are red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. The last two are rather arbitrary, however: Newton introduced indigo because he felt that their [sic] ought to be seven 'fundamental' colours by analogy with the seven notes of a musical scale.

Phillip Ball, *More than Meets the Eye*, Exhibition Catalogue, V&A, 6 Sep – 3 Nov 2000, (London: Ed. Harriet Coles for The Royal Society of Nature, V&A, 2000), p. 18.

<sup>110</sup> Alejandro Christophersen, 'Una Tarde con Anglada: La Bohemia de los Artistas en Paris', *La Tribuna Española*, 19 July 1913. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin, press cutting.

<sup>111</sup> Maurice Élie, *Lumière, couleurs et nature – L'Optique et la physique de Goethe et de la Naturphilosophie*, (Paris : Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1993), p.13.

In my opinion, what Anglada tried to explain was that he found inspiration in the physical world that surrounded him. It was his way of making clear that harmonies of colour did not come out of nowhere and that it was in reality, and therefore in nature, that he found these ideas. Vision would act as a radar, which after colliding with objects returns to the eye, producing the emotion that through the artist's technique is transferred to the canvas.

Kirchner too, in an essay on his drawings, written under a pseudonym in 1926, argues from a similar position, (...) for him the artistic process must be grounded in a fundamentally empathetic response to the stimulus.<sup>112</sup>

This subjective way of appreciating colours was at the root of the theories of nature of the German philosophers:<sup>113</sup>

Mais on peut cependant retenir certains points communs à tous ces penseurs : à côté de leur défiance à l'égard d'un traitement mathématique de la lumière et des couleurs, de leur hostilité envers la méthode newtonienne, qui rompt selon eux, l'unité de la lumière, et la soumet à un traitement «artificiel», ils partagent inversement le sentiment et l'idée d'une unité essentielle de la lumière, et en font l'équivalent, le représentant du spirituel dans la nature.<sup>114</sup>

Both artists and philosophers found support in the revolutionary discoveries of science. Coincidental to and motivated by the discovery of electricity, was the understanding of the human nervous system. According to nineteenth-century scientist Helmholtz:

The nature of the sensation depends primarily on the peculiar characteristics of the [receptor] nervous mechanism; the characteristics of the perceived object being only a secondary consideration. (...) The quality of the sensation is thus in no way identical with the quality of the object that arouses it. Physically, it is merely an effect of the external

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<sup>112</sup> L. de Marsalle (Kirchner), 'Drawings by E. L. Kirchner', in V. Miesel, *Voices of German Expressionism*, (New York: 1970), p. 23, quoted in Behr Shulamith, David Fanning, Douglas Jarman, (eds.), *Expressionism Reassessed*, (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 143.

<sup>113</sup> In its German form, Naturphilosophie, the term is chiefly identified with Friedrich Schelling and G.W.F. Hegel, early 19th-century German Idealists who opposed it to Logik and to the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* ("of the spirit or mind"). For more information: 'Philosophy of Nature', in *Encyclopedia Britannica online*, <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/406524/philosophy-of-nature>> [accessed 12th of June 2009]

<sup>114</sup> Élie, p.14.

quality on a particular nervous apparatus. The quality of the sensation is, so to speak merely a symbol for our imagination.<sup>115</sup>

With these statements I am not implying that Anglada had personally studied all these philosophical currents or scientific developments. I am just trying to contextualize his work and give meaning to the expression “the artistic air that one could breathe in 1900 Paris”. I am not even implying that he was consciously aware of them. However, as we shall see, he was familiar with at least some of them. They were just part of his entourage and are a solid explanation of why Anglada’s art had such a wide acceptance among his contemporaries. After all, as Gamwell states:

Fra Angelico did not need color theory to see that a patch of red stands out vividly against a green ground, any more that Bach needed music theory to hear an octave.<sup>116</sup>

The subjectivity of Anglada’s interpretation of colours was initially inspired by the novelty of artificial electric light. According to a contemporary Russian newspaper:

The surfaces lit by the sun, the impressionists transported all the force of the colouring in the shade. They have understood the opacity of the sunlight and the transparency of the shades; they had understood that the sunlight corrodes the colours where they fall and that one can find the force of the tone only in the shades.

But while working at the borders of the city, they did not see that in the city new conditions of illumination and of colour were created; the change occurred under their eyes, but they were blind in this field to it: it was the lights of the evening in the stony recesses of the streets.<sup>117</sup>

In fact, this way of mixing the most extraordinary colours into such a pleasurable nacre ensemble was Anglada’s individual manner of interpreting the new artificial light. It is highly possible that the pale result much criticized by his detractors, who described Anglada’s ghostly models as being depicted from the graveyard, might have been an accidental result of painting by night. As we have seen, Anglada worked late at night after returning from his sketching safaris. He used electric light in his studio, which gives a warm yellow shade. Therefore under daylight everything that had

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<sup>115</sup> Hermann von Helmholtz, *Handbook of Physiological Optics*, 1856-67. As quoted in Lynn Gamwell, *Exploring the Invisible – Art, Science, and the Spiritual*, (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 57.

<sup>116</sup> Lynn Gamwell, *Exploring the Invisible – Art, Science, and the Spiritual*, (Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 67.

<sup>117</sup> ‘Une Lettre de Paris’, *La Balance*, October 1904. Translated from Russian by Naks Voloakine. BAH.



been painted the night before would in the morning acquire a cooler, bluish tone, which although accidental in origin was obviously interesting enough to be worth keeping. Anglada often made his famous statement, in which he said that he could see more colours by night than by day.

Anglada is a loyal and crazy lover of the night, this queen of mystery, that has for him the charm of existence and in which, following his own and brilliant quotation «he sees more colours than during the day»; and this idea, product of a creative mind, shows that he is both a thinker and a poet (...).<sup>118</sup>

According to a contemporary newspaper, an elderly gentleman, who was a well known artist in Berlin and whose oracular opinions on art were highly respected among his compatriots, made some sarcastic comments in front of a large audience regarding Anglada's words, asserting his increased nocturnal chromatic vision. He nearly choked when Anglada, who knew that the gentleman used to go to bed "at the same time as hens", answered back saying that if he would at least once postpone his retirement time to meet the night, he would certainly modify his opinions.<sup>119</sup>

In fact, the strong light of a bright sun burns colours, converting them into a plain white. The colours obtained by Sorolla in his Mediterranean paintings of children and beaches with bathing or working people are always captured during the hours of sunset or sunrise - hence the long shadows as well as the yellowish tone of the lights (see illustration 6, appendix III).<sup>120</sup>

Anglada's use of colour paste was sometimes so heavy that his handling of the brush was three-dimensional. Colours on his palette were orderly, covering all the surface but never surpassing their boundaries. The result, which can be observed in two

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<sup>118</sup> *La Correspondencia*, Tuesday, 4 October 1904. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>119</sup> Anglada-Camarasa as quoted by Cidón. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>120</sup> Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida (February 27, 1863 - August 10, 1923), was a Spanish painter, born in Valencia, who excelled in the painting of portraits, landscapes, and monumental works of social and historical themes. His most typical works are characterized by a dexterous representation of the people and landscape under the sunlight of his native land.

'Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/554944/Joaquin-Sorolla-y-Bastida>> [accessed 27 May 2009]

palettes belonging to the collection of Fundació La Caixa, is a clean-cut, chromatic surface, where each colour keeps its brightness. Anglada's use of large amounts of oils, which covered the canvases in thick layers, made a beautiful contrast with the lightness of the final result. Both the large amount of oils and the new, longer brush strokes added to the artist's capacity of expression. As I have shown in previous quotations, the outcome of combining such relaxed, long strokes with Anglada's palette was such that the physical surface of the canvas absorbed most of the spectators' attention; as a result, even critical ones got carried away by the splendour of the chromatic consequences of Anglada's technique. This is most relevant for the development of art in the twentieth century, where the materiality and bi-dimensional quality of painting were stressed and therefore the physical surface of the canvas was formally acknowledged.

Anglada's whites became one of his most famous pictorial achievements. Apart from the impressive result of the ensemble, it is most admirable how Anglada built up the brightness that his pictures irradiate. A close examination of the composition reveals that the most vivid colours have been left together in the canvas, thus becoming neighbours for life. These neighbouring colours do not fight for primacy in the spectator's eye. On the contrary, they are combined in such an extraordinary way that what at first seems a randomly established vicinity is in fact a thorough plan, designed by Anglada, who uses the vicinity to make the neighbouring colours appear even more radiant. The result proves the theories of optics initiated by Maxwell and taken up by Rood, which differentiated between coloured lights and coloured pigments. The mixture of the former was additive, whereas the mixture of the latter was subtractive, becoming

a dullish grey.<sup>121</sup> However, Rood found a way to mix coloured pigments in an additive way:

Rood, however, did provide a formula for mixing additively any colour in the spectrum with another, and it was probably of considerable interest to Seurat. Basing his remarks on a triangular color diagram devised by James Clerk Maxwell, the author explained: "Maxwell selected [as primaries] vermilion, emerald-green, and ultramarine-blue, [...] since according to his researches they approximately represent the three fundamental colours. These he placed at the three angles of an equilateral triangle and ascertained [...] the position of white (or grey) in the interior of the triangle. Every colour that can be obtained by mixing red with green will lie on the line joining red and green; it is the same with green and blue, also with red and blue.[...] These colours [are] disposed along the sides of the triangle; they are also so arranged that complementary colours are opposite each other; white is in the interior, and along the lines joining the sides with the centre are placed the various colours mixed with more and more white as they are situated nearer to the centre."<sup>122</sup>

Instead of becoming a dull brownish combination, colours mixed in such a way work together by mutually adding a special brightness that they could never achieve on their own. The material explanation is that Anglada always used a combination of adjacent colours in the light spectrum. For example, instead of using pink on its own, it was always put together with orange and red or lilacs. The optical result produced a colour vibration reminiscent of light reflecting on a mother-of-pearl surface. This was much admired by Anglada's contemporaries and, as we shall see in

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<sup>121</sup> James Clerk Maxwell (Edinburgh, June 13, 1831, Cambridge, November 5, 1879) was one of the main scientists of the nineteenth century. Among many other studies Maxwell studied colour, being the first to show that the primary colours of light are red, green, and blue and demonstrating the first colour photograph based on this idea. From 1856 through 1873 Maxwell developed the laws of electromagnetism, beginning with Michael Faraday's concept of a field of lines of force. Maxwell's calculations showed that electromagnetic waves in a vacuum travel at the same speed as light; he correctly concluded that light is a form of electromagnetic wave, boldly predicting the rest of the electromagnetic spectrum. For more information about Maxwell: 'James Clerk Maxwell', in *Answers.com*, <<http://www.answers.com/topic/james-clerk-maxwell>> [accessed 12th of June 2009]

The American Nicholas Odgen Rood (1831-1902), who had studied physics, started to paint during a visit to Germany. His interest in colours thus encompassed the scientific and artistic points of view, and both these aspects underlay his attempts to impose a systematic order on colours. His book *Modern Chromatics* appeared in 1879, its subtitle promising "Applications for Art and Industry".

The basis of Rood's colour-wheel is a laborious improvement on the Maxwell triangle. As a physicist, Rood was interested in the additive mixture of colours, and he used the spinning colour-tops devised by James C. Maxwell to help determine the exact position of individual colours and their predominance. His colour mixtures are attained by spinning colour-tops carrying the primary colours at varying proportions (of surface area), with the resulting impression then being compared with an optical grey composed of black and white components. To have more information about Rood: 'Nicholas Odgen Rood', in *Colorsystem.com*,

<<http://www.colorsistem.com/projekte/engl/26rooe.htm>>, [accessed 12th of June 2009]

<sup>122</sup> Ogden N. Rood, *Modern Chromatics: Student's Text-Book of Colour with Applications to Art and Industry*, (London: 1879; New York: 1879, repr. New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1973), p. 220.

the next chapter, was closely studied by some of them. It contravenes the Newtonian laws of optics, according to which, in principle, someone who wants to highlight either a bright or a pastel colour should always put it together with a darker one, thus achieving a contrast. Anglada's colours do not shine by opposing each other; on the contrary, they work together in an optic collaboration that is beneficial to all of them. This relationship of colours, orchestrated by Anglada's artistry, explains why throughout Anglada's life his chromatic harmonies were continuously compared by his contemporaries with musical ones. Music was a source of inspiration for most artists of this period and Wagner was particularly influential. After all, he was a precursor in the field of expression:

Indeed, it is striking that, more than half a century before the expressionist artists launched their battle cry, their call for a new art, Wagner in his writings of the early 1850s had already clearly articulated this crucial distinction between the external and internal meanings inherent in the work of dramatic art, between conceptual reasoning and the communication of emotional states, between the rational and deductive on the one hand and the irrational, the inspirational on the other. In so doing he foreshadowed, however unwittingly, a dichotomy central to expressionist thinking as to the nature and purpose of art.<sup>123</sup>

Extrapolating musical structures into painting became a method quite generalized. Even Newton, as we have seen, had already established this kind of parallelism between colours and music.<sup>124</sup>

In fact, Anglada lived during a time of cultural revolution which was produced, according to Christopherson, precisely by the conceptual interrelationship between innovations in different arts and the ways in which these expressed highly complex and often quite fully articulated forms of life or views of the world. According to Christopherson:

They [the conceptual interrelationships between innovations in different arts] are part of a general intellectual climate which helped to motivate men and women and to

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<sup>123</sup> Shulamith, Fanning and Jarman, p. 18.

<sup>124</sup> Ball, p. 18.

shape their actions and their feelings, particularly in making art, just as much as did the more obviously material factors involved in historical and political change.<sup>125</sup>

Creativity was, both in music and in painting, anchored to the reality of the end of the nineteenth century, where society, as Roger Scruton explains, especially in Central Europe, was experiencing the void left by the Habsburg Empire. In the case of music, tonality was considered to be kitsch, meaning something that has ceased to be a genuine expression and has become sentimental, “proof of a civilization (...) eaten away by emotional termites (...) veneering its own emptiness and on the brink of collapse”.<sup>126</sup>

Anglada’s unique artistic skill for putting all sorts of pastel colours (soft colours obtained by adding white to a brighter base) on the canvas in an apparently anarchic manner liberated him from most of the established rules of academic creativity, always producing a shining final piece of work; in these ways, his paintings resemble some musical compositions of the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>127</sup> Stravinsky, (to give an example relevant to Anglada who attended the première of the *Sacrée du Printemps* in Paris 1913)<sup>128</sup>, in his revolutionary composition was sure to “have extended the boundaries of the permissible in the empire of sound”.<sup>129</sup> Many parallels can be found between Stravinsky’s music and Anglada’s ground-breaking painting at the time, such as the inspiration in folklore, and the use of bright colours comparable to the changes in volume, as well as its loud level in the *Sacrée du Printemps*. However, the main parallel

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<sup>125</sup> Christopher Butler, *Early Modernism: Literature, Music and Painting in Europe 1900-1916*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. XVI, p. XVII.

<sup>126</sup> Roger Scruton, ‘True Authority: Janáček, Schoenberg and us’, in *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music after Modernism*, ed. by Peter Davison, (Brinkworth: Claridge Press Ltd, 2001), p. 8.

<sup>127</sup> I am thinking particularly in Igor Stravinsky.

<sup>128</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 1981), p. 110.

<sup>129</sup> quoting Stravinsky

Roger Nichols, *The Rise of Modernism in Music 1890-1935*, (Leicester, London: Open University Press, 1978), p. 14.

can be found in the combination of notes and colours. The following extract about music chords could be applied to Anglada's combinations:

If we venture towards dissonance, then we should follow the examples of Janáček, Bartók and Stravinsky: we should contrast the dissonant cord with the chord that wholly or partially resolves it.<sup>130</sup>

Like Anglada's paintings, the *Sacrée du Printemps* defied tradition from within as well as appealing to any kind of public, even if only a well-educated one could appreciate the full significance of the work. In the words of Peter Davison:

(...) Stravinsky's Rite of Spring is genuinely idiosyncratic in expression, because it transcends the conventions of its time without fully rejecting them. It may depict, as Adorno suggests, the barbaric abandonment of the individual to the collective, but to believe that it advocates or expresses that as an ideology would be to assume that the audience, even today's audience, are primitive pagans likely to react to primitive stimuli. In actual fact, the audience for this work needs to be sophisticated and probably over-rational to appreciate how Stravinsky's music challenges the tradition to which it also belongs. Stravinsky incites us to acknowledge the barbarian within, but with the sophistication of highly civilised people.<sup>131</sup>

These technical developments were to be found in all the arts. According to Christopherson, artists at the turn of the century, both musicians and painters, needed to acquire a "language" as a means to the development and mastery of a style:

The mastery of any style presupposes the acquisition of *some* technique, (...) and so I see technique as the ability to control the elements of an artistic language, in the process of creating a style. This process of style creation, in the absence of previously accepted consensual languages, was felt to be as radical in music and painting as in poetry, as we can see if we look briefly at the technical innovations (...)<sup>132</sup>

The necessity to make something new out of the existing technical elements explains why both Anglada and Stravinsky were breaking the tradition from within. It seems obvious to me that if you already have the elements, either chords or colour combinations, the main way to create something new out of them is to rearrange everything in a very different way, if possible mixing the civilized and the barbarian. The capacity of expression found by this expansion of the elements of artistic languages

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<sup>130</sup> Roger Scruton, 'True Authority: Janáček, Schoenberg and us', in *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music after Modernism*, ed. by Peter Davison, (Brinkworth: Claridge Press Ltd, 2001), p. 28.

<sup>131</sup> Peter Davison, ' "... the madness that is believed ..." a re-evaluation of the life and work of Arnold Schoenberg', in *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music after Modernism*, ed. by Peter Davison, (Brinkworth: Claridge Press Ltd, 2001), p. 77.

<sup>132</sup> Butler, p. 10, p. 11.

into new dimensions was such that, as expressed by a contemporary, “we were dumbfounded, overwhelmed as though some hurricane had come from the depth of the ages and had taken our life by the roots”.<sup>133</sup> This search for expression was an issue common to all types of art practice, which looked to each other for inspiration. The turn of the century and the years that followed it were a period of exceptional interaction between the arts.<sup>134</sup> What seemed to be apparent anarchy was, both in music and in painting, a new path to achieve a new form of artistic expression, a new order, another way to see the world: a vision of the future of the twentieth century.

Anglada flowed towards this point of technical evolution: since the moment he found his very particular artistic style there is no evidence that he forced it in any special direction as an intellectual need in order to achieve a pictorial goal. However, Anglada’s glowing technique was to have particular relevance in an art world where nearly everyone was consciously trying to find new ways of expressing the changes that the new century brought into all aspects of life.

In this time when people are filled with enthusiasm for d’Annunzio, Beaudelaire and Rops; who is very much at ease in a sultry atmosphere where female bodies put on blood and hashish as perfume, the Spaniard Hermen Anglada represents his ideas and forms of thinking. It is due to his high degree of radicalism that when he deals with what everybody else describes as the private secrets of the human nature in his pictures, one cannot blame him because he only expresses the serious feeling of unease and the spirit of the era...<sup>135</sup>

Anglada became a living example of the polemic between scientists, philosophers and artists regarding optics, individual perception and the theory of colours. Maurice Élie deciphers the thoughts of Anglada’s contemporaries:

Reste à savoir évidemment si l’on peut tenir une sensation pour une couleur, alors qu’elle est «sensation *de* couleur». Mais, puisque la couleur ne peut exister «toute prête» dans le monde physique, pour être livrée telle quelle à notre perception, il faut bien distinguer «la part objective de la couleur», c’est-à-dire les causes externes, et «la couleur en tant que telle, c’est-à-dire comme sensation oculaire spécifique». Cette sensation oculaire spécifique est l’essentiel, puisqu’elle seule demeure constante, malgré la

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<sup>133</sup> Nichols, p. 14. quoting Louis Laloy, a friend of Debussy.

<sup>134</sup> Butler, p. XV.

<sup>135</sup> *Das Kleine Journal*, 29 February 1904. BAH. Press cutting.

diversité des excitants possibles, physiques (excitation par la lumière avec ses degrés), chimiques (pigments, ainsi que leurs mélanges), mécaniques (chocs), et même électriques. Aussi, Schopenhauer est-il passé d'une conception de la sensibilité comme propriété générale de l'appareil nerveux, à une conception d'une sensibilité spécifique à chaque organe sensoriel, que l'on retrouve dans la théorie de J. Müller : c'est l'organe, et non le stimulus, qui détermine la nature de la sensation éprouvée.<sup>136</sup>

The success obtained by the new subject Anglada had chosen placed him at the centre of the attention of contemporary art critics. Part of the limelight fell also on Anglada's darker palette represented by other subjects, such as the series of small paintings of horses. He found his models in the slaughterhouse close to his home. Most of these paintings, such as *Blue Horse Under the Rain*, or *Horses Under the Rain*, which were often mentioned by the press, were painted in darker colours. However, the final outcome of Anglada's darker palette astonished everybody. Anglada could demonstrate that he had more than one rabbit in his top hat and that soft pastels were not his only means of surprise. His mastery of the dark palette captivated art critics. Even the more academic ones, in the same article, would simultaneously criticize and praise Anglada's work. After the Vienna Secession exhibition in 1904, a critic who was firstly blinded by Anglada's powerful use of colour, recovered his academic senses quickly enough to strongly criticize the lack of precision of the drawings:

The Spaniard Hermen Anglada Camarasa presents himself like a "Stuwer" [the famous fireworks family in Vienna in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries] of the palette. His sparking fireworks of colours on the canvas surprise and dazzle, you even have to admire some of his tricks of contrasting effects, but every now and then the chaos of colours gets so bad that finding out the object of the painting becomes a real riddle. Still, this negative point would be forgivable, but it is completely unforgivable how the artist mistreats the human physiognomy. His mundane ladies seem real grimaces of hell and some of his feminine figures are gruesome caricatures. The drawing is of secondary importance to him; his "dancing gipsy", for instance, came out with much too short legs. In former times, there would have been loud protest if a Makart had not drawn perfectly correctly; today, the worst errors can be made in drawing and it will be accepted without any reprimand. Also the Belgian Montald with his "paintings of the catacombs" is one of the artists who consider the drawing less important....<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Élie, p.184.

<sup>137</sup> 'Theatre, Art and Literature', *Deutsches Volksblatt*, 5696, Vienna, 11 November 1904, p.10. ONB.



The flamenco dancers, another of Anglada's favourite subjects of this era, were also much praised for Anglada's ability to represent darkness with such a multiplicity of tones (see illustrations 11,17, 34 in Appendix II).

At around the turn of the century and in the early decades of the twentieth century the art of dance became loaded with a great deal of ideological encumbrances and gained acceptance during the era of German Expressionism as an important vehicle for achieving the desired and most coveted common goal – the regeneration of mankind.<sup>138</sup>

During the turn of the century, dance was highly regarded, not only for itself but also as an inspiration for other types of artistic expression. If dance was strong in France, it was even stronger in Germany:

Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* laid the groundwork for the realisation that dance was the symbol of wisdom, for it means lightness, and lightness means joy. Zarathustra, widely read by many Expressionists, issued a caveat to the higher beings: 'Go out of the way of such absolute ones! They have heavy feet and sultry hearts: - they do not know how to dance'. (F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, tr. T. Common, New York, 1936, p. 111).<sup>139</sup>

Dance became a very popular subject at the time, especially before the First World War. The reason for its popularity was its capacity to represent human expression as well as freedom. To contextualize Anglada's work, other famous contemporary paintings can be mentioned like Matisse's *Dance* (1910) or Nolde's *Candle Dancers* (1912).<sup>140</sup> However, it is worth drawing attention to the fact that both works are posterior to Anglada's.

Apart from Anglada's use of colour, the quality of the drawing of the figures' motion in his paintings also deserves attention for its novelty. The dancers captured in full movement were obtained from a large number of sketches and drawings that have

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<sup>138</sup> Manfred Kuxdorf, 'Expressionism and Dance: a Literary Perspective', in *Expressionism Reassessed*, ed. by Behr Shulamith, David Fanning, Douglas Jarman, (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), p.148.

<sup>139</sup> Shulamith, Fanning and Jarman, p.147.

<sup>140</sup> Nolde painted this work while leaving in Berlin, before he could personally experience the South Sea cultures in his travels during the First World War.

been the subject of a recent publication.<sup>141</sup> Before Anglada, probably nobody had represented in Western art the human figure under such paroxysms.<sup>142</sup> The irregularities that some critics erroneously considered to be drawing mistakes served to accentuate the violence of the movement that was the subject of the painting. As he dared to use a trick formerly reserved exclusively to caricature, Anglada opened the mind of other artists and contemporaries to the broadness of art. It is not far fetched to assume that the expression achieved by Anglada's distortion of the figures was inspiring, to say the least, as a pictorial tool for German Expressionists. One must remember that Anglada enjoyed the status of a celebrity both in Berlin and Munich and was well known in the artists' circles of major German cities.<sup>143</sup>

One of Anglada's major achievements which shows his masterly use of the darker palette is the *Cock Fight Market*, where the spectator is initially shocked by the profusion of shady colours, mixed with splashes of red and touches of yellow (see illustration 19 in Appendix II). The painting convincingly represents the rapid movements of the fighting animals, the aggressive environment, with feathers everywhere, hiding the owners, who worry about their bets. In the opinion of contemporary as well as present-day art critics, this painting proves that Anglada was an artist who already belonged to the twentieth century. At first sight, the *Cock Fight Market* seems almost abstract. Anglada was unwillingly helping some artists who were trying to liberate painting from subject matter. The darkness of the depicted environment disguised shapes and contours to the limit of disappearance. In contrast to

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<sup>141</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa: Dibujos. Catálogo razonado*, (Barcelona: Editorial Mediterránea, 2006).

<sup>142</sup> Neither Toulouse-Lautrec nor Klimt could capture, for their own subjects, the paroxysm of flamenco.

<sup>143</sup> Anglada was welcomed to exhibit his work in the main German salons and galleries. Examples of some of his exhibitions in Germany are: Munich: Münchener Secession (1903), Münchener Kunstverein (1905), Galeria Heinemann (1911). Berlin: Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon (September 1901 and December-January 1901-02), Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon (December 1902), Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon (1906). Düsseldorf (1903-1904?). Dresden: Grosse Kunstaussstellung (1904).

the works of previous artists, colours and forms are the main protagonists in Anglada's paintings, a role which had traditionally been reserved to drawing. This technique that Anglada pioneered with such success and vision and which, bordered on Abstraction, was abandoned almost completely approximately in 1904. From that moment, Anglada kept his absolute interest in colour but now using a more delimited subject as support.

Anglada's apparent freedom and spontaneity disguised a careful process of maturation that led to the final result. Although Anglada applied every brushstroke with the flexibility of a well-trained athlete of painting, each of them had its rightful place in a carefully planned composition. This was true for all of Anglada's paintings but especially for those in which mother-of-pearl was a main protagonist.

One is amazed by the energy of his [Anglada's] conception and the freshness of his critical power; furthermore, one has to admit the eminent security and the maturity of his personality. What catches the eye right from the beginning in his pictures is the rudeness; one has to penetrate into his soul to know how he produces this impression, with free brush strokes: they are thought over to the smallest detail, deeply. It is like with the poet Heine: in the fluidity of expression, one never actually sees the immense work he has done. Like that the lightness Anglada's art tricks because its characteristic is to colour the heaviness of the object. He wants only the colourist effect and he works it out to the utmost, in a mixture of burning colours, which are like a bouquet of flowers from the fields woven together in a harmonious total. Thus, he has a style of painting that only works with broad spots of colour, renouncing the moulding form and thinking only in the harmony of the tones. This furthering to the extreme of the means of expression, of colourist harmony, is really the consequence of pure pictorial intention, this was an aim which some of the most excellent painters, Titian and Rembrandt, in the summit of their work, also tried to reach. Only with their superb knowledge the moderate brush strokes have modelled the form of colour. Anglada blurs the form, like the modern artists of colour, in spots and visions without showing any inopportune brutality. Out of these burning spots arises like from a spring, a fragrance that captivates the senses and leaves them drunken. If anybody thinks that he has to analyze these pictures with German depth, he can do so, but he will be amazed by the seriousness of this hidden work and the necessity of every spot of colour.<sup>144</sup>

I shall now focus on another of Anglada's technical originalities that once again was only the expression of his individualism.

Le talent de M. Anglada-Camarasa est réel: sa forte personnalité est trop marquée pour n'être pas parfois décevant; mais on ne trouvera rien l'à d'ordinaire et de médiocre.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> *Rheinisch Westfälische Zeitung*, 3 April 1904. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>145</sup> *Nouvelle Revue*, March 1908. Palma de Mallorca. MA-C. Press cutting.

As we have seen in some of the quotations of his contemporaries, the pre-eminence of colour and form over subject matter was the theme of many positive and negative comments by art critics. In any case, it was the expression of Anglada's artistic personality, his main muse (his individualism, his own personality), that was the origin of this chromatic primacy, which imposed itself over all other aspects in the creative process. In the following quotation a contemporary critic, after a visit to the Anglada exhibition at the Sal6n Par6s in Barcelona, 1900, deals with the question of individuality:

All the declarations of contemporary artists tend very understandably, to focus on and reduce the levels of artistic emotion to a suggestive, simply personal point of interest. It's not enough any more to be right with the procedures and solve the technical difficulties; the artist looks out for the simplicity of the means that he is able to use, analyze the state of his [Anglada's] soul and interpret the external accidents around him following his way of feeling. So it could be said that there are two perceptions in the talented artist: one of the real vision of life, the material expression, and the other where the impressed soul comes out: both perceptions are complementary in spite of being different and that is why it is right to say that through this capacity of assimilation the artist penetrates the objects deeply and intimately by analysing them and becoming perspicacious both ways.<sup>146</sup>

The skilful use of bright colour combinations and their contrast with the subject-matter's spiritual darkness is particularly successful in Anglada's works because it perfectly achieves its final purpose of expression. The increasing weight of colour in painting was an artistic current that already existed by the time Anglada arrived in Paris in the late 1890s. Already Gauguin and his followers from Pont Aven, the Nabis, disregarded the studies of the physicality of colour done by the Impressionists and concentrated on colour, leaving subject matter a parallel role as well as being an inspiration and a support to their chromatic experiments. Up until 1904, Anglada went one step further, by dissolving the subject-matter of his paintings into forms, which except for some specific points, for example the eyes, were sometimes difficult to

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<sup>146</sup> 'Salon Par6s', *Opini6n de Catalu6a*, 9 Mayo 1900. BAH. Press cutting.

recognize as figures, giving all the protagonism to colour. As Anglada blurred the contours of his figures, they often seemed about to dissolve in the atmosphere.<sup>147</sup>

What I am trying to demonstrate is that Anglada's subject matter and technique worked together, enhancing each other. His skill is particularly successful when interpreted inside a Symbolist context, as we have seen in the previous chapter. However, figures drawn with the minimum amount of identifiable traits are precisely what sets Anglada alone and apart from nineteenth-century Symbolism. This dissolution of the object, which announced Abstraction, had hardly ever been tried before, either by Anglada's contemporaries or by his predecessors in art. Abstracting the essence of the situation represented in his paintings and reducing recognizable elements to the minimum in order to get the idea or feeling of the moment, was a novel approach. Although there is no evidence whatsoever that Anglada was consciously trying to be Abstract, it nevertheless had the same "evolutionary" final effect. It was precisely what was not there and what was not represented with a higher precision in drawing that gave the main meaning of the artwork. In some of Anglada's paintings of prostitutes, for instance, what were criticized as impersonal faces, or the masks that women seemed to wear, precisely pointed out the anonymity of their trade.

(...) pulling their heavy robes with effort they [the demimondaines] glide through space moving like skaters, advancing without noise to surprise, musical and bright; they glide towards their own reflections perceived in glasses, their faces having finally acquired the same shape as the mirrors where they spend so long searching for themselves, their faces having exchanged their natural carnation for a pallor making their traits gradually disappear. The colour of their flesh fades into the one of the corsage, the coloration of the whole figure is absorbed by the hat, remaining from these beings only their charming gestures and their undulating waists. Only their dresses are personal, important, animated, even mobile whereas the women are brought to a halt, dancing mannequins (...).<sup>148</sup>

Anglada paints them without particular features because, as I described in Chapter two, he perceived that these women did not count as individuals in society. Their abstraction was a by-product of the way he approached the subject. Their almond-

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<sup>147</sup> *Plume*, Paris, 1 July 1902. BAH. Press cutting.

<sup>148</sup> Marius-Ary Leblond, 'Hermen Anglada-Camarasa', *L'Art et les Artistes*, 41, 1908, p. 214.

shaped eyes, which are the only recognizable feature, are inspired by Egyptian paintings, which Anglada admired very much for their beauty as well as for their conceptual quality. According to Anglada:

It is the Egyptian art the source where everybody has drank [sic] to get inspiration for decorative motives, for human beauty and for beauty in itself as an abstraction: the spiritual, the subliminal, (...) <sup>149</sup>

Perhaps the immediate association of Anglada's *cocottes* with an extinct culture represents the eternal quality of their tragedy. On the other hand, the skinniness of these feminine figures and their fading contours show they are mortal, that only their trade has a life that goes back to the beginnings of humankind and goes on to live with it. The thinness of these fading figures, more precisely, points directly to how short their lives usually were. All these characteristics, which I have explained at more length in the previous chapter, were expressed by Anglada through his novel technique, which combined long brushstrokes, a bright palette and a subject matter interpreted with only the minimum amount of features, and which unconsciously brought him close to the new trends in Abstraction. The sick look of his women, for instance, which sprang from the elongated forms that blended with the surroundings, reflected, among other things, the drug abuse often associated with prostitution. This allure, although Baudelairian in its inspiration, gives the subject of these paintings a twenty-first century actuality. <sup>150</sup>

Anglada opposed criticism about the diffuse quality of his paintings by maintaining that the human eye can focus only in one point at a time when looking at something. According to Anglada, the surrounding elements of this centre of focus remain imprecise and somehow distorted in the human eye; therefore they had to be represented blurred.

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<sup>149</sup> Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Pujulá y Vallés, 'La Impotencia!', *Las Noticias*, 15 February 1901. Quoted in Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 306.

<sup>150</sup> Laura Adler, 'Introduction', *Les Maisons Closes 1830-1930*, (Paris: Hachette Literatures, 1990), pp. 9-22.

...Regarding the way of seeing, anybody with a small capacity of observation, will realise that if you look at a concrete point in nature, you will see details only in the point where you are fixing your attention, whereas the rest that surrounds that point is only a complement; it remains blurred, without clear shape, and envelops the focus of attention. To support this point of view we recommend anybody who is not quite convinced, to visit a museum where the onlooker will appreciate how the old masters looked at things, and the truth of our argument (...)<sup>151</sup>

In my opinion, this extract proves that Anglada was probably aware of improvements regarding optics. However, he obviously did not have a strictly scientific approach: he sent his detractors to find the proof of his argument in museums instead of recommending a volume on Physics, like the highly popular one by Hermann von Helmholtz, *Handbook of Physiological Optics*, 1856-67.

Anglada felt the need to give “scientific” explanations to support his artistic style, which often met with harsh criticism. Today we do not find it necessary to give such an explanation or excuse, as we take for granted the absolute freedom an artist requires in his or her creative process; however, these artistic liberties, like many others, had to be won. Henri Bergson (1859-1941) was a key supporter of the absolute priority of intuition over intellectual approaches in the creative process. There is no basis to suppose that Anglada had read Bergson’s theories, especially as he did not have an intellectual approach to art. Still, he must have been familiar with Bergson’s ideas, as it is always satisfying to know that so well-known a French thinker supported his own intuitive approach to painting. Mark Antliff explains Bergson’s *The Creative Mind: an introduction to metaphysics*:

Art, we are told, should be the product of genius, of “intuitions,” not theorizing; theory, in fact, is a substitute for creativity, which in former times preceded it. When asked two years later to assess the relation of Cubism to his philosophy, Bergson returned to this dichotomy to condemn the movement for analyzing artistic practice instead of intuitively performing it. Bergson deemed the Cubists’ attempt to move from analysis to artistic creativity an impossible one, for, as he states in the “Introduction to Metaphysics,” “from intuition one can pass on to analysis, but not from analysis to intuition.” Cubism

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<sup>151</sup> Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Sebastiá Junyent, ‘La Honradesa en L’Art Pictoric’, *Juventut*, 8 November 1900. Quoted in Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 305.

was seen as yet another example of the invasion of intellectual modes of thought into a field conducive to intuition alone.<sup>152</sup>

In any case, however intuitive Anglada's technique was he must have been aware of the existence of the numerous quasi-scientific books on colours in art. Some examples are: Michel-Eugène Chevreul (1786-1889) *De la Loi du Contraste Simultané des Couleurs* (Paris, 1839); David Sutter, "Les Phénomènes de la vision", *L'Art*, XX, 1880. (Genève); and Georges Seurat, "Introduction à une Esthétique Scientifique", *La Revue Contemporaine*, August 1885. All of these works approach the chromatic question in different ways, none of them explaining the one that Anglada intuitively applied so successfully in practice. In this he was unknowingly following Ogden Rood, according to whom:

Painters can not in many cases directly apply knowledge acquired from the palette to the interpretation of chromatic effects produced by nature, for these latter often depend to a considerable extent on the mixing of masses of differently coloured light. This fact is now admitted in a general way by intelligent artists, but probably few who have not made experiments in this direction fully realize how wide are the discrepancies which exist between the results given by the two different modes of mixture.<sup>153</sup>

Focusing again on Anglada's paintings, and just for the sake of following Anglada's counter-argument, one could state that sometimes his paintings were so blurred that he did not seem to focus on any point in particular, which means that he was not looking at them at all. He is present as viewer but he tries to capture the emotion of the moment more than its material details. This creates the impression that perhaps he prefers not to focus on things but rather chooses just to enjoy what can be abstracted in this atmosphere. It is this impression, suggesting that maybe everything is unreal, or that reality is seen in a dream, which gives Anglada's works their unique character.

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<sup>152</sup> Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson – Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 3.

<sup>153</sup> Rood, p. 143.



Although many contemporary critics considered Anglada's style as plainly decorative, it had a deeper meaning that attracted artists in search of new ways of expression. The following assertion by Matisse supports my argument regarding Anglada:

What I am after, above all, is expression. Sometimes it has been conceded that I have a certain technical ability but that all the same my ambition is limited, and does not go beyond the purely visual satisfaction such as can be obtained from looking at a picture. But the thought of a painter must not be considered as separate from his pictorial means, for the thought is worth no more than its expression by the means, which must be more complete (and by complete I do not mean complicated) the deeper is his thought. I am unable to distinguish between the feeling I have about life and my way of translating it.

Expression, for me, does not reside in passions glowing in a human face or manifested by violent movement. The entire arrangement of my picture is expressive: the place occupied by the figures, the empty spaces around them, the proportions, everything has its share. Composition is the art of arranging in a decorative manner the diverse elements at the painter's command to express his feelings. In a picture every part will be visible and will play its appointed role, whether it be principal or secondary. Everything that is not useful in the picture is, it follows, harmful. A work of art must be harmonious in its entirety: any superfluous detail would replace some other essential detail in the mind of the spectator.<sup>154</sup>

Anglada's shapes and forms that are on the verge of losing their identity were not only decorative items, because their worthiness could not be limited only to their obvious, immediate, superficial beauty. Anglada's works embodied his individualist way of interpreting life. Undeniable as it is that Anglada's paintings emitted a special beauty that was pleasant to look at, as was admitted even by those who afterwards rejected his art,<sup>155</sup> they also had a poetic insight that went deeply into the subject. As I have explained in the previous chapter, Anglada wanted to redeem the world "through the pedagogy of colour". For this reason, he believed that his combinations of colours could create a beauty that would have the power to elevate the spirit of the individual viewer.<sup>156</sup> Anglada's intention to redeem humanity through colour is in the line of Blanc. According to Homer:

The rules Blanc insisted the artist take advantage of – those of optical mixture, the vibration of colors, and the effects of diversely colored lights – were, however, not to be

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<sup>154</sup> Jack D. Flam, *Matisse on Art*, (London, New York: 1973), pp. 32-40.

<sup>155</sup> Boime, p. 166.

<sup>156</sup> José Francés, *El año artístico 1915*, (Madrid: Editorial Mundo Latino, 1916), p.189. Palma de Mallorca. Archives Museo Anglada-Camrassa, Fundació La Caixa.

employed just for the sake of optical beauty. The main purpose of color, as he stated earlier in the chapter, was to express emotion, thought, and moral character.<sup>157</sup>

It is reasonable to assume that Anglada must have known, even if only indirectly, Blanc's theories on colours.<sup>158</sup> According to Homer:

For Blanc, color plays an important part as the vehicle of mobile, intangible feelings, while form, as described by chiaroscuro, is precise and palpable. But one cannot exist without the other. While insisting that color is the feminine element in painting, guided more by instinct than intellect, he believed, paradoxically, that it obeyed "certain and invariable" principles that could be learned by artists: "Not only can color, which is under fixed laws, be taught like music, but it is easier to learn than drawing, whose absolute principles cannot be taught."<sup>159</sup>

This transcendence of colours and forms, which can be used as a means to perceive a more elevated truth, inspired artists such as Kandinsky who, as we shall see in the Chapter Five, were trying to achieve a certain spirituality through art. According to a contemporary review from Anglada's Sal6n Par6s exhibition in Barcelona, 1900:

... it comes as no surprise that this kind of psychosis takes place and the result it has on the things through translating them into their external form, and this is what has happened, as I see it, to Mr. Anglada. It is not only the vision that is interesting in the exhibited canvases; there is more than that in them, much more; there is a state of the soul, a delicate sensation, a beautiful analysis of external life converted into poetry through subtle vibrations.<sup>160</sup>

To conclude, I would like to stress the limited scope of the present investigation. Due to the novelty of this study regarding the origins and development of Anglada's technique, the reader might feel the need to have a broader picture of Anglada's time. Every subject that has been looked at in this chapter invites the researcher into a more profound study. Unfortunately, in order to maintain the scope and volume required of this investigation, I could not afford to fall into these academic temptations. I had to

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<sup>157</sup> William Innes Homer, *Seurat and the Science of Painting*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1978), p. 33.

<sup>158</sup> Anglada must have been familiar with the theories of Charles Blanc, who before the arrival of Anglada in Paris had enjoyed a position of power in the Parisian art world as an author, founder and editor of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, and as director of the Administration des Beaux-Arts in 1848-1850 and 1870. A member of the Acad6mie des Beaux-Arts, he was appointed to a chair of Aesthetics and the History of Art at the Coll6ge de France, where he taught from 1878 to 1881.

<sup>159</sup> Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin* published as *The Grammar of Painting and Engraving in the translation by Kate Newell Doggett* in Chicago 1879, p.146. Quoted in William Innes Homer, *Seurat and the Science of Painting*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: M.I.T. Press, 1978), p. 29.

<sup>160</sup> 'Salon Par6s', BAH. press cutting.

content myself with looking at certain subjects only from far away – subjects such as Matisse's theoretical development, the Académie Julian's non-practice-based lessons and the parallels between the evolution of music and painting. However, I needed to mention as many of those facts as possible in order to locate Anglada's work in its context and thereby enhance his merits. Nobody had researched before the importance of the Académie Julian in launching Anglada's career or the reason why Anglada's technique found such a wide acceptance among his peers. The contextualization of Anglada's art that I have carried out explains why his technique was widely appreciated by avant-gardists in search of expression, at a time when artists on the one hand used technology and, on the other, rejected how scientific and economic progress was transforming the world. A time, as we shall see, when artists wanted to find a way to the future but found their inspiration in their past. In Chapter Two I explained the originality of Anglada's views and the Symbolist origins of this rejection towards industrialization: his common roots with other artistic movements that as Anglada developed from the Symbolist enhancement of subjectivism. In this present chapter, Anglada's technique has been dissected. I have explained how he chose his subjects, which colour palette and brushstrokes he used, this required to start by the where, the location of Paris and the Académie Julian. Chapter Four, in explaining Anglada's awkward sales policy and his rejection of art dealers, will require an investigation into who his clients and friends were, and this will lead us to the Russian connection. Together these four chapters will build the ground for the fifth and last, where Kandinsky's relationship to Anglada's works will be studied. That will be the culmination of the main argument of this thesis: a re-evaluation of Anglada's works and a proof of how, by belonging to the artistic current that crossed the last two centuries, his paintings also fed the future. Kandinsky has been chosen as a link with a

traditionally but still widely accepted narrative of the twentieth-century history of art, for his indisputable relevance in the artistic developments that led the way to the present day.

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### DEALERS VS CLIENTS: LAUNCHING ANGLADA- CAMARASA'S CAREER AND THE RUSSIAN CONNECTION

“Le marchand – voilà l’ennemi”

Pablo Picasso, 1918

In this chapter I will explain how Anglada launched his career through a network of connections that he made through his friends. Anglada was a bourgeois and was supported and financed by the bourgeoisie, providing further proof of the crucial role that the bourgeoisie played in the artistic innovation of the twentieth century. I will pay special attention to the Castéra family and to how they influenced different aspects of Anglada's success. Anglada did not have the support of professional dealers when he might have needed them, later he could afford to ignore them. I shall explain how, as the marginal utility of dealers diminished with success, Anglada's arrival into the world of fame through the main entrance gave him the opportunity to deal personally with his admirers, avoiding the greed of professionals. However, for the sake of accuracy, I will have to mention one possible exception: there might have been some kind of professional relationship between Anglada and the art dealer Berthe Weil at the very beginning of the Spaniard's career.

I shall go on to discuss Anglada's extravagant pricing policy that was rooted in his wish to obtain glory rather than financial benefits, as well as in his profound belief in the quality and value of his artistic work. I shall further explain that this policy, which involved sustaining very high prices in order to induce an upwards re-evaluation

of certain artists in the market, was widely used at the time, not only by artists but also by many renowned contemporary dealers. I will link this pricing policy with the existence of important Russian collectors in Paris at the turn of the century. The sums that these collectors paid were responsible for a selective inflation in the art market as well as for the birth of many of the century's artistic reputations, such as that of Picasso.

I will use the last third of the chapter to explore the origins of Anglada's success among his wide Russian clientele, emphasising the fact that Diaghilev wrote abundantly about him in the art magazine *Mir Isskutsva* ("The World of Art"), of which he was co-founder and manager. The relevance of the publicity Anglada received from the articles about him in this magazine cannot be over-estimated, as this was the cultural vehicle that the charismatic Diaghilev used to propagate his visions in order to change what he considered to be the sclerotic production of Russian artists. These cultural developments in mother Russia were closely followed from Munich by Kandinsky, who even participated by contributing an article himself in *Mir Isskutsva*. This topic will be developed in the next chapter.

At the end of the present chapter, I will try to evaluate the extent to which both Russian and French clients, with their interest in folklore as the quintessential artistic expression of national identity, influenced Anglada's output by distancing his production from what would become some of the avant-garde movements, such as Abstraction, Expressionism and Cubism.

First, as in the case of any other artist, it is of the utmost importance to understand the patronage that supported Anglada financially. Even if Anglada claimed to have led a relatively independent existence, as soon as his public became reasonably

solid<sup>1</sup> he began to try to please it. This ensured his consistent success. Anglada's artistic freedom and creativity during his life in Paris was at its peak not at the end, but at the beginning of his stay, when he was really free to choose how he wanted to be known and appreciated. As I have demonstrated in Chapter Three, Anglada tried to attract the attention of the salon viewers from the very moment he launched his career. This by no means indicates, however, that Anglada's art and success were based on something generic or purely commercial, as an artist can only work and produce from within his or her creative means. Therefore, if a work of art is not genuinely inspired it will not have aesthetic merit.

The commodification of art suggests that it is impossible to separate an aesthetic perspective from an economic one. To appreciate art, the contours of this market must be understood in light of how it is based upon aesthetic claims and in light of how it attempts to separate aesthetic and economic claims. Further, this is not a world of disconnected or anonymous buyers or sellers – as at a supermarket – but a world in which relationships of trust, friendship, or enmity abound. Such a market is characterized by embedded relationships (...). Seeing the art world as an economic market place deepens, not weakens, our appreciation for its complexity and aesthetic concern.<sup>2</sup>

After 1903, although Anglada's success made him financially free, he had to carry the weight of this same success. For many artists, success implies as much a need to consolidate, as a narcissistic need to please. Both needs often end up by slowing down creativity, which, in principle, develops through emotional freedom.

As I have shown in the previous chapter, Anglada obtained considerable support from the Académie Julian, and this support enabled him to exhibit in the salons. Anglada used these opportunities to strengthen his name and attract his first clients. A look at the catalogue raisonné immediately reveals the fact that during the years leading up to the First World War, Anglada's works were being sold to an increasing number of

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<sup>1</sup> I think this clearly happened from 1903 onwards. This was the date of Anglada's first big success at the Biennale, which was the culmination of a series of other successes, mainly in France and Germany, and the forerunner of many others, and indicates the solidity of Anglada's achievement in terms of professional acceptance.

<sup>2</sup> Gary Alan Fine, *Everyday Genius – Self-Taught Art and the Culture of Authenticity*. (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 3.

people, rather than to one sole dealer or collector. This means that, from an early stage of his career, Anglada had managed to create his own market and to develop a demand for his works. While some of Anglada's clients bought just one of his works, others were so devoted that they accumulated small collections. Among the latter group, it is important to draw attention to the D'Avezac de Castéra family. This family, composed of M. Amand D' Avezac de Castéra, his wife, Léonie de Castéra, and their three sons, Carlos, René and Gaston, played an important role in supporting Anglada. The ancestors of the D'Avezac de Castéra family were Spanish aristocrats who had fled from Spain with Joseph Bonaparte. These origins could explain in part the large number of friends that this family had among the Spanish cultural community, especially musicians. Two of the D'Avezac de Castéra sons were painters and one became a famous musician. All of them lived in Paris and became acquainted with Anglada. The origin of this life-long relationship could possibly be traced back to their common acquaintance with Carlos Baca-Flor (the Peruvian artist)<sup>3</sup> or just to the fact that Gaston, like Anglada, studied under Laurens.<sup>4</sup> Both René and Carlos owned many works by Anglada, but it was Carlos who considered Anglada as one of his best friends. He bought ten paintings from Anglada when the latter was beginning his career. Later in life Carlos was obliged to convert his important collection of Anglada's works into cash in order to pay family debts. Georges Ducrocq writes in a letter to René de Castéra on the 24th January 1926:

J'ai dit à Carlos mon regret de vous voir morceler une aussi belle propriété [...]. J'ai proposé d'immobiliser une certaine somme dans vos bois. Il serait entendu que ce ne serait là qu'un placement provisoire, dont vous pourriez toujours vous retirer dans la suite [...]. De tout cœur avec vous je souhaite la fin de ce cauchemar et je regrette bien, je vous l'assure, de n'être pas milliardaire et de laisser partir en Amérique les Anglada de Carlos.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Anne de Beaupuy, Claude Gay, Damien Top, *René de Castéra (1873 – 1955) – Un compositeur landais au Coeur de la Musique française*, (Paris : Séguier, 2004), pp. 71-76.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 421.



The *pater familiae*, the wealthy M. Amand D' Avezac de Castéra, not only encouraged his own children to pursue their artistic careers, he also favoured their friends:

En 1904, Anglada avait emprunté une somme de 14.000 francs (soit environ 44.800€) à M. d'Avezac de Castéra, et lui en avait délivré un reçu. En 1905, un tableau vendu au Musée de Venise ne lui ayant pas encore été payé, et le solde du règlement d'un autre tableau étant différé, le peintre catalan demanda à reporter le remboursement. Compte tenu des prix atteints par ses œuvres près d'un siècle plus tard, on peut considérer que cette forme d'«aide aux artistes » exercée à son égard par Amand d'Avezac s'est avérée profitable pour Anglada ou ses ayant-droits.<sup>6</sup>

In a photograph that appears in the biography of René de Castéra, one can see one of Anglada's paintings, depicting a horse, hanging by the fireplace in a drawing room of the family house (as an example of Anglada's horse paintings see illustration 8 in Appendix II). This pride of position indicates how much René appreciated Anglada's style.<sup>7</sup> The Castéras, as they liked to call themselves, also fostered Anglada's promotion in society because they had an intense social life in Paris and were well acquainted with the upper echelons of its society: aristocrats and bourgeoisie, as well as artists and all sorts of musicians, were among their friends. According to their descendant, Anne de Beaupuy, "les trois frères se rendaient au concert ou au théâtre, étaient reçus par des personnalités du Tout-Paris."<sup>8</sup>

Anglada's visionary character did not always prove to be practical. According to his daughter, it was perhaps the fact that he could not find dealers to help him out of his penury at the beginning of his career that made him refuse to be represented by anyone once he had acquired fame, unlike most other artists. He did not trust intermediaries and refused to accept the loss of freedom they implied. For these reasons, he preferred to deal with his own financial affairs.<sup>9</sup> The fact that his clientele was widely spread had

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 181.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>9</sup> Telephone interview with Beatriz Anglada-Huelin. Oxford-Pollença, 27 February 2008.

the advantage that he was not dependent on a single buyer or a patron; on the other hand, it had the disadvantage that he was not able to join forces and combine market strategies with professional art dealers, and he also missed out on the possibility of benefiting from their reputation and connections. Peter Watson points out:

Of course dealers are trying to make a market, to create a demand for objects of which they have a supply. In this game, the more that beauty can be written of as unquantifiable and unobjectifiable, the better.<sup>10</sup>

Dealers who normally bought large numbers of works from one artist, sometimes completely monopolizing his or her production, had a certain capacity to influence that production.

In contrast to Picasso or Anglada, Vincent Van Gogh had, if only theoretically, a positive opinion of what could be achieved through the perfect symbiosis between artist and dealer. Michael Fitzgerald states:

Vincent repeatedly admonished his brother that artist and dealer were linked in a communal pursuit. In one of his last letters to Theo, he returned to this theme and suggested that the dealer might even contribute to the creation of art: "I tell you again that I shall always consider you to be something more than a simple dealer in Corots, that through my mediation you have your part in the actual production of some canvases ...." Despite his failure to win public support, Vincent continued to believe in a collaboration between dealer and artist that reached from the easel to the marketplace and to the broad public.<sup>11</sup>

Van Gogh, however, was an exception; generally artists only relied on dealers in cases of extreme need. This distrust is not very surprising, given the way dealers behaved towards artists. The following extract, for instance, describing the relationship between Picasso and the dealer Vollard, shows how much artists sometimes depended on dealers:

Gouaches and other paintings inspired by the same subject (*saltimbanques*, blue period) followed. It was Vollard who got hold of all the canvases painted during this period. He would arrive at the studio unexpectedly and buy everything. I still remember the fabulous sum of two thousand francs which Picasso received one day, which meant

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<sup>10</sup> Peter Watson, *From Manet to Manhattan – The Rise of the Modern Art Market*, (London: Hutchinson, 1992), p. xxvi.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Roskill (ed.), *The Letters of Vincent Van Gogh*, New York, 1974, p. 339-40. As quoted in Michael C. Fitzgerald, *Making Modernism – Picasso and the Creation of the Market for the Twentieth-Century Art*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1996), p. 9.

he could go to Spain for several months. For two thousand francs Vollard had taken away something like thirty canvases of all shapes and sizes.<sup>12</sup>

Anglada's early success in his career gave him the luxury of being able to opt out of the artistic slavery implied in a relationship with a dealer. He developed his own network of clients, which, as we shall see, made him relatively free to choose his style and subjects.

(...) artists have generally been studied in isolation from the dealers who represented them and the marketplace that judged their work. Not all writers have echoed Picasso's accusation that dealers are the enemy of artists, yet most have disregarded the relevance of commerce in the history of twentieth-century art.<sup>13</sup>

Anglada certainly from time to time might have sold to a dealer but never became dependent on one.<sup>14</sup> It is not clear the role that the dealer Berthe Weill played in the launching of Anglada's career.<sup>15</sup> If, as seems likely, the series of portraits of Madame Berthe from around 1900 are in fact portraits of Berthe Weill, they could indicate a commercial relationship. Although in Fontbona and Miralles' *Anglada-Camarasa* Madame Berthe is identified as probably Anglada's tenant, it seems unconvincing to me that she only was his landlady. According to the catalogue raisonné, there are at least eight paintings of Madame Berthe, one of them a nude. In these paintings Madame Berthe appears self assured, dressed totally in black and posing in rather solemn interiors. Her nude, representing a young, slim body, is striking for being completely indifferent to the viewer, relaxed but not at all sensuous. These

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<sup>12</sup> Fernande Olivier, *Picasso and his Friends*, (London: Heinemann, 1964), pp. 51-52.

<sup>13</sup> Fitzgerald, p.3.

<sup>14</sup> Berthe Weill was very fond of Catalonian modernists:

Her business card proclaimed that her gallery was a "place for youth." And as a sign of her dedication, and limited means, her working capital consisted of her dowry – four thousand francs. From the beginning, this independent woman presented the paintings of the French Fauves and Catalonian *modernistes* in group exhibitions that alternated with displays of more conventional prints.

Fitzgerald, , p. 26.

<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately Weill's book of memoirs only starts when Anglada was already acquiring fame and therefore far to expensive for Weil as an investment.

Berthe Weill, *Pan! dans l'Oeil : ou, Trente Ans dans les Coulisses de la Peinture Contemporaine 1900-1930*, (Paris: Lipschutz, 1933).

portraits were painted around 1900, when Anglada was starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel of his financial struggles. The model of these portraits is totally different from the ones chosen by Anglada for all his other paintings. The possibility of Anglada needing any kind of model can also be discarded as Anglada had plenty to choose from. They could be a way of thanking the dealer, which was a popular custom among artists, as is shown by the many portraits of Ambrose Vollard and, later on, of Berthe Weill herself.<sup>16</sup>

Anglada's refusal to collaborate with dealers, however, prevented arrangements that could have been beneficial for all parties, as dealers used to play a crucial role in the development of reputations. As Weisberg, Becker and Possémé state:

Car il ne fait aucun doute que, dès le dix-neuvième siècle, les marchands d'art ont joué un rôle essentiel dans la genèse des réputations artistiques. En commandant des œuvres aux artistes, en cultivant la relation avec les collectionneurs, en organisant des expositions et en publiant des catalogues sur les artistes qu'ils exposaient, ils ont développé, voire créé, le marché de l'art, et fait de l'objet d'art un produit d'avenir.<sup>17</sup>

It is reasonable to assume that Anglada could cope with this potential financial loss as, from 1903 onwards, he was at the very peak of fame. Anglada had built his network of clients first through his initial contacts from the Académie Julian and then mainly through his good Spanish-speaking friends, such as the Spaniard Zuloaga or the Peruvian Baca Flor. However, as I have said before, many of his friends were of French origin. Anglada found himself at ease in French society thanks to his command of the French language. This contrasts with Picasso, whose alien status as a Spanish citizen,

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<sup>16</sup> Berthe Weill was a very considerate dealer who acted more in the interests of art and the artists than for her own personal gain. John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso, Volume 1: 1881-1906*, 3 volumes, (London: Pimlico, 1992), I, pp.163-164.

<sup>17</sup> Gabriel P. Weisberg, Edwin Becker, Évelyne Possémé, *Les Origines de L'Art Nouveau – La Maison Bing*, (Paris : Union Central des Arts Decoratifs, 2004), p. 6.

poor grasp of French and ignorance regarding the politics of the salons made him completely dependent on dealers during the first ten years of his life in Paris.<sup>18</sup>

Anglada's commercial activities require closer scrutiny. With his self-assured optimism, Anglada trusted that fame, once acquired, would be sufficient to sell his works. However, a careful observation of the journey his works made through international exhibitions reveals that the same paintings often travelled from one country to another, which means that a big proportion of his major works was not sold.<sup>19</sup> Nonetheless, many found their way towards the private collections and walls of the Parisian aristocracy and haute bourgeoisie. The list of Anglada's best clients includes names like le Prince de Wagram, le Comte de Pradère and Henry de Rothschild.<sup>20</sup> The obvious interpretation of this fact is that the works that were exhibited were, in general, not always the same ones that were sold.

Anglada had very carefully drawn up a plan regarding the pricing of his works, of which he informed his Castéra friends:

Les avis « autorisés » de Carlos amenèrent Anglada à l'interroger le 5 août 1901 quant à « l'opinion des marchands sur les prix qu'il demandait pour ses tableaux », estimant que Carlos pensait, comme lui, « qu'il faut les tenir un peu, quitte à souffrir pour n'être pas à leur merci ensuite. » Aussi devait-il « souffrir un peu » puisqu'il demanda à Carlos de lui avancer 1.500 F, lui offrant un de ses tableaux en garantie ... pour « vous remercier bien chaudement pour la grande et sincère amitié que vous me témoignez et pour votre confiance dont vous me comblez si largement. Je vous suis profondément reconnaissant de l'intérêt que vous me portez, vous et votre frère.<sup>21</sup>

This policy of sustaining prices, forcing them somehow artificially in order to prevent their fall, had been put into practice before. In fact, the birth of the modern art

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<sup>18</sup> For Picasso's deficient grasp of French and his awkwardness in French society during the first decade of the twentieth century, see Richardson, I, pp. 204-205, p. 416

<sup>19</sup> See list of exhibitions in Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1981), pp. 309-312.

<sup>20</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, pp. 233-265.

According to Fontbona, all the documents that show the successive owners of Anglada's works are either in the archives of Anglada's museum in Palma de Mallorca or belong to the private collection of the family.

<sup>21</sup> Beaupuy, Gay and Top, p. 76.

market took place at the time of the Impressionists, who had to find a way out of the Académie's monopoly. Peter Watson writes:

Throughout his memoirs, Durand-Ruel stressed that a dealer must always do what he could to protect the prices of his artists. Whenever possible, he sought to obtain a monopoly of an artist's oeuvre, buying up works from other dealers or collectors, and even "bidding up" pictures at auction to prevent prices from falling.<sup>22</sup>

This policy did not always work out well or quickly enough to prevent the ruin of the dealer. Durand-Ruel, for example, could not hold the prices long enough and had to emigrate to Manhattan, where he was luckier and managed a very profitable gallery. Later in life, once he had gained independence through success, Picasso himself admitted how much he had learned regarding pricing policies from the famous art dealer Vollard. Vollard's relevance for art history is based on his enormous stake in the development of the modern art market and therefore in modern art itself, as both concepts were intimately related. Michael C. Fitzgerald asserts:

More than forty years after exhibiting at Vollard's gallery, Picasso told his companion, Françoise Gilot, that he still "based his own manoeuvres on Vollard's tactics".<sup>23</sup>

As Anglada did not sell many of the exhibited paintings, one might ask how exactly he was earning his living. I believe that Anglada had a similar policy to Courbet. According to Oskar Bätschmann:

It is evident that as a producer of pictures Courbet distinguished between different categories, depending on their destination. The provocative and demanding works were for exhibition and public showing, and they were intended to bring the artist honours, followers and awards. The others were simply pot boilers, intended to make money. Courbet justified this by arguing that the second type gave him the freedom and independence he needed for the first type of work.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Watson, p. 83.

<sup>23</sup> Fitzgerald, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> Oskar Bätschmann, *The Artist in the Modern World – The Conflict between Market and Self-Expression*, (Cologne: Yale Univ. Press / Dumont, 1997), p. 130.

It is possible that through the high reputation of his name Anglada obtained commissions for portraits of which we have lost track. Hopefully, many are still to turn up now that his market price is increasing.<sup>25</sup>

It is curious to what extremes Anglada took his pricing policy. Among the documents that can be found in the archives of the Anglada-Camarasa Museum, which now belongs to the Fundació La Caixa, there are numerous letters from the years before the First World War in which Anglada negotiates with Spanish museums as potential buyers. In these letters Anglada sticks to his prices so obstinately that he eventually prefers not to sell anything rather than grant any price reduction.<sup>26</sup> Even at the beginning of his success in 1902, Anglada wrote to his friend Llort that a considerable number of people were interested in buying his paintings but could not do so because he had asked too high a price for them on purpose. Anglada does not show any disappointment about this; on the contrary, he wrote:

(...) during the year when I became *associé*, numerous were the artists who were really keen on purchasing my exhibited works but could not afford them because I had prized them so high. Instead they came to my studio and bought some sketches and small drawings valued at 500 francs each. And I can drop you right now a few of these artists' names, like the famous landscape painter Paulow and Lucien Liman. Suddenly, to stop all this, I had to say: *Alto la ronda !!*<sup>27</sup> Because I knew this was going to be a decoy that would enable me to sell all the rest at much higher prizes, which is exactly what happened (...).<sup>28</sup>

In the same letter, where after a prolonged period of silence Anglada is updating his friend Llort on all his recent successes, he proudly refers to his policy of high prices:

I got the title of *associé* thanks to four little works that I had exhibited. Two of them you already know because they are the two (relatively) big ones that were hung on the extremes of the exhibition at *Casa Parés*. One with a *cuadrilla* (bullfighting group)

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<sup>25</sup> During the last fifteen years, Anglada's works have been auctioned at Christie's, with selling prices increasing at an exponential rate until October 2008, when *la Gata Rosa* failed to achieve its calling price. Anglada's oeuvre selling price reached its peak in 2006.

<sup>26</sup> Letters from the *Junta de Museus de Barcelona* to Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, Barcelona, 27 May (1909), 30 June (1909). Palma de Mallorca. Archives Museo Anglada-Camarasa (MA-C), Fundació la Caixa. Letters.

<sup>27</sup> *Alto la ronda* is colloquial Spanish for: I will not pay for more drinks in this tavern.

<sup>28</sup> Hermen Anglada Camarasa, 'Letter from Paris', Private correspondence to Pere Llort, 25 July (1903), p. 2. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin (BAH). Private correspondence.

and the other one a theatre overlooking a garden. Do you remember? Well, I priced one at 10.000 francs and the other at 8.000 francs. Naturally, I didn't sell them on that date.<sup>29</sup>

The idea that sometimes Anglada did not want to sell his works is supported by another event described in this important letter, where Anglada tells his friend how he gave away two paintings for half the price he had asked before:

The other two that I exhibited were one of a gipsy dance and the other one of a Spanish dance with people accompanying and clapping. The first one I sold in Moscow to Mr. Morozov for 4.000 francs, and the second one the following year in France for the same price.<sup>30</sup>

Fifty per cent of the initial price still amounted to a large sum. Taking into account that this letter was written in 1903, the transaction with Morozov must have taken place in 1901, or 1902 at the latest. This fact proves that already from 1901 onwards, Anglada was selling to the Russian collector at relatively high prices, which, among other consequences, made him unattractive as an investment for dealers like Vollard, who were famous for buying cheap and selling expensive (if at all). Vollard even sold a portrait of himself, painted by Picasso as a present, to Morozov for 3,000 francs.<sup>31</sup>

True to form, Vollard sold his (by Picasso) portrait a few years later to the Russian collector Ivan Morozov for three thousand francs. (It had been painted in the winter 1909-10).<sup>32</sup>

To have a true idea of Anglada's prices we need to compare them to those of his contemporaries. Another active protagonist in the birth of the modern art market was the group of collectors who called themselves La Peau de l'Ours and who also invested in emerging artists. La Peau de l'Ours auctioned its collection in Paris in 1913 earning a huge profit. They sold works by artists that would later become famous such as: Bonnard, Matisse, Picasso, and Rouault.<sup>33</sup> It would have been unthinkable for them to

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Fitzgerald, p. 33.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> For more information on La Peau de L'Ours: 'St'Art Contemporary Art Fair in France', in *Dexigner*, <<http://www.dexigner.com/art/news-23799.html>> [accessed the 12th of June 2009]



buy an Anglada, considering that they only had 2,300 francs to spend a year. With that budget they would not have been able to buy more than a couple of sketches by Anglada. Anglada was therefore not playing a part in a famous historic event precisely because he was already enjoying his own independent success.

However, with the distance of time, one has the impression that, except in moments of great need, Anglada felt a certain reluctance to sell. There are several explanations for Anglada's behaviour towards clients. The first is that, like with many other artists, Anglada felt a special emotional attachment towards his works, which he even compared to offspring:

I know with how much pleasure you are going to read the summary of all that has happened during the time in which I have not written. But let me first ask you: how many times already are you a father? I am sure that in that issue, I am ahead of you because I am a father and a mother at the same time, the only difference is that my children are made only of colours and shapes and that their movements are as fictitious as their shape is false: Paintings! Paintings!! And always paintings!!!<sup>34</sup>

In fact, later in life he undertook the mission of recovering as many of his own works as he could assemble, commanding his daughter to buy them at whatever price was necessary.<sup>35</sup> He also gave specific orders that his works should always be exhibited together with his collection of precious objects: Japanese prints, Spanish *mantones* and Oriental furniture. He thought that his oeuvre would be better understood if seen as a whole. This recalls a statement Manet made to his friend Antonin Proust:

(...) ce mot de Manet, qu'il me répétait souvent : « Tu sais, moi, il faut me voir tout entier. Et, je t'en prie, si je viens à disparaître, ne me laisse pas entrer dans les collections publiques par morceaux ; on me jugerait mal ». <sup>36</sup>

Anglada, precisely because he regarded his works as his natural descendants, did not like to part with them. But there were also other reasons. Like many great artists, Anglada was sure of the value of his art. This malaise at the departure of much beloved

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<sup>34</sup> Anglada Camarasa, 25 July (1903), p. 1. BAH. Private correspondence.

<sup>35</sup> Interview with Beatriz Anglada Huelin in Polleça. June 2005.

<sup>36</sup> Antonin Proust, 'L'Art d'Edouard Manet', *Le Studio*, January 1901. Quoted in *Manet – Raconté par lui-même et par ses Amis*, 2 volumes, (Genève : Pierre Cailler Éditeur, 1953), I, p. 39.

works to their new owners, as part of their life evolution as paintings, can be compared to Picasso's morose reaction to what had initially been much desired sales, reaction which Olivier describes in her memoirs.<sup>37</sup>

The second explanation of Anglada's pricing policy is related to the first: he believed so much in his art that he sold his paintings only to people who could bring him prestige. Anglada considered his works not independently but as parts of a whole, which would be less well appreciated by posterity if many pieces were missing.

With this sales policy, it is not surprising that at the same time as painting in his studio Anglada taught in various academies: after all, he had to secure his income. By 1901, Anglada was already teaching in the famous Academie Colarossi, where he had also formerly trained.<sup>38</sup> According to Fontbona and Miralles:

Anglada combined his profession as a professional painter with that of an art teacher. In Paris he directed an academy in which Marie Blanchard attended as a student between 1908 and 1913. Between 1906 and 1914, other painters who would later become well known in their respective national schools, passed through his classrooms. Some examples are: the Portuguese Amadeu de Sousa Cardoso, the Guatemalan Carlos Mérida, the English Charles Ginner as well as the Latin Americans of the future school of Pollença.<sup>39</sup>

These teaching jobs not only suited Anglada's taste, but they also allowed him to be in permanent direct contact with his pupils and admirers; furthermore, they gave the stubborn Anglada the financial freedom to behave as he pleased towards potential buyers. For as independent a character as Anglada's, that must have been a priority.

Nevertheless, there are numerous examples of Anglada's works in different museums all over the world such as the Hermitage Museum, the Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Museo de Arte Moderno de Buenos Aires, the British Museum, the Modern Art Museum of Venice and Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid. This can be taken as

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<sup>37</sup> Olivier Fernande, *Picasso and his Friends*, (London: Heinemann, 1964).

<sup>38</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 32.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.

evidence that, in spite of Anglada's reluctance to part with them, many of his paintings found their way to interested clients.

However, the most relevant example for the argument of this dissertation is a painting kept in the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg: *Danza Española* (1901). Its importance is related to the interest that Anglada provoked in the Russian community in Paris, which constituted probably one of his main group of buyers. The origin of what became a mutual adoration between Anglada and the Russian community in Paris is difficult to trace. Maybe the trend was led by Diaghilev, who wrote extensively about his predilection for Anglada in his art magazine *Mir Iskusstva*. *Mir Iskusstva* was founded in 1898 by Diaghilev together with his friends, Alexander Benois and Leon Bakst. This publication was a novelty in its field and had a considerable influence among the Russian public. History has acknowledged Diaghilev's ability to recognise outstanding talents, such as Benois, Bakst, Nijinsky and the composers Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky. Diaghilev's contemporaries also felt this rare quality; therefore Diaghilev's potential influence was enormous. It is not surprising that his penchant for Anglada contributed to the latter's popularity among Russians as well as among other admirers of Diaghilev. *Mir Iskusstva* set out to familiarise the Russian public with developments in modern art and thereby foster the evolution of modern art in Russia. Up to fourteen reproductions of Anglada's work appeared in *Mir Iskusstva* during the six years of its existence. Diaghilev owned several paintings by Anglada, the exact location of which today is unknown. One of the reasons Anglada's paintings were so celebrated was probably because they inspired Russian artists to be modern without losing their Russianness. I shall develop this important idea, of how to reinterpret Russian cultural identity, later on in this chapter.

Whatever the origins of his reputation, it is well known that Anglada was highly admired by the artists, writers and aristocrats of Russian origin living in Paris at the turn of the century. According to Fontbona and Miralles the inauguration at the International Art Exhibition of Rome was planned for the 14th of May 1911 by the kings of Italy and the Grand Duke Boris and Grand Duchess Maria Pawlovna of Russia. As the rooms dedicated to Anglada's paintings were not ready yet, they could not be officially inaugurated.<sup>40</sup> Still, the Grand Duchess expressed her wish to see Anglada's rooms, which she did.<sup>41</sup>

For reasons that will be analysed in the following chapter, the Russian public and, more specifically, the main Russian collectors were very fond of Spanish culture and particularly Spanish art. The Morozov family history provides, on a large scale, numerous examples of a national trend, one of which can be seen in the following description by Beverly Whitney Kean writing in 1983:

The Morozov houses ranged from Mikhail's stately structure in the Empire style to the mansion of his brother, Arseny, which had been built in 1895-99. This exact replica of a Spanish castle created to order was a landmark of Moscow; today it serves the Soviet government as the House of Friendship.<sup>42</sup>

Anglada's art, which his contemporaries considered to have a revolutionary character, also attracted the attention of the Russian writer Maximilian Gorky. Gorky was such an admirer of Anglada's oeuvre that on one occasion, when passing through Venice on his way from Capri, he obtained special permission to be able to view an exhibition by Anglada on the day preceding the opening.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>41</sup> 'Il Principi di Russia ospiti dei nostri Sovrani a Valle Giulia', *La Stampa*, 14 May (1911).

<sup>42</sup> Beverly Whitney Kean, *All the Empty Places: The Merchant Patrons of Modern Art in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*, (London/Melbourne/Sydney/Auckland/Johannesburg: Barrie & Jenkins, 1983), p. 63.

<sup>43</sup> 'Lammirazione di Gorky pel pittore Anglada', *La Stampa*, 22 April, (1911). MA-C. Press cutting. Also, Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 102.

Gorky was also a close friend of a member of the Morozov family, who shared his revolutionary and artistic ideas. Their friendship was so close that Savva Morozov not only financed Gorky's intellectual adventures, such as theatre plays, but also paid his bail once when Gorky was detained and sent to jail. According to Whitney Kean:

When Gorky was arrested in Riga for sedition in 1905, Morozov paid 10,000 rubles to bail him out, and the cost of this gesture was fatal. In this year of the abortive revolution, Mariya Fyodorovna Morozova was totally out of sympathy with her son's political attitudes, his efforts to ameliorate the lives of the workers, and above all, with his friendship with Gorky. She was still the major stockholder, and when Savva suggested that Morozov industries could safely share a portion of the profits with its employees, she exploded at his 'stupidity'. Despite the swollen earnings, she removed her son from control of the company.<sup>44</sup>

However, it was two first cousins of Savva Morozov, Michail and Ivan, who were culturally more progressive and who were to start the impressive contemporary art collection, which, along with the palace that housed it, was to immortalise them. These two brothers, Michail and Ivan, were politically moderate but extremely progressive, for the time, in their artistic tastes. In fact, they were particularly interested in colours. The Nabis painters, who had started at the Académie Julian, were their favourites. Bonnard, with whom Anglada shares certain chromatic similarities, found his main clients in the Morozov brothers. They provided him with the material support than enabled him to create without worries. According to Christine Burrus:

Legend had it that Morozov left blank places on his walls which he would not fill until he had found the painting with the exact shading he had envisaged for that spot. He put his collection together like a giant palette and became very enthusiastic about Nabis, a group of painters formed in 1892 by members of Académie Julien [sic] in Paris. Bonnard's lyricism, which transformed familiar scenes into glorious symphonies, appealed to him to such an extent that he commissioned three panels from the painter to decorate the main staircase in his private mansion. Between the stately neo-classical columns, the triptych *La Méditerranée* (The Mediterranean) flaunted its iridescent colours like a stained-glass window, brightening the Russian greyness with a touch of southern light.<sup>45</sup>

The Morozovs also liked the modern subject of prostitution, which had elevated Anglada to the summit of his fame. According to Whitney Kean:

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<sup>44</sup> Kean, pp. 105-106.

<sup>45</sup> Christina Burrus, *Art Collectors of Russia – The Private Treasures Revealed*, (London & New York: Tauris Parke Books, 1992), p. 30.

(...). However, his (Michail's) selections indicated a certain flexibility. They included Degas's brothel scenes and an original drawing for *Elles*, Toulouse-Lautrec's album of lithographs on that subject.

The Morozov home, an immense, square mansion in the Empire style which still stands a short distance away from the present American Embassy, was filled with modern art. Mikhail was one of the earliest Russians to collect contemporary French masterpieces. Though his political orientation was conservative, his artistic tendencies were radical for the period.<sup>46</sup>

Considering the Morozovs' tastes regarding Spain, colours and subject matter, it is not surprising that they would have been very interested in an artist like Anglada who, by that time, was rising in value in Paris.

Ivan Morozov was a particular good friend of the Basque artist Zuloaga, who advised him on the question of Spanish art. Whitney Kean writes:

As with his brother, Ivan had succumbed to the collector's virus, but he was determined that his pictures, like his life, should bear no resemblance to theirs. Spanish art would form the main body of his collection, and he had travelled across Spain with his close friend Ignacio Zuloaga, the Basque artist, and Auguste Rodin, on his first search for important works.<sup>47</sup>

Zuloaga, who was also a very good friend of Anglada, might possibly have introduced artist and collector to each other. By recommending Anglada, Zuloaga would have rendered a good service to both parties and, at the same time, would not have taken any risk, as his compatriot was a safe investment. Morozov was well known for his special talent to spot the very best of Parisian artists or, as Oleg Neverov puts it, the 'aristocracy' of painting that he found compatible with some contemporary Russian artists:

To begin with, one discovered as if it were America, that half of the Morozov collection is composed of things typically Russian, of actual, living artists shown in exhibitions, painters who, being in conformity with the canons now established in Russia, could not be seated at the same table with members of the Parisian artistic aristocracy.<sup>48</sup>

As in the case of Diaghilev, Ivan Morozov's interest in modern art combined with his interest in things typically Russian: art, tradition and culture. Both these

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<sup>46</sup> Kean, p. 109.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>48</sup> Oleg Yakovlevich Neverov, *Great Private Collections of Imperial Russia*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), p. 202.

Russian trend-setters were deeply interested in the paintings of Anglada. There is evidence that Morozov bought at least one painting by Anglada, who briefly mentions the fact to his friend Llort.<sup>49</sup> As the very communicative Anglada does not seem to attribute particular importance to the Morozov purchase in the letter (an event that would seem remarkable to anyone else), the transaction was probably not an extraordinary one. One might also suspect that neither the buyer nor the fact that he purchased paintings from Anglada were new to the artist and his friend Llort. This, in turn, might mean that Morozov bought many more works from Anglada.

It was probably his friend Zuloaga who initially provided Anglada with his Russian connections. He definitely did not get them through the Castéras, because when the latter visited Moscow they were presented to the Morozovs and received an invitation to dine at their palace through their good friend Maurice Denis. Moreover, Zuloaga was very popular in Moscow and had painted the portrait of another very important collector, Ivan Shchukin, which now hangs in the Hermitage. Zuloaga and Rodin also had accompanied Shchukin during his trips to Spain, where they advised him on his purchases. According to Christina Burrus:

Zuloaga and Rodin were also very influential on Ivan Shchukin and took him also in buying trips to Spain advising him on his purchases.

Ivan Shchukin and Rodin became firm friends and Shchukin also kept company with Degas and Renoir. One of his closest friends, the Spanish painter, Ignacio Zuloaga, introduced him to the splendours of Spanish art. Together with Rodin, the two aesthetes took a trip to Spain, following in the footsteps of El Greco, Goya and Zurbarán. Shchukin bought various works and, in particular, several Goyas. But these outrageously extravagant purchases, in addition to his costly love affairs, finally ruined the family's prodigal son.<sup>50</sup>

After seeing how popular Spanish art was in Russia, and how much Anglada was favoured by people of great influence in the consolidation of the Russians' taste, one cannot be surprised that the devotion between Anglada and the Russians became

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<sup>49</sup> Anglada Camarasa, 25 July (1903). BAH. Private correspondence.

<sup>50</sup> Burrus, p. 16.

mutual. It is more than likely that Anglada enjoyed an important clientele among the Russians. Anglada would have never felt the intense sympathy that, for example, in 1911 made him participate in the Libre Esthétique Exhibition of Brussels as a Russian delegate if he had not previously received some feedback on his artistry, which was the most important part of his self. In my opinion, among other forms of recognition, this feedback must have manifest itself in purchases. As Shchukin and Morozov were the main collectors, it is logical to infer that they took the lead regarding art purchases among their compatriots.

Contemporaries were astonished at the breadth of taste and freedom of spirit shown by Ivan in his collection. The art critic Boris Ternovets wrote: "It is clear that in those years which ended with the War of 1914, no modern European art collector or Western museum enriched its collections with such energy and impetuosity." Morozov made sure that in his house all the major artists of the period were represented at their best, an approach that set him apart from Sergei Shchukin, who concentrated on a small, select group of painters: "Untouched by the passion of Shchukin, always prudent and strict in his choices, fearing everything sudden, hesitant, conflicted, Morozov preferred to go about his quest peacefully," wrote Ternovets, who would become the curator of Ivan's collections.<sup>51</sup>

Unfortunately, most of the paintings were probably lost after the Russian Revolution: "War made this situation even worse. Works vanished without trace, never to reappear."<sup>52</sup> The lack of transparency, or even in some cases secretive policy, in the Hermitage makes it very difficult to investigate which paintings by Anglada are locked away in the cellars of this museum.<sup>53</sup>

The fact that Anglada who, judging from the support he gave to and received from the Russian community during those years, felt more Russian than anything else, never came back to Paris after the end of the First World War can be explained by the

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<sup>51</sup> Neverov, p. 202.

Burrus, p. 9.

<sup>53</sup> Nationalized in 1918, Ivan's private gallery became the basis of Russia's second *Museum of Modern Western painting*, created in 1919, and Morozov, although named deputy director of the new public museum, chose to emigrate at the end of 1918. He died abroad, in Karlsbad, in 1921. In 1928 the Soviet authorities fused the Morozov and Shchukin collections, thereby creating the *State Museum of Modern Western Art*, housed in the one-time mansion of Ivan Morozov. Twenty years later, at the height of the campaign against "cosmopolitanism", the museum's collections were slated for destruction, and only by the greatest of good luck were they saved, and then divided between the *Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts* in Moscow and the *Hermitage* in Leningrad. Neverov, p. 202.



absence there of most of his friends and clients, who were trapped in Russia by the Revolution. The world that had celebrated Anglada's genius had totally vanished after 1918. This fact has never up to now been suggested as a possible major reason for Anglada's mysterious early retirement to Mallorca. Later in his life, Anglada kept an address book where he noted the names of all the clients he directly dealt with after the First World War. The fact that there was not a single Russian name is quite revealing for someone who had officially represented Russia and had been admired by some of its most representative figures. Their addresses were lost or had changed, they were dead or they survived either in exile or, from 1924 onwards, in the isolation of the USSR. Anglada probably never saw them again.

Having established who Anglada's clients were, I will now turn my attention to the question of how they provoked a change in both Anglada's subject matter and his technique. Regarding subject matter, it is striking that from 1904 onwards Anglada turned his back on one subject that had previously been particularly successful for him. He abandoned the night scenes, with prostitutes as the main protagonists, and turned to more folkloric subjects, such as Spanish dancers, flamenco fiestas, and female gypsies carrying babies or flowers, or to the very successful Valencia peasantry scenes, which were depicted in an a-temporal light. This kind of unnatural light does not have shadows that can be associated with a particular time of day and was used arguably to express the timeless quality of the subject. The reason for this drastic change, from sad prostitutes to happy peasants, may be found in the taste of his clients. After all, artists of all times have at some stage yielded to the tastes of their public: a weakness for spoiling existing clients to secure them or, with more reason, for trying to find new clients to please. It seems even Vincent Van Gogh, for example, wrote to his brother Theo of his

commitment to paint henceforth only beautiful scenes, like starry nights, that everybody would like.

Picasso is another example of an artist who cared greatly for his market share and whose production was affected by it. Even before the famous auction in 1913 of the collection belonging to La Peau de L'Ours, Picasso started painting again in a neo-classical style that reflected his uneasiness with Cubism as well as his distancing himself from Braque. However, he did not dare to show these paintings to the public after the strenuous effort that his dealer Kahnweiler had made to promote Cubism:

With Cubism only just achieving widespread recognition, this painting would have shocked the avant-garde if it had been seen on his return to Paris in the fall, because its style would have been received as a repudiation of Cubism by one of its inventors – a capitulation to the academy that would devastate the avant-garde's claim to independence. Perhaps because he realized the implications of this new work, Picasso not only kept the picture secret but stopped work on it when the composition was little more than a design, and he hid the canvas for the rest of his life.<sup>54</sup>

When the war approached and Cubism started to be considered pro-German and antipatriotic, Picasso reconsidered his position regarding subject matter. After all, Cubism had not sold well in La Peau de L'Ours's auction compared with his early Blue and Rose periods:

Given these pressures, the Peau de l'Ours sale may have suggested to Picasso a welcome alternative. Having had the opportunity to see his major early work, which, like Cubist work, was rarely exhibited, critics suggested that Picasso would do well to revisit his Blue and Rose periods. Whether or not Picasso was specifically prompted by the largely laudatory public attention to these pictures in the spring of 1914, he did what the critics urged.<sup>55</sup>

It is therefore not surprising that Anglada, in order to please his admirers, abandoned painting his Parisian nights scenes altogether. However, as we have seen in previous chapters, these paintings continued to be exhibited with great success as well as sometimes being spiced with scandal. The reason why there was such a preference

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<sup>54</sup> Fitzgerald, p. 48.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 51.

for Anglada's folkloric subjects is that his main group of clients, the Russians, were interested in finding an inspiration for their own culture in which modernity and tradition could be represented together. As nationalistic tendencies were rife at that time, many people were searching for the roots of their own identity. We will look at this in greater detail in Chapter Five.

Anglada's French friends the Castéras were also very much immersed in their cultural roots (especially René with his music), which they combined with a strong liking for 'espagnolisme'. The Spanish composer Albeniz, referring to his suite *Iberia*, wrote to Carlos de Castera:

Dans ces trois œuvres, j'ai poussé l'espagnolisme et la vérité à son degré extrême et je n'hésite pas à le considérer comme le meilleur cahier quoique je reconnais qu'il est le plus difficile et rébarbatif ...<sup>56</sup>

In fact, Carlos de Castéra had bought, to the obvious joy of the rest of the family, an example of Anglada's new style of painting featuring gypsies with children. The following quotation comes from a letter that Léonie de Castéra, mother of the three brothers, wrote to her eldest son Carlos, who was on his way back from India:

*Le tableau [d'Anglada] pour René [est] chez l'encadrer » et ajouta à l'intention de Carlos : « C'est avec une grande impatience que nous t'attendons [au retour du voyage en Inde]. Tu pourras écarquiller tes yeux devant la belle toile d'Anglada. » « Je vais demain donner des ordres nécessaires pour vous faire envoyer votre toile », avait écrit Anglada. « Bien entendu [...] mon tableau La Gitane et l'Enfant reste pour vous, pour la somme de 4.000 francs. 4.000F : environ 12.800€. Il s'agissait du tableau la *Gitana con Niño* (150x100cm) peint en 1907. René de Castéra prêta cette toile pour une exposition à Rome en 1911.<sup>57</sup>*

However much Anglada's subject matter may have changed after 1904, his technique altered to an equal extent. The development of Anglada's technique is surprising because it contradicts the traditional narrative, according to which the evolution of painting was towards abstraction. Anglada, who was in the avant-garde of a

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<sup>56</sup> Isaac Albéniz to Carlos de Castéra, 19 and 30 November 1907, as quoted in Beaupty, Gay and Top, p.170.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 243.

current that would lead some of his contemporaries to abandon subject matter altogether, turned in the opposite direction. One cannot say that he turned back, because he had never used this style and technique before. To be more precise, even if Anglada still mixed his colours in the same way he had before, there were two main differences. The first concerns the use of white, which was much less in evidence in the paintings with folkloric subjects. The second relates to the brush strokes, which after 1904, even though they were still applied with ease and with a very relaxed wrist, resulted in a much less diffused, less blurred, image. Contours became more precise: whereas before 1904 the prostitutes sometimes looked as though they were made of nothing more substantial than smoke and were about to disappear, now figures became clearly separated from their surroundings. Anglada's Valencia peasants and gypsies are more earthbound: their clear contours and, in the case of the gypsies, the fact that they are generally depicted in an a-temporal light, make them subject to the laws of gravity. As I have pointed out in previous chapters, Anglada's night figures had abandoned their corporality and were no longer subject to the laws of physics. An explanation for Anglada's technical change could be that the new subjects were not the product of sketches that he had collected during his night wonderings, as previous ones had been. Most of his later paintings were done using studio models as well as many photographs that can be found in the family's private collection, some of which have been published. (see illustration 37 in Appendix II).

If Anglada, like other artists, adapted his style to the demands of the market, this would prove that Anglada's clients, although being part of the intellectual elite as well as connoisseurs of modern art, did not regard abstraction as desirable, which is something that most art historians in the twentieth century had taken for granted as inevitable. As an example of this assertion I can give the following extract from an

article written by Carlos de Castéra, (who acted as a friend, collector and critic of Anglada and his work, as well as being his social spring-board), in the art magazine *L'Occident*. In this article he initially expresses his admiration for Anglada's colours, only immediately to disapprove of his 'disrespect' for anatomy and the fact that all his subjects have similar faces, regretting also their unnatural colour. Both criticisms were a symptom of Anglada's relatively advanced artistic position. At the same time, they imply the author's dislike, or lack of understanding, of expressionist techniques:

L'effet, dans ses toiles, est toujours solidement établi, les valeurs justement observées et la tonalité générale d'une harmonie parfaite malgré la franchise et l'audace des tons. La pâte est toujours abondante, épaisse, généreuse. Remarquez avec quel inattendu, quelle fougue elle est répandue, distribuée, dans les robes des danseuses surtout ; c'est de ce bousillage de pâte précieuse et de riche couleur que naissent sur ces rutilantes étoffes mille reflets et toutes les connivences de la lumière artificielle.

En véritable peintre, M. Anglada s'attache à la forme que prennent les choses dans l'atmosphère plutôt qu'au dessin (contour précisé, si l'on préfère) ce dont on ne saurait trop le féliciter mais peut-être voudrait-on y trouver un peu plus de scrupule anatomique. On trouve quelquefois aussi que ses personnages sont un peu poussés à l'expression : ce défaut paraît être souligné par la raison que toutes les physionomies se ressemblent, le peintre répétant un peu trop les mêmes déformations pour leur donner du caractère. Cette critique, même légère, pourrait se faire aussi du teint des visages qui est toujours un peu du même brun.<sup>58</sup>

Carlos de Castéra represented the tastes of an important section of Anglada's public, which included many friends. No wonder that Anglada surrendered to those who proved to like him so much.

The article concludes, definitely proving the author's incomprehension, that despite the painting's faults Anglada manages to make the movements of his dancers very real:

Mais, j'oublie de parler de l'essentiel peut-être : le sujet et les grands traits de la composition ; l'arabesque y est toujours logiquement ordonnée, le mouvement et le geste observés avec acuité. Dès que l'œil s'est attardé sur les toiles de M. Anglada, presque toutes les autres peintures paraissent creuses.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Carlos de Castéra, 'À travers les Salons: Anglada', *L'Occident*, Paris, 7 June (1902), 402-403. Paris. Archives de la Bibliothèque National de France (BNF).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 403.

After studying Anglada's patrons and dealers – or the fact of their absence – during his Parisian years, I would like to conclude by emphasizing three points. First, Anglada did not lose much by avoiding dealers. Dealers could have saved him the time-consuming procedures that follow commercial transactions, and could have done the public relations activities required to cultivate relationships with important clients. Perhaps the only disadvantage of not selling large amounts of works to any one particular client through a dealer was that of losing the opportunity to become even better known among his contemporaries, but he cherished his production too much to let it go in chunks. Second, Anglada's ambition was focused more on fame than on money, as his policies on pricing and sales prove: once he had secured the financial support that would permit him the freedom to create solely according to his own wishes, he would drop any opportunities that did not increase his share of glory. Instead of relying on dealers, he kept lists of addresses of individual clients and thus avoided a monopoly of power that could have the potential to strangle his free will. Third, Anglada's artistic love affair with Russian culture was, as we shall see in the next chapter, satisfactory to both sides because it was deeply rooted in some profound cultural understanding that lasted until the First World War and the Russian October Revolution. This relationship between the artist and the Russian group in Paris brought Anglada financial benefit and boosted his already healthy self-esteem. It was also this Russian contact one of the main channels that brought Anglada's work to Kandinsky and arguably the latter's breakthrough into abstraction.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANGLADA AND THE TWENTIETH CENTURY:

#### A RE-EVALUATION OF HIS WORK THROUGH A COMPARISON WITH KANDINSKY'S ARTISTIC EVOLUTION

Every work of art is the child of its time; often it is the mother of our emotions. Thus, every period of culture produces its own art, which can never be repeated. Any attempt to give new life to the artistic principles of the past can at best only result in a work of art that resembles a stillborn child (...) a work that remains soulless for all time. This sort of imitation resembles the mimicry of the ape.<sup>1</sup>

The main argument that I am about to put forward will be built upon the theoretical infrastructure developed in previous chapters.

Up to now I have explained the origins of Anglada-Camarasa's technique and fame. In Chapter Two I have established his Symbolist roots and the fact that he shared the feeling of cultural malaise, characteristic of the end of the nineteenth century, which constituted the creative ground from which different artistic expressions materialized.. In Chapters Three and Four I have explained how his stubborn optimism and the ambition typical of great achievers helped Anglada to climb the ladder of success and produce a very particular style and technique. It was both his style and his technique that caught the attention of contemporary artists and the public. Regarding Anglada's contemporaries, throughout my study I have paid special attention to those of Russian origin, for the reason that Anglada's art was deeply admired by some of the leading Russian artists and intellectuals responsible for the intensely creative period in Russian culture in the years prior to the First World War. As I will try to show in the present chapter, this success among Russian intellectuals was one of the connections that linked Anglada to Kandinsky.

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<sup>1</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'On the Spiritual in Art', in *Kandinsky, Complete Writings on Art*, ed. by Kenneth C. Lindsay, Peter Vergo, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 127.

The aim of the present chapter is to reveal that Anglada's work not only had an intrinsic value independent of its context, but that it also fully participated in the cultural and artistic concerns that led the way to many of the currents at the beginning of the twentieth century. I am referring particularly to those artistic currents that were searching for a greater expression and/or abstraction. I will try to prove that Anglada was an influential factor within those artistic developments that gave way to many of the subsequent styles. I will ground my argument on the fact that the art of Anglada had a deep meaning, as it was a pictorial language reminiscent of Symbolism, which tried to achieve spiritual beauty through colourful technique: a contagious spiritual beauty that, as we have seen in previous chapters, would invade the viewers' soul through their eyes.

Anglada's chromatic harmonies and composition deserve to be studied on their own. However, as they were produced not in an isolated environment but in the middle of turn-of-the-century Paris, with its social intensity and its cultural life, they are better studied in the context of the inevitable interaction that took place between his contemporaries.

I will try to accomplish this task using Kandinsky's evolution as a tool: by exploring how Anglada's art was a source of inspiration in Kandinsky's own artistic quest, I will attempt to demonstrate how Anglada was technically ahead of his time. By blurring images and, most important of all, by giving total preeminence to colours and forms over subject matter, Anglada approached abstraction, which would become one of the main currents of the century, if only because of the cultural domination imposed later by the supporters of the Modernist Paradigm. The inspiration that, as I try to



expose, Kandinsky obtained from Anglada in the former's lengthy efforts to achieve his own abstract style, acquired an artificial but immense relevance.<sup>2</sup>

As I shall point out, Kandinsky was not interested in the pictorial language of the nineteenth century: he was in search of something totally original that, having a link with his Russian past, would enable him to create a new artistic style to express the present and the future. In a letter to Gabrielle Münter in 1902, in which he expresses his need to communicate his emotions and his lack of technical means, Kandinsky writes:

So what do you have with me? It is not often that I can be happy. There is happiness living within me, I do enjoy a lot nature and life, and sometimes I say thank you from the bottom of my heart to the unknown power that gave me this joy. This joy is what you can read in my pictures. But what gives that to somebody else? I don't know how to say everything that is within me.<sup>3</sup>

I will show how Anglada's art was, to say the least, a pictorial language constant in the background of Kandinsky's creative effort from 1901 to 1910, and even later, presaging the latter's stylistic metamorphosis into Abstraction, which Kandinsky himself dated around 1911. I will argue that Anglada's art has had a more important role in Kandinsky's artistic evolution than hitherto assumed.

In order to achieve this, I shall develop my argument following equivalent steps to the ones I have used up to now in previous chapters. First, I will explain how Kandinsky, like Anglada, felt the malaise of his generation and searched for solutions through art. As I shall point out, Anglada and Kandinsky shared Symbolist roots, which were a first step towards Abstraction and the search for the "essence of things".<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> I use the term 'artificial' to emphasize the fact that the relevance of Anglada's innovations in the development of Abstraction become important due to the artificial wide spread that Abstraction had through its supporters who, as I have explained in the first chapter, imposed their ideas culturally. 'Artificial' is used here as opposed to 'natural', meaning that these ideas were imposed on artists from the outside instead of being the product of an internal need or natural evolution.

<sup>3</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter', 8 September 1902, p. 2. Munich. Gabriele Münter und Johannes Eichner Stiftung (GM-JE). Transcription.

<sup>4</sup> Examples of Kandinsky's terminology are: the essence of things, the inner-sound of things, the soul of things. All of them were created by Kandinsky in an effort to explain what art should aim for, namely to capture a concealed significance that was hidden behind the immediate impression of things. This idea, of an immaterial core behind the obvious, was inherited from Symbolism. Examples of this

Second, I will follow Kandinsky's evolution, dividing it into three chronological segments: from around 1900 until 1906; from 1906 until 1907, including his long stay in Paris; and finally his life in Murnau from 1908 until 1914. This last period was probably the most important for two reasons: first, because it would prove that Anglada's influence lasted at least ten years and, second, because during this period Anglada's use of colours can be strongly felt in Kandinsky's first incursions in the territory of non-objective art. I will point out that, although he lived abroad, Kandinsky always actively retained his Russian origins and conserved cultural links with his motherland, a channel through which, as we have seen, Anglada's name regularly flowed.

Wassily Kandinsky (Moscow, 1866, Neuilly-sur-Seine, France, 1944) started his professional life as an economist and lawyer in the University of Moscow; only at the age of thirty did he decide to become an artist. This background explains both his intellectual approach to art as well as his well-structured theories on the subject. If this intellectual approach has been an advantage for researchers, especially for art historians, I think that it also restrained Kandinsky's own artistic development.

Up until 1908, Kandinsky painted with short palette-knife strokes, a technique reminiscent of Impressionism. It not until he came back to Germany from his travels through Europe and North Africa with Gabriele Münter and started to live in Murnau with her, that he began to use long brushstrokes to synthesize images and to study the *Glasmalerei* technique.<sup>5</sup> This technique, which involved painting behind glass and

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conceptual trend that searched for what laid behind eternal appearances were Bergson's *élan vital* and Freud's unconscious.

Robert Rosenblum, 'Art in 1900: Twilight or Dawn', in *1900 Art at the Crossroads*, Exhibition Catalogue 16 January – 3 April 2000, Royal Academy of Arts London, (London: RA, 2000), p. 39.

<sup>5</sup> The synthetic character of representation used in the technique of painting behind glass was to be a source of inspiration for Kandinsky. Also the folkloric subjects and the evolution of medieval traditions were very much to the taste of Kandinsky and his friends. For more information on the history and characteristics of this technique, see:

which had originated in the Middle Ages to decorate church windows, became popular again in Germany in the nineteenth century, where it was used extensively in folkloric art. It attracted the attention of many artists, if only for its way of mixing colours.

Kandinsky himself stated that he did not arrive at the rational abstract artistic style that would make him famous until 1911. According to Kenneth Lindsay and Peter Vergo:

He asserted that he was the first to paint a non objective painting (he dated this work 1911 and located it in Russia), but later soft-pedaled the primacy of the act. In spite of his meticulously kept House Catalogue, this work remained innocent of title, catalogue number, and specific location. To this date no one has been able to identify with certainty the work he had in mind.<sup>6</sup>

In my opinion, the reason why it took Kandinsky so long to produce the style that would make him famous was precisely because of his rational approach, which made it more difficult for him to search for what he understood to be the “essence of things”.<sup>7</sup> To understand this one must remember that Kandinsky believed, as I shall show, that the act of creating a work of art was the product of an internal spiritual necessity on the part of the artist, something so strong that it would sometimes become unavoidable. The consequence was the need to channel those emotions into a material work of art by means of a specific technique. To find this technique the artist was allowed to search everywhere for inspiration, including in the works of fellow artists from the past and present, who had themselves succeeded in expressing their own concerns. After all, this fundamental necessity to find the inner essence of things, as Kandinsky would define it, was the common root of artists of all times. According to Kandinsky:

There exists, however, another outward similarity of artistic forms that is rooted in a deeper necessity. The similarity of inner strivings within the whole spiritual-moral atmosphere – striving after goals that have already been pursued, but afterward forgotten

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<sup>6</sup> ‘Glass Painting’, in *Encyclopedia Britannica online*,  
<[www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/235018/glass-painting](http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/235018/glass-painting)> [accessed 14 May 2009]

<sup>6</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> According to Kandinsky, an artist was, by definition, someone capable of feeling the essence of things.

– this similarity of the inner mood of an entire period can lead logically to the use of forms successfully employed to the same ends in an earlier period. Our sympathy, our understanding, our inner feeling for the primitives arose partly in this way. Just like us, those pure artists wanted to capture in their works the inner essence of things, which of itself brought about a rejection of the external, the accidental.<sup>8</sup>

By the time Kandinsky had written the above text in *On the Spiritual in Art*, it was already 1911 and he had therefore been trying for more than ten years to define his problem rationally as well as to master a satisfactory technique. He had taken so long specifically because he was applying a rational approach to a spiritual problem which, as we shall see, required emotional freedom in order to liberate the forces of creativity, a freedom which Kandinsky did not possess until 1908. Fineberg states:

Moscow University – where Kandinsky received all of his higher education – modeled itself on the supreme rationalism of the German universities. Yet Kandinsky had grown up in the mystic tradition of the Russian Orthodox Church. This produced a conflict between his deeply rooted religious mysticism and his highly developed intellectual precision, an irreconcilable juxtaposition which became a permanent feature of his character and his art.<sup>9</sup>

It is this difficulty, if not impossibility, of feeling and thinking at the same time that slowed down Kandinsky's artistic development. Because of his rational approach to creativity he had to look for inspiration in others. Kandinsky tried to express his emotions pictorially through the intellect and, as the intellect is a road that does not take the artist inside him/herself, Kandinsky was obliged to borrow pictorial solutions from others.<sup>10</sup> As far as Kandinsky was concerned, profiting from other artists' findings was more of a duty than a right. He stated:

His (the artist's) eyes should be always directed toward his own inner life, and his ears turned to the voice of internal necessity. (...) this is the only way of giving expression to mystical necessity. All means are moral if they are internally necessary. All means are sinful if they did not spring from the source of internal necessity.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Kandinsky, 1994, p. 128.

<sup>9</sup> Jonathan David Fineberg, *Kandinsky in Paris 1906-07*, (Essex: Bowker Press, 1975).

<sup>10</sup> Kandinsky has been often criticized for the open mistrust that, even he admitted, is produced by artists who write. According to Kenneth Lindsay and Peter Vergo, unfriendly critics would ask questions such as: Is such an artist using the recorded word to foster his own posterity? Does he write to compensate for an insufficient talent? Are his paintings more than a justification for his theories? These questions, of which Kandinsky was aware, are treated in the Introduction of the work on Kandinsky's complete writings on art edited by the above-mentioned authors: Lindsay and Vergo, p. 11, p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> Kandinsky, 'On the Spiritual in Art', 1994, p. 175, p. 176.

In contrast, as we have seen, Anglada felt the essence of things (to keep using Kandinsky's terminology) at almost the same time as he found the appropriate technique to express them. As I have shown in Chapter Three, Anglada was relatively quick to find the technique that would permit him to express his feelings on issues such as the redemptive power of colours, or his critical view of the new leisure culture. His style and technique became so successful because they expressed, in a personal way, his contemporaries' concerns. It was an authentic style precisely because it was the product of an inner necessity, again to use Kandinsky's term. Kandinsky knew that, yet he still could not apply it to himself:

(...), that the search for the personal, for style (...) not only cannot be arrived at intentionally, but also is not of such importance as we think today.<sup>12</sup>

In contrast to Kandinsky, Anglada did not rationalize painting or write about it unless he was put under pressure, for instance when he was under attack from the critics. As we have seen, he explained his art with words only *in extremis*. Anglada and Kandinsky also differed in the important fact that, during the period treated in this chapter, the former was an international celebrity whereas the latter, although his fame was slowly but progressively increasing, was not. Peg Weiss points out:

With the *Blaue Reiter* exhibitions of 1911-12, the *Blaue Reiter* almanach (which he edited together with his friend Franz Marc), and the publication of his own book, *Über das Geistige in der Kunst* in the same year, Kandinsky became a figure of international renown. Even prior to that, with the second exhibition of the Neue Künstlervereinigung in 1910, his international significance had been established.<sup>13</sup>

This is a very important issue, as it explains the uni-directional flow of artistic influence: Anglada was a star, whereas Kandinsky was still struggling to become established as an artist. However, these two very different characters have some common traits. The most important one is probably their optimism and their belief in

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>13</sup> Peg Weiss, *Kandinsky in Munich: The Formative Years*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 3.

the redemptive power of art. We have seen in past chapters this quality in Anglada.

Lindsay and Vergo corroborate something similar for Kandinsky:

His sense of time blew like the wind. Mysterious yet palpable, it gave him a bold view of history and the temporal aspects of the arts, and above all, to traits that often escape modern chronologists: optimism and the privilege of faith.<sup>14</sup>

This common luminous vision of life was at the root of Anglada's success with Kandinsky. At the end of the nineteenth century, the social and economic situation was much more extreme in Russia than it was in France. The distribution of wealth had changed in Russia due to industrial and economic development, which was based on scientific progress, but it still was very uneven. The new social class that developed – an industrial bourgeoisie – represented a relatively small percentage of the Russian population. Despite all its prosperity and although it proved to be crucial in the development of the arts, the Russian bourgeoisie did not achieve any personal or social improvements.<sup>15</sup> Kandinsky felt the disappointment of his generation:

Like many of the Russian modernists, particularly Bely, Kandinsky was familiar with scientific discovery, but his attitude towards it was ambiguous. On the one hand he admired its progress (...) on the other, he condemned it, identifying it with all the ills of nineteenth century positivism.<sup>16</sup>

Kandinsky felt his social conscience so strongly that he decided to abandon his passion for art and instead read Peasant Law and Economics at Moscow's University. According to Kandinsky, art was a pleasure that he could not afford. It was only in 1896, disappointed with the materialistic and scientific approaches to social reality, that Kandinsky chose the road of art.<sup>17</sup> The Symbolist spirit that predominated in Moscow's cultural life put down deep roots in Kandinsky's soul.<sup>18</sup> The application of Symbolist

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<sup>14</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 14.

<sup>15</sup> Maybe their greatest social achievement was according to Diaghilev to create a new social class that would eventually destroy them.

<sup>16</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 97.

<sup>17</sup> For more information on Kandinsky's early years chronology: 'Wassily Kandinsky Biography', in *notablebiographies.com*, <<http://www.notablebiographies.com/Jo-Ki/Kandinsky-Wassily.htm>> [accessed 14th of June 2009]

<sup>18</sup> *Kandinsky*, 'On the Spiritual in Art', 1994, pp. 96-97.

principles to art was seen by him as a way out: the only possible path to enlighten humanity and leading it out of its miseries. This redemptive quality of art was deeply shared by Anglada.

Kandinsky's inheritance from Symbolism is clear in his theories about what art should be. The main idea promoted by Symbolism – to avoid the obvious in appearances and search behind it for a more profound meaning – conforms to the structure of Kandinsky's thought. Kandinsky's early studies in Law and Economics are responsible for the precision in his thinking, but it was the musical education he received from his early childhood which was throughout his life to influence his artistic search even more deeply. Kandinsky found in the abstract capacity of the expression of music what painting should aim for: the inner meaning or resonance of things beyond external appearance. He maintained that as the soul lived inside the body you could reach it only via the physical senses. The effect that viewing a painting produced could be compared to a vibration in a musical instrument:

This effect would seem to be a sort of echo or resonance, as in the case of musical instruments, which without themselves being touched, vibrate in sympathy with another instrument being played. Such highly sensitive people are like good, much-played violins, which vibrate in all their parts and fibers at every touch of the bow.<sup>19</sup>

According to Lindsay and Vergo, this intellectual plan harmonized with the Symbolist wish to penetrate the essence of the objective world. In fact, with reference to the article that Kandinsky published in Odessa in 1911. "Wither the 'New' Art", they assert:

Generally speaking, "Wither the "New" Art" owes much to the ideas and ideals of the European and Russian Symbolists. Many of the references here betray Kandinsky's support of the Symbolist aesthetic, e.g., his admiration of the Symbolist "heroes" Boecklin, Maeterlinck, and Wagner, his praise for the "new" Russian literature (the prose and poetry of Andrei Bely, Alexandr Blok, Viacheslav Ivanov) And his allusions to the "godseeking" initiated by the philosopher Vladimir Solovev and popularized by the social historian Vasily Pankratov.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'On the Spiritual in Art', 1994, p. 158.

<sup>20</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 96.

Being an artist, Kandinsky's means of expression differed from writers: he had different tools for his expressive needs. According to him, it was through colour and form that the inner chords of the souls that have become deaf may vibrate again. Like a furious priest, Kandinsky wrote:

In this era of deification of matter, only the physical, that which can be seen by the physical "eye", is given recognition. The soul has been abolished as a matter of course.<sup>21</sup>

It is therefore very important for my research on Anglada whom Kandinsky chose to follow as his artistic models. For him, a true artist had, in addition to mere technique, the capacity to express an inner sound which communicates an emotion to viewers. Of course, the first thing and the most necessary condition of an artist was to be able to feel the inner sound, to have something spiritual, or *Geistiges*, to communicate:

Kandinsky regarded the artist as a person with special vision into the central spiritual issues of the age; he believed that art should advance the moral development of its times and that it should aspire to make its prophetic message immediately and universally accessible to its viewers. These are Symbolist attitudes, based on a concept of art as the revelation of another deeper reality which lay beyond the superficial appearance of things. The rise of Symbolism was accompanied by a whole corpus of art theory in Russia, Germany, and France that had already begun to indicate – sometimes overtly – the direction towards abstract art. Kandinsky's predisposition for these thoughts – as well as his utopian social beliefs – stemmed from his Russian intellectual origins, and received encouragement from the contemporary mood of Europe which was very sympathetic to these concerns.<sup>22</sup>

Anglada, as I shall explain, fulfilled most of Kandinsky's expectations, since he was breathing a similar Symbolist cultural air in Paris. As I have shown in Chapter Two, Anglada, too, in his paintings of the first part of the Parisian period (1894-1904), reflects very clearly the disappointment of economic progress in his socially critical paintings of prostitutes.

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<sup>21</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Whither the "New" Art - (Kuda idet "novoe" iskussvo)', *Odesskie Novosti*, Odessa, (1911)', in *Kandinsky, Complete Writings on Art*, ed. by Kenneth C. Lindsay, Peter Vergo, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), p. 98.

<sup>22</sup> Fineberg, 1975, p. 15.



The common spiritual ground on which both Anglada and Kandinsky stood is the starting point of my argument. Anglada's work was, using Kandinsky's terminology, a child of its age, a product of the cultural circumstances. The fact is that Anglada had profited from the comparative advantage of living in the capital of the arts, which from a cultural and artistic point of view was much more advanced and lively than Munich, where Kandinsky had started his career. Anglada had arrived in Paris in 1894 already trained as an artist. But, just after 1900, thanks to the very personal technique and style that he successfully developed, as I showed in Chapter Three, Anglada started building up his international name to a very surprising degree. Harris quotes the words of Manolo Hugué, friend of Anglada and Picasso, who remembered how, when he arrived in Paris around 1902, people wanted to shake hands with him just because he was a compatriot of Anglada.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast, and simultaneously, Kandinsky, who had arrived in Munich in 1896, was struggling with intermittent depression that, in his own words, prevented him from enjoying life and nature to the full. In his abundant correspondence to Gabrielle Münter from the period 1902 to 1904, his sufferings occupy an overwhelming proportion of the content of his letters, to the point that he asserts:

There is much I like very much, that I really like very much, but it doesn't touch me deep inside any more. The feeling of prayer has disappeared, maybe for the reason that I have too many people around. I am afraid that my nature (the newly framed), will have a negative impact on you. I don't want that. You say sometimes: 'always in sorrow' But, is it my fault? God knows, (I know it myself too) this deep sorrow rises within me and fills all my self.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Josep Pla, *Vida de Manolo Contada por ell Mateix*, (Barcelona: Catalònia, 1930), p. 124. Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles assert that this fact was confirmed to them personally by Marcial Olivar, friend of Manolo. It seems Manolo used to often recall this anecdote from his arrival in Paris with Picasso. Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1981), p. 225.

<sup>24</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter from Kallmünz to Munich', 17 June 1903, p. 2. GM-JE. Transcription.

Kandinsky always managed to overcome these dark moments thanks to his natural optimism, which made him rejoice in the wonders of nature or, as we shall see, in the art works of others. Regarding nature he tells Münter in the same letter:

But you are wrong: right now I don't see it all in a sad way, absolutely not! The big and solemn keeps staying (...) in front of me without any change. I feel the big serenity and the big self confidence in many aspects, strong as usual, and I am glad to see it. I want to say: I am sadly happy. Yes, yes, that is the expression. I am smiling to nature, to the whole, great nature as a whole.<sup>25</sup>

It was somewhere around 1902 that Kandinsky became definitely disappointed with the Munich Secession. Munich, which a few years prior to Kandinsky's arrival had been declared the German capital of the arts because of its liberal spirit which had permitted the development of new tendencies, had not fulfilled its promises. On the contrary, Berlin, the Prussian capital, had simultaneously developed a blossoming cultural life, to the dismay of the Bavarian artists. Kandinsky, aware of the situation, although with all his sympathies still with Munich, tried to expand his artistic field by exhibiting his work in Berlin at the Edward Schulte Kunst Salon. Schulte was more progressive and had connections in other German towns, which meant Kandinsky's art could reach a broader market. According to Kandinsky:

The Berlin Secession, having agreed to differ from the same Munich Secession from which it originally derived, since which time it has constantly disturbed the complacency of its Munich brethren, has for some years displayed in moderate numbers collections of these latest "Frenchmen." Two years ago Cassirer showed a big exhibition of the strongest and most "extreme" among them. All this may be just a temporary aberration in art, but still, you can't lock it out – that is the view of the Berliners. Unwillingly, Munich is obliged to follow suit, obsessed by the same old nightmare: the "decline of Munich as an artistic center." And Munich has that selfsame Berlin to thank for that nightmare.<sup>26</sup>

It is worth pointing out the use the words "aberration" and "nightmare" in the above quotation by Kandinsky to describe his opinion of the new French artists, because

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letters from Munich – *Apollon*, St Petersburg, (1909-1910)', in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 57.

his view of them will evolve throughout this chapter until, by the end, it will have completely transformed.

According to Jonathan David Fineberg, there were several reasons why Kandinsky had initially, in 1896, chosen Munich instead of Paris as the destination where he would pursue his new life as an artist. The first was that Munich enjoyed a very good reputation among Russian intellectuals. The second was that, thanks to an aunt, he was fluent in German. A further reason was that the Munich Secession had been, until then, ground breaking and Kandinsky shared its spirit. But this movement was soon to lose momentum, laying aside expectations without having accomplished its promises, like a political party governing after a successful campaign. This had led Kandinsky to found his own 'Phalanx' group, through which he kept in touch as much as possible with the artistic developments that were taking place in Paris.

It was after an exhibition at the Edward Schulte Kunst Salon in Berlin in 1902 that the names of Anglada and Kandinsky first appeared together. The article featuring the review was written by the famous contemporary art critic Hans Rosenhagen in the equally well-known art magazine *Kunst für Alle*. In it Rosenhagen classified Kandinsky as a gifted follower of Anglada's trend. According to Rosenhagen: "Wassily Kandinsky (Munich) imitates, not without success, the Spaniard Anglada."<sup>27</sup>

Rosenhagen was probably making a reference to paintings such as Kandinsky's *Promenade* (1902) (illustration 10 in Appendix III), among others, which represents some ladies out on a night stroll accompanied by a top-hatted man, and which could have taken inspiration from so many of Anglada's works that it would be pointless to list them all. Kandinsky would repeat the idea in later years with *Nightfall* (1905) (illustration 12 in Appendix III). Again, the same subject but with two ladies in

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<sup>27</sup> Hans Rosenhagen, 'Die Fünfte Ausstellung der Berliner Secession', *Kunst für Alle*, 1 July (1902), p. 43. Pollença. Archives Beatriz Anglada Huelin (BAH). Press cutting.

the foreground, one of them in white this time, could have well justified Rosenhagen's words. The similarities, especially regarding composition, with *Champs Elysées* (1904) and *Ver Luisant* (1904) (illustrations 20 and 16 in Appendix II), both by Anglada, are more than striking.

However, Rosenhagen's words travelled through time, annoying some of Anglada's biographers, such as Peg Weiss in the late 1970s, whereas others preferred to ignore them. I shall start with Dr Weiss, who, before arguing about the content of the previous quotation, attacks Rosenhagen by calling him "facile", among other niceties:

The intrepid Berlin critic, Hans Rosenhagen, also reviewed this exhibition for *Kunst für Alle*. Rosenhagen was not only intrepid, he was facile. It didn't seem to matter much to him what he said, so long as it was said with flair and a certain amount of "artistic" ambiguity. Thus his abbreviated comment on Kandinsky: "Wassily Kandinsky (Munich) imitates, not without success, the Spaniard Anglada." Though indeed, Anglada (1872-?), like Zuloaga, had recently come into fashion, it is very doubtful that Kandinsky had yet seen his work.<sup>28</sup>

Dr Weiss subsequently proceeds to explain how very unlikely it was that Kandinsky could have copied Anglada, arguing that he could not have known him from Munich. Clearly, the fact that Dr Weiss did not know the date of Anglada's death – 1959, only eighteen years before Weiss's book was published – proves that she did not have available all these data on Anglada. This probably also explains her lack of awareness of the fact that, at the time, Anglada was already enjoying enormous success in Paris and was fast becoming a sort of celebrity in the artistic *milieu*. She also does not seem to know that Anglada had in the previous year 1901, sold at least one painting for 4,000 francs to the Russian collector Morozov, who was a trend-setter in artistic matters, especially among his compatriots. In any case, this lack of valuable information is understandable given that, at the time of Weiss's publication on Kandinsky, Anglada's catalogue raisonné had not yet been published. Neither does Weiss seem aware of the fact that Anglada had been the subject of several articles in the Russian art

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<sup>28</sup> Weiss, 1979, p. 77.

magazine *Mir Iskusstva* (*The World of Art*) from 1901. This matter deserves special attention in order to measure its importance.

*Mir Iskusstva* was an art magazine that, as I wrote in Chapter Four, also gave its name to a revolutionary artistic movement whose aims were to resurrect Russian art (which was thought to have died from asphyxia under the weight of Realism) as well as to educate the Russian public by developing its artistic taste. It was co-founded by several artists but the leading role belonged to Sergei Diaghilev:

Sergei Diaghilev was indeed the moving force behind such ambitious projects as the publication of the World of art (*Mir Iskusstva*) magazine and the foundation of the artistic society of the same name, whose exhibitions did so much to define the face of Russian art at the turn of the century.<sup>29</sup>

According to Diaghilev's vision, there was an intrinsic value common to all true works of art and, although it took different forms according to the different historical moments in which art had materialized, artists should search for this common element. This view was totally revolutionary at the time and it implied an a-temporal conception of art that nearly emptied the idea of evolution of its sense. Petrova points out:

In the light of the modern practice of regarding the history of art as a chain of stadial events or stylistic metamorphoses, the World of Art would appear to be nothing more than an insignificant episode on the path from the naturalist school of the mid-nineteenth century to the avant-garde – belated Realism or undivulged Art Nouveau. It does not pay, however, to refer to the World of Art in the stadial-stylistic aspect. For just as they ran from time, so did the World of Art for the exact same reasons run from style (or perhaps they are merely the two sides of the one coin?). The artists sensed and acknowledged the existence of evolutionary laws, and sought refuge from the actions of these same laws in the World of Art – the world of art, the temple of art in which style loses its faculty and artists discourse with all ages, the meeting place for all those for whom – so it seemed to them – the time barrier was surmountable. Speaking in the language of modern aesthetics, Diaghilev can be said to have synchronized culture for its identification, arranging a semantic space in which everything exists simultaneously on the level of artistic will and intuition. The instant and eternity thus become equivalents.<sup>30</sup>

It was this meeting of artists of all ages which “authorized” them to look for inspiration not only in the past, but in other cultures as well as in the present. This

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<sup>29</sup> Yevgenia Petrova (ed.), *The Age of Diaghilev*, (St Petersburg: The Russian State Museum Palace Editions, 2001), p. 5.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

apparent contradiction, of searching for one's own artistic subjective identity in the identities of others, was cultural common ground at the beginning of the twentieth century. Anglada, in later years, would also reject the dominance of French art, thus forgetting where he had developed his own style. Russians, who sought their own identity, on the one hand rejected Western cultural influences and, on the other, imported foreign artists through their eminent collectors and Diaghilev. As I shall explain, the idea was to provide, through this imported art, a shock therapy that would set the heart of Russian artists beating again.

The goal of this cultural revolution was to achieve a broader social revolution. Diaghilev wrote using his visionary power again: "We are doomed to die so that a new culture might arise again. We who raised it will be destroyed by it."<sup>31</sup> According to Giulio Carlo Argan:

*Mir Iskusstva* or *World of Art* was the first Russian artistic movement, which lasted from the turn of the century to the First World War, that had an international inspiration. It was not a movement organized after a specific poetry – the Symbolist trend was predominant but simply because all European art of that period followed the Symbolist trend. It can be more specifically said that the *World of Art* represented the totality of Russian Modernism: as such, it cannot be over estimated its crucial role in the modernization and reform of Russian culture. Without any doubt, the *World of Art* movement vitally contributed to liberating Russian culture from the oppression of the cultural policy of the Tsarist government.<sup>32</sup>

Therefore, Anglada, who appeared in several issues of *Mir Iskusstva*, actively took part in the transformation of Russian art:

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<sup>31</sup> Diaghilev quoted by D. Burliuk, *Galdyaschie "benua" I novoe russkoe natsional'noe iskusstvo*. St Petersburg, 1913, p. 3, in Petrova, p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> *Mir Iskusstva* o *Mondo dell'Arte* è stato il primo movimento artistico russo che abbia avuto, tra la fine del secolo scorso e la prima guerra mondiale, un raggio internazionale. Non è stato un movimento organizzato attorno ad una precisa poetica\_ la tendenza simbolista è stata predominante semplicemente perché tutta l'arte europea di quel periodo era tendenzialmente simbolista. È più giusto dire che *Mondo dell'Arte* ha rappresentato tutto l'arco del modernismo russo: come tale, ha avuto un'importanza assai rilevante nel processo di aggiornamento e di riforma della cultura russa. Ha contribuito indubbiamente a liberarla dall'oppressione della politica culturale repressiva dei governi zaristi.

*Mir Iskusstva – Il mondo dell'Arte – Artisti Russi dal 1898 al 1924*, Catalogo a cura di Gabriella Di Milia con interventi di Giulio Carlo Argan e Maurizio Valenzi; Museo Diego Aragona Pignatelli Cortes, 15 Dicembre 1981 - 15 Febbraio 1982, (Naples: Società editrice Napoletana, 1981), (without page numbers).

Thanks to the stimulating influence of the *Mir Iskusstva* activities were started in every branch of the Russian world of art.<sup>33</sup>

*Mir Iskusstva* was published partly in French as well as in Russian because it was directed not only at the Russian colony in Paris but also at the wider French public that surrounded it. In fact Diaghilev himself was in Paris, reviewing exhibitions and sending articles to the magazine that he kept directing from abroad. His artistic impulse was phenomenal, overpowering the more conservative tastes of his friends and co-editors. According to Richard Buckle, Anglada was among the innovative artists who had been put forward by Diaghilev and whose technique shocked not only the plain bourgeois:<sup>34</sup>

Thus Diaghilev proclaimed in his twenty-eighth year the creed which was to guide him when his ballet company swept across the Western world, always on the crest of the latest wave. To him repetition was death. In art he would never grow old. In this he differed from his friend Benois, who increasingly accused the experimental artists of Moscow and Paris of trying to draw attention to themselves by showing off and shocking the bourgeois.

Diaghilev thought Besnard was the most interesting of the younger artists; indeed, rumours of his talent had already reached Russia, 'where little interest is taken in art, and modern art least of all'. He sent home for reproduction in the next number not only two Besnards but works by his recent favourites, Zuloaga and Anglada.<sup>35</sup>

Kandinsky also wrote an article for *Mir Iskusstva* in 1902.<sup>36</sup> All these facts make it seem highly improbable that Kandinsky would not have been aware of the existence of a rising artist like Anglada. Kandinsky, although he had left Russia in 1896, was deeply interested in Russian issues throughout his life.

Although Kandinsky lived in Munich, he continued to feel bound by ties of sympathy to events in Russia. That is apparent not only from his reports written for Diaghilev's periodical *Mir Iskusstva* and later for Makovsky's periodical *Apollo*, but from his own artistic development. From 1903 onwards, motifs from the world of old Russian tales, songs and legends crop up increasingly commonly in his works. Their closeness to the motifs used by painters Mikhail Vrubel, Ivan Bilibin and Nikolai Konstantinovich

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<sup>33</sup> Arnold Haskell, *Diaghileff – His Artistic and Private Life*, (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1955). p. 124.

<sup>34</sup> As I shall show, Diaghilev published works of Anglada for the first time in 1901.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Bukle, *Diaghilev*, (London: Weidenfeld, 1993), p. 66.

<sup>36</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Correspondence from Munich ("Korrespondentsiia iz Miunkhena")', *Mir Iskusstva* (1902), in Lindsay and Vergo, p.45.

Rerikh, who had been pursuing Russian traditions in their works for some years, is astonishing.<sup>37</sup>

Russian culture was close to Kandinsky's heart, as his own art demonstrates. No matter how far he travelled – Munich, Tunis or Paris – Kandinsky always produced art related to his motherland. Anglada's work was particularly attractive to both Diaghilev and Kandinsky because it was a striking example of how tradition (Spanish, in this case) and modern art could be successfully combined, something that constantly occupied their minds. Buckle writes of Diaghilev:

He had begun to reveal to a small circle of Russians the potential of the younger generation of artists, and with Benois he had begun to make his more intelligent fellow-countrymen a little conscious of their heritage from the early nineteenth, the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries and from medieval times – for in Russia the Middle Ages only ended with Peter the Great. But he saw nothing except artistic chaos under the present regime, and he longed to establish order.<sup>38</sup>

Buckle does not recognize the importance of Anglada, although all through his book he seems to support the idea of Diaghilev's genial gift for visualizing art and the future, as well as his immense talent for appreciating global artistic quality in all artistic fields. This is not surprising, as it is widely accepted that during his relatively short but intense professional life, Diaghilev was instinctively attracted to men of genius. He "discovered" painters, choreographers, composers and dancers, as well as men of letters such as Tchekhov.<sup>39</sup>

Still, according to Buckle, Diaghilev might have exaggerated the talent of some of his intellectual protégés, such as Anglada and Denis, stating that:

If Diaghilev were to be judged solely as a propagandist for the Impressionists and the Post-Impressionists, his achievement is not to be despised. From the beginning of *The World of Art*, he had given a showing to Degas, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro and Sisley, either in the magazine or in exhibitions, or both. In Vol. XI, Nos 8-9, though we may think Diaghilev was over-generous in space to such temporary favourites as Anglada and Maurice Denis, he reproduced seven Gauguins – a year before the big Gauguin

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<sup>37</sup> Helmut Friedel, Annegret Hoberg (eds.), *Vasily Kandinsky*, with texts by Evelyn Benesch, Christian Derouet, Helmut Friedel, Annegret Hoberg, Noemi Smolik, Reinhard Spieler and Christian Wolsdorff, (Munich/Berlin/London/New York: Prestel, 2008), p.39.

<sup>38</sup> Bukle, pp. 66-67.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.



retrospective in 1905 – one Cézanne, one Lautrec, three Vuillards, two Bonnards, two works by the *pointilliste* Cross (Seurat was never reproduced in *The world of Art*, though mentioned in articles translated from Meyer-Gräfe), one Van Gogh and one Matisse. Only the collectors Shchukin and Ivan Morosov [sic] were comparable as pioneers of new movements in the cultural backwater of Russia.<sup>40</sup>

It is absolutely extraordinary that a biographer of Diaghilev such as Buckle could have classified Anglada as a “temporary favourite” if one takes into account the number of publications relating to Anglada that appeared in *Mir Iskusstva*. Anglada’s works were published throughout the four most important years, from 1901 to 1904, during which Diaghilev was the leader of the art magazine as well as of the group. If we compare the number of Anglada’s publications with that of some of the above-mentioned, such as the seven Gauguins, it seems unsustainable to call him a “temporary favourite”. The figures speak for themselves:

The magazine *Mir Iskusstva* published 14 works of Anglada-Camarasa during four years (1901-1904).

In 1901, in number 8-9, *Danza española*, of the 1901 Salon in Paris.

In 1902, in number 9-10, *Danza Española*, *La Noche*, *Caballos después de la Lluvia*, *Andares Gitanos*. All of them from the 1902 Salon in Paris.

In 1903, in number 9, *Flores de París* from the 1903 Salon in Paris.

In 1904, in number 8-9, *Loire Fuller*, *En la Cafetería*, *Vendedoras de Legumbres*, *Boceto* (male torso), *En el Palc*; *Caballo*; *En el Restaurante de Noche La Morfinómana*. Possibly all of them from the 1904 Salon in Paris.<sup>41</sup>

As has been mentioned above, Kandinsky kept a close relationship with his Russian colleagues, many of whom belonged to the *Mir Iskusstva* movement. He published his first article, “Critique of Critics”, (“*Kritika Kritikov*”), in Moscow in 1901 in the Russian newspaper *Novosti dnia*. In this article, he writes about the inability of Russian critics to understand and appreciate modern art. Kandinsky here reveals his own artistic preferences, which paralleled the sympathies of Diaghilev and his friends.

It was this article that probably triggered Kandinsky’s career as an art critic and led, in the following year, to the publication of another article, “Correspondence from

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 80.

<sup>41</sup> Yuri R. Saveliev, ‘Anglada-Camarasa en Rusia’, in *El Món d’Anglada-Camarasa*, Exhibition Catalogue, Caixaforum Barcelona, 29 November 2006 – 19 March 2007, Caixaforum Palma 5 May – 29 July 2007, (Barcelona: Fundación La Caixa, 2007), p. 42.

Munich” (“Korrespondentsiia iz Miunkhena”), this time in *Mir Iskusstva*. This last article consolidated Kandinsky’s career as a writer; he persevered in his efforts to theorize art throughout the rest of his life. In their introduction to this article in *Kandinsky – Complete Writings on Art*, Lindsay and Vergos declare:

Kandinsky was not a member of Sergei Diaghilev’s circle, and “Correspondence from Munich” was his only written contribution to Diaghilev’s journal *Mir Iskusstva* [The World of Art], published in St. Petersburg between 1898 and 1904. He was, however, more closely associated with the World of Art movement than one might think. Gabriele Münter recalled that Kandinsky “rarely spoke of his earlier Russian associations,” but that he “did mention Bakst from time to time.” His Russian “fairy tale” pictures have an evident affinity with the illustrations made for *Mir Iskusstva* by artists such as Aleksandr Benois and Ivan Bilibin. [...]Moreover, Kandinsky’s style as critic is somewhat reminiscent of Diaghilev’s own[...]in the first issue of *Mir Iskusstva*. This influence persisted in later years; in *On the Spiritual in Art*, (...).<sup>42</sup>

There are many parts of the last quotation that deserve special attention, the most important being the overall idea of how deeply Kandinsky was impregnated with the ideas shared by all Diaghilev’s circle and how Diaghilev’s influence can be traced in Kandinsky’s ulterior theoretical art writings. All this only adds more weight to my argument that Kandinsky must have not only been familiar with Anglada’s work through Diaghilev, but most probably also shared the admiration for him that his friends from the *Mir Iskusstva* movement demonstrated. It is also worth noticing that Münter states that Kandinsky never mentioned people and artists who had been important to him in later years. This was part of the image that Kandinsky liked to give of himself and explains the lack of personal references to be found in his writings on art, a point which will be addressed further on.

Going back to the subject of Dr Weiss’s initial strong disagreement with Anglada’s contemporary, the famous art critic Hans Rosenhagen, we find a surprising change of direction. It is interesting that immediately after arguing how very unlikely it was for Kandinsky to have copied Anglada on the grounds that Kandinsky would have

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<sup>42</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p.45.

been unaware of Anglada's work, Weiss admits that Rosenhagen was, after all, not so far from the truth. In her own words:

On the other hand, the comparison (between Kandinsky and Anglada) was not entirely without merit. Kandinsky's *Bright Air*, with its light-crinolined ladies in a sunny park had certain thematic and even structural affinities with Anglada's paintings of similar motifs. Indeed Anglada, too, was a "gourmet of color," and used it non realistically as a compositional device. Nevertheless, in such Anglada works as *The White Peacock* or *Evening Party*, the subject matter is always identifiable as contemporary, whereas Kandinsky at this period, in paintings such as *Bright Air*, chose nostalgic or "timeless" themes, often selecting motifs from bygone centuries; Biedermeier ladies or medieval knights. Even his landscapes, such as *Old City*, shown at this exhibition, were removed from reference to daily life. *Old City* was in fact a view of the ancient town of Rothenburg-on-the-Tauber, noted for its picturesque medieval walls and turrets. Sometimes Anglada, too, chose a nostalgic theme, as in his *Spanish Peasants from Valencia*.<sup>43</sup>

I shall treat the question of the subject matter in depth later when I consider Kandinsky's stay in Paris. Here I will only point out the fact that it was the trend among Russian artists, especially those related with the Mir Iskusstva movement, to choose subjects from the past, from either fairytales or medieval times. This can be verified just by looking at the *Mir Iskusstva* magazines from 1901 to 1904, where a large percentage of the works by Russian artists such as Alexander Benois or Nicholas Roerick depict these Russian subjects from the past. Therefore Kandinsky was not being particularly innovative; he was just following an important trend. In Anglada he saw the possibility of painting his Russian themes in a modern way, with the help of a different technique. As Kandinsky himself later explained, he was looking for a pictorial language that would permit him to speak from soul to soul. Through art, the viewer should achieve a resonance in the strings of his own soul that would set him in tune with that of the artist. This relatively complicated intention was not yet clear in those years, even to Kandinsky himself. What he knew, for certain, at the time is that he wanted to see an artist who was sincere as far as the treatment of colour was concerned. He rejected, as he put it, artists who, by pretending to maintain the fresh expression of sketches, would

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<sup>43</sup> Weiss, 1979, p. 77.

just produce a fake. In *Mir Iskusstva* Kandinsky criticized some of his contemporaries on that point:

To comply with (...) this fashion, artists pile up heaps of colors and apply them with quite extraordinary flourish – supposedly to express their personalities. There can be nothing more distasteful and harmful than this kind of artificial technical fad. Real personality does not submit to this kind of approach, but expresses itself in its own terms, eventually demanding attention in its own right.<sup>44</sup>

Adding Rosenhagen's opinion and Kandinsky's thoughts, it can be deduced that the latter found the sincerity of execution that he was looking for in Anglada's work.

I will proceed now to study chronologically the opportunities that Kandinsky had to approach Anglada's art. For the sake of clarity in my explanation of Anglada as a potential source of inspiration for Kandinsky, I will divide my study on Anglada's influence on Kandinsky into three phases: first, the years 1901 to 1906, when a disorientated Kandinsky was inspired more by Anglada's approach as a whole; second, his Parisian months, from 1906 to 1907, when he was visibly inspired by Anglada's technique as it was applied to folkloric subject matter; and third, from 1908 to 1914, Kandinsky's Murnau years that end with the outbreak of the First World War. I will try to prove that in some of Kandinsky's semi-abstract compositions from the Murnau period, clear similarities with Anglada's use of colours can be found. And, at least as relevant, I will try to establish that what in Kandinsky's opinion was his most important theatrical piece, the *Yellow Sound*, was clearly inspired by Meyerhold's theatre, Wagner's music and, most relevant for my argument, two of Anglada's largest paintings.

By the time of Rosenhagen's reference, it appears that Kandinsky was trying to use white in a simple imitation of Anglada. This simplicity might have been achieved in an effort of synthesis: Kandinsky here pushes Anglada's technique to the extreme. In

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<sup>44</sup> Kandinsky, 'Correspondence from Munich', in Lindsay and Vergo, pp. 49-50.

*Bright Air* and *Old City*, Kandinsky painted a white dress using short brushstrokes that, instead of blending, are so well delineated that they could be accurately counted. The use of colours is also extremely synthesized, as Kandinsky uses only white and pink, for instance in *The Bride* (1903) (see illustration 11 in Appendix II). A radically different explanation of the final result would be that the synthesis was not done on purpose and that Kandinsky was again thinking, as opposed to seeing: he would unsuccessfully summarize what he thinks he sees as pink and white. Whatever the reason, the final result lacks the richness of Anglada's whites in paintings like *The White Peacock* (see illustration 15 in Appendix II) or *Evening Party*, and paintings that were famous among his contemporaries precisely for their complexity and vibration and that were produced through the combination of many neighbouring colours in the spectrum. Kandinsky did not believe yet in the total independence of colour from the subject. For many years to come he would not use colours freely and independently of subject matter; he would need the subject as an excuse to use a colour. This is why in the case of *Bright Air* he also used the lady's dress as an ideal subject for white. Kandinsky would describe many years later this dilettante (in his own words) period of his life:

At the same time I felt within myself incomprehensible stirrings, the urge to paint a picture. And I felt dimly that a picture can be something other than a beautiful landscape, an interesting and picturesque scene, or the portrayal of a person. Because I loved colors more than anything else, I thought even then, however confusedly, of color composition, and sought that objective element which could justify the choice of colors.<sup>45</sup>

In Anglada's paintings, Kandinsky found the effect he was looking for – they produced an inner resonance in his soul – something Kandinsky thought had been lost in Western art that could be found in the Oriental origins of Spanish culture and that Kandinsky wanted to revitalize in his own paintings. In Kandinsky's opinion:

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<sup>45</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'The Cologne Lecture', in *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ed. by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), p. 90.

It is precisely this general “inner tone” that the West lacks. Indeed, it cannot be helped: we have turned, for reasons obscure to us, away from the internal toward the external. And yet, perhaps we Westerners shall not, after all, have to wait too long before the same inner sound, so strangely silenced, reawakens within us and, sounding forth from the innermost depths, involuntarily reveals its affinity with the East – just as in the very heart of all peoples, in the now darkest depth of depths of the spirit, they shall resound one universal sound, albeit at present inaudible to us – the sound of the spirit of man.<sup>46</sup>

If Kandinsky extracted so much inspiration from Anglada’s works, as I shall attempt to demonstrate now, it would prove that he found Anglada’s artistic forms suitable to express his own inner tone. Kandinsky thought that:

Our point of departure is the belief, (...) that the artist, apart from those impressions that he receives from external phenomena, continually accumulates experiences from within his own inner world, that he must seek artistic forms suitable to express the interaction and interrelation of all these elements, striving to liberate these forms from everything accidental, in order to express all the more forcefully only that which is essential, in short, the search for artistic synthesis.<sup>47</sup>

Borrowing some of Anglada’s technical elements in order to construct his own technique is therefore consistent with Kandinsky’s theories regarding the need to seek artistic forms and liberate them from the accidental. Kandinsky chose those where he thought that he felt his soul vibrate on a similar wavelength to that of the Spanish artist.

Unfortunately for my research, Kandinsky chose not to leave written traces of all the artists who had impressed him. Therefore, I have had to follow smaller and more hidden paths to compensate for what was missing in his theoretical writings on art. Also, these theoretical writings, such as *The Letters from Munich* (1908-1909), *On the Spiritual in Art* (1911), or *The Blue Rider* (1912), are posterior to 1909, whereas the letters that I will quote are all prior to 1908. In these personal letters from Kandinsky to Münter, which have not yet been published and only one of which Peg Weiss quotes in her book, symptoms of this affinity with Anglada can be found. As I have said, they were all written prior to Kandinsky’s main publications on art theory. In them,

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<sup>46</sup> Kandinsky, ‘Letters from Munich’, in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 59.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 62.

Kandinsky uses a totally different style, seeming more relaxed while writing them, expressing thoughts as they spring to his mind. This spontaneity gives them a special value regarding the authenticity of Kandinsky's feelings or emotions. In contrast, his theoretical writings are proof of an enormous effort to rationalize his thoughts on art. As we have seen in the quotations, Kandinsky's terminology is not scientific, which subtracts clarity to the intellectually polished final publication. It is only in these private letters that Kandinsky, who was extremely structured in his theoretical writings, does not follow a clear plan, but jumps from one subject to another. Kandinsky also uses abbreviations to save time and space which, together with the often incorrect German syntax, complicates the understanding of those intense but very personal messages. However, what is clear in these letters is that Kandinsky's mood, far from being even, fluctuates from melancholy, self-doubt and depression to euphoria and exultation.

In spite of these difficulties, the study of Kandinsky's letters to Münter reveals an important fact: the pessimism that often burdened Kandinsky's spirit could be suddenly lightened when he saw what he took to be a true work of art. To prove my point, I shall quote the first part of a letter where Kandinsky seems exultant thanks to the effect that music and art produce in him during a visit to Vienna:

I really liked it quite a lot: this chaos – a lot of running through the city, eating here and then there, after the old masters (in the gallery) music for parades, after the 'Kuenstlerhaus' – the Secession, after 'Hagerlund' – modern opera 'Louise' (silly French thing). Wind, sun, rain, church music, comedy in the 'Burgtheater', etc, etc. If Huisigen would ask me now how I am (do you know how worried he looks then?), I would say frankly: ve-ery [sic] well! I know since long time ago what fine and solemn guys the old masters are. But now, I think, I really have felt it (mixed up) and have understood. Pure music, heavenly, music of the angels! Like magic things come up in front of you, so real, completely natural [sic]. Simple, earnest, deep, non-human.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter in Munich', 16 April 1903. Munich. GM-JE. Transcription.

After this text one can understand Kandinsky's future use of colours in his compositions. Unfortunately, these positive vibrations lose intensity during the course of the letter and he finishes in a rush, before his daydream is over:

(...) Ella (Münter), you can reproach me anything but that! I am not clever. More stupid with my old-fashioned idealism. When this thought comes up I can't find a solution and finish with what I've started with. We both are too weak. Until now I only have seen two happy people. And maybe you could be the third, if it were not for me. Who knows? No, I really have to tell you something about me! I have to, even if it is not easy. Like this my good mood is fading away. Adieu, adieu, my dear, little, tender Ella.<sup>49</sup>

Alterations in Kandinsky's mood can be found in many of these letters. This is not the place to make a full study of this part of Kandinsky's correspondence to Münter, which could be by itself the subject of a dissertation. I will therefore summarize the apparent motives that produced these changes by saying that the majority of Kandinsky's happy moods were caused by the joys of nature and art in all its expressions, but particularly by the plastic arts and music. On the other side, Kandinsky's grey moods were provoked by personal insecurities regarding his art as well as his own capacity to produce happiness in others, or doubts about Münter's feelings; on other occasions, he wondered how "accustomed" he was getting to Münter or if Münter would ever be able to get "accustomed" to him, or if any of the open possibilities would be at all beneficial, especially to himself. The following extract might serve as an example:

It is not good that I got so very used to you. I feel sad. In this mood I sometimes feel weak. The whole heart is full of sadness: I feel sorry for everything. Do you also have such silly feelings, sometimes? This is when I want to be a musician. But it is also in most of my works: hidden deep there in the joy, sorrow shows its face. And that is all right for me: The World, the whole, big, eternal World is an eternal joy for me. Everything will be explained one day. The insinuations that Nature tells me will be transformed into a big, clear answer. The sorrow that is within this joy is the reflection of my poor little soul.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter, addressed to p. A. Fr. Dr. Münter, Marktstrasse, Herford i/W', 7 May 1903. GM-JE. Transcription.



According to some scholars, the constant state of emotional unrest was related to Kandinsky's temporal incapacity to find a definitive artistic style for himself. David Fineberg claims that he did not find the necessary emotional stability until 1908, when he dared to live together with Münter in Murnau, in the house that he convinced Münter to buy with her dowry. This was the beginning of what became probably the most productive period of Kandinsky's life. This was when he definitely liberated himself from the Impressionist technique and started to paint landscapes in a more Fauvist style, which would eventually lose its object, becoming what we now know as Abstraction.

This explains why, at the time he wrote the aforementioned letters in 1903, Kandinsky was still in an emotional turmoil that prevented him from finding his way and looked for inspiration in his artistic surroundings. It was in this state of mind that he visited the Biennale in Venice in 1903. There he saw Anglada's paintings, which had provoked a considerable scandal, even if that had added only more shine to his enormous success.<sup>51</sup> In the following paragraph, which is part of the only letter quoted by Peg Weiss, Kandinsky mentions Anglada, perceiving happiness in the situation as a whole, without differentiating between colours and music or between life and art. In fact for Kandinsky these were all different dimensions of the same non-objective expression of life:

Colour, colour! Noble, dark shining, flashy bright and deeply harmonic colour, you show as clearly as possible how poor, weak, dirty our palette is! By God! And this dusk, where blue, violet, gold, orange, copper and flat green develop a deeply sensuous symphony. I don't dare to open my painting kit here and don't want to paint anything here. God, how poor our modern art is. And even being it 10 times a Zuloaga, or twenty times an Anglade (?) and Mesnard (?) and Besnard and Renoir and Cottet. My thoughts mix up and the best I can do is at least not to think in painting right now. From 9.30 music has been playing on San Marco square. Elegant ladies (a lot of fans and jewellery) and gentlemen are coming and going, were sitting at the small marble tables in the

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<sup>51</sup> As a consequence of this success in 1903, in what was Anglada first exhibition at the Biennale, he was to be offered a special salon for his works in the following Biennale of 1905. It was at that time that Anglada obtained the much sought-after award of Maestro de la Biennale de Venezia.

cafeterias drinking colourful things. People participated in the music, whistled and clapped. The young guys were talking so fast and full of temperament.<sup>52</sup>

It is worth noticing the fact that Kandinsky admits to having a dull palette compared to Anglada, among others. The stimulating effects on Kandinsky of art, colour and music increase while he writes. He seems to have an urge to communicate to Münter his “joie de vivre” while it lasts. Immediately afterwards in the same letter he writes:

Yesterday evening there were serenades on the canale grande. Hundreds of gondolas accompanied big boats decorated with paper lanterns, where the musicians and singers were sitting. Thousands of lights were reflected in the dark, dark water. The moon laid its trembling mercury way through the whole canal. Yes! And San Marco! It was morning mass and I entered by chance. You have to see that, hear that. What can I write about it.<sup>53</sup>

These descriptions are particularly interesting because they support my argument by containing three important ideas that deserve special attention. The main one, the radical change of mood triggered in Kandinsky mainly by art, has already been mentioned. It was therefore likely that Kandinsky’s high spirits resulted essentially from the stimulus that art produced in him. In fact, these letters betray Kandinsky’s constant fear of losing his capacity of feeling and/or praying.<sup>54</sup> In a letter written prior to this trip to Venice, he tells Münter:

And I felt sad – on the way everything seemed different today. The colours were incredibly earnest, deep, all of them deep tones, tones of cello. I went against the wind and thought and thought about you, about my house, the passed times, all the things I have lived, the feelings I have lost on the way. Nature and my thoughts sounded together.<sup>55</sup>

The second idea is how Kandinsky not only mixed colours and sounds but also superimposed different moments. Thus, he mixes the ecstasy provoked by the colours and sounds of the gondolas the previous night with those of mass in San Marco in the

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<sup>52</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, ‘Letter from Venice to Gabriele Münter’, 9 September 1903, p. 3. GM-JE. Transcription.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> See quotation associated to footnote number 9

<sup>55</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, ‘Letter to Gabriele Münter from Munich to Hotel Rote Amsel, Kallmünz b. Regensburg’, 23 July 1903. GM-JE. Transcription.

morning. This demonstrates that Kandinsky could also feel, not only grasp through rational thought, the idea of timelessness promoted by, amongst others, the Mir Iskusstva movement. This idea also included the concept that different kinds of artistic manifestations belonging to different cultures or epochs had something authentic in common. Anglada, in the eyes of his contemporaries, also had a musical way of mixing colours. According to Samuel Hutchinson Harris:

The picture, in fact, is orchestral, and Anglada uses colour as Wagner used instruments, in a manner which appeared extravagant in his day, but which gave a new impetus to music. Before these decorative pictures, if, releasing ourselves from the enchantment, we relapse into an analysis of the cause of it, we may visualize a conductor, with brush for baton, solicitous, not to concentrate the attention on a point, not to throw into prominence the brilliance of the prima donna's voice, but to evoke a scintillating note from there, and here, and there, binding them to contribute to one effect.<sup>56</sup>

Anglada's paintings provoked in his contemporaries a clear vision of the similarities between musical and chromatic harmonies. It is not surprising that Kandinsky, who had the capacity, according to most of his biographers and as we have also seen in his private correspondence, to associate sounds with tonalities, would be deeply impressed by Anglada's works.

Finally, Kandinsky's appreciation of the bright colours of the lanterns or the moon reflecting in the "dark, dark" water is particularly noteworthy as regards Anglada, as the colours used in Anglada's paintings of gardens at night could be associated with the mixture of lights reflected in the lagoon. It would not be far-fetched to suggest that Kandinsky was particularly appreciative of the contrast between bright colours against a dark background after having contemplated Anglada's paintings. As we have seen in former chapters, Anglada acquired his fame through his night scenes of Paris or *fiestas flamencas*, where colours stand out from the darkness of the entourage.<sup>57</sup> The best example, with which Kandinsky was familiar as it had been exhibited in Berlin in 1902,

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<sup>56</sup> Samuel Hutchinson Harris, *The Art of H. Anglada Camarasa – A Study in Modern Art*, (London: The Leicester Galleries, 1929), p. 15, and translation p. 14.

<sup>57</sup> Anglada exhibited at the Venice Biennale of 1903, *En el Teatro and Gitane*. Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 309.

is *Caballos Después de la Lluvia (Horses After the Rain)* (1902) (see illustration 8 in Appendix II). In this painting the colourful reflection of lights against dark puddles can be appreciated.

For all these reasons it seems highly probable, as Rosenhagen first claims and Weiss partially and unwillingly later admits, that Kandinsky found the paintings of Anglada extremely inspiring. In this chapter I am not claiming that Anglada was Kandinsky's only source of inspiration: my point is that due to Anglada's "avant-gardism" at the time, Kandinsky found in him something stimulating from a technical and artistic perspective, something with which to experiment; and I am using the fact that Kandinsky was artistically running behind Anglada to support Anglada's "avant-gardism".

However, in spite of all the doubts he had about himself, Kandinsky felt that he could overtake those artists whom he admired. As we have seen in the quoted paragraphs from his letters, he was striving for a means of expression, still undiscovered, that would take him artistically even further:

Maybe I am over estimating myself or being arrogant if I don't want to mix myself into the crowd, but on the other side it is also humbleness, because I consider the circle too high for myself.<sup>58</sup>

Kandinsky admired in art the freedom of expression that he did not have. He wrote to Münter from Berlin:

The old teacher, Rembrandt, I also admired him again and again. When you look at these things you really get into the mood and feel the courage to be honest and (...) to keep your artists soul and not to sell yourself to the devil by no means. And the old Greek art! And the Egyptians! And the old Germans! And Italians! Heavens!<sup>59</sup>

It is more difficult to know how familiar Kandinsky was with Anglada's evolution and career during the years preceding his stay in Paris in 1906. Between 1904

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<sup>58</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter, from Munich to Hier, Schackstr', 23 February 1904. GM-JE. Transcription.

<sup>59</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter from Hotel Berlin to Pension "Belle Vue", Theresienstr. Munich', 31 October 1903. GM-JE. Transcription.

and 1906, Kandinsky spent most of the time traveling around Europe and North Africa with Münter, so there is no correspondence between them. However, considering Kandinsky's efforts to stay informed about the latest developments in art, it is not unrealistic to assume that he was well aware of Anglada's international success, which peaked during those years. In his 1957 biography of Kandinsky, Grohmann acknowledges Kandinsky's particular interest in Parisian exhibitions, although he rejects its relevance:

Kandinsky must have seen these exhibitions, and it would be natural to suppose that in his groping frame of mind at that time, he would have borrowed from the French avant-garde. But this was not the case.<sup>60</sup>

Grohmann obtained all his information regarding this matter directly from Kandinsky, who had bitter memories of his stay in Paris and dismissed the influence of the art that could be seen in the French capital. However, for someone as well-informed as Kandinsky, it would have been difficult not to have "seen" Anglada, whose works were exhibited in the following places during those years: Paris, London, Venice and Munich, 1903; Düsseldorf, 1903-1904; Berlin, Paris, Dresden, London and Vienna, 1904; Munich, Venice and Paris, 1905; Paris (Salon d'Automne), Barcelona and Berlin, 1906. And, as I shall now try to show, the influence of Anglada on Kandinsky can hardly be dismissed.

Articles on Anglada's style and technique abounded and could be read by those who had not attended his exhibitions. Anglada's exhibitions were amply reviewed and provoked different reactions, more than half of which were critical. Disapproval was provoked by Anglada's unrealistic style, his use of unnatural colours and his complete disregard for anatomy and drawing.

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<sup>60</sup> Will Grohmann, *Kandinsky: Life and Work*, (New York: Abrams, 1957), p. 48.

During the years that Kandinsky was traveling, and even more during the latter's stay in Paris, Anglada had intensified his relationship with the Russian community, which continued to grow closer until the beginning of the First World War. As I have pointed out before, this intensity was based on the fertile cultural common ground that Anglada shared with the Russians, an Eastern source. Samuel H. Harris quotes Ricardo Guiraldes, a friend of Anglada, in the following paragraph:

Anglada does not know, or want to experience, this mournful Castilian procession. His Spain is Eastern and sings in forms and colours a sane optimism of beauty. He does not believe, according to the maxims of an extravagant romanticism that profundity is alone met with in the sorrowful excavation of the anticipations of death that man carries within him. Deeper is the lyric of love, sung in the wild ecstasy of passion.<sup>61</sup>

Anglada's Orientalism and sane optimism of beauty must have seemed particularly attractive to an insecure and tortured Kandinsky. Harris quotes another of Anglada's contemporaries in a colourful stew of images where only Egyptians, much beloved by both Anglada and Kandinsky, as well as by many of their contemporaries, are missing:

One day Anglada felt the magnetic attraction of the beautiful things of vanity fair, and began to love them for themselves. Vaguely there stirred in his blood that inexplicable ecstasy in the presence of beautiful realities, and it would seem as though there spoke in him the ancestral and mysterious voices of Oriental grandfathers and Greek great-grandfathers, arrived before they became Greeks from the Far East, where the eyes, avaricious of light and sensation, sought out every marvel of the enchanted seas and of an earth filled with light; where the universal opulence of the varied world suggested beautiful creatures, iridescent dream colours, and an infinity of rhythmic lines, that gave immortal and sumptuous forms to the ships of the valiant Argonauts, to temples, and to monuments, and the fineness of tracery, fanciful and of delicate beauty, to polished and painted walls, as to fine shot silks, with the shades of a feather, of the sky at sunset, and of precious stones. And all the exaltation of nature took a supreme synthesis in man, and life was a magnificent and gay exaltation of the things of this world.<sup>62</sup>

Let us now turn our attention to the period between the summer of 1906 and the autumn of 1907, the time Kandinsky lived in Paris. This short period is particularly important because it is when clear quotations from Anglada's oeuvre can be found in Kandinsky's works.

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<sup>61</sup> Harris, p. 15, and translation p. 81.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

Kandinsky and Münter arrived in Paris around the summer of 1906 and after only one month in town they moved to nearby Sèvres, where they stayed until the autumn of 1907. This period of Kandinsky's development was overlooked by his early biographers, such as Grohmann, Eichner and Lindsay. According to Fineberg, the reason is that Kandinsky downplayed what for him had been an unhappy period. It was not until 1975 that the importance of this Parisian experience on Kandinsky's subsequent evolution was reconsidered, in Jonathan David Fineberg's biography:

Grohmann made no mention of the other artists in these shows or of the numerous other exhibitions, publications, or associations which (...) Kandinsky encountered and drew upon for his own development.

Grohmann also took no notice of the stylistic changes in Kandinsky's "*motifs russes*," as he called them – the pictures with fairy tale-like subjects, medieval Russian themes, or figures in Victorian dress, all usually done with a mosaic-like dot technique in tempera paint. Nevertheless, Kandinsky's most important stylistic innovations during the Paris period took place in this idiom. And far from accidental (as will be seen in the chapters below), the similarity of the surface in these works to contemporary paintings by Delaunay represents Kandinsky's quick sensitivity to an important development in the vernacular of avant-garde French art at that moment. Grohmann did recognize the concentration of Kandinsky's interest in this kind of painting during the Paris year but he explained it away, calling the Russian motifs "an outlet for homesickness," and suggested that "such works may have been inspired by opera performances."<sup>63</sup>

Fineberg does not mention Anglada; however his research is very important for the present study because it situates Anglada within Kandinsky's field of vision at this period, prior to the latter's conscious transition into Abstraction.

The following paragraph, taken from Fineberg's criticism of Johannes Eichner's point of view, is particularly important for my argument:

This lack of research beyond the confines of Münter's recollection caused particularly acute problems in Eichner's presentation of the Paris year; he accepted, at face value, Kandinsky's later distasteful memories – which were based on personal insecurities and artistic self doubts – and mistook them for an objective perspective on Kandinsky's interaction with the Paris art scene. This caused Eichner to disregard Kandinsky's connection to Fauvism, to Neo-Impressionism, and to other French movements; to underrate the importance of Kandinsky's paintings of 1906-07 for his later development; and to conclude that the road to abstraction suddenly appeared for the first time in the Murnau period (1908 to 1914).<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Fineberg, 1975, pp. 2-3.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

As Grohmann had stated, Kandinsky suffered from homesickness; however, this was a permanent state and not, as Grohmann suggests, an intermittent feeling for him. It is true that during his stay in Paris he suddenly concentrated particularly on Russian subjects, doubtlessly influenced by the fact that during that year Diaghilev had organized an exhibition of Russian art, as well as his musical shows of the *Ballets Russes*. It is well known that the success of Diaghilev's idea of exporting Russian culture was overwhelming. Suddenly, Russians were seen in a different light and became openly proud of their traditions and from that time onwards Kandinsky dared to interpret his usual subjects from a new perspective. According to Fineberg, it seems clear that Kandinsky's painting *Riding Couple* (see illustration 13 in Appendix III) (1906-1907) marks the beginning of a new period in his evolution.<sup>65</sup> This opening Russian phase is particularly important for Kandinsky because it is then that he starts painting something towards which he feels strong emotions and, through the new art that he witnesses, he finally achieves a breakthrough in his personal style. Although this breakthrough would not be consolidated until the following years in Murnau, it was nonetheless conceived in Paris. Friedel and Hoberg argue:

(...) Kandinsky the artist was anything but sure of himself at this stage in his career. His style was still subject to huge pendulum swings between French Impressionism, Symbolism, Pointillism and the influence of individual artists such as Edvard Munch, while his iconographic compass ranged from landscapes to scenes of medieval life and Russian folklore. To put it in a nutshell: At the time he visited Paris, Kandinsky was still finding his way and still experimenting. He confirmed as much himself in a letter to Grohmann dated 1932: "Those were very difficult years for me personally, perhaps most of all in Sèvres; so many dreadful doubts about my art and about myself. My liberation did not come until 1908, when I moved back to Munich."<sup>66</sup>

I stress these facts because *Riding Couple* was clearly inspired by Anglada's work. Peg Weiss recognized, even if unwillingly, the compositional "similarities" between Kandinsky's *Riding Couple* and Anglada's *La Fiancée de Benimamet* and

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>66</sup> Friedel and Hoberg, p.57



*Jeunes Filles D'Alcira*. (see illustrations 23 and 24 in Appendix II) These last paintings had all been exhibited in the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1906, among other places.

According to Peg Weiss:

(...) Sometimes Anglada, too, chose a nostalgic theme, as in his *Spanish Peasant from Valencia*. Then a closer comparison might be made, for example, to Kandinsky's *Riding Couple*, of about 1906-07, where the spotting of the color also results in a rich mosaic effect. But a painting such as Anglada's impassioned, one might even say "expressionistic," *Gypsy Dance* was far removed from any of Kandinsky's contemporary work.<sup>67</sup>

In fact, Kandinsky did not wait long to start his own version of Anglada's riding couple, as is shown in his letter to Münter in December 1906, where he clearly expresses the intense inspiration that the subject had given him. This was of vital importance at a time when Kandinsky felt that, from a creative point of view, he was working against the clock, as is also described here with a certain anguish:

(...) I am working on the sketch for the quiet couple on the horse and I'm happy with the issue. I put much of my dreams into that: it could really be compared to an organ, there is music in there. This gives me courage for other things and I felt already twice the peculiar twitch of the heart, that I used to have when I was more of a painter-poet. I also understood some more of the theory. But will I have enough life and power to turn this theory into praxis? Tomorrow 40. It is like the second warning that the Russian censorship gave in former times to the magazines: first, second and instead of the third – finished for all times. The first I felt when I became 30. Well! Nonsense: I shall live until 90 and work until my last breath.<sup>68</sup>

It was not only the richness of bright colours standing out against the dark background but also the subject matter of Anglada's paintings that I believe attracted Kandinsky's attention at this stage in his stylistic development. As I have mentioned, Kandinsky and some of the other artists related to the Mir Iskusstva movement were using subjects from the past, the most popular sources being Russian folklore, fairytales and medieval times. Kandinsky, who had previously painted only small canvases, suddenly in Paris dared to move into larger sizes, of which *Riding Couple* is one of the

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<sup>67</sup> Weiss, 1979, p. 77.

<sup>68</sup> It is worth noticing that Kandinsky was writing to Münter because they had temporarily separated as Kandinsky's nervous breakdowns were unbearable. Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter, from Sevres, to Miss G. Muentner, at Mme. Vernot, 58, rue Madame, Paris', 4 December 1906, p. 1, p. 2. GM-JE. Transcription.

main examples. The subject of the knight, which he had treated previously, is reproduced here in a less combative context: the knight has a bride, who rides in exactly the same old-fashioned, side-saddled posture that Anglada had use for his Valencian female peasants and brides. As we have seen in Chapter Two, Samuel H. Harris describes these paintings by Anglada in the following words:

As Wagner found in the Sagas of the dim past in the Northern mists a favourable vehicle for the musician's expression through the ear of the passions of mankind, so Anglada, after strenuous years of the study of the qualities of light and colour in the highly-civilized Paris of to-day, turned to the surviving relics of Spain's golden chivalry, on a background of Mediterranean blue, the same to-day as then, for the painter's expression through the eye of the emotions of mankind which are stirred by beautiful colour.<sup>69</sup>

Even Weiss admits that Anglada's representations of these peasants acquire a timeless character, which I believe made them an appropriate source of inspiration to Mir Iskusstva artists. The timelessness is achieved not only through the subject, as these peasants had been wearing the same style of garments for generations without change, but also through the technique. The blurred image and the use of bright colours, which do not exist in nature in such a pure state, are partly responsible for the effect. However, the unreal character is achieved principally through the "timeless" lighting: the lack of shadows deprives the viewer of any reference to the time of day. Examples of this technique are *Jóvenes de Burriana* (1908) and *Grupas Valencianas* (1909) (see illustrations 27 and 29 in Appendix II).

It is most surprising that not only the influence of Anglada but the whole year in Paris has been overlooked for so long as irrelevant in terms of Kandinsky's development. Friedel and Hoberg assert:

That this version of events has been accepted as the only true one by almost all Kandinsky scholars (...) is surprising; for why else would the artist have moved to Paris, if not to draw inspiration from the cradle of Modernism and to seek contact with the international avant-garde and the art market to which it had given rise? Around the turn of the century, any artist of ambition was duty bound to spend at least a few months or years

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<sup>69</sup> Harris, p. 14.

in Europe's undisputed art capital, if only to collect useful contacts and to engage with the most important currents of the age and their leading exponents.<sup>70</sup>

The explanation is that for somebody like Kandinsky, who wanted to be perceived as a natural genius, it would have been out of the question to acknowledge the existence of artistic rivals and, even less, of "sources" of inspiration such as Anglada. Friedel and Hoberg elucidate the point:

That Kandinsky is presumed to have had no such intention doubtless has to do with how he later styled himself. For although he left posterity with numerous autobiographical texts, notes, potted biographies and retrospectives dated 1911 and later, he left scarcely a single word about that early trip to Paris. Not even the letters and writings dating from much later contain more than the occasional mention of an 'année à Sèvres'. It is as if Kandinsky had deliberately down-played that first visit to Paris so as to lend more credence to the myth of autodidactic artist who went his own way instead of running with the crowd.<sup>71</sup>

In my opinion, *Riding Couple* was not the only painting by Kandinsky that had clearly been inspired by Anglada's works. Another even more important work in Kandinsky's evolution, *Motley Life*, (illustration 14 in Appendix III) also shows unmistakable similarities to some of Anglada's previous works. This is particularly relevant for my argument, if only for the academic importance that has been traditionally given to *Motley Life*. According to several scholars, *Motley Life* was Kandinsky's response to Matisse's *The Joy of Life*:

When Kandinsky arrived in Paris, therefore, *The Joy of Life* was still very much in people's minds. Although the Salon had ended just prior to his arrival, he was able to view the work at his leisure at the Steins, whose acquaintance he is thought to have made through Hans Purrmann, a friend and fellow painter from his days in Munich. Purrmann by that time was a student of Matisse and had come within the Stein's orbit through him.

(...)It was thanks mainly to Purrmann, therefore, that Kandinsky knew all about the discussion of pictorial concepts going on in Matisse's circle, even if as a reader of *Tendances Nouvelles* the former was certainly not ignorant of the latest developments on the Paris art scene.<sup>72</sup>

*The Joy of Life* must have produced a strong impression in Kandinsky, as Fauvism was in its highest point when Kandinsky arrived in Paris, and Matisse was

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<sup>70</sup> Friedel and Hoberg, p. 57.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

indisputably leading it. According to Richardson, even Picasso was terribly jealous of Matisse's "*succès de scandale*", resulting in a rivalry between the two artists that, according to Richardson, made the envious Picasso claim that he had been ahead of the Fauves with his use of colour in a self-portrait from 1902. Richardson disagrees, because he thinks that whereas Picasso had just been trying an eye-catching device, Matisse had "discovered how to juxtapose colours and, like God, engendered light".<sup>73</sup> For someone such as Kandinsky, who was looking for a new pictorial language, the works of Matisse, who not only mastered colour compositions but who also supported the Fauve theory that the use of colours had to be instinctive, the viewing of *Joy of Life* must have produced a tremendous impact. In fact, the use of lines over colour in some of Kandinsky's later works clearly remind one of Matisse's technique in *Joy of Life*.

However, *Motley Life*, which features a group of Russian peasants dressed up in folkloric clothes with a castle or palace on top of a small mountain in the background, shows striking similarities to some of Anglada's pictures, for instance, *Jeunes Filles de Liria* (illustration 25 in Appendix II). Anglada very frequently used this composition, including peasants in the foreground and a rising landscape of fields and a small village, culminating in a higher building, church or castle in the background. It can be found in *Friso Valenciano* (1905-1906), *Estudio para Feria de Valencia* (ca.1906), *Grupus Valencianas* (1906-1907) and *Jeunes Filles de Liria* (1907) (illustration 28 and 25 in Appendix II), all of them part of a larger group of similar subjects that had been exhibited in the Salon National in May 1906, and in the Salon D'Autumne in October 1906.

There is proof that Kandinsky started painting *Motley Life* before December 1906, as if he didn't want to lose the inspirational momentum that the vision of what he

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<sup>73</sup> John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso, Volume 1: 1881-1906*, 3 volumes, (London: Pimlico, 1991), I, pp. 411- 414.

considered true art, in this case Anglada's oeuvre, produced on him. He wrote to Münter:

Soon it'll be 12 hours that you are gone, dear little Ella. And it actually seems to me that much more time has passed. I've been working with long pauses, but still quite energetically: 2 canvases blackened and a lot of drawing about the 'motley life'. Average happiness with the drawing. Hope to get more and yet expect more from the painting.(...) And my thoughts went back to the gloomy yesterday evening again and again. You are certainly not right when you accuse me that I show no effort to overcome myself. How can I not want to get rid of this pressure? Sometimes I envy the lowest street cleaner. But I'm not able to, little Ella. I tell you, it worked before. I never wanted to suffer and turned my back to the whole affair. Maybe I got more human and lost much of the 'super'. Maybe before I hoped unconsciously to everything again (...).<sup>74</sup>

It is most interesting to note under what personally imposed pressure Kandinsky was working. He shows serious doubts in this letter about his artistic survival. Naturally, instead of peasants celebrating in a Mediterranean setting, *Motley Life* features a large number of Russian medieval characters:

He (Kandinsky) stages his Golden Age not in some Mediterranean Arcadia, but rather in medieval Russia. The costumes of the knights and noblemen and the castle in the distance, whose white walls and lofty towers inevitably conjure up associations with the Grail Castle, create an atmosphere very different from Matisse's pastoral idyll or Gauguin's South Sea paradise. Kandinsky tries hard to anchor his own Arcadias in a spiritual realm that is quintessentially Russian. Nor is it just the costumes or certain figures such as the Orthodox priests that are crucial to this endeavour. Even the technique used is a pointer to the painter's own unmistakable identity. By painting in pointillist manner, he proves himself to be in tune with the times and au fait with Neo-Impressionism aims and Fauvism.<sup>75</sup>

Most of Anglada's paintings do not contain as many figures as this work by Kandinsky; however, as in Kandinsky's painting, the figures are often dressed in folkloric attires: Valencian peasant style in Anglada's case, ancient Russian in Kandinsky's. After all, the Valencian peasant dresses are part of a folklore that has survived from medieval times, thereby giving it its timeless character. Furthermore, Anglada painted other works featuring a large number of peasants in the background. Therefore Kandinsky's painting seems to contain a combined inspiration from several

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<sup>74</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter, at Mme. Vernot, 58, rue Madame, Paris' (n. d.), p. 1. GM-JE. Transcription.

<sup>75</sup> Friedel and Hoberg, p. 69.

of Anglada's paintings. Kandinsky did not hesitate to borrow elements from different provenance that would help him to deliver his message or content:

This method of selecting and juxtaposing, whose purpose was to lend weight to the conviction Kandinsky never tired of repeating – 'that the question in art is not a question of form, but rather one of artistic content' – was indeed revolutionary.<sup>76</sup>

The background in *Jeunes Filles de Liria* and in *Motley Life* is nearly identical, although the former contains a church instead of a castle. Furthermore, Anglada paints the fields with the short brushstrokes that Kandinsky particularly appreciated at that time (see illustration 25 in Appendix II). Although there is an alternative which cannot be ruled out. I think there is a claim that Anglada's works are the ones which inspired Kandinsky as he managed to channel his Russian-ness and take part in the famous Parisian contest of 1907, as well as start a new phase in his artistic evolution:

Kandinsky accepted the challenge. In February 1907, he ordered the largest canvas he had used to date (...) and began work on a painting that he knew would involve him in the contest that had been set in motion by Gauguin, Signac and Cézanne and was now being perpetuated by Matisse and Derain. *Motley Life* was to be Kandinsky's answer; but it was also to be a programmatic declaration. As anxious as Kandinsky was to join the race for a vision of paradise that had all of Paris in its thrall, he also wanted his French counterparts to know that he would not be sacrificing either his origins or his own convictions to this end.<sup>77</sup>

It was not just the subject of Anglada's paintings and his bright palette that produced this impression of timelessness and the dreamlike character of his interpretation of Valencian peasants: just as important was the lack of shadows. Kandinsky was very much interested in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, more specifically in the idea that the materiality that made possible the existence of a shadow is in fact what interrupts the light of God. According to Lindsay, Kenneth and Vergo, Kandinsky was much closer to Middle Ages thought than to the Baroque or the Renaissance. Dante's symbolism of light explains why Kandinsky found Anglada's celebrating peasants so appropriate to depict his version of Paradise in *Motley Life*:

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<sup>76</sup> Annegret Hoberg, 'Painting alone was not enough for us – Vasily Kandinsky and Franz Marc: The "Blaue Reiter" Almanac Revisited', in Friedel and Hoberg, p. 88.

<sup>77</sup> Friedel and Hoberg, p. 69.

Step by step Dante prepares himself to view the light, which grows ever stronger. In Paradise, he transcends his mortal self to experience the brilliant light that is everywhere. Dante's transhumanization means that he will no longer be capable of casting a shadow and will no longer yield to the law of gravity. Finally, in Canto 33, he has the Beatific Vision and sees the Supreme Light.<sup>78</sup>

Kandinsky had plenty of opportunities to see *Jeunes Filles de Liria* as well as the other paintings mentioned: as I have said, they were exhibited in Paris in the 1906 Salon National and Salon d'Automne. Other paintings by Anglada with similar motives were often exhibited too. As Friedel and Hoberg state:

The artistic insecurity that Kandinsky admits to here makes it all the more likely that his main motivation for being in Paris was indeed his craving for inspiration and orientation. To assert that Kandinsky ignored his Paris-based rivals, that he ensconced himself in Sèvres and lived a 'lonely and ascetic life' and did not re-emerge from this state of protracted self-absorption until his return to Munich means taking at face value his own self-mythification, which in turn is shaped largely by a teleological model of art history.<sup>79</sup>

As is often the case in research, once something has been discovered and, in the case of paintings, once two paintings have been linked, the similarities are so striking that it is surprising *a posteriori* how the fact had not been noticed before. This general question, common to all kinds of research, has probably been aggravated in many studies of the twentieth century by what Friedel and Hoberg have defined as the teleological model of art history, a problem that I have explained in Chapter Two.

Therefore, it is now clear, without excluding other possible sources of inspiration, that Anglada's technique and style influenced Kandinsky's artistic evolution in 1901, 1902 and 1903, as well as during his stay in Paris in 1906 and 1907. And is highly likely that when Kandinsky visited Paris in 1904 he would have seen Anglada's exhibition at the Salon National. In fact, it has been recognized that the change in palette that marked Kandinsky's evolution from 1904 had a Nabis chromatic reminiscence. If somebody looked for similarities between Anglada's palette before

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<sup>78</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 25.

<sup>79</sup> Friedel and Hoberg, p. 57.

1904 and any major contemporary artistic movement, these would certainly be found in the Nabis:

Like the anecdotal paintings (Kandinsky's), the prints also seem to have undergone a stylistic change in 1904, dropping the more conventional arts and Crafts inspired works and initiating a series of soft colored naturalistic prints which seem very French in their stylistic origins – close to Bonnard and Vuillard.<sup>80</sup>

Kandinsky, as I have tried to demonstrate, had plenty of opportunities to familiarize himself with Anglada's work, which was practically unavoidable. It is very likely that Kandinsky would have heard about the large exhibition, the same year of 1904, of more than thirty paintings by Anglada at the Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon in Berlin, if only because Kandinsky had developed a personal friendship with Schulte, as is often mentioned in the correspondence with Münter. Kandinsky was also a reader of

*Kunst für Alle:*

*Die Kunst für Alle* also carried reviews and many photographs of art from all over Europe. Kandinsky must have at least kept up with this, the leading German art periodical, all the more so since it reviewed exhibits of his own work. In its discussion of the December 1904 showing of his *Phalanx* group at the *Darmstadt Kunstverein*, the critic wrote "Kandinsky's multi-form works happily manifested a strong, self-willed talent, although (...) they did not arouse deeper sympathy."<sup>81</sup>

Anglada's works were regularly reviewed in *Kunst für Alle*, from 1902 to 1906, extensively in 1912, and one last time in 1914.<sup>82</sup> And Kandinsky would certainly have

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<sup>80</sup> Fineberg, 1975, p. 33.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>82</sup> Anglada's works were reviewed in the following articles of *Kunst für Alle*:

- *Die Kunst für Alle* 17, (1902), p. 240, p. 95.
- *Die Kunst für Alle*, 18, (1903), p. 244, p. 468, p. 473.
- *Die Kunst für Alle* , 19, (1904), p. 310.
- *Die Kunst für Alle*, 20, (1905), p. 471.
- *Die Kunst für Alle*, 21, (1906), p. 44.
- *Die Kunst für Alle*, 27, (1912), pp. 197- 201, pp. 203-205.
- *Die Kunst für Alle*, 29, (1914), p. 454.

*Die Kunst für alle - Malerei, Plastik, Graphik, Architektur*, 1-58 (1885/86-1943).

Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek <<http://www.bsb-muenchen.de/>> [accessed 15 May 2009]

OPAC plus catalogue, Bayrische Staatsbibliothek,

<<http://opacplus.bsb-muenchen.de/search?oclcno=183365112>> [accessed 15 May 2009]

Arthistoricum, Virtuelle Fachbibliothek Kunstgeschichte, <<http://www.arthistoricum.net/>> [accessed 15 May 2009]



read about Anglada's success in the 1905 Venice Biennale, as the noise of the controversy could be heard all over Europe.

Finally, I shall move on to examine the last stage of my chronological research, the period from 1908 to 1914, which is most relevant to understanding the case of Anglada, and which culminates this investigation. I shall try to demonstrate that Anglada's influence not only helped Kandinsky to channel his desire to show his Russian culture in his paintings, but also that it inspired Kandinsky in the final stages of his search for a new pictorial language, when objects disappeared in the transubstantiation that led to Abstraction. I shall also explain the important role that Anglada's art played in Kandinsky's most important stage composition, *Yellow Sound*.

Fineberg asserts:

New evidence shows that Kandinsky became involved with French art in 1904, and that the evolution of these new stylistic ideas first surfaced, gradually, after this contact with France commenced. These researches (...) suggest that (...) French ideas lay at the foundation of his prewar development.<sup>83</sup>

Kandinsky left Paris in the autumn of 1907, suffering from a nervous breakdown. Before going to Germany he visited Switzerland for a cure for his nerves. His personal life was in need of reorganization, which implied the need for a divorce from his Russian wife, his cousin and friend Anja. Also Kandinsky must have felt very stressed during his stay in Paris when confronted with Fauvism, feeling that he was being left behind in his use of colours as well as in finding his personal technique.<sup>84</sup> The nervous breakdown shows how intense, and also how unpleasant, his year in Paris had been. It was not until 1908, when he settled with Münter in Murnau, that he came through his struggles and started to see light at the end of the tunnel. In my view,

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<sup>83</sup> Fineberg, 1975, p.1.

<sup>84</sup> An anecdote is often quoted by Kandinsky's biographers, according to which Gertrude Stein accepted an invitation to visit Kandinsky at Sèvres but when she saw Kandinsky's paintings she laughed. This would probably have demoralized Kandinsky. Friedel and Hoberg, p. 65.

Kandinsky had his first taste of real artistic freedom in the years between 1908 and approximately 1914, and it is this period that I am now going to review. Kandinsky's artistic freedom was probably related to his personal life. He had overcome his remorse and worries about what society would think and dared to live openly with Münter without being married.<sup>85</sup> The new freedom that translated itself into landscapes would progressively lead to the disappearance of the object altogether, in what were some of the first conscious Abstract, or non-objective, paintings of the twentieth century.

The approximately ten-year-long metamorphosis experienced by Kandinsky leading up to 1908 was about to give way to one of the most productive periods of his life, which lasted until the outbreak of the First World War. It is during this time that Kandinsky wrote his best prose regarding art theory. Probably the most famous of his works, *Über das Geistige in der Kunst*, (*On the Spiritual in Art*) was published in 1911. Yet, considering the enormous length of time it took Kandinsky to write it, one realizes that the work was also rooted in his Parisian year. In this book it seems that everything that he had been looking for finally became attainable. However, Kandinsky did not know at the beginning of his long personal journey, around 1900, where he was heading: the long process needed to arrive at that final point proved that not even the final goal had been obvious at the beginning. For us, as is often the case when one

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<sup>85</sup> This was at the inconvenience of Münter, who wanted to get married, and of his wife, who suffered living in a social limbo. From 1908, both Anni Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter lived very close to each other and were "forced" to socialize with each other, in order to please Kandinsky. Kandinsky started putting emotional pressure on both from 1907, as it shows the following extract of a letter:

Today I got a letter from Anna. She had written two but I don't know the content of the first one, because I didn't receive it: maybe she had forgotten something in the address. In the second one she said: if you are not too embarrassed to meet again and you think that it is necessary and desirable for you, so come to the restaurant for lunch etc. – I interpret it thinking that a meeting would be embarrassing for her and she only accepts it if it is important for me. Soon I understood that I had to abandon the idea, at least for the moment being. I can't (...) bear it any more that everything is being done for me. This decision was and still is difficult for me and causes me pain.

Wassily Kandinsky, 'Letter to Gabriele Münter in Munich', 14th June 1907. GM-JE. Transcription.

knows the conclusion in advance, it is more difficult to visualize Kandinsky's artistic hardship during his theoretical voyage of artistic self discovery.

According to Fineberg, Kandinsky had felt disappointed with the Munich Secession as soon as it had not proved to be as ground-breaking regarding technique as initially expected. From the outset of his stay in Paris, Kandinsky had felt an attraction towards French art without knowing exactly why. He liked the freedom of these new ways of artistic expression, such as Fauvism, or the works of Anglada, but did not know yet how to exactly apply them to his own interests, which were still strongly linked to his Russian culture. No matter how much he had read, heard or thought about French art, it was not until he was physically confronted in Paris with those paintings from Matisse, the Fauvists, Picasso and Anglada that Kandinsky could express, using his expression, his inner sound.

The abundant reviews only make it evident that Kandinsky must have been informed of French art and theory; it was, however, the encounter with the works themselves – as exhibited in the Paris galleries – that provided him with the primary stimuli.<sup>86</sup>

What Kandinsky had started to grasp from his first contacts with French artistic movements, mainly Fauvism, is that colours, lines and form could be independent from subject matter. This innovative pictorial conception was perfectly coherent with Kandinsky's intellectual approach, which was based on the 1874 book *Critique of Western Philosophy* by the Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov.<sup>87</sup> According to it, Western thought had three main failures. The first was that it had been based, since

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<sup>86</sup> Fineberg, 1975, p. 44.

<sup>87</sup> Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov (28 January 1853 – 13 August 1900) played a significant role in the development of Russian philosophy and poetry at the end of the 19th century and in the Russian spiritual renaissance in the beginning of the 20th century. Solovyov compiled a philosophy based partly on Hellenistic pagan philosophy and also early church Patristic tradition along with Buddhism and Hebrew Kabblahistic elements. Solovyov also studied Gnosticism. Solovyov's religious philosophy was syncretic and fused many of the philosophical elements of various religious traditions with that of the Eastern Orthodox church. His Russian religious philosophy had a very strong impact on the Russian Symbolist art movements of his time.

For more information on Solovyov: 'Vladimir Solovyov (1853-1900)', in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <<http://www.iep.utm.edu/s/solovyov.htm>>, [accessede 23 June 2009]

Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, only in reason and therefore considered dreams, creativeness and faith unworthy of being taken into account. The second was its claim of absoluteness that Solovyov thought was unsustainable. And the third was its idea of a global community, which was subject to a process of a linear, steadily rising historical progression. According to Solovyov, this idea, which supposed a common objective for everybody, excluded and denigrated other cultural, ethnic or religious formations that would not accept this linear process. Noemi Smolik quotes Solovyov on the subject:

Because of this triple failure, says Solovyov in the introduction to his book, he considered Western knowledge out of date:

"This book is based on the conviction that the development of philosophy, in the sense of abstract, exclusively theoretical cognition, has come to an end and [such philosophy] belongs irrevocably to the past."<sup>88</sup>

This very important basic but multi-dimensional idea, which contained plurality, universality and a timeless character, and which supported not only Kandinsky's thought but all the structure of the Mir Iskusstva movement and therefore all of the subsequent artists from the Russian avant-garde, would progressively disappear after the First World War. As a result, during most of the twentieth century, the Modernist Paradigm linear explanation of the evolution of modern art prevailed, leaving behind many artists, such as Anglada-Camarasa.

In this final part of the chapter, which deals with the years that stretched from 1908 to the First World War, I shall start by comparing some of Kandinsky's later compositions and improvisations with some of the Valencian subjects previously painted by Anglada. I will try to prove that Anglada continued to be a constant presence in Kandinsky's conscious or subconscious.

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<sup>88</sup> Vladimir. S. Soloviev, *Sobranie socinenij* V. S. Soloveva, 12 volumes, (Brussels: 1966-69), I, p. 27. As quoted in Noemi Smolik, 'Modernism's Prophet or its Adversary: Kandinsky's Journey from the Russian Provinces to the Bavarian Art Metropolis', in Friedel and Hoberg, p. 31.

At some points in life and in history, circumstances align themselves in the precise way necessary to cause events to happen. In the words of Kandinsky:

At a particular time, necessities come to fruition. I.e., the creating spirit (which one can call the abstract spirit) finds access to the [individual] soul, subsequently to [many] souls, and calls forth a longing, an inner compulsion.

If those conditions are fulfilled which are necessary for a precise form to come to maturity, then this longing, this inner compulsion is empowered to create a new value in the human mind, which, consciously or unconsciously, begins to live within man.

Consciously or unconsciously, from this moment man seeks a material form for this new value that lives in spiritual form within him.

Thus the spiritual value seeks its materialization. Matter is here a reserve of supplies from which the spirit, like a cook, selects what is necessary in this case.<sup>89</sup>

I shall subsequently go on to show which ingredients from Anglada's oeuvre, the "cooking spirit" of Kandinsky chose.

As Kandinsky would have said, there are certain moments when necessities ripen, which was the case for him from 1908 in Murnau. I will not go into the full details of Kandinsky's transition during this period and will take the word of other scholars to summarize my own point of view: once in Murnau the change that Kandinsky had been gestating for so long finally materialized into a new style and technique. In his landscape paintings he at last moved on from the old Impressionist technique and started using brushes that permitted him long brushstrokes. He would keep certain echoes of Pointillism but now, without abandoning his Russian taste, his colour mosaics were richer (compare illustrations 16, 17, 18, 19 or 20 in Appendix III, with previous ones). By Russian taste, I mean Kandinsky's taste for folkloric decorated glass, stained-glass church windows, and Russian traditionally decorated wood, which was achieved by touches of colourful paint over a dark lacquer base:

Yet Kandinsky uses the technique in a way that is very different from Signac. His main source of inspiration is not French Impressionism, but traditional Russian crafts such as bead embroidery and glass painting. The technique of painting on a black ground also has Russian folk origins and can be traced back to the lacquer work that was used so extensively for furniture and woodwork and that sought to amplify the individual colours by setting them off against a black ground. It is these two traditions, combined with that of tempera painting, that together produce the same effect as that of a medieval stained-glass window and so lend the work its mystic, quasi-religious impact. Using his own

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<sup>89</sup> Kandinsky, 'On the Question of Form – *Der Blaue Reiter Almanac*', in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 235.

unique idiom, in other words, Kandinsky tried to synthesize the Old Russian tradition with modern French painting and in so doing created a 'harmony' of method to match the universal harmony of the Golden Age.<sup>90</sup>

As David Fineberg has said, Kandinsky's new use of colours in landscape was obviously inspired by Fauvism, which was at full power when Kandinsky arrived in Paris in 1906.<sup>91</sup> Their ideas on colour technique suited Kandinsky perfectly. André Derain's new concept of light, which consisted of the negation of shadow;<sup>92</sup> or Matisse's ideas about colour's main function being to serve expression and that colours' expressive powers surpassed the traditional theory of complementary colours and could be mastered only through instinct,<sup>93</sup> were all ideas with which Kandinsky intrinsically agreed. In fact, it is undeniable that even Anglada changed his palette from 1904 onwards, no longer using so much white, abandoning his nacres and mother of pearl iridescences, using brighter colours and contrasting them in his chromatic compositions. As this happened prior to the 1905 Salon D'Automne exhibition, it is not obvious that Anglada could have been influenced by it. Still, Anglada was clearly part of the trend in what Matisse later, in 1936, would explain as what had been the call to return to the essential principles which made human language, including the "call for beautiful blues, reds, yellows (...)".<sup>94</sup> Most artists, inspired by Fauvism, were experimenting with contrasts. In this Fauvist palette complementary colours were applied together, producing an initial colour-shock in the viewer. By using basic colours, Matisse later

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<sup>90</sup> Friedel and Hoberg p. 69.

<sup>91</sup> Matisse and his followers (Derain, Vlaminck, Puy and Rouault) had acquired the term Fauves (Wild Beasts) after the 1905 Salon D' Automne exhibition. Their use of bright colours had been the main reason for the epithet.

<sup>92</sup> André Derain, 'Letters to Vlaminck', in Harrison and Wood, p. 65.

<sup>93</sup> Henri Matisse, "Notes of a Painter", *La Grande Revue*, (Paris, 25 December 1908). As quoted in Harrison and Wood, p. 73.

<sup>94</sup> Henri Matisse, 'Statements to Teriade', *Minotaure* n. 9, ( Paris, 15 October 1936), p. 3, As quoted in Harrison and Wood, p. 384.

explained, the starting point of Fauvism had been the courage to return to the purity of the means.<sup>95</sup>

Kandinsky, following his own line, took a long time to achieve this liberation, and in fact in his first writings on the subject he confirms that he does not see the need to obliterate the object. It was not until 1914 that he admitted the possibility of a totally object-less painting.<sup>96</sup> According to Fineberg, it was the influence of the very religious Denis (the other protégé of Diaghilev) that provoked in Kandinsky the progressive hiding of the object. I disagree with Fineberg: I think that in this technical respect Kandinsky was closer to Anglada than to Denis. If it is true that the spiritual Kandinsky might have found Denis's artistic approach interesting in paintings such as *Christ vert* (1890) or *Christ orange* (1890), Anglada's blurred images had a much more appropriate technique for hiding figures in their background. Some of Denis's subject-matter might have been inspiring for Kandinsky, as his religiosity could be channelled through the kind of Symbolism formulated by the Nabis. Nevertheless, Maurice Denis soon developed his own style into more defined forms that contrasted with the background. The meaning might have been hidden but the subject definitely was not.

Denis studied at the Académie Julian (1888) under Jules Lefebvre and at the École des Beaux-Arts. Reacting against the naturalistic tendencies of Impressionism, Denis fell under the influence of the work of Paul Gauguin, whose style was also much admired by Denis's fellow students Paul Sérusier, Édouard Vuillard, Pierre Bonnard, and Ker Xavier Roussel. With these friends, Denis joined in the Symbolist movement and its later offshoot, the group of painters collectively called the Nabis. The quasi-mystical attitude of the Nabis was perfectly suited to Denis's highly religious nature. In 1890 Denis expressed the underlying principle of much modern painting in the following often-quoted words: "It should be remembered that a picture—before being a warhorse, a nude, or an anecdote of some sort—is essentially a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order."

Later, however, after visiting Italy, Denis became greatly influenced by the works of the great Italian fresco painters of the 14th and 15th centuries and began to place emphasis on subject matter, traditional perspective, and modeling, as in "Homage à Cézanne" (1901).<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 21.

<sup>97</sup> Denis's monumental mural decorations are to be seen in many French churches as well as on the ceiling of the Champs Élysées Theatre in Paris. In 1919 he, along with Georges Devallières, founded the Studios of Sacred Art. His work was one of the chief forces in the revival of religious art in France.

Rather than from Denis, it is highly possible that Kandinsky could have obtained some of his technical sources from Anglada's demi-mondaines, who, as we have seen in previous chapters, dissolved into their surroundings. Furthermore, in some of Anglada's Valencian peasant paintings, such as *Jeunes Filles D'Alcira* (1906), the figures with their complicated attires dissolve in a timeless dream similar to Monet's cathedral. Therefore, Anglada could have been one of Kandinsky's conscious, or subconscious, inspirations.

Deforming and blurring the object until it disappears is a one-direction way into Abstraction. I shall now develop my idea according to which Kandinsky tried another way, which took the opposite direction: finding and/or drawing figures in a non-objective (background) painting.

Even if Kandinsky was during this period living in Murnau, he continued travelling and being in contact with the rest of the artistic world. Anglada must have been a presence in his life, as Anglada continued developing a high profile among Russians during those pre-war years. What I will consider now is a new direction of Kandinsky's path into Abstraction which has not yet been studied by any scholar and which also involves Anglada. It runs in the opposite direction, as I said, to the one mentioned above. Instead of blurring an image until its near disappearance, which approach is recorded by Kandinsky himself, in this alternative case he follows a simpler process. He chooses a set of forms and colours, which we would understand as a pure Abstract painting but, as if scared of the deep blue void of infinity of the non-objective, he draws an object that can keep him safely anchored to the material world. The phase in which Kandinsky experimented with this method is prior to 1914, when he finally

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'Maurice Denis', in *Encyclopedia Britannica online*,  
<<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/157702/Maurice-Denis>> [accessed 15 May 2009]



admitted to himself that painting completely without subject matter was possible. In 1912 Kandinsky still found the usefulness of the object. In *The Blue Rider* he asserts:

The strong abstract sound of corporeal form does not necessarily demand the destruction of the representational element (...). The object can retain its internal and external sound, and yet its individual parts can be transformed into independently sounding, abstract forms, which thus occasion an overall, abstract sound.<sup>98</sup>

To support my theory I would like to draw attention to the fact that Kandinsky and Münter liked to study children's drawings and follow their creative process. The reason was that they thought that children could without any difficulty feel the inner sound of things, as well as represent it in a synthesized and clear manner. Kandinsky stated:

Thus in every child's drawing without exception is revealed the inner sound of the object itself. (...) Now apart from the ability to suppress the external element, the gifted child also has the power to clothe the remaining internal element in a form in which this element appears most strongly and thus produces an effect (as one also says, "speaks"!)." <sup>99</sup>

Kandinsky was intellectually open to all suggestions regarding art, as well as being willing to experiment or adopt anything that might be useful. In the case I am referring to, the process followed would be similar to that children's game in which one looks at the clouds and tries to find shapes of recognizable objects. In Kandinsky's own words:

Every form is many sided. One constantly discovers in it new and fortunate characteristics. Here, however, I wish only to stress one side of good children's art which is for the moment important for us: the compositional. Here at once, there springs to the eye the unconscious (as if spontaneous).<sup>100</sup>

It is probably the case that Kandinsky did not like to leave behind records of his sources of inspiration, especially in this instance, where he was practising with a child's technique: although the theory behind it was there, the reference was not as direct as in the other process towards Abstraction.

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<sup>98</sup> Kandinsky, *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 255.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 251.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

My theory is that Kandinsky took his inspiration from parts of Anglada's paintings, which once extracted of their original context became independent Abstract works, and then added objects to them. In the selected patches of colour of Anglada's paintings Kandinsky would visualize landscapes and then add figures to them.

In support of my argument I would like to draw attention to some details which I have selected from *Jeunes Filles D'Alcira* (1906) (illustrations 24b and 24e in Appendix II). These details, as well as one from *Grupas Valencianas* (1907) (illustration 29c in Appendix II) have striking similarities with certain of Kandinsky's works, such as *Blue Mountain* (1908-1909), *Improvisation 7* and *Improvisation 21A* (illustrations 15, 22, and 28 in Appendix III). The surface of Anglada's picture is divided into areas in which lines, dots or a flat surface are combined. Colours are generally contrasted – red and orange lines are intersected by green, immediately beside a white surface full of dots that recall the Pointillist technique, only fuller. And on one side a blue or purple flat surface. Kandinsky could have obtained any of his improvisations under the spell of these fragments of Anglada's paintings, which could inebriate a viewer who was sensitive to colour compositions. I have chosen just a few to support my argument.

As far as Kandinsky's *Blue Mountain* is concerned, the fact that Kandinsky had specifically chosen a fragment of Anglada's work where three of the basic fundamental colours in the spectrum are clearly separated and visible, can also be explained by Kandinsky's interest in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. Kenneth, Lindsay, and Vergo explain:

Finally, in Canto 33, he has the Beatific Vision and sees the Supreme Light. Viewing the three colored circles of the Trinity and wanting to "see how the human image was conformed to the divine circle and has a place in it," Dante needs the illumination of Grace. St. Bernard gives him this capacity to discover human measure in the colored circles of the divine nonobjective display. It is ironic that Italy's highest expression of the medieval quest for transcendence resisted convincing pictorial visualization until modern art made it possible.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p. 25.

Why Kandinsky had felt attracted to this contrasting combination, not only of complementary colours but also of contrasting lines with dots and a flat surface against its opposite, might be found in his personal evolution. The fact that he not only appreciated these contrasts but also dared to use them can be explained by his new life in Murnau and his divorce from his Russian wife Anja, which permitted him an internal liberation that translated itself into his art. He was to start leaving behind his Russian subjects as well as his impressionistic link to nature. But what is most interesting for my argument is his evolution in the use of colour. With his personal liberation he was to be able to take on board all that he had seen in Paris.

Evidence of Kandinsky's evolution is how he evolved from rejecting what he thought to be the random use of bright colours with expressionistic purposes, as we have seen from his early writings from 1902 and 1903, while admitting to Münter at the same time how dull his own palette was. His evolution can be seen, for instance, if we rewind to what he wrote in 1902, in his comments about an exhibition that was taking place at the Glaaspalast in Munich. Kandinsky criticizes the use of colours, among other things, as a channel of expression:

I feel obliged to linger upon this point because in Munich of late one finds increasing value being placed on "speed of execution". To comply with this fashion, artists pile up heaps of colors and apply them with quite extraordinary flourish – supposedly to express their personalities. There can be nothing more distasteful and harmful than this kind of artificial technical fad. Real personality does not submit to this kind of approach, but expresses itself in its own terms, eventually demanding attention in its own right.<sup>102</sup>

A careful reading of Kandinsky's writings on art reveal many implicit contradictions, which prove how he himself was confused. In another paragraph from the same 1902 review he criticizes not only the excessive use of white but also the artist's weak drawing and interpretation of nature:

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<sup>102</sup> Kandinsky, 'Correspondence from Munich', in Lindsay and Vergo, pp. 49-50.

Dull and muddy in his portraits, this still-youthful artist is both excessively spectacular and forcedly original (...) an artist who interprets nature so weakly and limply (in his portraits) must contrive problems without having real ground beneath his feet; deprived of the necessary link with his prime source of inspiration, he must build his house "on sand".<sup>103</sup>

These reflections sharply contrast with Kandinsky's more evolved thoughts nearly a decade later from the period that we are now studying. Regarding the use of white, which in previous years he had found so abusive in other artists, he had changed to the point of asserting in 1914:

In the summer of 1911(...). Suddenly all nature seemed to me white; white (great silence - full of possibilities) displayed itself everywhere and expanded visibly. Later I remembered this feeling when I observed that white played a special role and had been treated with particular attention in my pictures.<sup>104</sup>

Contrasting with what he had said in 1902, Kandinsky criticizes artists who, while being innovative in the use of colours, are still too limited as regards drawing, by being, in his opinion, incongruously respectful of the old academic traditions. While reviewing an exhibition he asserts:

All the other artists here represented (least of all, perhaps, Girieud) display almost to the extent of complete inviolability that contingent attitude toward line, the same accidental delimitation of form that they have discovered in nature. It is curious to observe how their whole creative energies are directed solely toward color. Why? Why is it only color that undergoes these modifications, violations, substitutions? What prevents the artist from likewise submitting the linear and planar aspects of nature to the same artistically necessary transformation? Why does the creative urge direct itself solely toward, "*peinture*," and why does the other, uniquely powerful, essential aspect of painting – what we rather vaguely refer to as "drawing" – remain untouchable?<sup>105</sup>

By the time Kandinsky published *On the Spiritual in Art* in 1911, he had gained much more understanding of the use of colour. There is a clear evolution from his former thoughts that profoundly contrasts with his Murnau palette. From 1908 onwards, everything was allowed: when the final goal was art, the goal justified the means:

By this beauty we are, of course, to understand not external, nor even internal morality (such as generally accepted), but everything that, even in a wholly intangible form, refines and enriches the soul. Thus, e.g., in painting, every color is inwardly

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>104</sup> Kandinsky, 'The Cologne Lecture', in Harrison and Wood, p. 91.

<sup>105</sup> Kandinsky, 'Letters from Munich', in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 68.

beautiful, since every color causes a vibration of the soul and every vibration enriches the soul. Hence everything can, in the end, be inwardly beautiful, even if it is outwardly “ugly.” As it is in art, so it is in life. And thus there is nothing that is “ugly” in its inner result, i.e., its effect upon the souls of others.<sup>106</sup>

Kandinsky, as I have shown, felt a strong kinship towards medieval times and ideas. And it is precisely in the Middle Ages that authorship of works of art was not considered to be important, as they had, of course, a different idea of what art meant. Therefore “medieval artists” could copy “successful” ideas from their peers to produce a desired result. Kandinsky shared in some measure this medieval idea on the irrelevance of authorship and expressed it in his writings. He said that “the artist may utilize every form of artistic expression”.<sup>107</sup> The idea was that, using Kandinsky’s metaphor, the cook is more important than the ingredients and the origin of those “ingredients” is nearly irrelevant:

(...) as proportions and scales are to be found, not outside but within the artist(...) qualities the artist is born with, which are heightened by enthusiasm so as to reveal genius.<sup>108</sup>

It is interesting to see how Kandinsky in his writings supported the idea of a born genius. It was unquestionably very convenient in order to support his artistic machinations theoretically. For Kenneth Lindsay and Peter Vergo, self-promotion was only a convenient side-effect:

As for the question of self-promotion, it was natural that Kandinsky should defend his own achievements. He understood the way writing enhances the artist’s public image. But the attentive reader of this book will discover that personal aggrandizement played a minor role in motivating his writing; the issues that stirred him were mainly larger ones.<sup>109</sup>

It is not part of this investigation to research this matter; it is just enough to point out again how Kandinsky found it perfectly justifiable to equip himself with artistic secondary sources in order to produce his own work. And once Kandinsky had justified

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<sup>106</sup> Kandinsky, ‘On the Spiritual in Art’, in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 214.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>109</sup> Lindsay and Vergo, p.12.

his artistic borrowings theoretically, the irrelevance of declaring their origins becomes, for similar reasons, a consistent idea.

Some examples of Kandinsky's paintings that could have been inspired by Anglada's works are: *Impression III* (1911) (see illustration 27 in Appendix III), where black lines have been added to the colourful background, suggesting some figures: and *The garden II* (1910) (see illustration 20 in Appendix III), where Kandinsky seems to have extracted a fragment of one of Anglada's Valencianas' skirts from *Campesinos de Gandia* (1909) (see illustration 28 in Appendix II) converting it into a hilly landscape and then just adding little hidden houses. In some cases, such as *Improvisation 19* (1911) (see illustration 24 in Appendix III), the idea of the black lines forming figures over a multi-coloured composition is so obvious that it shows how proud Kandinsky is of his method and is therefore not trying to disguise it.

As Kandinsky put it (...) .The almanac demonstrated this key principle, as well as that of comparative juxtaposition, in both its essays and, above all, in its abundant illustrations, which for the first time and in what was then exceptionally modern manner brought together works of heterogeneous provenance and allowed them to interact.<sup>110</sup>

Kandinsky would keep using this technique of enlarging details in many other examples, such as *Improvisation 9* (1910) (see illustration 21 in Appendix III), which could have been lifted from any one of many of Anglada's paintings, until he finally completely obliterates objects, sometimes substituting them with geometrical figures. For the main bulk of my argument – the similarity of these common elements in the works of Anglada and Kandinsky – I shall have to rely on the visual recognition of the reader of this thesis. Fortunately, and unfortunately, words cannot totally translate the value and meaning of a painting. As Kandinsky would say:

As has been said often enough, it is impossible to make clear the aim of a work of art by means of words. Despite a certain superficiality with which this assertion is leveled and in particular exploited, it is by and large correct, and remains so even at a time of the

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<sup>110</sup> Friedel and Hoberg, p. 88.

greatest education and knowledge of language and its material. And this assertion – I now abandon the realm of objective reasoning – is also correct because the artist himself can never either grasp or recognize fully his own goal.<sup>111</sup>

Naturally, it could be argued that Kandinsky could have obtained his inspiration from many other contemporary painters. Due to the limitless character of the experiment, I obviously cannot claim to have done an exhaustive investigation. However, whilst fully accepting that Anglada's work might not have been Kandinsky's only source of inspiration and that he probably combined different sources, it is challenging to find backgrounds as similar to Kandinsky's as Anglada's. Certainly, none will be found in Maurice Denis's works. The only alternative sources, as I have said, could be the ones provided by the works of some of the Fauvist artists, such as Henri Matisse, André Derain or Maurice de Vlaminck, whose works often have the mixture of dots, lines and flat combinations of colours that, as I have mentioned before, could have stimulated Kandinsky's creativity.

During the years from 1908 to 1914 when Kandinsky lived in Murnau, Anglada was at the peak of his success in Paris and immersed in Russian culture. It is very likely as I said, that, for this reason, Anglada continued to be a presence, if unacknowledged, in Kandinsky's life. As proof of this, it is worth mentioning that Vsevolod Meyerhold staged a theatrical pantomime in St Petersburg called *Los Enamorados (The Lovers)*, performed over two preludes by Debussy and with a plastic reference to Anglada's *Los Enamorados de Jaca* (ca. 1910), an oil painting of large proportions (172 x 429 cm), (illustration 33 in Appendix III) which also impressed Kandinsky profoundly, as we shall see.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Kandinsky, 'The Cologne Lecture', in Harrison and Wood, p. 89

<sup>112</sup> Béatrice Picon-Vallin, *Meyerhold: Les Voies de la Création Théâtral*, (Paris : Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1990), p. 49.

The passion felt by Meyerhold for Anglada's *Los Enamorados de Jaca* is not surprising if we take into account his preference for creating shallow scenery, that like a bas-relief would project its energy towards the spectators, forcing them to take part in the action of the play. In *Los Enamorados de Jaca*, the figures of the musicians stand in first plane, their size adding to the impression of proximity with the spectator. Furthermore, Meyerhold became revolutionary in his field for, among other things, giving priority to gestures over words, which also explains why he particularly liked the very expressive paintings by Anglada. Schmidt states:

In Meyerhold's theater darkness is destroyed by light, the hidden chair of the analyst-observer-audience is discovered, made present; a passive, purely aural process is replaced by an active, physical transaction between two equal entities who occupy the same space. The idea of audience, those who hear, is replaced by the idea of spectators, those who see. The primacy of the actor as a speaker of words is denied for the sake of a text written in more than words.

(...) Under Meyerhold's hand the whole of a performance became a crystallization of meaning. And the code of that meaning, beyond the language of the text, was *movement – gesture* and the *reaction* that gesture ineluctably calls forth.<sup>113</sup>

Meyerhold took part himself in *Los Enamorados*, playing the role of an old Spanish man. Meyerhold and Anglada met personally in the following year (1913) and started a short but intense friendship. In a letter to his wife Meyerhold tells all the things that he was discovering in Paris, thanks to his nights out with Anglada:

Anglada took us to Montmartre, to a Spanish cabaret where real *castizos* Spaniards danced. A Spanish woman interpreted two songs accompanied by guitars. Oh my God! It was so magic and wonderful! Anglada was so charming. He is deeply interested in Russia and is prepared to paint something for the theatre. He would also like to travel to Spain (with Meyerhold) and search in all the last forgotten corners of the country, to try and find all those typical folkloric dresses. He seemed really interested in what I told him of my *Los Enamorados*, and was terribly sorry that we wouldn't have wrote him because we could have borrowed all the dresses that he owns.<sup>114</sup>

It is worth emphasizing the admiration and sympathy that Meyerhold felt for Anglada because it was not based on something merely superficial from an aesthetic

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<sup>113</sup> Paul Schmidt, *Meyerhold at Work*, transl. by Paul Schmidt (London: Applause, 1996), p. xiv.

<sup>114</sup> Vsevolod Meyerhold as quoted in Nikolay Volkov, *Meyerhold*, (Moscow: Teatral'ny Oktibr', 1926), p. 287, and Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 110.



point of view; on the contrary, it came from a deep common cultural understanding. In the following words explaining Meyerhold's approach to theatre, we could be reading a description of Anglada's paintings or, even more possible, an explanation of what Kandinsky was aiming to achieve.

In Meyerhold's tableaux, in his episodes, temporality and causality in their traditional dramatic sense were removed: the time of the action as well as the time of the performance were both dissolved, the idea that x was caused by y, was suspended for a moment, and a situation (which may well have been contrived out of dramatic causality) was held up for observation and comment before the spectator.<sup>115</sup>

Anglada, being completely immersed in all the manifestations of Russian culture taking place in Paris at this time, frequently went to the theatre. He also went to the premiere of Stravinsky's the *Rite of Spring* that took place on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1913 at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées, which was to become a symbolic milestone in the history of modern Western music. Anglada took part in the controversy originated by Stravinsky's music in the *Rite of Spring*. He publicly spoke in favour of the Russian composer, who in those days was not yet generally accepted.<sup>116</sup> He probably went there in the company of Meyerhold, as the day after the latter visited Anglada's studio with Stravinsky. Meyerhold wrote to his wife again telling her about all the wonders that they had seen, especially Anglada's collection of beautiful Spanish *écharpes* (probably *mantones*) from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that Anglada kept among his treasures, which also included precious combs and comb-tiaras (*peinetas*), typical of Spain.

Not only did Anglada's *Enamorados de Jaca* inspire Meyerhold to create a musical pantomime but Kandinsky also I believe had this large painting in mind when in 1912 he wrote an abstract stage composition called *Der Gelbe Klang* (the *Yellow Sound*). This work has long been regarded as the artist's principal theatrical

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<sup>115</sup> Schmidt, p. xv.

<sup>116</sup> Fontbona and Miralles, 1981, p. 110.

contribution.<sup>117</sup> If we follow the Wagnerian idea that the subject (or drawing) of a painting can be compared with the lyrics in an opera and the music with the colours, the rational part being associated with the former and the emotional with the latter, we can extrapolate that Kandinsky's use of voices without words imply Abstraction. In the introduction to the *Yellow Sound* Kandinsky uses blues and the dark colours of the night, together with high voices singing ideas of reconciliation, laughter and slaughter, whereas the deeper voices sing images of sky, rocks and ramparts. All these ideas are implied in the subject of *Enamorados de Jaca*, an old town in the Pyrenees.<sup>118</sup> In the introduction Kandinsky writes:

Over the stage, dark-blue twilight, which at first has a pale tinge and later becomes a more intense dark blue. After a time, a small light becomes visible in the center, increasing in brightness as the color becomes deeper. (...)

Behind the stage, a chorus is heard, which must be so arranged that the source of the singing is unrecognizable. The bass voices predominate. (...)

At first, deep voices: (dark colors)

Stone-hard dreams ... And speaking rocks ...

Clods of earth pregnant with puzzling questions ...

The heaven turns ... The stones ... melt ...

Growing up more invisible ... rampant ...

High voices: (bright colors)

Tears and laughter ... Prayer and cursing ...

Joy of reconciliation and blackest slaughter.

All:

Murky light on the ... sunniest ... day

(...)

Brilliant shadows in darkest night!<sup>119</sup>

The similarity between the *Yellow Sound* and the *Enamorados de Jaca* is even more striking in the first scene, where the description of the scenario leaves hardly any room for doubt:

The stage must be as deep as possible. A long way back, a broad green hill. Behind the hill a smooth, matt, blue, fairly dark-toned curtain. (...) At the same time, the

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<sup>117</sup> At the time, the *Yellow Sound* was admired by such individuals as Arnold Schönberg and Hugo Ball and its influence can still be felt today.

Susan Alyson Stein, 'Kandinsky and Abstract Stage Composition: Practice and Theory, 1909-12', *Art Journal*, 43, 1, spring (1983), p. 61.

<sup>118</sup> In *Enamorados de Jaca* the group of male musicians are serenading a young woman on behalf of her beloved. Normally they were commissioned by the latter, as a proof of love and/or as an act of reconciliation, asking for forgiveness.

<sup>119</sup> Kandinsky, *Yellow Sound*, in Lindsay and Vergo, pp. 269-270.

background becomes dark blue (in time with the music) and assumes broad black edges (like a picture). Behind the stage can be heard a chorus, without words, which produces an entirely wooden and mechanical sound, without feeling. (...)

Later, the same scene is illuminated. Five bright yellow giants (as big as possible) appear from right to left (as if hovering directly above the ground).

They remain standing next to one another right at the back, some with raised, others with lowered shoulders, and with strange, yellow faces which are indistinct.

Very slowly, they turn their heads toward one another and make simple arm movements.<sup>120</sup>

The five giants who move from right to left are reminiscent of the five musicians who, depicted from a low viewpoint in *Enamorados de Jaca*, tower over the viewer.<sup>121</sup> They also move from right to left, where a wall with a sixth figure would make further displacement impossible. A yellow light produces brilliant shadows. To dissipate any possible remaining doubt, the description of how their heads turn towards the centre - some with raised, others with lowered shoulders - coincides with the position of Anglada's musicians, who wear bright yellow socks and have yellow lights dramatically accentuating their indistinctive bony faces. The description of the dark blue background with broad black edges that gives depth to the back of the stage, where a hill can just be discerned, reflects simply but quite accurately the painting by Anglada.

The explanation of the music and the movements of the actors, however, is more complex and necessitates taking into account two more ideas. First, the obvious fact that when Kandinsky describes the apparently senseless gestures of the giants, who move their arms slowly up and down as if they were imitating birds, the influence of Meyerhold's theatre, with its language of gestures and its triumph of the grotesque, seems clear. According to Béatrice Picon-Vallin:

Meyerhold ne manifeste aucune volonté de reconstruction, mais un principe de libre composition dans la tradition de la comédie de masque (...). Pas de dialogue, sauf

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>121</sup> Taking into account the proportions of Anglada's painting 172 x 429 cm, as well as the fact that the figures of the musicians are bent, if they would be standing up straight they would be larger than natural size, or at least very tall.

quelques courtes phrases dans les moments de tension, et de la musique: elle fourni un cadre à des phrases de improvisation laissées à la liberté de l'acteur.<sup>122</sup>

Second, the description of the lights, the intensity of which increases in parallel with the volume of the voices, as well as the idea of the yellow turning to white, recalls the beginning of Wagner's opera *Das Rhein Gold*. There, the sun (the stage light) illuminates gradually, in crescendo with the sound, the darkness of the night. and gives way to the ray of light that, broadening progressively, illuminates the water. In *Das Rhein Gold* the music, gradually increasing in volume and in additional instruments, is a perfect symbol of sunrise. In fact this technique of crescendo, climax and diminuendo, is used very effectively also in the prelude of Wagner's *Lohengrin*, where the orchestra progressively grows in "gleaming intensity". As I shall explain, *Lohengrin's* prelude, which has often been described as a "luminous manifestation", is particularly relevant to this dissertation.<sup>123</sup> Quoting Baudelaire on *Lohengrin*:

Then, involuntarily, I evoked the delectable state of a man possessed by a profound reverie in total solitude with *vast horizons* and *bathed in a diffused light*; immensity without other décor than itself. Soon I became aware of a heightened brightness, of a light growing in intensity so quickly that the shades of meaning provided by a dictionary would not suffice to express this *constant increase of burning whiteness*. Then I achieved a full apprehension of a soul floating in light, of an ecstasy compounded of *joy and insight*, hovering above and far removed from the natural world.<sup>124</sup>

In Anglada's *Enamorados de Jaca* it is the white wall behind the musicians, which is illuminated from underneath, that plays the part of the dawn. In the following part of Kandinsky's *Yellow Sound* the similitude with *Enamorados de Jaca* is remarkable:

(...) and the giants approach the ramp very slowly. Quickly, red, indistinct creatures, somewhat reminiscent of birds, fly from the left to the right, with big heads, bearing a distant resemblance to human beings. (...)

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<sup>122</sup> Béatrice Picon-Vallin, 'Le Triumphant du Grotesque', in *Meyerhold: Les Voies de la Création Théâtral*, (Paris : Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique , 1990), p. 48, p. 49.

<sup>123</sup> Angel-Fernando Mayo, *Wagner: Discografía Recomendada, Obra Completa Comentada*, (Barcelona: Guías Scherzo, Barcelona, Editorial Península, 2001), pp. 161-162.

<sup>124</sup> Charles Baudelaire, as quoted in Richard Wagner, *Lohengrin*, Plácido Domingo, Jessye Norman, Wiener Philharmoniker, cond. by George Solti, (London: DECCA Record Company Ltd, 1987), p. 14.

The giants continue to sing more and more softly. As they do so, they become more indistinct. The hill behind grows slowly and becomes brighter and brighter, finally white. The sky becomes completely black. (...)

The apron stage turns blue and becomes ever more opaque.<sup>125</sup>

The dominant dark figures in the “apron stage” of *Enamorados de Jaca*, the deep blue of the starry night, and most of all the intensity of its nocturnal illumination masterly depicted by Anglada, has a chromatic sound similar to *Lohengrin*, which has a similar tonality, as according to Mayo:

(...), the music of *Lohengrin* irradiates a blue and silver glow, originated by the subtle use of violins and woods (...).<sup>126</sup>

It is interesting to underline that through colours Anglada tried to epitomize the feeling of what was represented by that music, whereas Wagner through music achieved a chromatic impression. Anglada’s contemporaries seemed to have been soundly in agreement on the issue, as *Enamorados de Jaca* also prompted Harris to draw the following musical parallel:

The picture, following out the Wagner analogy, may be compared to “Lohengrin”; the range of colour under the soft Southern night is less varied and more melodious than in the other decorative works, and the treatment is nearer to that to which the public was accustomed. And it is more “literary” than the works just considered, and forms a link to them with the Gypsy pictures; the mind may be allowed to wander from the general effect, to see in these Aragonese serenaders, not merely the survival of a custom which originated in the age of chivalry, but types of the country to-day, even to recall the Aragonese Goya, just so engaged in one of the mad escapades of his youth.<sup>127</sup>

In *Enamorados de Jaca*, the glowing night and the impression of immensity are produced by the location of the dark blue at the top and the whitish-yellows at the bottom of the picture, some of the latter sprinkled at the top to depict the stars: the light starts at the bottom of the painting. The use of colours by Anglada to enhance the meaning of the painting is comparable to the use of the orchestra by Wagner in *Lohengrin*. According to Mayo:

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<sup>125</sup> Kandinsky, *Yellow Sound*, in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 271-272.

<sup>126</sup> According to Mayo it was Thomas Mann the first to describe the blue colour in *Lohengrin*. Wieland Wagner staged it in blue in Bayreuth from 1958 to 1962. This production has never been overcome.

Angel-Fernando Mayo, *Wagner: Discografía Recomendada, Obra Completa Comentada*, (Barcelona: Guías Scherzo, Barcelona, Editorial Península, 2001), p. 157.

<sup>127</sup> Harris, p. 15, and translation p. 81.

(...) here the use of the leitmotiv (...) as it will be in ulterior works, fixes acoustic images in the musical memory, which (...) clearly strengthen the dramatic content elevating the orchestra well over its traditional simple role of accompaniment.<sup>128</sup>

This parallelism, first established by Anglada's contemporaries, between *Enamorados de Jaca* and *Lohengrin*, again links us to Kandinsky, as later in his life he used to say that the two experiences in Moscow that led him to his decision to abandon Law and Economics to dedicate his life to art were seeing the *Haystacks* by Monet and Wagner's *Lohengrin*.<sup>129</sup> It is important to point out that Wagner's music and his idea of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, as well as his interpretation of the survival of ancient customs, were greatly appreciated by Kandinsky. But it was the independent capacity of expression, of music in Wagner and of the use of colour in Anglada, what Kandinsky appreciated the most. If we add Kandinsky's view that all artistic expressions had a common ground, it is not surprising that in the *Yellow Sound* he tried to create a composition that harmonized some of them.

The connection between Anglada's works and the *Yellow Sound* does not end here. It goes even further in the second scene, where darkness opens into light to present a scenario, the description of which this time coincides closely with Anglada's *Valencia* (c. 1910). This painting is even larger than *Enamorados de Jaca*, as it measures 480 x 612 cm. It is the largest painting ever done by Anglada, the first of a series that was

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<sup>128</sup> (...) el empleo del leitmotiv, aquí (...) fija en la memoria musical unas imágenes acústicas que (...) refuerzan la acción del drama y elevan claramente a la orquesta muy por encima de su vieja función de mero acompañamiento.

Mayo, p. 160.

<sup>129</sup> Wagner's *Lohengrin*, which had stirred Kandinsky to devote his life to art, had convinced him of the emotional powers of music. The performance conjured for him visions of a certain time in Moscow that he associated with specific colors and emotions. It inspired in him a sense of a fairy-tale hour of Moscow, which always remained the beloved city of his childhood. His recollection of the Wagner performance attests to how it had retrieved a vivid and complex network of emotions and memories from his past: "The violins, the deep tones of the basses, and especially the wind instruments at that time embodied for me all the power of that pre-nocturnal hour. I saw all my colors in my mind; they stood before my eyes. Wild, almost crazy lines were sketched in front of me. I did not dare use the expression that Wagner had painted 'my hour' musically."

Magdalena Dabrowski, 'Kandinsky and Music – excerpted from "Kandinsky: Compositions"', in *Artchive*, <<http://www.artchive.com/artchive/K/kandinsky.html>> [accessed 15 May 2009]

never finished, and was commissioned as decoration for a palace ( see illustration 32 in Appendix II).

The description of the second scene starts at the back of the stage where, just like in *Valencia*, the dominant colour is green against a background of violet:

The blue mist recedes gradually before the light, which is a perfect, brilliant white.  
At the back of the stage, a bright green hill, completely round and as large as possible.  
The background violet, fairly bright. (...)

This striking start becomes even clearer when the definition of the subject increases to give way to dream-like vegetation, the description of which speaks of a cucumber-like floral shape on the left that could perfectly match the garland on the left of Anglada's painting:

At this point the background suddenly turns a dirty brown. The hill becomes dirty green. And right in the middle of the hill forms an indefinite black patch, which appears now distinct, now blurred. At each change in definition, the brilliant white light becomes progressively grayer. On the left side of the hill a big yellow flower suddenly becomes visible. It bears a distant resemblance to a large, bent cucumber, and its color becomes more and more intense. (...) <sup>130</sup>

I will not describe the music accompanying the stage events; suffice it to say that figures enter the stage, each dressed in a different colour, as in *Valencia*. These figures hold flowers and sing:

(...) accompanies the movement of the flower, (...)

The flower trembles violently and then remains motionless. (...) At the same time, many people come on from the left in long, garish, shapeless garments (one entirely blue, a second red, a third green, etc., only yellow is missing). The people hold in their hands very large white flowers that resemble the flower on the hill. The people keep as close together as possible, pass directly in front of the hill and remain on the right-hand side of the stage, almost huddled together. They speak with various different voices and recite:

The flowers cover all, cover all, cover all.

Close your eyes! Close your eyes!

We look. We look.

Cover conception with innocence.

Open your eyes! Open your eyes!

Gone. Gone.

At first, they all recite together, as if in ecstasy (very distinctly). Then, they repeat the same thing individually: one after the other – alto, bass and soprano voices. <sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Kandinsky, 'Yellow Sound', in Lindsay and Vergo, p. 275.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

The description of the action, as I have said, recalls Meyerhold's theatre. Where Kandinsky describes what look like erratic movements, in the sense that they don't follow a linear narrative, what he is doing is using the equivalents of expression and abstraction that, thanks to Meyerhold, could be materialized in a theatrical form:

The light brightens somewhat, and one can recognize indistinctly the colors of the people. Very slowly, tiny figures cross the hill from right to left, indistinct and having a gray color of indeterminate value. They look before them. The moment the first figure appears, the yellow flower writhes as if in pain. Later it suddenly disappears. With equal suddenness, all the white flowers turn yellow.

The people walk slowly, as if in a dream, toward the apron stage, and separate more and more from one another.<sup>132</sup>

This stagecraft, where figures move and act with an apparent lack of consequence and where narrative is non-existent, or at least not obvious, proves that the cultivated Kandinsky was aware of the ground-breaking innovations of his compatriot Meyerhold. It is therefore very likely that he knew Meyerhold's work based on Anglada's *Enamorados de Jaca*. This is clear if we remember Meyerhold's theories. According to Béatrice Picon-Vallin:

Chaque spectacle, présenté au Kursaal de Térioki, témoigne d'un total refus de la routine et d'une volonté d'expérimentation: d'un côté tradition et comedia dell'arte, de l'autre une recherche concernant l'action précise des couleurs sur le spectateur.<sup>133</sup>

The fact that Kandinsky uses two different paintings by Anglada for the first and second scenes of the *Yellow Sound* is not surprising if we know that he had in mind Mussorgsky's suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* when he wrote the *Yellow Sound*.<sup>134</sup> Also, with their considerable dimensions (*Valencia*, 480 x 612 cm and *Enamorados de Jaca*, 172 x 429 cm) and their life-size figures, both paintings provoke an enveloping sensation that makes the viewer feel part of them. This fact, without doubt, triggered Kandinsky's desire to produce in *Yellow Sound* his own *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., pp. 276-277.

<sup>133</sup> Picon-Vallin, p. 49.

<sup>134</sup> 'Wassily Kandinsky – The Biography / Bauhaus 1922-1933', in *wassilykandinsky.net*, <<http://www.wassilykandinsky.net/>> [accessed 15 May 2009]



I hope that with this study I have given enough evidence to support my argument, namely that Anglada influenced Kandinsky over approximately a ten-year period, from 1902, when Rosenhagen reviewed Berlin's exhibition, to 1912, when Kandinsky published the *Yellow Sound*. The extent of this influence was broad enough to include compositions and subject matter as well as some parts of Anglada's combinations of colourful forms.

As a conclusion to this chapter, I would like to emphasize that Anglada, as I have demonstrated through Kandinsky's tribulations, fully took part in the artistic concerns of his time. Anglada's success was based precisely on the fact that his oeuvre was a child of its time. Early in his career he was able to express himself through his technique. The prevalence of line and colour over subject matter was his primary achievement and it permitted him to express his artistic subjectivity. This was to be a great achievement also for the artists that later followed the twentieth-century currents relating to Expressionism and Abstraction.

Anglada's value as an artist can be proved first of all by his own works. They narrate some of the main social issues that artists tried to address through their art. However, Anglada's value can also be measured by the important part he took in the artistic evolution of his time, by influencing contemporary artists in various ways, Kandinsky being probably the most significant example. I would like to insist on this point once again by saying that although Anglada was by no means the only creative input in Kandinsky's production, nevertheless his relevance in the latter's work, as I have tried to demonstrate, is greater than hitherto has been accepted.

Due to circumstances and to his personal tastes, Anglada chose his own way. Although he was influenced by Fauvism and shared his contemporaries' interests in expression through colour and form, he never fully belonged to any of the currents that

became known as the avant-garde. His interests lay elsewhere and he was not interested in whatever these new movements were trying to achieve. Besides, as we have seen, during the three or four years that preceded the First World War, Anglada was an artist of such stature and international fame that he could afford to do as he pleased. However, if one studies his paintings carefully, as Kandinsky probably did, it is obvious that Abstraction was there, if he had chosen to develop that technique. The First World War produced such a violent and aggressive rupture with the previous cultural world that all those who survived it had to overcome more or less severe traumas. Anglada found refuge in the Spanish island of Mallorca, where he drastically changed his style, but not to Abstraction. Instead he moved to a quasi-mystical, idealized naturalism. He never went back to Paris in any sense.<sup>135</sup> As we saw in Chapter Two, the Catalan critic Eugeni Ors questioned, with melancholy, Anglada's artistic survival after the Great War. He was prepared for the worst:

One must bid farewell to this kind of art whose beauty is exalted to the extreme in the heat of the feverish rapture that precedes death, as one would bid farewell to a sin of youth.<sup>136</sup>

Any speculation as to how Anglada's pre-war style might have developed under different circumstances would be vain.

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<sup>135</sup> This is not wholly exact as in fact Anglada was forced to flee to France during the Spanish civil war (1938). He lived in Paris for a very short time before settling down in Puix les Eaux until 1948.

<sup>136</sup> Xenius, 'La Gràcia i el Pecat del Pintor Anglada', *La Veu de Catalunya*, 23 de Mayo, (1915). Palma de Mallorca. Archives Museo Anglada-Camarasa (MA-C), Fundació la Caixa.

## CONCLUSION AND EPILOGUE

In this dissertation, I have gradually explained and described the unique character of Anglada-Camarasa's work.

In Chapter Two I contextualized Anglada's creative process inside the Symbolist atmosphere that prevailed in Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century. There I demonstrated that, even if Anglada was "a child of his time" and therefore shared concerns similar to those of his contemporaries, his understanding of them, which can be extracted from his art, differed from others in an inherent optimism, shown through his interpretation of the decadence of the new leisure culture, which was used as a reflected image of the whole of the Parisian *fin-de-siècle* society.

In Chapter Three I engaged in an extensive process of dissecting Anglada's technique, proving the innovative character of his colour combinations, his compositions and the success in which these resulted. I stressed throughout this chapter that, together with his passion for art, Anglada had a clear idea of the need to achieve material success in order to be able to afford to be an artist, and I explained how, as a consequence, his technical development was, at least at the beginning, commercially focused. In this chapter I also described Anglada's overwhelming success among his contemporaries, emphasizing which components made up the formula of his success. We saw that, as is to be expected, his natural talent was the main one but also that his ambition fuelled the hard work necessary to endure and survive his initial penury until his individual pictorial language had finally developed.

In Chapter Four I undertook the task of finding out how Anglada had developed his network of connections and clients, and established that his main clients and mentors were an upper-middle class of aristocrats and intellectuals. Those clients and friends

influenced Anglada's strong personality to the point of inducing a change in style and subject matter from 1904 onwards, which resulted in a less revolutionary technique. However, as I explained, the new dominant subject matter, made up of folkloric Valencian peasants and gypsies and flamenco dancers, provoked intense appreciation, especially among Russian intellectuals and artists who were trying to include their own cultural origins in their emerging art. In Anglada's paintings they saw how a modern interpretation through a novel technique could give a new freshness and actuality to subjects from their cultural roots. This search for values had occupied musicians and artists but it was a particularly difficult matter, especially among Russians, who were undergoing one of the most intense cultural and socio-political changes of their recent history; therefore it was among Russian intellectuals and artists that Anglada was to find his most fervent admirers.

Chapter Five was the culmination of its three predecessors, as it built its argument on the evidence and theoretical structure previously provided by them. Chapter Five tried to fight with facts the inaccuracies explained in Chapter One by the supporters of the Modernist Paradigm, who dominated the history of art during most of the twentieth century. Chapter One had provided an explanation of the limited character of a theoretical structure that was born at the same time as the MoMA of New York, whose intellectual godfather was the brilliant Alfred Barr. I explained how the Modernist Paradigm's principles were applied randomly even by its supporters and how this created a confusion that by the 1970s had reached such a peak as to provoke the birth of several fronts of alternative art criticism, which would eventually end the Modernist Paradigm's monopoly. By exposing new evidence with regard to Kandinsky's creative process I further tried to undermine the Modernist Paradigm's main pillars of originality and abstraction. I argued that Kandinsky found inspiration in

Anglada and, if my arguments are successful, then it follows that the value of radical originality was less clearly exemplified in Kandinsky's work than his traditional biographers led us to believe. Through the potential chromatic stimulation that, in my opinion, Kandinsky found in Anglada's work, I have also shown how undefined the boundary is between abstraction and figuration in the former's works prior the First World War.

In Chapter Five I explained, and hopefully proved, how Anglada-Camarasa's work had a great intrinsic artistic value of its own. Being technically new and particularly innovative in the use of colours and in dealing with all the issues that concerned his contemporaries – artists, musicians, philosophers, scientists and men of letters – Anglada's oeuvre was at the epicenter of the many intersecting and sometimes colliding forces that formed the cultural eruption witnessed in Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century. For this chapter I used Kandinsky's own artistic development, as Kandinsky is generally accepted by all sides as a pivotal figure in the many artistic developments, especially those related to Abstraction, that took place in the twentieth century. I argue that the work Kandinsky produced during the ten years over which he developed his distinctive style shows the influence of Anglada. And, if that is right, then it follows that Anglada played a crucial role, albeit unwittingly, in the development of one of the most influential and original artistic movements of the twentieth century. And this, obviously, gives Anglada a very different and more important place in the history of modern art than has been recognized to date.

My discussion concerning the twenty years that Anglada lived in Paris has helped, I hope, to anchor him to the rightful historical place that he should have always occupied. Anglada abandoned the style that had made him famous, by radically changing subject matter, after the First World War. At the outbreak of war, Anglada

retired to the Spanish island of Mallorca. He chose Mallorca influenced by his very good friend the Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí. It is no wonder that, as in the case of many artists, the experience of the war, even when seen from far away, was extremely traumatic for Anglada. Anglada was always very private regarding his personal life and emotions and therefore one can only speculate on a possible interpretation from the open book that was his art. According to his daughter, at the beginning of his new life in Mallorca Anglada temporarily thought of giving up painting altogether, devoting himself exclusively to gardening for approximately one year. It was only after succumbing to the insistence of his friends that he took up his canvases and brushes again, but his work now showed a radical change in subject. From then onwards Anglada painted almost exclusively Mediterranean landscapes. According to him, it was on the twisted branches of the old pine trees that he tried to find the strength and wisdom necessary to weather the storms of life. These words clearly imply that, alongside to his natural optimism, Anglada suffered. As far as his friendships were concerned, Anglada had without any doubt many reasons to mourn, as the majority of his Russian friends had to struggle first with the World War and then those who survived had to face the 1917 Russian Revolution, after which freedom, art and art-lovers in Russia found life increasingly difficult.

Anglada concentrated on nature, depicting it in such a bright way that his former palette would nearly fade away when confronted with his new depiction of the effects of the sun on rocks, sea and vegetation. In these naturalistic but idealized landscapes, human figures disappeared from sight and, although Anglada painted some more gypsies and portraits of female friends, the feminine figure lost the protagonism that it had enjoyed during the previous two decades. Nor did Anglada painted the night again. His landscapes from Mallorca became a luminous song to creation, rejoicing in what

miraculously had been untouched yet by the bellicose instincts of humanity. But was this radical change triggered solely by the war? It is not uncommon – and Picasso and Kandinsky are clear examples of this – to find close links in artists between changes of partner and changes of style. In the case of Kandinsky, Annia Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter and Nina Kandinsky correspond to different periods of the artist's creative life. It would be therefore reasonable to think that somebody as sensitive to feminine qualities and charms as Anglada, and who had made women his main subject matter for two decades, would have had some sentimental reason for his drastic retirement to a fishermen's village as well as for some of his artistic evolution. In any case, this is an issue that will need to be the subject of another investigation.

Anglada went to live in a recondite spot by the Mediterranean sea, where he changed his style, from artificial light to daylight and from Paris night scenes to landscapes, effectively abandoning the human figure. And he also radically changed his looks: he lost a considerable amount of weight and shaved his enormous black beard, so as to be reborn into the new image of a neatly dressed, completely different man. I would suggest that this was part of a search for spirituality that found its expression in conflicting ways in different artists. We have seen that, for Kandinsky, who was a prolific writer and theoretician, this search was manifested in his wanting to paint so as to achieve the same degree of expression as music. Rivers of ink have been spilt discussing Kandinsky's search for absoluteness. For myself, his essay *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* is the masterwork that condenses Kandinsky's thought on the question.<sup>1</sup> Anglada, by contrast, looked for transcendence, as a Franciscan would, down on Earth, through the purity of nature. He kept sending his oeuvre round the world but hardly ever travelled to the places where his paintings were being acclaimed. Anchored in Mallorca,

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<sup>1</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning The Spiritual in Art*, (New York Dover Publications), New York, 1977.

he observed his surroundings, reproducing once and again pine and olive trees under various lights.

Anglada was not a prolific writer like Kandinsky, and he even rejected writing because he thought that what could be said with words did not need to be expressed by painting.<sup>2</sup> He hardly ever wrote about theory like Kandinsky, the exception being when he felt he needed to defend himself. 'La Honradesa de L'Art Pictoric', published in one of the main contemporary newspapers, is one of such few examples. Anglada had been criticized in his native Barcelona, and in this article he responded by giving a systematic account of his ideas on the subject of artistic painting.<sup>3</sup> Unlike in Kandinsky's case, absolutely nothing has been published up to now on the significance of this part of Anglada's life. Therefore the deep reasons for these radical changes have never been explored and, since there is nothing written by Anglada to illuminate this period, one can only extrapolate from his paintings.

I trust that the comparison and contrast of Anglada's oeuvre with Wassily Kandinsky's will convince those who still hesitate that the history of modern Western art is a space with more dimensions than was implied by traditional theoreticians of Modernism. But, even if I fail to convince some on that score, I hope to have succeeded in showing the intrinsic value of his work, which derives not from the influence he may have had on others but from the optimism that materialized in his technique. Anglada's is a pictorial language that, although being a product of an epoch, has a significance that transcends time.

Anglada-Camrassa's oeuvre survived the Modernist Paradigm. Anglada himself did not live long enough to, as the Chinese proverb says, witness the corpses of his enemies being paraded in front of his doorway. Given what a strong personality he

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<sup>2</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1981).

<sup>3</sup> Hermen Anglada-Camarasa, 'La Honradesa en l'Art Pictoric', *Juventut*, 39, 8 November (1900), pp. 614-615, reprinted in *Ibid.* p.305.



was, I doubt that he would have cared. After so much art interrupted by three wars, Anglada passed away in his beloved fishermen's village more concerned with the changes of light than with the issues being fought in the outside world. In any case, with the reallocation of Anglada-Camarasa in the canon of art history another piece will be added to the never-ending puzzle that forms the image of our past.

## APPENDIX I: PRICES AND EXHIBITIONS

### *Prizes and Awards*<sup>1</sup>

- Premios Escolares de las Academias *Julian y Colarossi* de París (1898-1900).
- Associé del *Salon de la Société Nationale de Paris* (1902).
- Societaire del *Salon de la Société Nationale de Paris* (1903).
- Societario de la *International Society of Sculptors, Painters and Engravers* (New Gallery, Regent Street, London W) (25 February 1905).
- Miembro Correspondiente de la Union Artistique de Munich «*Secession*» (Köningsplatz 1) (15 March 1905).
- Maestro de la *Bienal de Venecia* (1905).
- Miembro Correspondiente de la *Berliner Secession* (Berlin W., Kurfüsterdamm 20819) (31 January 1907).
- Gran Premio de la *Exposición Internacional de Arte del Centenario de la República Argentina* (1810-1910) por *Valencia* – obra conocida posteriormente como *Campesinos de Gandia* -, Buenos Aires (30 November 1910).
- Delegado de Rusia en la *Exposición Internacional de Bellas Artes de Barcelona* (1911).
- Primer Premio – compartido con otros nueve artistas – en la *Exposición Internacional de Arte de Roma* (1911).
- Socio Honorario de la *R. Accademia di Belle Arti* in Milano (7 June 1912).
- Miembro Correspondiente de la *Hispanic Society of America*, de Nueva York (21 January 1913).
- Socio de Mérito del *Círculo Artístico de Barcelona* (12 February 1915).
- Socio Honorario del *Círculo de Bellas Artes de Madrid* (28 June 1916).
- Miembro Numerario de la *Hispanic Society of America*, de Nueva York (21 February 1917).
- Miembro del Comité de Honor de la *Exposición de Arte Francés de Barcelona* (30 March 1917).

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<sup>1</sup> Francesc Fontbona, Francesc Miralles, *Anglada-Camarasa*, (Barcelona: Polígrafa, 1981), p. 313.

- Primer Premio a la Carroza de Marial Hermanos, proyecto y dirección de H. Anglada-Camarasa, de la gran fiesta celebrada en Montjuïc (Barcelona) el 7 de julio de 1918 (25 August 1918).
- Socio de Honor de la *Associació d'Amics de les Arts de Barcelona* (entidad presidida por M. P. Sandiumenge) (2 December 1918).
- Delegado del Círculo Artístico en el Comité de la *Exposició d'Art* patrocinada por el Ayuntamiento de Barcelona (17 January 1919) – rehusó a causa de los escasos medios con que se contaba para darle rango internacional.
- Directivo del *Círculo Artístico de Barcelona* (30 January 1920).
- Miembro del Comité de Honor de la *Exposición de Arte Belga de Barcelona* (November 1920).
- Medalla de oro de la *Sesquicentennial International Exhibition of Filadelfia* (1926).
- Sala de Honor en la *Exposición Internacional de Barcelona* (1929).
- Académico Correspondiente de la *Real Academia Catalana de Bellas Artes de Sant Jordi*, de Barcelona (4 November 1932).
- Exposición Homenaje en el Marco de la *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes*, de Madrid (1954).
- Académico de Honor de la *Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando*, de Madrid (12 May 1954).
- Socio de Honor de la *Asociación de Escritores y Artistas Españoles*, de Madrid (entidad presidida por M. Benedito) (19 May 1954).
- Gran Cruz de Alfonso X el Sabio (18 de julio de 1954; impuesta el 7 June 1955).
- Medalla de Plata al Mérito Artístico con Carácter Colectivo, del Ayuntamiento de Barcelona, a él y a otros cinco supervivientes de *Els Quatre Gats* (26 January 1955).
- Presidente de Honor del *Real Círculo Artístico*, de Barcelona (8 June 1955).
- Premio Juan March de Bellas Artes (1956).
- Académico de Número de la *Academia de Bellas Artes de San Sebastián*, de Palma de Mallorca (7 May 1957).

## Exhibitions <sup>2</sup>

- 1888: Barcelona. *Exposición Universal*.
- 1894: Barcelona. *II Exposición General de Bellas Artes*.
- 1894 (IX): Barcelona. Sala Parés. *Colectiva*.
- 1898 (V): París. *Salon Nacional*.
- 1899: París. *Salon Nacional*.
- 1900 (IV-V): Barcelona. Sala Parés.
- 1901 (c.IX-X): París. *Salon Nacional*.
- 1901 (c.IX-X) : Berlin. Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon.
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- 1903 (c.VI-VI): Munich. Münchener Secession.
- c. 1903-04: Düsseldorf.
- 1904 (III): Berlin. Eduard Schulte Kunst Salon.
- 1904 (IV): París. *Salon Nacional*.
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- 1905 (II): Munich. Münchner Kunstverein.
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- 1914 (X): Moscow. Salon Artistique.
- 1915: Buenos Aires. Salon Witcomb.
- 1915 (V): Barcelona. Galeries Laietanes. *Exposició Bou*.
- 1915 (V): Barcelona. Palau de Belles Arts.
- 1915 (VI): Barcelona. Ateneo Barcelonés.
- 1916 (II): Barcelona. Sociedad Artística y Literaria de Cataluña.
- 1916 (V): Barcelona. Exposición General de Arte del Círculo Artístico.
- 1916 (VI-VII): Madrid. El Retiro.
- 1916: Buenos Aires. Salon Witcomb.
- 1916 (VII): Buenos Aires. Salon Witcomb. *Exposición de Pintura Española*.
- 1916 (X): Buenos Aires. Sala Parmenio Piñero del Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes.
- 1916 (XI-XII): Barcelona. Galeries Laietanes.
- 1917 (I): Madrid. Círculo de Bellas Artes.
- 1917 (II): Barcelona. Sala Parés. *Exposició de la Societat Artística i Literària*.

- 1917 (V): Buenos Aires. Salon Witcomb.
- 1917 (XI): Barcelona. Galeries Laietanes.
- 1918 (V): Barcelona. El Camarín – con Joan Borrell Nicolau –
- 1919 (X): Bilbao. *Exposición Internacional de Pintura y Escultura.*
- 1920: Mallorca. Salones Àrab de La Veda.
- 1920: Paris. Salon d'Automne.
- 1921 (VIII): Buenos Aires. Salon Witcomb.
- 1924 (IV-VI): Pittsburg. Carnegie Institute. *23 Annual International Exhibition of Paintings.*
- 1924 (VIII): Buenos Aires. Sociedad Amigos del Arte.
- 1924 (XII)/1925(I): Washington. Vandyck Galleries.
- 1925 (II): New York. Brooklyn Museum.
- 1925: Chicago. Fine Arts Club.
- 1925: Des Moines. City Library. Des Moines Associations of Fine Arts.
- 1925 (VII-VII): Los Angeles. County Museum of Art.
- 1925 (X-XII): Pittsburgh. Carnegie Institute. *24 Annual International Exhibition of Paintings.*
- 1925 (XI): Dallas. Dallas Art Association. *Annual Exhibition.*
- 1926 (I-II): Filadelfia. The Art Club. *XXIV International Exhibition of Paintings.*
- 1926 (II-III): San Diego. Fine Arts Gallery Balboa Park. *Inaugural Exhibition.*
- 1926 (II-III): Barcelona. Sala Parés. *Bodes de Plata de la Societat Artística i Literària.*
- 1926 (III-IV): New York. Grand Central Art Gallery. *Carnegie International Exhibition.*
- 1926 (V-VI): St. Louis.
- 1926 (VIII-XII): Filadelfia. *Sesquicentennial International Exposition.*
- 1926 (X-XII): Pittsburgh. Carnegie Institute. *25 Annual Exhibition of Paintings.*
- 1927 (XII)/1928 (I): Palma de Mallorca La Veda.
- 1928 (VII): Buenos Aires. Pabellón Nacional de Bellas Artes. *Misión e*

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- 1929 (X-XII): Pittsburgh. Carnegie Institute. *28 Annual International Exhibition of Paintings.*
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- 1929 (XI?): Palma de Mallorca. *1er Saló de Tardor.* Cercle Mallorquí y Galeries Costa.
- 1930 (IV-V): Barcelona. Sala Barcino. *XXVI Exposición de la Sociedad Artística y Literaria de Cataluña.*
- 1930 (VII): London. Leicester Galleries.
- 1930: Liverpool. Walker Art Gallery. *58<sup>th</sup> Autumn Exhibition.*
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- 1931: Cleveland. Cleveland Museum. *Foreign Section of 1930 Carnegie International.*
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- 1931 (II): Barcelona. Sala Barcino. *Exposició de Pintura Catalana Moderna.*
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- 1931 (X): Palma de Mallorca. *Saló de Tardor.* Galeries Costa.
- 1932 (I): Barcelona. Sala Parés. *Exposició Col·lecció Niubó.*
- 1933: Buenos Aires. Salon Witcomb. *Exposición de pintura española.*
- 1933 (VI): Barcelona. Sala Parés. *Exposició Col·lecció Ròmul Bosch i Catarineu.*
- 1933 (IX-X): Barcelona. Sala Parés. *Exposició Col·lecció Joan Valentí.*
- 1934: Providence. Rhode Island School of Design. *Modern Spanish Painting.*
- 1934 (V): Buenos Aires. Witcomb y Cia. *Sucesió Bou. Pintura española.*
- 1934 (IX-X): Barcelona. Galeries Laietanes.
- 1935 (X): Barcelona. Sala Parés.

- 1936 (II): Paris. Jeu de Paume. *Exposition d'art espagnol contemporain.*
- 1936 (VI-VII): Barcelona. La Pinacoteca.
- 1938 (X): Barcelona. *Saló de Tardor.* Sala d'Exposicions del Casal de Cultura. Plaça de Catalunya, 14.
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- 1947 (XII)/1948 (I) : Barcelona. La Pinacoteca.
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- 1950 (XI-XII): Palma de Mallorca. Cercle de Belles Arts.
- 1950 (X-XII): Pittsburg. Carnegie Institute. *International Exhibition of Paintings.*
- 1952 (III): Barcelona. Casa de l'Artista – with Works of Mir and Gimeno –
- 1952 (VI): Barcelona. La Pinacoteca.
- 1953 (XII): Barcelona. Sala Parés.
- 1954: Madrid. Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes.
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- 1955 (VI): Barcelona. Reial Cercle Artistic.
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