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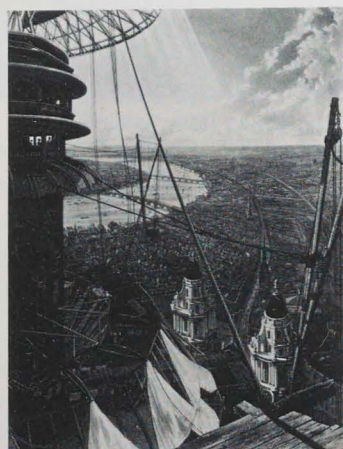
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A Sum of Destructions: Violence, Paternity, and Art in Picasso's "Guernica"

John O. Jordan

Isn't story-telling always a way of searching for one's origin, speaking one's conflict with the Law, entering into the dialectic of tenderness and hatred?

—Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text* (1975)

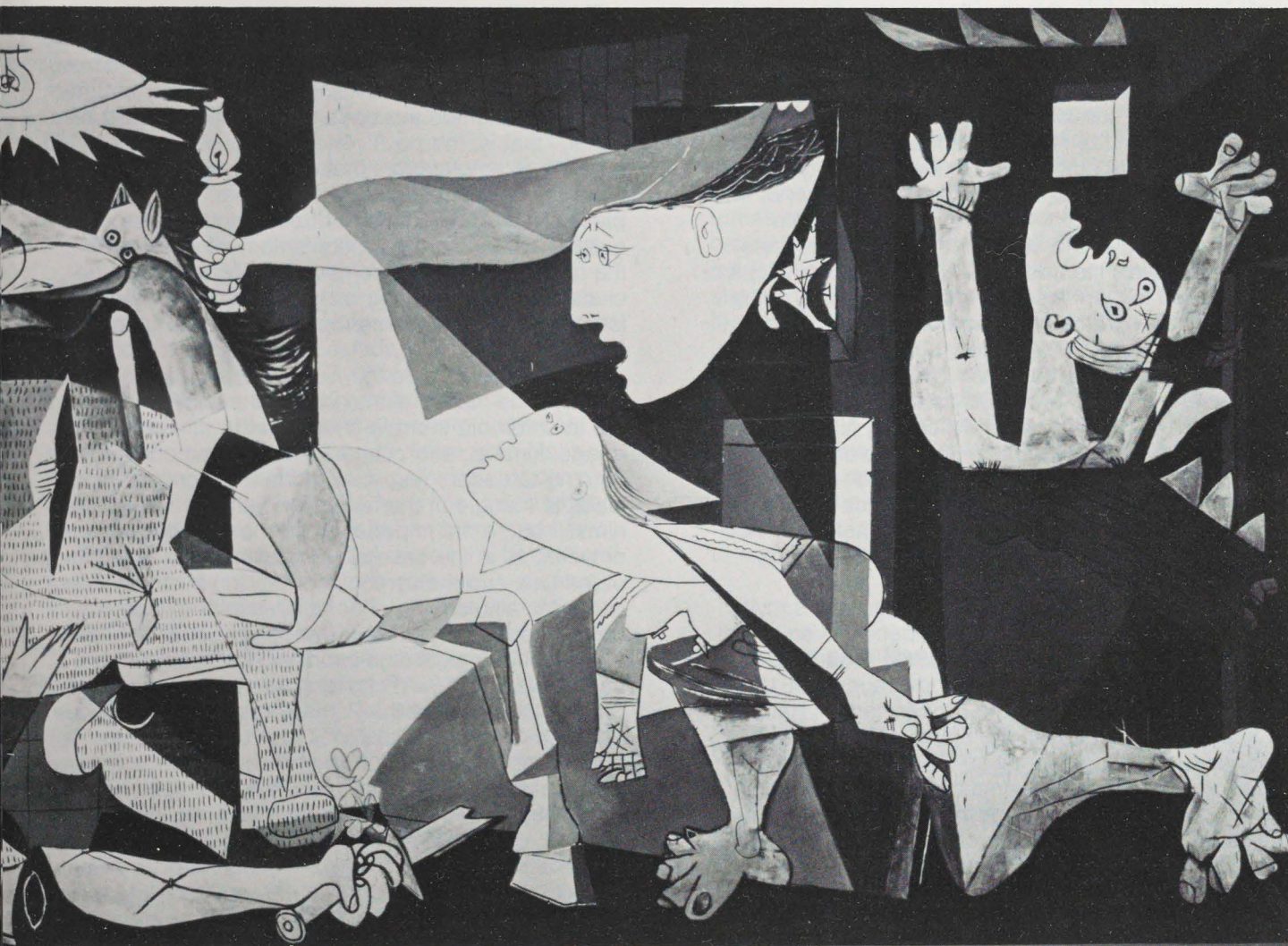
The reading of Picasso's *Guernica* (Figure 1) that I wish to propose in this essay takes as its point of departure two hypotheses: first, that the painting is structured like a narrative and that it tells a story—or several related stories—which unfolds in a specific temporal sequence; and second, that one of the main elements in this narrative is the figure of the father, or what I prefer to call Picasso's myth of paternity. The relation between these two hypotheses is suggested both by the quotation from Barthes that I have taken as an epigraph and by another statement that Barthes makes in the same essay. "Every narrative," he writes, "is a staging of the (absent, hidden, hypostatized) father" (p. 10).

To discuss *Guernica* in these terms, as the narrative staging of a paternal myth, may seem at first like a refusal to engage the important historical and political significance of the painting: its relation to the Spanish Civil War and to the deadly aerial bombardment of April 26, 1937, which was the occasion for the painting and which dictated Picasso's choice of a title. I am convinced, however, that an approach along the lines I have indicated does more than just add another level of interpretation to the many that have been suggested for the painting. In addition, I believe, such an approach provides a more complete basis for understanding the social and political dimensions of *Guernica*, both as the lament for an appalling military atrocity and as the statement of a revolutionary hope for the future.

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Figure 1 Picasso. *Guernica* (May to early June, 1937). Oil on canvas, 11' 5½" × 25' 5¾". (The Prado, Madrid.)



The Myth of Paternity

Before proceeding to develop my two hypotheses, let me first elaborate the idea of a paternal myth as it applies to Picasso. In so doing, I shall draw on biographical information about Picasso's relationship with his father as well as on the psychoanalytic theories of Jacques Lacan, especially Lacan's important concept of the Name-of-the-Father (*le nom du père*). Picasso's myth of paternity is the story of a weak father and a strong son. In its most cryptic form, the story recounts how the father, a mediocre academic painter in provincial Spain, recognized the budding artistic genius of his 13-year-old son and handed over his brushes and palette to the adolescent prodigy, renouncing painting forever. Sabartés (1948:29–30; see also Penrose 1958:31–32), who heard it directly from the artist, gives the most detailed account of this incident, but other versions of the story and allusions to it ap-

pear in the memoirs of people who knew Picasso well. Apparently, he enjoyed telling the story, and as a result it has become part of the Picasso legend: a myth of origin cast in the form of a grave vocational crisis for the father and a startling Oedipal victory for the son.

Whether the incident actually happened and whether it took the precise form described by Sabartés are questions that cannot be answered with certainty. The episode bears a striking resemblance to the anecdote told by Vasari about the young Leonardo's arrival in the studio of the aging Verrocchio. According to Vasari, Leonardo completed the figure of an angel in a painting of Verrocchio's design. So perfect was the execution of this figure and so ashamed was the master to be outdone by a mere boy that he never touched colors again. In telling the story of his own

apprenticeship at La Coruña, Picasso may have exaggerated or fictionalized the real events in order to assert his claim to recognition as the Leonardo of his century. In his story, it is a still life and the figure of a dove (his father's favorite animal) that provoke the crisis and bring on the remarkable rite of passage.

We cannot rule out, therefore, the possibility of deliberate self-mythologizing in Picasso's account of the events at La Coruña in 1894–1895. However, we should not dismiss the story for this reason as irrelevant to Picasso's life and work. In a general sense, it remains true to Don José's predicament as an aging painter faced with the challenge of his son's prodigious talent. Moreover, the story corresponds to other things that we know about the father's life during these years: the loss of his job as museum curator in Málaga in 1891, his financial difficulties, his loneliness and depression after the move to La Coruña, and the death there of his youngest child in 1895—events that coincide with Picasso's early adolescence and with his growing sense of artistic vocation. That the father felt threatened and that both son and father recognized his vulnerability seem evident.

The more profound significance of Picasso's myth of paternity lies not in its correspondence to empirical fact or in its usefulness for the kind of literal-minded biographical criticism that Rosalind Krauss (1981) has attacked as "art history of the proper name." Rather, its importance pertains to the status of the La Coruña story as what Fredric Jameson (in a different context) calls a *fantasm*, or fantasy master narrative. Such a master narrative, writes Jameson (1981:180), "is an unstable or contradictory structure, whose persistent actantial functions and events (which are in life re-staged again and again with different actors and on different levels) demand repetition, permutation, and the ceaseless generation of various structural 'resolutions' which are never satisfactory, and whose initial form is that of . . . waking fantasies, day dreams, and wish-fulfillments." Jameson also makes the point, particularly important for *Guernica*, that the family situation in such fantasms is social as well as personal or "psychoanalytic" and that family relationships often mediate those of class—and also, we might add, those of politics and gender. Regardless of its basis in fact, Picasso's myth of paternity thus stands as an implicit subtext or phantom pentimento beneath many (though certainly not all) of Picasso's major works, among them *Guernica*. It also provides Picasso with the model for his conception of himself as a revolutionary artist—the restless overreacher ("I do not seek, I find"), forever changing styles and breaking with the art of the past, including his own.

The La Coruña episode, as we have considered it thus far, leaves out several important elements that are necessary to a fuller understanding of Picasso's paternal myth. These elements can be briefly enumerated. They include the son's ambivalence toward his father—that is, the positive feelings of admiration and the wish to emulate him that go along with the hostile fantasies of destruction and the wish to usurp his place. They also include the tremendous sense of guilt felt by the son when his fantasy of overthrowing the father suddenly becomes a reality, and they include an accompanying wish to take care of the father and to make some reparation for the grievous injury inflicted on him.

Finally, they include the necessary accommodation that all sons must make to paternal authority if they are to enter into the rule-governed activities of language, kinship, and culture. This accommodation, according to Lacan, results from the intervention via the Oedipal triangle of the father, who stands not only for himself but, more importantly (for he may be absent or weak, as in the case of Don José), for the function of the Law and the symbolic order, to which the father himself is also subject. The father's intervention is experienced by the son as a symbolic castration. The phallus, the original signifier of desire, is given up and displaced by what Lacan calls the paternal metaphor or the Name-of-the-Father:¹ a signifier that fuses patronymics (*nom*) with prohibition (*non*). This displacement generates in turn a chain of other signifiers that designate the paternal function. The son's fantasy of murdering and castrating the father implies not only his rebellion against paternal constraint but also the recognition of his sonship—that is, of his position as castrated and his desire to possess the object that he knows is lacking. The son's submission to the always absent Symbolic Father binds him to the Law and constitutes the acceptance of his place as a participant within the cultural order.

Thus, although it is manifestly a story of paternal weakness and filial triumph, Picasso's myth of paternity contains other complicating and contradictory features: ambivalence, guilt, and accommodation to the very Law that seemed to have been overthrown. The father's palette and brushes are examples of the paternal metaphor, passed from one generation to the next according to the law of patrilineal succession. The father's act of renunciation involves the yielding of phallic power over his successor and at the same time the transmission of that power in a form that guarantees the father's survival through the son's progeny and, more importantly, through the son's art. The dove that Picasso recalls painting functions as a mediating term between son and father, confirming their new alliance. Like the ram that substitutes for the son in the sacrifice of Isaac, the dove absorbs the intergenerational conflict and carries the mark of cas-

tration. According to Sabartés, the bird was dissected, its feet cut off and pinned to a board where they served the young boy as a model. Also like the ram, the dove has seminal connotations; *paloma*, for example, is a common children's word in Spanish for penis.

The final element in Picasso's paternal myth that needs elaboration is the role of Don José as his son's art teacher. Few art historians would accord much significance to the father's influence on his son's art beyond 1896 or 1897, by which time the young painter had definitively rejected the sterile exercises of the academy for the excitement of the *modernismo* movement and the more cosmopolitan world of Barcelona's bohemian cafés. By the age of 16, in works such as *Science and Charity* and *The First Communion*, he had fully mastered the academic style of painting and had nothing more to learn from his father's lessons. Considered as a painter in his own right, Don José is a negligible figure of limited ability, hardly a potent role model for his ambitious and rebellious son. Considered, however, as the bearer and transmitter of a tradition, he assumes much greater importance in Picasso's art than his meager talent would otherwise suggest.

The tradition that Don José carried and passed on to his son was that of classical figure drawing—the foundation of all naturalistic representation since the Renaissance and a tradition itself based on classical sculpture. Academic art instruction in the nineteenth century began always in the *salon antique*, where students were put to work drawing human figures, using plaster casts of Greek and Roman antiquities as their models. It was this rigorous discipline that Don José imposed on his son in La Coruña and perhaps even before that in Málaga. Photographs of the father's studio at the Academy of San Telmo in Málaga show it jammed with the plaster statuary that he set his pupils to copying. Among the earliest drawings that we have by Picasso are several that faithfully reproduce classical fragments and figures from the Parthenon, completed, we must suppose, under his father's exacting eye. Behind the mediocre academic painter, therefore, and behind the person of Don José, stands the figure of the Law, Lacan's Symbolic Father: *le nom du père*. This absent, hypostatized father is the tradition of classical figuration and naturalistic drawing that Picasso, as leader of the modernist revolt, helped to overthrow, but it is the same tradition that he helped to sustain through his periodic reversions to a "classical" style and through the purity of line in all his work, regardless of style or period.

Perhaps the strongest indicator of the Name-of-the-Father in Picasso's career as a whole is his stubborn repudiation of abstract art. No artist before him had moved so radically toward breaking with the idea of painting as naturalistic representation, yet he refused to take the final step into abstraction. "There is no abstract art," he told Zervos in 1935. "You must always start with something. Afterward you can remove all traces of reality. There's no danger then, anyway, because the idea of the object will have left an indelible mark (quoted in Barr 1946:273). The refusal of abstraction and the insistence on fidelity to "the idea of the object" are evidence, I would argue, of Picasso's accommodation to the symbolic authority of the Father—an authority greater than that of Don José but transmitted through him and through the debased institution of the academy. Thus rebellion and accommodation, innovation and tradition, all have their place in Picasso's paternal myth. How different parts of the myth combine and take their place in a specific narrative structure will become more apparent as we turn to a closer examination of *Guernica*.

Guernica as a Narrative

In order to support the assertion that *Guernica* is structured like a narrative and that the story it tells has a definite sequence and direction, we must first identify what that story is. Any interpretation of *Guernica* needs to begin with a basic question: what is the subject of the painting? What is *Guernica* about? If this question has seldom been asked in so blunt a fashion, it is probably because the answer to it has always seemed obvious. *Guernica* is about the event that its title names, the bombing by German planes of a small town in northern Spain on April 26, 1937. All the circumstances surrounding the execution of the painting support this identification. Picasso was an outspoken supporter of the Republican cause. He had done other works, notably the *Dream and Lie of Franco*, which take the Civil War as a subject. *Guernica* was painted on commission for the Spanish government-in-exile to be displayed in its pavilion at the 1937 World's Fair in Paris. Picasso drew his first sketches for the commissioned project on May 1, only a few days after news of the bombing reached him in Paris. On many occasions, he emphasized the explicitly political purpose of the painting. Finally, of course, there is the title. Picasso rarely gave specific titles to his works, *Guernica* thus being an important exception to his customary practice. All these facts confirm the self-evident conclusion: the subject of *Guernica* is *Guernica*.

Several difficulties arise, however, when one attempts to read the painting as a literal portrayal of the bombing. First, as Rudolf Arnheim has pointed out (1962:20), the town of Guernica was attacked on a sunny spring afternoon at 4:30, whereas the painting clearly suggests darkness or, more precisely, night.² A second difficulty, according to Arnheim, derives from the fact that the enemy is not present. Neither airplanes nor bombs are visible; moreover, there is no figure that can be identified with certainty as a corpse. The only "dead" person in the completed mural is a statue. The figure conventionally read as a "dead infant" might be sick, or wounded, or unconscious, or very much alive. Arnheim has no trouble accounting for these "deviations from the historical facts," suggesting that the darkness is symbolic and that the absence of the enemy is consistent with Picasso's emphasis on the suffering victims. There is, however, another, much simpler explanation for the two so-called deviations. They are not deviations at all. Arnheim, like other interpreters of *Guernica* until very recently, has overlooked the literal subject of the painting. It is not the bombing of Guernica, but another, equally specific event: the Málaga earthquake of December 1884, which took place when Picasso was 3 years old.³

In identifying the earthquake as the literal subject of *Guernica*, I do not wish to exclude other levels of reference in the painting, notably to the bombing and to political events in Spain as well as to Picasso's myth of paternity. Nor do I mean to deny Picasso's reliance on iconography of the bullfight and the Crucifixion, aspects of the painting that have been discussed in detail by other scholars.⁴ The earthquake, however, is the initial, literal referent that organizes the other patterns of significance, and it is therefore with the earthquake that one must begin. It functions not merely as one overtone of meaning among others, but as a central organizing device that Picasso used in order to control his symbolic motifs and shape them into a coherent design.

Evidence to support the earthquake identification has been available for many years. Consider, for example, the following conversation reported by Malraux (1976:39):

Before *Guernica* was taken, in 1937, to the Spanish Republican Pavillion at the Paris World's Fair, I had told Picasso, "We don't believe very much in subject matter, but you must agree that this time the subject matter will have served you well." He replied that, indeed, he didn't believe very much in subject matter, but he believed in themes—so long as they were expressed symbolically. . . . What he considered themes (and I quote) were birth, pregnancy, murder, the couple, death, rebellion, and, perhaps, the kiss.

It is an interesting but puzzling exchange. Malraux assumes that he knows what the subject of the painting is. Without denying or confirming his friend's assumption, Picasso responds by listing a series of symbolic themes. What are we to make of this list? Is Picasso still speaking of *Guernica*, or do these themes have only a general applicability to his art? Is Picasso's answer serious, or is he being coy and self-protective? "The kiss" has no relevance to the painting, nor, apparently, does "the couple." "Murder," "death," and "rebellion" come closer to the usual ways of thinking about *Guernica*, but why do these themes follow "birth" and "pregnancy" on the list? In order to make sense of Picasso's response, we need to pursue the question of the painting's subject.

If the conversation with Malraux contains a clue as to this subject, it is a conversation with Picasso's close friend and private secretary, Jaime Sabartés, that provides us with its certain identification. In 1946, Sabartés published his biographical memoir, *Picasso: portraits et souvenirs* (published in English in 1948). The memoir is rich in anecdotal material, based on many intimate conversations between the two friends. It is, in particular, the best available source of information about Picasso's early years in Málaga and La Coruña. Toward the beginning of the memoir, Sabartés recounts the following story:

Early one night in mid-December 1884, Don Pepe [Don José] was chatting with some friends in the back room of the drugstore where they used to get together to discuss all manner of things. Suddenly they were aware of a vibration which flung to the floor all the bottles lined up on the shelves. The friends separated hastily, Don Pepe returning home on the run. Along the way he thought of a plan of salvation. "These rooms are too big, María," he gasped upon arriving. "Cover yourself up with something. And you Pablo, come with me."

After fifty-seven years Picasso still remembers it. "My mother was wearing a kerchief on her head. I had never seen her like that. My father grabbed his cape from the rack, threw it over himself, picked me up in his arms, and wound me in its folds, leaving only my head exposed."

Thus they left their home and thus they arrived at the house of [the neighbor], which was located near the sea; the rooms were small and adjoined the rocks. . . .

That night of great cataclysm was an anguishing night for Malaga. . . . In the midst of all the tribulations his sister Lola was born. [pp. 5–6]

The key word in Sabartés is "cataclysm." Memories of the 1884 Málaga earthquake returned vividly to Picasso on the occasion of another cataclysmic event. In his effort to imagine the first massive aerial bombardment on the European continent, Picasso searched his own past for an analogous experience. The metaphor, earthquake-bombing, came naturally to him. The subject of *Guernica*—the literal subject—is not Guernica. Rather, it is the earthquake of 1884.

Once the earthquake identification has been made, the painting becomes legible as a depiction of the story narrated by Sabartés. No longer is there any need to worry about "deviations" from historical fact. The painting shows a nighttime scene because the earthquake took place in the evening, around 9:00. The enemy is not present because there is no "enemy," only a natural disaster perceived in terms of its effects: burning houses, frightened people, a broken statue. The earthquake identification also helps to explain the puzzling conversation with Malraux. Picasso's list of symbolic themes begins with two items, birth and pregnancy, which figure prominently in the earthquake narrative and which we can also identify in the painting.

The pregnancy of Doña Maria Picasso Lopez and the birth of Picasso's sister Lola are both explicitly portrayed in *Guernica*. One of Picasso's statements to Sabartés provides the clue by which Doña Maria can be recognized: "My mother was wearing a kerchief on her head. I had never seen her like that." In *Guernica*, the frightened woman who runs from right to left clearly wears a kerchief on her head. Her thick body and swollen breasts are consistent with the signs of advanced pregnancy. Behind her to the right is an open door through which she has just rushed into the street. She is on her way to the safety of the neighbor's house. In the preliminary sketches for this figure, the woman's kerchief is even more prominent, and often she holds an infant in her arms, its head dangling down suggestively below her belly (Figure 2). Arnheim, without realizing how close he is to the literal facts of the situation, describes the child of this sketch as "still half unborn" (1962:52). Newly dead or newly born, the child is a deliberately ambiguous image.

In the final state of the mural, Picasso removed this dangling infant to the extreme left of the composition, where it appears as part of a family group that includes a mother and, standing above her in the form of the bull, a father. Usually identified as a mother with dead child, this scene preserves the deliberate birth-death ambiguity of the earlier sketch. The mother can be read alternately as grieving for her dead child or as suffering the pangs of its delivery into the world. In terms of the earthquake story, this family group represents the birth of Picasso's sister Lola in the aftermath of the disaster. The bull is thus Picasso's father, who saved his family in a time of need, escorted them to a secure place, and here stands guard over his wife and newborn child. The bull's testicles, emblem of his paternity, hang prominently in view.

The childbirth and pregnancy motif appears even more prominently in some of the preliminary sketches for *Guernica*. For example, at the extreme left of the study dated May 9 (thus in the same position she will occupy in the finished mural) a woman in labor is clearly represented, her legs⁵ lifted high into the air (Figure 3). Pregnancy and birth also appear in relation to another figure in the painting—the horse. Several of the drawings done on May 1, the day Picasso began work on the project, portray the horse as an expectant or actual mother. Thus, in one sketch a tiny Pegasus flies from an opening in her side (Figure 4). Is this the departing soul or a magical, newborn foal? Again there is deliberate ambiguity of death and birth. In another drawing of May 1, crude and childlike in its outline,⁶ the horse stands pregnant like some primitive symbol of fecundity (Figure 5). Thus, from the very first, before any human mothers appear on the scene, the horse is Picasso's symbol for maternity, a function it continues to serve in the completed painting. Like the mother with dead/newborn child, to whom it is iconographically related by the position of its head, mouth, and tongue,⁷ the horse of the mural is at once a victim and the source of new life. The diamond shape on its side is both wound and womb. Just above the diamond and to the left, a bird of unknown species completes the motif, replacing Pegasus as the symbol of departing/renascent spirit.

The evolution in Picasso's treatment of this bird or Pegasus figure is interesting in its own right and provides another link back to the story of the earthquake. One of the striking details in Picasso's recollection of that evening is the memory of his father wrapping him in a cape and carrying him in his arms through the streets of Málaga. The first two sketches for *Guernica*, done on May 1, both allude specifically to this event. I have already identified the bull as Picasso's father, Don José Ruiz Blasco, also known as Don Pepe. In the initial sketch of May 1, riding like a passenger on the bull's back, sits a bird, its wings outstretched in the form of a "V" (Figure 6). In the second drawing of that day, the bird has metamorphosed into Pegasus, but its position remains the same (Figure 7). Both "passengers," I would suggest, represent the 3-year-old boy who rode securely in his father's arms through the midst of a cataclysm. As the painting developed, the meaning of the bird/Pegasus changed in some of the ways I have already indicated, but its original significance as an autobiographical image should not be overlooked.

Before leaving Picasso's important initial drawing of May 1, let me comment on three further details it contains. I have already pointed out the association of pregnancy and birth with the horse of *Guernica*; this association is no less true of the initial drawing. Although hastily penciled in, the form of the horse has one identifying feature—a single upraised hoof. In a

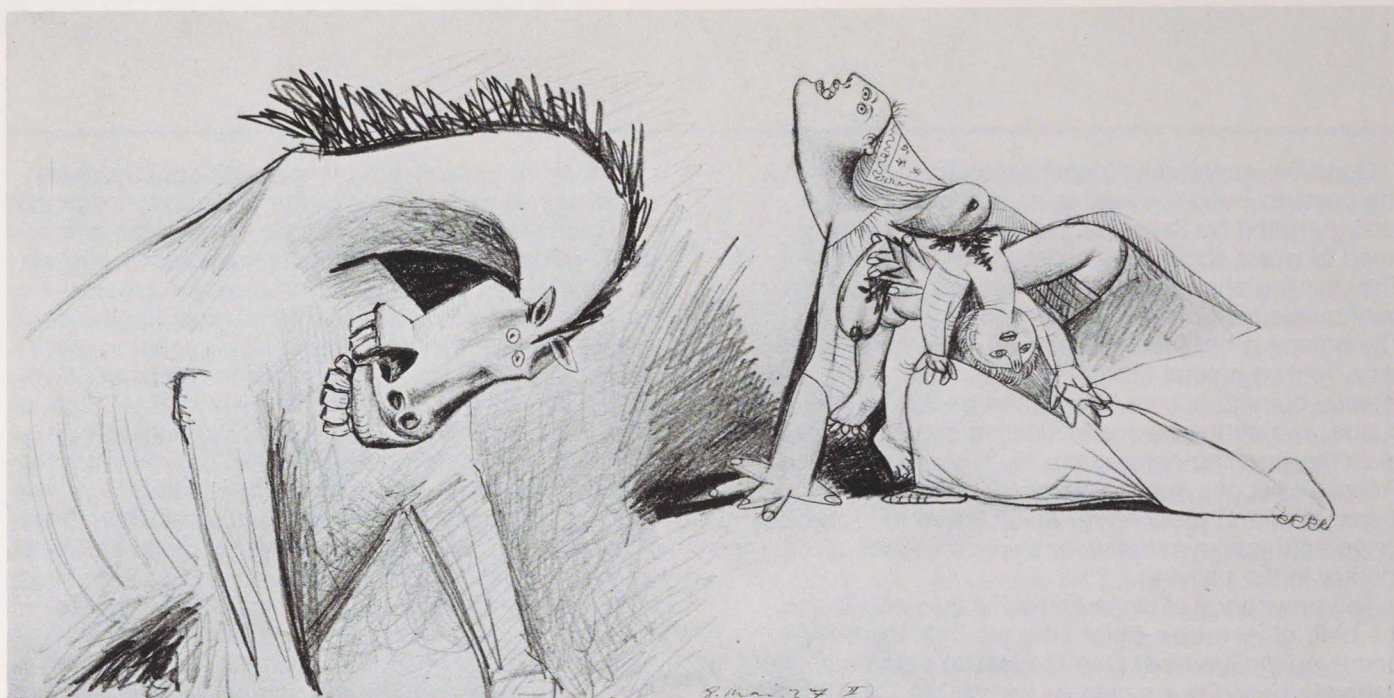


Figure 2 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica* (May 8, 1937). Pencil on white paper, 9½ × 17⅞". (The Prado, Madrid.)

drawing of the previous year, Picasso had used the same feature to indicate a mare giving birth to a foal (Figure 8). A second notable detail of the initial drawing is the woman holding a lamp who appears at the upper window of a building. So far as I know, this woman has no specific identity in terms of the earthquake story, though she rather quickly assumed the features of Picasso's mistress, Marie-Thérèse Walter.⁸ The symbolic role of this figure as light-bearer and witness to the scene below makes me suspect that she represents the position of the artist, an interpretation suggested by Arnheim and by other viewers as well. If she represents the position of Picasso as "informed intelligence," she may also represent his position as the 3-year-old child who witnessed the earthquake and, 53 years later, translated it into art.⁹

One final detail in the initial drawing deserves mention: the curved line that moves from beneath the lamp-holder down and across to the lower left center of the paper, ending in a pointed tip or arrow. This line is important in two respects: as a direction line for composition and as a direction line in time. Although the proportions of the mural differ from those of the initial drawing, the basic organization of the two states is the same. Against the two stable forms of horse and bull at the center and left of the composition, the curved line of the drawing defines a thrust or movement from right to left that appears, essentially unchanged, in the final painting. It is a movement that flows down with the falling woman, turns left at the powerful thrusting leg of the running mother, contin-

ues across through the broken statue, and resolves in the family group at the left. None of these figures is present in the initial drawing, but their placement has already been mapped.

The curved line also defines a movement in time. *Guernica* is a narrative painting; it tells the story of the earthquake, and that story moves from right to left, beginning with buildings on fire and people escaping as best they can, and ending, most improbably, in a scene of nativity.¹⁰ With a single downward stroke of the pencil, Picasso anticipated the narrative line his painting would eventually follow. Nor, in the end, did he forget the pointed tip of the line. In the final state of the mural (but not before) an arrow inexplicably appears between the horse's hind feet, near the lower left center of the canvas. It has no function other than as a directional cue; it tells us to move on to the next scene, the scene of birth. This arrow, like so much else in the painting, has its origin in the initial sketch of May 1.¹¹

Thus, from the very outset, the earthquake memory provided Picasso with an extended visual metaphor by which to depict the cataclysmic events of April 26, events that were difficult to imagine since they had no precedent in European military history or in the traditional iconography of warfare. Many elements of the earthquake story could be transposed without difficulty to the bombing: sudden violence, confusion, alarm, destruction, the helplessness of the victims and their frantic efforts to escape. At the same time, the earthquake story imposed coherence and direc-

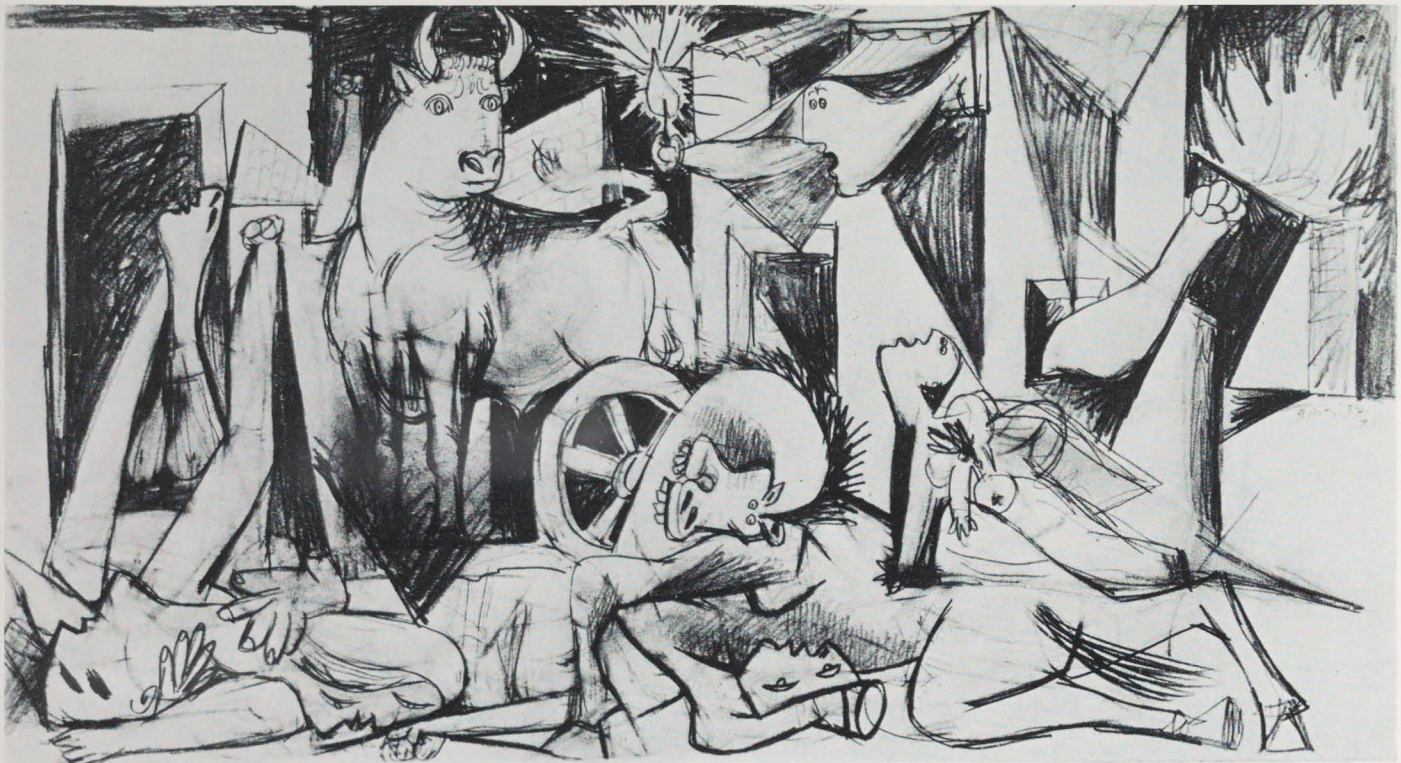


Figure 3 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica* (May 9, 1937). Pencil on white paper, 9½ × 17⅞". (The Prado, Madrid.)

tion on these events. It gave them a cast of characters and a simple narrative structure or plot. In this way, it allowed Picasso a useful economy of means, limiting the number of figures needed to represent the experience of an entire town while enriching the painting's significance by the addition of pregnancy, birth, and paternity as symbolic themes. Moreover, the earthquake story gave the painting a powerful emotional resonance for Picasso that it might not otherwise have had by condensing into a single image the collective trauma of his divided homeland and a vivid childhood memory of his own family's escape from a disaster of comparable magnitude.

The Theme of Violence

The common element that makes the earthquake-bombing metaphor so effective is violence—sudden, irrational, large-scale violence. *Guernica* is a painting about violence, or rather about the consequences of violence. In addition to the frightening, impersonal violence of the earthquake and the bombing, however, the painting also suggests the more familiar, personally motivated violence that occurs between individuals and within the family. Three of the central figures who appear in the early sketches for *Guernica* and who remain in the completed mural are familiar from Picasso's graphic work of the 1930s, where they often seem to translate the scenes of domestic vio-

lence that were occurring in Picasso's private life during this time. The bull, the horse, and the female onlooker (who sometimes carries a light) frequently appear together (Figure 9) in violent encounters that several critics have linked to the deterioration of Picasso's marriage to his wife Olga and the development of his new relationship with Marie-Thérèse Walter (see especially Chipp 1973–1974:103). The raging bull who gores the horse and sometimes devours its entrails would thus represent Picasso's rage against his hapless wife, the blonde onlooker being his beautiful young mistress.

Picasso's domestic difficulties during the 1930s are another important element in the background to *Guernica*, and it will be useful to recall quickly some of the main events from this time. In June 1935, after a long and bitter dispute over the terms of a settlement, the marriage to Olga ended in a legal separation. Picasso continued to see his estranged wife, however, for it was through her that he had access to his son Paulo.

Early in 1936, Picasso traveled to the south of France for several months in the company of Marie-Thérèse and their infant daughter, born the previous October. Things did not go smoothly on this trip, however, and in May, Picasso returned abruptly to Paris. Although he continued to see Marie-Thérèse and to spend weekends with her and Maïa at le Tremblay-sur-Mauldre, where he installed her in a villa, their relationship never regained the intimacy it previously had (Jordan 1981). By the summer of 1936, Picasso had begun to keep company with Dora Maar, the

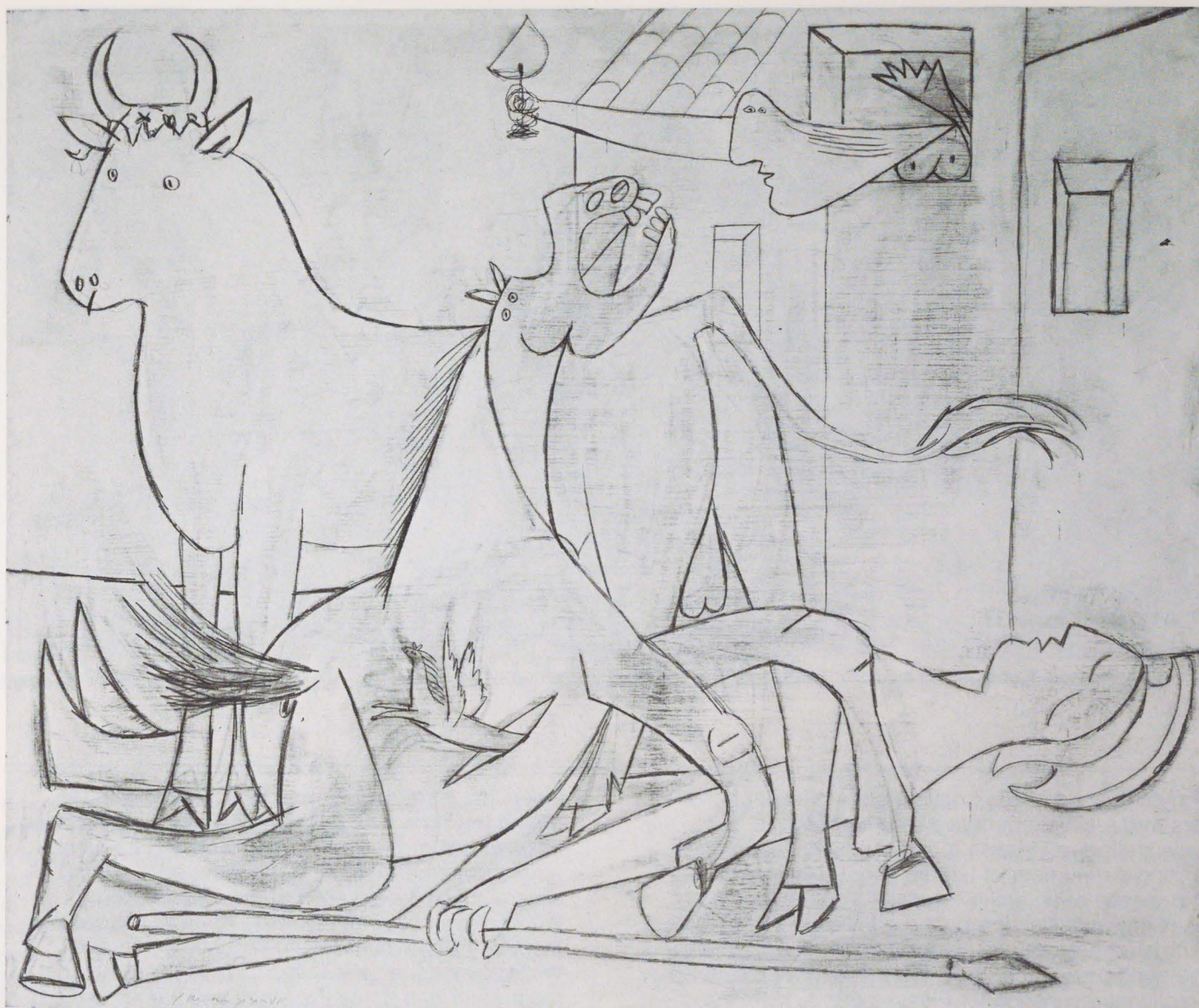


Figure 4 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica* (May 1, 1937). Pencil on gesso, on wood, $21\frac{1}{8} \times 25\frac{1}{2}$ ". (The Prado, Madrid.)



Figure 5 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica* (May 1, 1937). Pencil on blue paper, $8\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ ". (The Prado, Madrid.)



Figure 6 Picasso.
Composition study for
Guernica (May 1, 1937).
Pencil on blue paper, 8¼
× 10⅝". (The Prado,
Madrid.)



Figure 7 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica* (May 1, 1937). Pencil on blue paper, 8¼ × 10⅝". (The Prado, Madrid.)

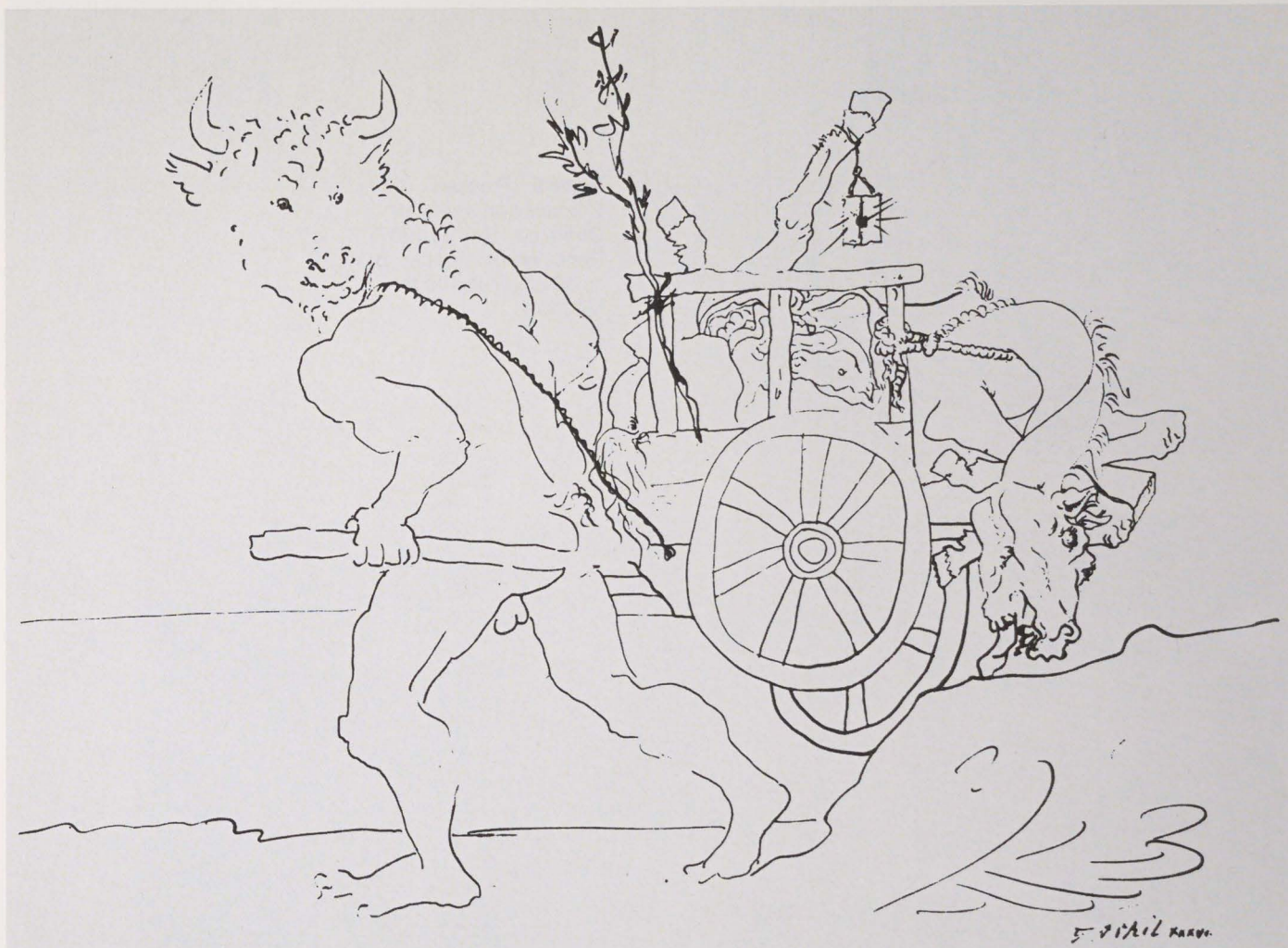


Figure 8 Picasso. Untitled drawing (April 5, 1936). Ink on paper, 19½ × 25⅜". (Musée Picasso, Paris.)

dark, Spanish-speaking, politically active photographer and painter whom he had met through his friend Eluard. It was she who, in the winter of 1937, found him the large studio in the rue des Grands-Augustins where *Guernica* was to be painted, and it was she who took photographs of the mural in its various stages of completion.

The relevance of this biographical information to an understanding of *Guernica* is suggested not only by the familiar iconography of bull, horse, and light-bearing onlooker, but also by Picasso's inclusion of "the couple" in the list of symbolic themes that he mentioned to Malraux. In addition to telling the story of the earthquake, the painting contains traces of a more recent sequence of events: the history of Picasso's troubled relationship with the women in his life. Further support for this hypothesis comes from an unexpected source, Marie-Thérèse herself. In an interview with Pierre Cabanne (1974), Marie-Thérèse gives us a glimpse of Picasso's complicated domestic arrangements during the period when he was working on *Guernica*:

When *Guernica* was bombed, he was in despair; on one side there was the war, on the other there was Olga whom he saw every day and to whom he gave 500 francs each time. At that time there was also Dora Maar. . . . When he did the great canvas that he called "*Guernica*," he was like a madman; he wanted to paint that bitch of a war and at the same time all the women he had on his mind. As for me, I was sort of an angel for him and that's how he portrayed me; and then the other one, Dora Maar, she was the war, poor dear. [p. 9]

One would not want to put too much faith in Marie-Thérèse's interpretations of the mural, especially the prejudiced view of herself as the angel of the painting (presumably the light-bearer) and of Dora Maar as the war (probably the running mother, as well as the various weeping women who appear in the so-called postscripts to *Guernica*). Nevertheless, her statement helps to explain why the victims in the painting are mostly, or perhaps all, women and children, and why the bull is portrayed in such an ambiguous fashion that critics have endlessly debated whether he is the cause of violence or a defender of the weak—in politi-

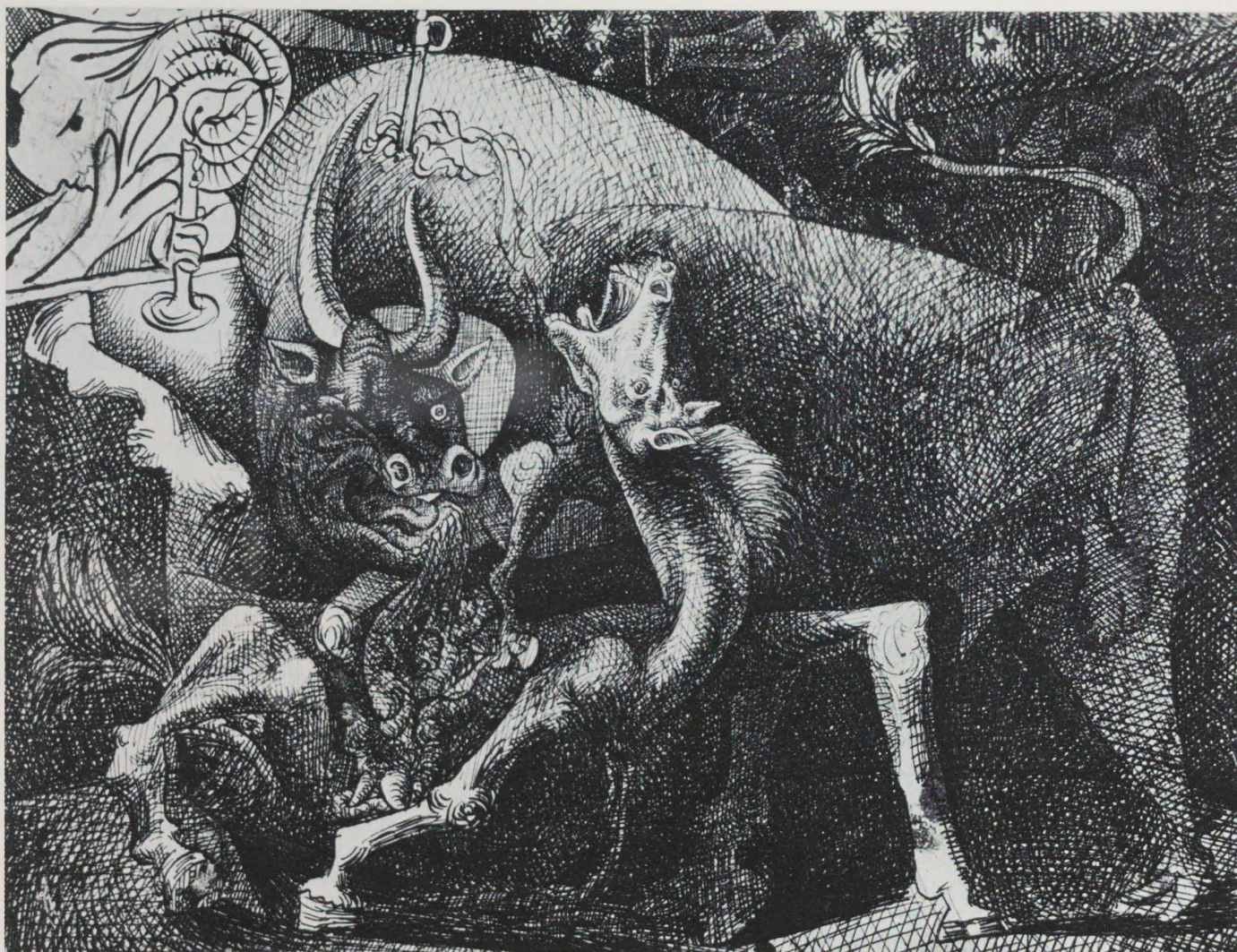


Figure 9 Picasso. *Bull Disembowling a Horse* (July 24, 1934). India ink on wood, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 16". (Musée Picasso, Paris.)

cal terms, whether he is a Fascist or a Republican. Picasso's famous answer to this question is useful, but does not tell the whole story. "The bull is not fascism," he said to Jerome Seckler (quoted in Ashton 1972:137), "but it is brutality and darkness." By refusing to equate the bull with fascism, Picasso was emphasizing the complexity of his symbolism and the inadequacy of any interpretation that reduces the painting to a simple allegory of political parties or of good versus evil. At the same time, his response does acknowledge a degree of similarity between the bull and the Fascists, even if the bull's significance is far from exhausted by this resemblance.

As with the earthquake metaphor, Picasso's use of bullfight imagery in the painting is related to his central concern with violence. The bull is like the Fascists in that he is a destroyer of innocent lives. The brutality and darkness he embodies are those of the enraged beast in the arena who acts out his fury against the horse in so many of Picasso's bullfight pictures and who, in *Guernica*, is implicitly responsible for the diamond-shaped wound (*cornada*) in the horse's belly.¹²

The brutality and darkness of the bull are also those of Picasso himself, in his relationship not only to Olga (usually represented by the horse) but also now to Marie-Thérèse and Maïa, whom he had more or less rejected in favor of Dora Maar. The mother and child beneath the bull's body at the left side of the mural thus take on additional meaning in relation to these events. They suggest the new family group that Picasso had formed in 1935 but from which he withdrew, except for visits that suited his convenience, in 1936. The childbirth motif that emerges in the earthquake story is reinforced by association with the more recent birth of Picasso's daughter. Picasso's ambivalence toward his own role as *père de famille* is reflected in the bull's posture: fiercely protective, but at the same time emotionally detached and aloof. The expression of agony on the mother's face can thus be understood as resulting both from the travails of childbirth and from the pain of being rejected by her child's father, different moments in their relationship being condensed into a single image.

Considered in this perspective, *Guernica* becomes



Figure 10 Picasso. *Head of Bull with Studies of Eyes* (study for *Guernica*; May 20, 1937). Pencil and gouache on paper, 9¼ × 11½". (The Prado, Madrid.)

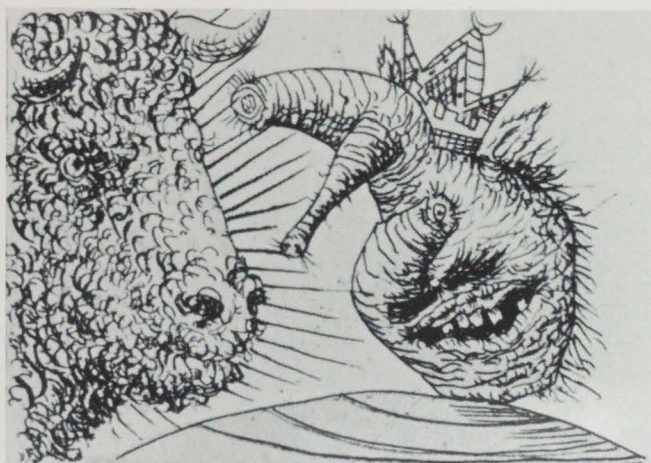
Figure 11 Picasso. *Dream and Lie of Franco, II* (detail; January 8–9, 1937). Etching and aquatint. (Collection, Museum of Modern Art, New York.)

a painting about domestic violence as well as about the earthquake and the bombing. Its symbolic themes rightly include "the couple," as Picasso hinted to Malraux; and it is indeed about "all the women he had on his mind," to a greater extent even than Marie-Thérèse realized, for it includes his mother and his sister Lola as well as references to Marie-Thérèse in roles other than that of angel.¹³ Women and children are victims of the domestic violence in *Guernica*, and man—or male brutality—is the oppressor. Like the muscular, bison-headed figure in the *Minotaur-machy*, the bull of *Guernica* embodies this tragic capacity for violence. It is a capacity that Picasso found deeply rooted in himself, in Spanish culture, and perhaps in human nature generally, and that he saw as having particularly destructive consequences in the relation of men to women. *Guernica* is Picasso's protest against the destruction of innocent lives, but it is also, at least in part, a confession of his responsibility for similarly destructive acts toward the women and children in his own domestic sphere.

It is scarcely an exaggeration, then, to say that Picasso identified with the Fascists as well as with the victims of the bombing, for he knew what it was like to be a destroyer. To say this, however, is only to point out one of the elements that makes *Guernica* great art and lifts it above mere political propaganda. The conflict in Spain was a civil war, and Picasso, as a Spanish artist, understood and experienced the full

anguish of a nation divided against itself. Although his political allegiance was strongly to the Republican side, this did not prevent him from recognizing in himself elements of "brutality and darkness" that resembled those of the Fascists. As we shall see, *Guernica* does contain a strong partisan message, but it is important to emphasize Picasso's profound understanding of both sides of the conflict.

In the painting, this double awareness is reflected primarily through ambiguities in the portrayal of the bull, who is literally a two-sided figure: facing left as well as right and folded back upon himself in a violent contortion that was one of the relatively late changes Picasso made in the layout of the mural. Benignly protective (in terms of the earthquake story) but also destructive (in terms of the bullfight), the bull is a figure of tragic contradictions: head turned against body, light side against dark. Because of these contradictions, he can be read either as a Fascist or as a Republican, depending on which side of his nature one chooses to emphasize, but in fact, of course, he is both. The ambiguities do not resolve. He is like the minotaur, Picasso's favorite self-image during the 1930s, in his mingling of opposed qualities—bestial, human, and divine. As a creature of "darkness," he shuns the light, turning his head away from the double source of illumination in the painting. In this respect, he resembles the minotaur in the great etching of 1935, who tries to shield his eyes against the light



of a candle held by a little girl. The sight that each wishes to avoid is a scene of domestic violence for which he is in part responsible and which includes a disemboweled horse.

In both works, however, the compulsion to see and to enlighten is stronger than the wish to evade and obscure. The strong forward thrust of the light-bearer's arm indicates an insistence that nothing be hidden and that the truth about the disaster be known to all (Hohl 1978). Sight as well as light is an important element in the mural. *Guernica* is a painting full of eyes—eyes that stare and that force us to stare, to be witness to the horror of destruction. Overhead, the naked lightbulb forms the iris and pupil of a single eye that looks down unflinchingly on the scene of violence. This motif is repeated in the tiny oval flame of the oil lantern, which, like the electric lamp, is at once a source of light and an organ of vision.

The bull too is a singularly well-sighted creature. His eyes are intelligent and human, oval rather than round like those of a beast,¹⁴ and there is even the faint trace of a third eye visible between the other two. Picasso's emphasis on the theme of vision, especially with respect to the bull, is evident in one of the early studies for the painting (Figure 10). Here, the bull's head is surrounded by a swarm of ocular improvisations, free-floating eyes that call attention (albeit rather playfully) to the bull's extraordinary powers of perception.¹⁵

In the final state of the mural, this visionary power is stressed both by the pentimento of a third eye and by the displacement of the bull's left eye downward below his ear and onto his neck, where it settles quite contrary to the laws of conventional physiognomy. The effect of this cubist displacement is twofold. First, it establishes a meaningful tension between the head gesture of the bull as it turns away from the light and the counter-force of attraction that draws the bull's eye back toward the central scene of violence.¹⁶ (The displacement of this eye did not occur until the same state of the mural at which Picasso made the decision to fold the bull's body back upon itself, thus creating the effect of a turn and with it the tension between sight and evasion.) A second effect of displacing the

bull's eye is to emphasize the quasi-autonomous power of the faculty of sight. The bull, like the artist, sees more profoundly than other creatures. Vision is for him a separate and special mode of apprehension. (Picasso's penetrating eyes were always his most striking feature.) The bull's displaced lateral eye is thus the sign of his special understanding and insight, an understanding that the viewer who is confronted by this eye must seek out for himself.

The tensions and ambiguities in Picasso's portrayal of the bull have many sources, personal as well as cultural and political. The bull has elements of Picasso's father in his role as savior and protector of the family during a time of crisis. Like Picasso, the bull is an artist possessing special powers of intelligence and vision. The bull is noble and heroic, like the magnificent fighting bulls of the *corrida* whom Picasso had drawn and painted since childhood and who often carry the artist's own personal symbolism. Seer, defender, creator, and preserver, the bull represents all that is strong and admirable in the Spanish character and in the Spanish Republic. The bull who embodies all these virtues is the one who opposes the hideous polyp, Franco, in Picasso's political cartoon, *The Dream and Lie of Franco*, from the winter of 1937 (Figure 11).

Unlike this simple and unequivocally heroic figure, however, the bull of *Guernica* also has a dark and brutal side that suggests his kinship, if not his identity, with the Fascists. The wounded horse, traditionally his victim in the cruel ritual of the arena, confirms the bull's role as aggressor and destroyer. The frightened women and children in the picture take their place too, along with the horse, as victims of male brutality. This interpretation, an extension of more widely accepted readings of Picasso's bullfight pictures from the early 1930s, draws on biographical information about his relationship with Olga, Marie-Thérèse, Maïa, and Dora Maar. It need not remain narrowly biographical, however. The bull can be seen more generally as representing masculine pride and tyranny—Spanish *machismo* in all its benevolent and oppressive force.¹⁷ The injuries suffered by the women are in this sense gender-induced. Their wounds are emotional and psychological rather than physical, and the bull can be understood as protective and possessive but at the same time cruel. Viewed in this way, *Guernica* assumes additional coherence as a study of domestic violence. The story of the couple takes its place along with that of the earthquake and the bombing in the narrative composition of the painting.

Father and Son

If *Guernica* is a painting about the couple, it is also, as I indicated at the beginning, a painting about father and son and about Picasso's myth of paternity. Allusions to the theme of fatherhood have already been noted in relation to the earthquake story and to the figure of the bull. I have suggested that in Picasso's initial conception of the painting the bull represents his father and that the bird/Pegasus figure who rides on the bull's back in the first two sketches of May 1 thus represents the son who was carried through the streets of Málaga on the night of the earthquake.

Part of the appeal that this memory must have had for Picasso is the image of his father as strong, virile, and decisive. Don José is usually portrayed in his son's art as a weak and lonely old man. In Picasso's portraits of him from 1895 to 1900, he often appears in isolation, his hands idle and his head bowed or leaning on his arm. One early drawing from La Coruña, dated January 1, 1895, shows him lying back on a couch or bed with his hands folded across his body in a state of almost death-like passivity (Figure 12). The date of this New Year's portrait locates it at or around the time of Don José's personal crisis, when he is supposed to have renounced painting and handed his tools over to his son. The date of the drawing also situates it in relation to another crisis in Don José's role as father. His youngest child, Concepción, then seven years old, had contracted diphtheria and died only nine days later, on January 10. Picasso's memory of his father as the rescuer and guardian of the family during the earthquake contrasts sharply with the more frequent image of him as vulnerable and weak and therefore provides the son with a stronger model of paternal identification. The bull may thus express part of the positive side of Picasso's ambivalent feelings toward his father, but, as we have seen, the bull of *Guernica* is also associated with domestic violence and brutality and in this way carries part of Picasso's guilt for being a bad or destructive father with respect to Olga and Paulo, Marie-Thérèse and Maïa.

Picasso's pervasive concern in the painting with violence and the effects of violence extends to yet another area of relations within the family. In addition to the violence of men toward women and children, the mural is about the violence between generations, between son and father. The figure in the painting who carries this aspect of Picasso's myth of paternity is the warrior, or sword-bearer, whose fallen body, reduced in the final mural to a head and two forearms, lies in fragments across the bottom left of the picture beneath the horse's feet and below the bull. One of the warrior's hands grasps the hilt of a broken sword, near and apparently out of which grows a single flower. The significance of this warrior figure has been



Figure 12 Picasso. *Portrait of Don Jose Ruiz Blasco* (January 1, 1895). Pencil on green paper, 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (signed P. Ruiz). (Museo Picasso, Barcelona.)

variously interpreted, and several different genealogies for him have been suggested from the history of Western art. He is often associated with the Crucifixion, either as a Christ-like martyr or as one of the two thieves or, by virtue of the spear and helmet that he has in one of the early studies, as the Roman centurion who pierced Christ's side and who was subsequently canonized as St. Longinus (Russell 1980:22–23). In terms of Picasso's bullfight motif, he can be linked both to the picador, who wields a lance, and to the matador, who uses a sword. Because of the occasional overlapping of bullfight and Crucifixion imagery in Picasso's work, these possible interpretations are viewed as simultaneous and mutually reinforcing. In all accounts, the warrior is taken as one of the victims of the bombing, a Republican soldier who died defending the town—his sword thus being a futile or perhaps only a symbolic weapon, for it could have no practical effect against an aerial bombardment.

In order to grasp the meaning of the *Guernica* warrior, a meaning I believe to be quite different from the ones just mentioned, it will be useful to trace the development of this figure from the early composition studies through the several states of the mural. The warrior first appears in the sixth and final composition study which Picasso completed on May 1 (Figure 4). Here he wears the classical helmet and carries a spear. His entire body, especially his arm and feet, is stiff, almost statue-like in its rigidity. Only the curved lines that indicate closed eyelids suggest any relaxation or death-like repose in his figure. On the following day he appears again, only this time a little less rigidly positioned (Figure 13). One knee is slightly raised, and the arm that holds his spear is bent at the elbow. The classical helmet is gone, and his head lies in what may be a pool of blood. His spear is broken, and he has been joined on the ground by a female



Figure 13 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica* (May 2, 1937). Pencil and gouache on gesso on wood, 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ × 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". (The Prado, Madrid.)



Figure 14 Picasso. Composition study for *Guernica*, II (May 8, 1937). Pencil on white paper, 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ × 17 $\frac{7}{8}$ ". (The Prado, Madrid.)

figure, both of them presumably victims of the unseen violent force that alarms the bull and the light-bearer. In a study of May 8, he occupies much the same position as in the previous sketch (Figure 14). Finally, in the important composition study of May 9, the warrior loses his individuality and sinks into the tangle of broken bodies that line the base of the picture (Figure 3). At this stage in Picasso's conception, he apparently no longer figures as an important actor in the drama. His weapon is gone, and he joins the group of other anonymous victims who form a supporting cast to the main action.

In the first state of the mural, the warrior surges into a new position of prominence that nothing in the preliminary studies had anticipated (Figure 15). Naked, his feet and legs together, and his arms outstretched from his body, he assumes a posture that is at once cruciform and helpless but also heroic and defiant. In one hand he grasps the broken sword that will remain an integral part of his role from this point on. With the other arm he raises a vigorous, clenched-fist salute that provides the canvas with a strong vertical axis to offset its horizontal length. He is at the same time Christ militant and Christ crucified. He is also Christ Republican, his raised arm giving the familiar anti-Fascist gesture of resistance.

State two of the mural (Figure 16) represents an important transitional moment in Picasso's portrayal of the sword-bearer. On the one hand, the soldier's vertical gesture of defiance has been strengthened and rendered more affirmative by adding weight to his closed fist and giving it a sheaf of grass and grain to hold, and also by surrounding it with a large, flower-like sun that forms a halo behind it at the apex of the central compositional triangle. On the other hand, Picasso has considerably blunted the force of this affirmative gesture by blacking out a large rectangle at the center of the horse's body in such a way as to cancel the warrior's shoulder and bicep and thus de-

prive his fist of any visible support. Arnheim is correct, I believe, in suggesting that this technique was used by the painter "to indicate the ground and also to clear for free action certain problematic parts of the composition" (1962:120). The blacked-out areas of the canvas have, in effect, been condemned in preparation for the trying out of a new idea. With respect to the sword-bearer, this means that Picasso had already begun to reconsider the appropriateness of giving such prominence to a figure of martyred resistance and to so obvious a gesture of political allegiance.¹⁸

State three of the mural (Figure 17) marks Picasso's first attempt to work toward a new conception of the sword-bearer, but his idea at this point remains tentative and vague. Gone are the raised arm and clenched fist that signaled militant resistance. Gone too is the cruciform deployment of the body. The strong vertical axis has collapsed, and the warrior lies reduced to the horizontal, his muscular torso effaced completely and his legs partially blacked out to indicate that they too will not remain. The direction of his head is now reversed, connecting him more strongly to the left side of the painting. His face turns downward, and his features, notably the eyes and the weak, recessive chin, lack strength or determination. Only the forearm and the hand that holds the broken sword remain unchanged from the previous state. It is difficult at this stage of the painting to speculate on what the warrior's role in the action has become. One thing, however, is clear: Picasso has rejected the idea of this figure as a militant and crucified Christ, choosing instead to emphasize his fallen, horizontal posture and the broken weapon that he continues to hold.

Between state three and the completed mural, Picasso made three further changes in the sword-bearer figure. First, in the bottom left corner of the

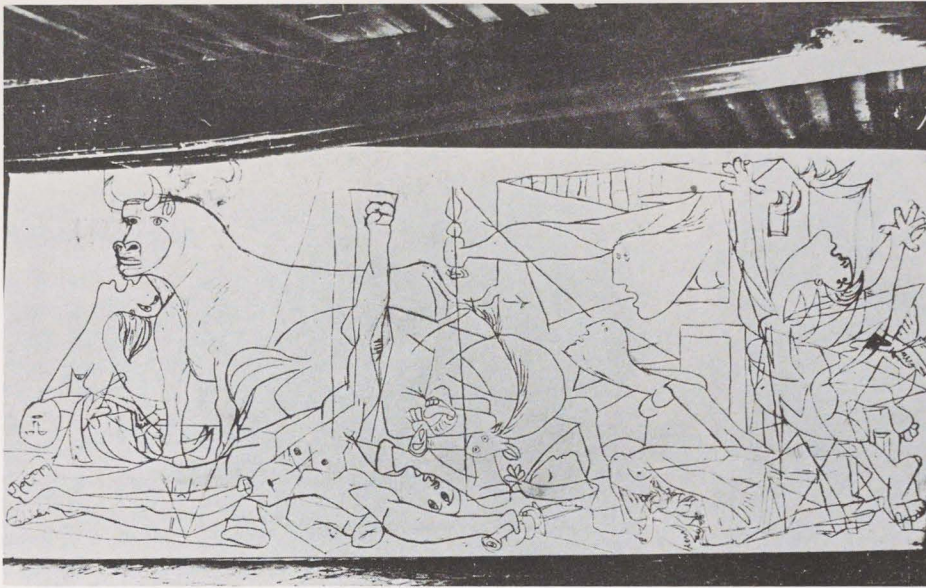


Figure 15 Picasso.
Guernica: first state of the mural. (Photographed by Dora Maar.)



Figure 16 Picasso.
Guernica: second state of the mural. (Photographed by Dora Maar.)

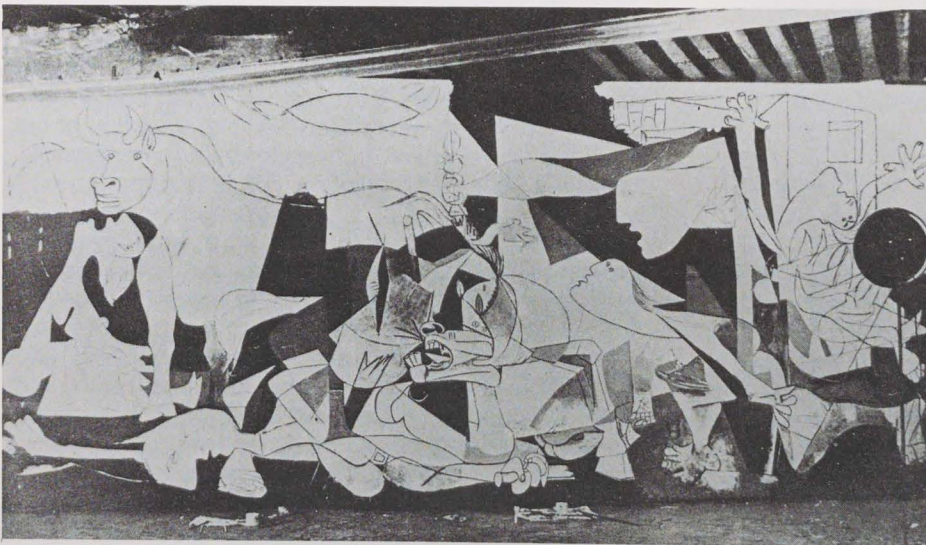


Figure 17 Picasso.
Guernica: third state of the mural. (Photographed by Dora Maar.)

painting where the warrior's legs had previously appeared, he added a second arm with open hand and outstretched fingers. Second, after experimenting with different positions and combinations of features,¹⁹ he settled on a final conception of the warrior's head: the face now turned upward toward the bull, the mouth open revealing a double row of teeth, and the eyes wide and staring, repeating in their shape and asymmetrical disposition those of the bull. Finally, and most important, he transformed the sword-bearer from an ordinary human figure, presumably of flesh and blood, into a set of plaster casts or fragmented pieces of statuary, their open hollow forms exposed at the join of elbow and of neck. The effect of this final transformation is to make the warrior seem more like a toppled and broken statue than a dead soldier killed in the bombing. In this respect, the warrior's final appearance recalls his rigid, statue-like position in the composition study of May 1 (Figure 4).

These final changes in the sword-bearer figure, especially his transformation into a man of stone or plaster, correspond to a fundamental shift in Picasso's conception of the warrior's role. As I have already mentioned, the idea of a broken or fallen statue may owe something to Picasso's memory of the Málaga disaster of 1884. Certainly, the violence of the earthquake as well as of the bombing was sufficient to topple many a statue from its base. Picasso's decision to render the sword-bearer in this fashion, however, has other important implications. Where before he had imagined the warrior as a Christ-like victim and a martyr of the resistance, Picasso now began to think of him more as the embodiment of traditions and values from the past, in other words as a figure from history—hence his representation as a statue or the fragments of a monument.

The historical associations of this figure are of three different kinds. They refer to Picasso's own personal history, to the history of art, and finally to the history of Spain. In terms of Picasso's own private history, the fallen warrior refers, I believe, to the artist's myth of paternity and in particular to his father, whom he admired as his first instructor but whom he quickly surpassed and overthrew in the process of asserting his creative independence. The portrayal of the sword-bearer as a set of plaster casts supports such an identification. Fragments of classical statuary, we recall, served as models in the nineteenth-century academic schools where Picasso studied and were used specifically by Don José for the instruction of his son. The pieces of statuary that lie across the bottom of *Guernica* recall the figure studies that Picasso produced at La Coruña under his father's supervision (Figures 18, 19). The fact that they lie fallen and in fragments indicates the overthrow of the father and of the academic tradition that he represents by the revolutionary new style of the younger generation.

In addition to indicating the fallen father and the son's rejection of his early academic training, the pieces of statuary in the mural are also an allusion to the classical past. In this sense, they combine with other classical elements in the painting to reflect Picasso's acknowledgment of the continuity between his own work and the art of Greece and Rome.²⁰ Most notably, the monumental size and triangular composition of *Guernica* recall the sculptured pediments that surmount Greek temples. Antique heads and forearms, rendered as plaster casts, had appeared previously in Picasso's art as similar reminders of his classical heritage (Figure 20). Despite the presence of such allusions, however, *Guernica* is hardly a classical work; or rather, it is so chiefly in a violent and disturbing way. Its classical elements are more notable for their profanation than for their faithful and loving imitation. Far from being an ideal of heroic virtue, the warrior is fallen and fragmentary rather than erect, entire, and noble. Likewise, the mural's resemblance to a classical pediment is suggested only to be violated by the grotesque distortion of its figures.²¹

Like so many of Picasso's paintings, *Guernica* is thus a work of deliberate stylistic discontinuity. It evokes the conventions of classical art in order both to use and to transgress them. Self-consciously aware of its relation to the art of the past, it dramatizes its position as a modernist canvas by establishing an interplay of conflicting aesthetic codes. In this way, it stages the search for origin and the conflict with the Law that Roland Barthes views as the essence of storytelling, and it enters into the "dialectic of tenderness and hatred" that Barthes (following Lacan) identifies as the response of narrative to the "absent, hidden, hypostatized father." The Law, in this instance, is no longer the weak and limited figure of Picasso's biographical father, but the set of formal structures and conventions that Lacan calls the Name-of-the-Father and that appears in *Guernica* through the various classical elements, including the fallen warrior, that the painting simultaneously violates and sustains. Both in personal terms and in terms of the history of art, *Guernica* can thus be understood as an enactment of Picasso's myth of paternity.

If the fallen warrior of *Guernica* carries these suggestions of a contested and deposed paternal order, then a similar thematic pattern can be derived from his figure with respect to political events in the Spain of 1937. In order to understand how this can be so, we must think of the painting in a broader historical context than just that of the bombing. Among the symbolic themes mentioned in the list he recited to Malraux, Picasso included that of "rebellion." Yet there was no rebellion at Guernica, only the murder of innocent victims; the town was a civilian target, most of whose residents were women and children. From Picasso's perspective as a Republican sympathizer,

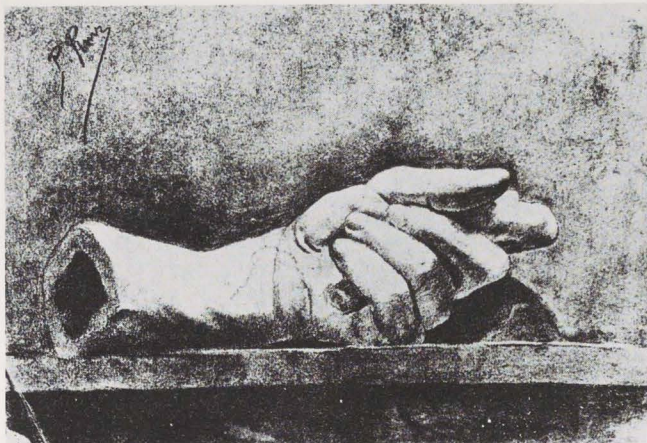


Figure 18 Picasso. *Study of a Hand after a Plaster Cast* (1893 or 1894). Charcoal on paper, 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ × 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (signed P. Ruiz). (Musée Picasso, Paris.)



Figure 19 Picasso. *Study of a Reclining Torso after a Plaster Cast* (1893 or 1894). Pencil on paper, 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 25 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (signed P. Ruiz). (From C. Zervos, *Pablo Picasso: oeuvre catalogue*, volume 6, plate 4.)

however, the conflict in Spain was indeed, in its largest significance, a rebellion—that is, a social and political revolution by the Spanish people and the forces of democracy against a privileged and entrenched ruling class. The uprising led by Franco and his generals against the Spanish Republic was, for Picasso, part of a reactionary counterrevolution carried out by the military in the name of the ruling elite. Such, in more or less these terms, was the position that Picasso took in a statement he made in the spring of 1937 on the occasion of an exhibition of Spanish Republican posters in New York. The exact date of this statement is unknown, but it was issued in May or June while Picasso was still at work on the mural. It is both his clearest statement about the meaning of the Spanish struggle and his strongest assertion of the mural's political message. The statement (quoted in Barr 1946:202) begins as follows:

The Spanish struggle is the fight of reaction against the people, against freedom. My whole life as an artist has been nothing more than a continuous struggle against reaction and the death of art. . . . In the panel on which I am working, which I shall call *Guernica*, and in all my recent works of art, I clearly express my abhorrence of the military caste which has sunk Spain in an ocean of pain and death.

In *Guernica*, Picasso's abhorrence of Franco and the Spanish military caste finds expression in two ways: first, through his depiction of the ocean of pain and death that the Fascists wrought upon the women and children of the town; and second, through his depiction, in the person of the sword-bearer, of a symbolic representative of that caste—one who has been overthrown, however, and whose sword, one of the two weapons visible in the painting, has been broken. When he rejected the idea of the sword-bearer as a martyred hero of the resistance, Picasso instead changed this figure into an embodiment of the values and traditions within Spanish culture that were ultimately responsible for the bombing.

The fallen warrior of *Guernica* is precisely that: a warrior. His outstretched arm and open hand recall not so much the Crucifixion²² as the Fascist salute (Figure 21). The fact that he grasps a sword in his other hand links him implicitly to the Spanish cult of militarism and to the tradition of military iconography in Spanish art and literature. The hero of the Spanish national epic, the *Cid*, is repeatedly referred to as having his sword in hand, *la espada en la mano*. From Charles V to Franco, portraits of the Spanish monarchs and political leaders have shown them in military costume, holding a sword (Figures 22, 23). Countless civic monuments, not only in Spain but throughout Europe, have been erected in public buildings and on city squares to honor the exploits of military men. Public art tends to glorify the warrior. Statues of sword-bearing heroes became one of the clichés of Fascist art in Germany under National Socialism (Figure 24). Picasso's art, by contrast, is deliberately antiheroic and antimilitarist. In *Guernica*, he takes the familiar icon of military heroism and smashes it to pieces, breaks the sword, the instrument of violence, and beside it plants a flower, watered by the tears of suffering. (The flower has a tear-shaped petal that connects it to the eyes of the falling woman and the weeping mother.)

The fallen father of the painting is thus also a social and political father. If not specifically Franco, he is at least a historical type of which Franco in 1937 was the particular instance. He is also, as a statue, an example of what Picasso meant by "reaction and the death of art": neoclassical style in the service of fascism and military ideals. By showing this statue as toppled and broken, Picasso inserted a prophetic message into his painting of the ruined town. Although the Fascists might bomb cities and murder women and children, the final result of the Spanish struggle would be the overthrow of repressive authority and the birth of a new social order. In this way, Picasso used his myth of paternity—a myth centrally concerned with the overthrow of authority—as a means of interpreting history and looking into the future.

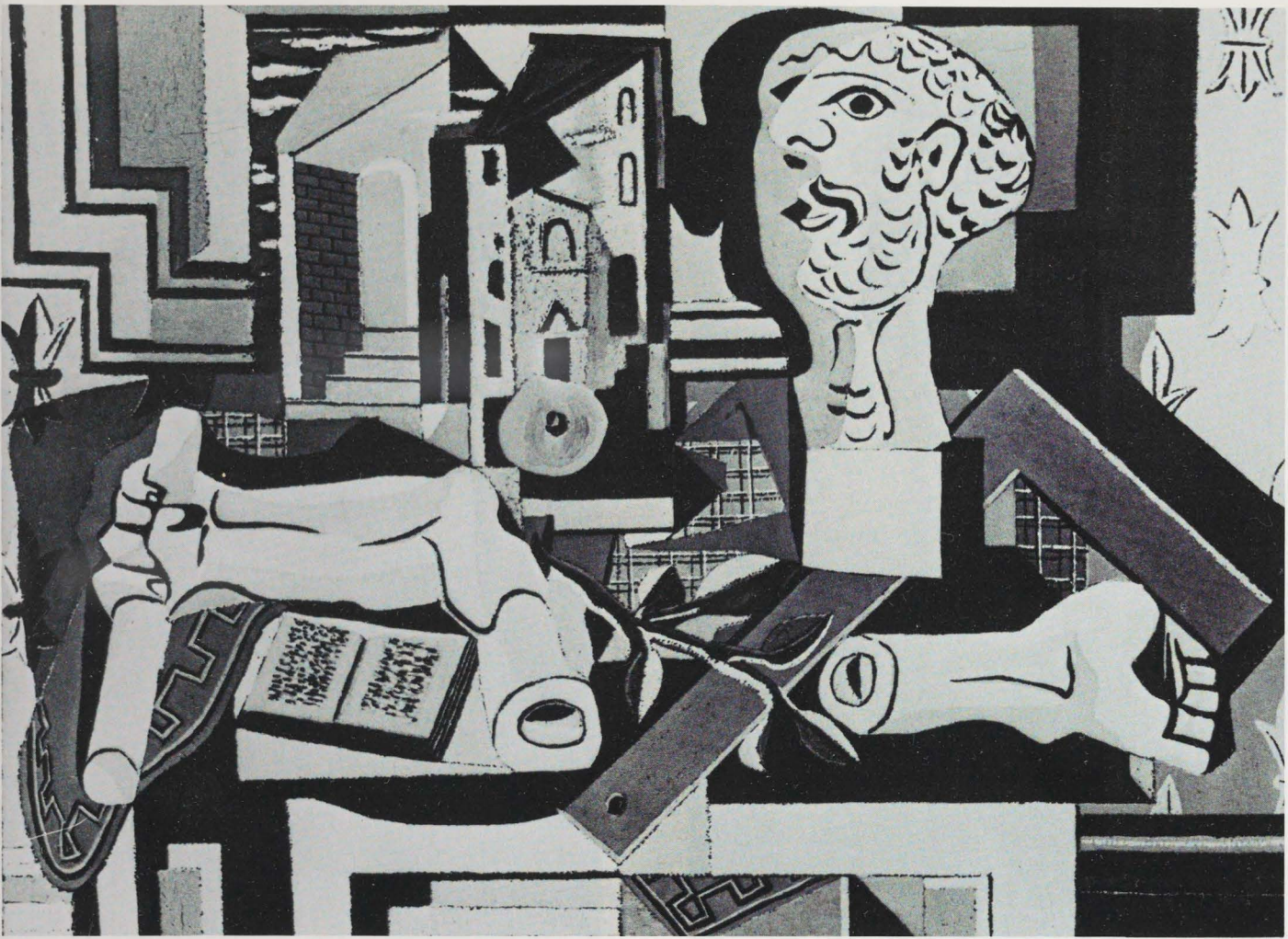


Figure 20 Picasso. *Studio with Plaster Head* (1925). Oil on canvas, 38 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". (Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.)

Revolution and Rebirth

Picasso's prophetic message in *Guernica* is one of revolution and rebirth, the rebirth not only of Spanish society but of Spanish art. This message was part of the important 1937 statement that he sent to accompany the New York exhibition of war posters. "As to the future of Spanish art," the statement concludes,

this much I may say to my friends in America. The contribution of the people's struggle will be enormous. No one can deny the vitality and the youth which the struggle will bring to Spanish art. Something new and strong which the consciousness of this magnificent epic will sow in the souls of Spanish artists will undoubtedly appear in their works. This contribution of the purest human values to a resurgent art will be one of the greatest conquests of the Spanish people. [ibid.:264]

Although his immediate subject is the work of other artists and in particular the posters in the exhibition, Picasso's remarks about a renaissance of Spanish art have relevance to his own work and to *Guernica*.

The theme of birth—of birth surrounded by violent destruction—was from the very beginning a central element in Picasso's conception of the painting. The birth of his sister Lola in the aftermath of the earthquake provided him with a motif that appeared in the initial sketches of May 1 and that retained its place in the completed mural. As I have indicated, the dangling infant in the family group at the left side of the painting carries associations of childbirth as well as of death. The other figure associated with the theme of birth in the early sketches is the bird or Pegasus, who in one of the May 1 drawings is shown flying from an opening in the horse's belly. This winged figure soon disappeared from Picasso's composition studies, but reappeared briefly in state one of the mural before metamorphosing into a hand and then dropping out again until almost the very end. Only in the penultimate state of the mural did the bird take its final position, occupying the space vacated when Picasso decided to rotate the bull's hindquarters 180 degrees to the left.

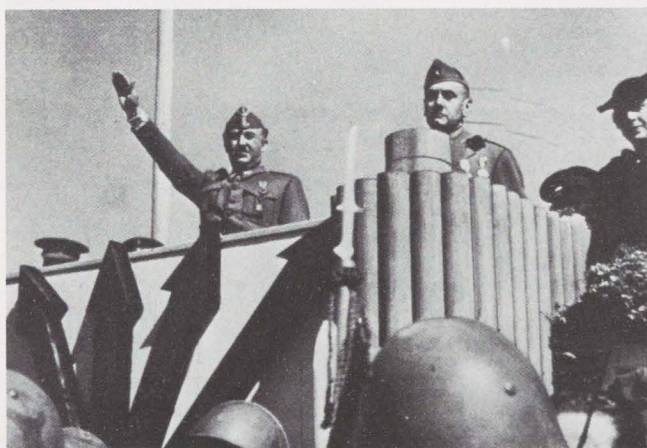


Figure 21 Photograph of General Franco (October 1938).



Figure 22 Giovanni Britto. *Charles V with Drawn Sword* (ca. 1540). Woodcut after Titian. (Albertina, Vienna.)

The bird of the mural consists of little more than an outline, an artist's cartoon with stick legs, set against the wedge-shaped corner of a table just in front of the horse's open mouth. Its body contains a horizontal white bar that once formed part of the bull's shoulder. Its upraised beak is open in a silent carol—whether of the victory or defeat we do not know. Added at the last minute, the bird is not, however, an afterthought. In view of its important place in the early studies, the bird's return to prominence in the completed mural should come as no surprise.²³

The bird of *Guernica* resumes and completes Picasso's theme of rebirth, once again with respect to the artist's own personal history as well as to the history of art and the history of the Spanish war. In terms of Picasso's private themes and symbols, the bird recalls the doves and pigeons that his family raised in Málaga and La Coruña and that Picasso often kept around him in his studios in later life. Doves are also associated with Picasso's theme of paternity, for they were the favorite subject of his father's paintings.²⁴ A dove also figures prominently in the narrative of

Picasso's paternal myth. According to the story told by Sabartés and Penrose, it was the figure of a dove painted by the son in a canvas of the father's design that led Don José to renounce painting and hand over his brushes to the young boy. The bird of *Guernica*, with its legs and feet clearly outlined against the table top, evokes a memory of the dove whose feet the father dissected and pinned to a board for his son to use as a model. The bird of the mural is thus associated with the father's overthrow, but at the same time its presence in a painting by the son constitutes a resurrection of the father's totem animal (what Lacan would call the paternal metaphor) and hence a restoration through art of the paternal legacy.

The bird of the mural functions as a symbol of mediation between father and son. It expresses both violence and conciliation. It has attributes that suggest the continuity of generations and the passing on of inherited traits. Its upraised beak, for example, forms a V-shaped pair of "horns" like those of the bull,²⁵ and the white bar in its body represents the literal internalization of what was formerly a part of the bull's back.



Figure 23 Portrait of General Franco (detail from mural of the Spanish Civil War). (Servicio Histórico Militar, Madrid.)

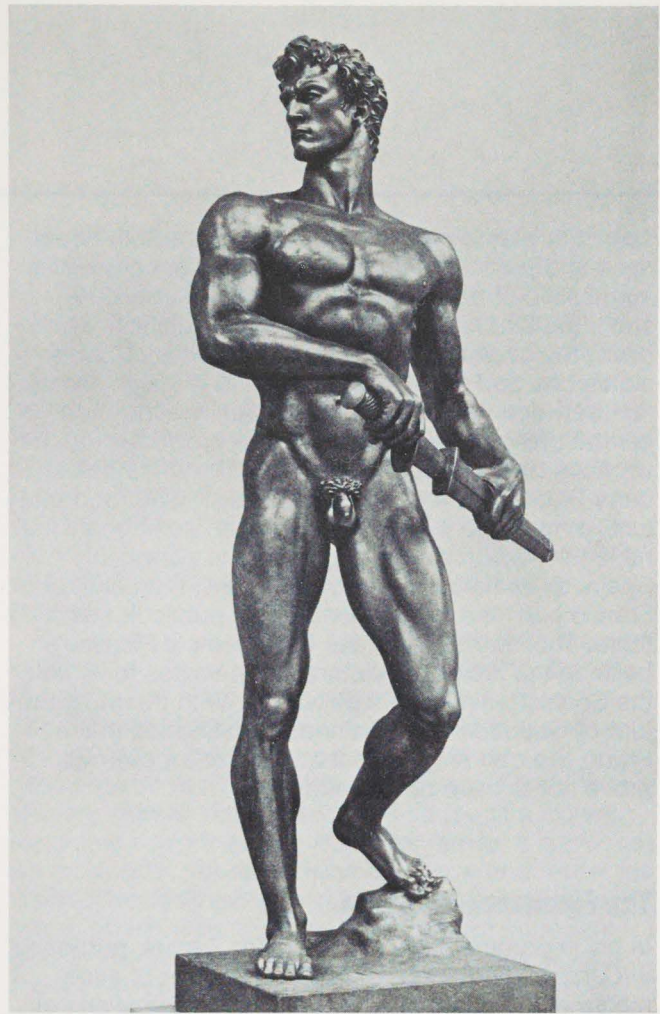


Figure 24 Arno Breker. *Readiness* (1939). (From *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich*, August 1939, p. 261.)

In the first two preparatory sketches, we recall, the position of the bird/Pegasus figure on the bull's back derives from the earthquake memory and suggests the most positive and supportive aspect of the father-son relationship. In the final state of the mural, the bird thus resumes its position of intimacy with respect to the paternal shoulders.

In terms of the history of art, the bird also reinforces Picasso's theme of rebirth. It suggests not only a restoration of the father's artistic legacy and of one of his favorite motifs but also the general revitalization of Spanish art that Picasso foresaw as one of the consequences of the people's struggle. It expresses "the vitality and the youth which the struggle will bring to Spanish art." Born out of civil strife and the suffering of the entire nation, it emerges like a bolt shot from the horse's mouth or a new soul risen from the diamond-shaped wound (or womb) in the horse's side. It may also embody the reborn soul of outworn conventions and traditions that must be destroyed, like the statue of the sword-bearer, if this new "consciousness" (as Picasso calls it) is to thrive.

The bird's earlier incarnation as Pegasus is relevant in this regard. Pegasus was also the product of a violent birth, sprung from the drops of blood that fell to the ground when Perseus cut off the Medusa's head. Moreover, Pegasus is traditionally associated with poetic or artistic inspiration. The winged horse was sacred to the Muses, and on its back creative artists rode to the top of Mount Olympus. These associations with creativity and imagination carry over into the figure of the bird and support its role in the painting as the symbol of "a nascent art."

In more general terms, we can think of the bird as having been born in the midst of conflagration and strife—as a phoenix, in other words, embodying the undying spirit of the people and of the Spanish Republic that neither fascism nor bombings nor military leaders like Franco would be able to suppress. Or the bird may be a dove of peace, announcing a cessation of bombings and the murder of innocent people and holding out the promise of a future time when "the purest human values" will pervade Spanish society as well as Spanish art. In either case, the bird

seems to play a mediating role, involved both as witness and participant in the present violence but also suggestive of transcendent values and ideals. As such, the bird is a fitting (and less restrictively symbolic) replacement for the warrior's upraised fist in states one and two of the mural, and it merits its position between the horse and bull near the top of the central triangle. Like the flower that grows beside the warrior's broken sword, the bird of *Guernica* helps to carry Picasso's prophetic message of hope for the future, a message in which he believed so strongly that he left the painting as a legacy to the people of Spain, to be held in trust for them until the death of Franco and "the reestablishment of public liberties" there. The very terms of the legacy imply Picasso's belief in the inevitable victory of the values for which the Spanish revolution was waged. With the recent return of *Guernica* to Spain and its installation in the Prado, we can only hope that Picasso's belief will prove not to have been betrayed.

The Fundamental Vision

In his important 1935 interview with Zervos, published in *Cahiers d'Art*, Picasso made a number of statements which seem in retrospect like anticipations of *Guernica*. It is as if, in this year of abstinence from painting (from February 1935 until early April 1936), he knew he was gathering strength to produce a masterpiece that would sum up his career and that would exemplify his creative process. "It would be very interesting," he told Zervos (quoted in Barr 1946:272), "to preserve photographically, not the stages, but the metamorphoses of a picture. Possibly one might then discover the path followed by the brain in materializing a dream." Two years later, Picasso carried out this project by arranging for Dora Maar to photograph the mural seven times during its process of completion and also by preserving the more than 60 sketches, studies, and postscripts for the painting, with the result that a more complete record of its genesis exists than for any other major work in the history of art. "But there is one very odd thing—" Picasso continued, "to notice that basically a picture doesn't change, that the first 'vision' remains almost intact, in spite of appearances" (ibid.). We have already seen to what extent this statement is true of *Guernica*. Picasso's first vision, in the initial sketch of May 1, remains in many ways unchanged up through the final state of the mural, keeping the same cast of characters, the same general format, and the same plot or subject—that of the earthquake—as its basic visual metaphor for translating the story of the bombing.

In the same interview, Picasso made another general statement about art which, with only a slight adjustment in perspective, we might take as his announcement of the central theme in *Guernica*. "In my case," he said, "a picture is a sum of destructions" (ibid.). The destruction of Málaga by the earthquake, the destruction of Guernica in the bombing—these are the immediate historical subjects of the mural. But there are other ways in which destruction or violence becomes a main concern in the painting: the violence of bull against horse, for example, which functions as a metaphor for violence between the sexes and, in particular, for the artist's own destructive impulses toward the women in his life. There is also the violence of son against father, which, I have argued, derives from Picasso's myth of paternity and operates in the painting not only through a set of coded biographical references, but also as a more general explanatory code with reference to the history of art and to the civil war in Spain. The theme of "rebellion," of overthrowing the father, thus suggests the relation of modern art (and Picasso's work in particular) to the art of previous generations (especially the academic and neoclassical traditions). It also suggests what will be the eventual outcome of the people's struggle against the military caste of men like Franco.

Picasso was not a sentimentalist about violence, however, and his painting is neither a simple piece of antiwar propaganda nor its equally simple opposite, a celebration of revolutionary violence. Rather, it is a complex meditation upon the consequences of violence and upon the capacity, both for evil and for good, of human aggression. On the one hand, the painting bears mute but eloquent witness to the horror of sudden, wanton, unprovoked destruction. It compels us to identify with the helpless victims of an irrational and invisible violence that rains upon them in the dark and forces them to flee their homes. It directs our outrage against the perpetrators of that destruction, whoever or whatever they may be. And in its monumental, frieze-like pattern, its reminiscence of Grecian temple pediments, and its careful placement of figures within a triangular composition, the painting also reflects a desire for order and structure, based on classical models, to contain and withstand the forces of destruction.

On the other hand, the painting recognizes the familiarity of violence as something that takes place in ordinary domestic surroundings, beneath electric light bulbs and in front of tables. Violence is a part of daily life. It occurs within families, between the members of a couple, and between parents and children. Picasso's recognition of the pervasiveness and banality of violence, together with his awareness of his own destructive potential as son, father, and lover, enabled him to portray violence in the painting not just as an alien force to be condemned but, especially in the

bull, as a more ambiguous quality, intimately involved with the capacity to love and to create. Violence in this sense appears rooted in the human condition, perhaps in basic aggressive instincts, and, like the destructive force of an earthquake, becomes much more difficult to judge as good or evil.

Moreover, with Nietzsche and with some of the Surrealists such as Bataille, who advocated the redemptive power of "transgression" as a cultural force, Picasso seems to have believed in the necessary connection of violence and creativity. For him, the artist was not a patient follower of rules and traditions, but a restless breaker of conventions, the overthrower of received canons of beauty and stylistic uniformity. In its formal qualities, *Guernica* is certainly a less revolutionary painting for 1937 than the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* was for its time 30 years before. Nevertheless, it does contain grotesque distortions, nonmimetic elements such as the arrow, and cubist dislocations in perspective²⁶ and body parts.²⁷ These disruptive elements work against the painting's nostalgia for classical form and structure and produce the unsettling effect of one system of representation jostling against others within a single canvas. Stylistic violence as a means of disorienting and defamiliarizing viewer expectations thus becomes the method as well as to some extent the content of *Guernica*. The most literal translation of this content into iconography is the set of disjointed sculptures at the bottom of the mural—shattered fragments from the classical past. The presence of this content as style, however, is apparent throughout the painting.

At the same time, then, that it protests against the inhumanity and suffering produced by violence, the painting works a violence of its own against the viewer and against inherited artistic conventions. Violence in this sense for Picasso was regenerative as well as destructive. In the world of art, as in the social and political world, violent revolutions against imposed authority were sometimes necessary in order to prepare the way for new forms and beliefs. In art, however, the logic of contradictions does not always hold. That which has been destroyed does not necessarily disappear. It may continue to exist under the sign of cancellation. The process of destruction can, paradoxically, become additive, and a painting may thus be justifiably described as a *sum* of destructions. Picasso's explanation clarifies the paradox: "I do a picture—then I destroy it. In the end, though, nothing is lost; the red I took away from one place turns up somewhere else" (ibid.). In *Guernica*, what has been destroyed, flattened, smashed, is a monumental classical pediment, but traces of the pediment remain. The painting is both profoundly anti-classical and profoundly classical as well.

Violence as a prelude and means to regeneration also enters the painting via the theme of birth. The birth of Picasso's baby sister in the midst of the Málaga earthquake becomes a metaphor for two other violent births: the renaissance of Spanish art and the eventual restoration of public liberties, both as a result of the people's struggle against fascism. The burden of Picasso's political message in the painting is thus prophetic and optimistic. He foresees the overthrow of the military oligarchy and of the Spanish ideal of militarism. And from the ashes and ruins of the bombed city, he foresees the birth of democratic principles and a renewal of "the purest human values."

Finally, in addition to its meditation on violence and destruction, *Guernica* is a work of mourning. It is the expression of Picasso's grief, as a Spaniard, at the injury and death inflicted in the bombing. It is also, in more personal terms, an expression of the guilt and confusion he must have felt as a 3-year-old child, fantasizing himself omnipotently the cause of a violent force that threatened the life of his family. It is also, as we have seen, an expression of sorrow and regret for destructive feelings toward other people whom he loved: father, wife, mistress, children. An important part of the process of mourning is the acknowledgment of one's ambivalence toward the lost object, one's hatred as well as one's love. *Guernica*, in its personal significance, was just such an acknowledgment for Picasso.

But mourning, in order to be successful and cathartic, also involves the internal reparation of the injuries inflicted or imagined. In this sense, the work of mourning is creative. *Guernica*, as a work of art, provides such a healing and restorative experience. It opens itself to the forces of darkness and destruction in order to control them. It resurrects the father as well as overthrowing him and shows new life born out of chaos and violence. The net result is a gain, a sum of destructions. Nor is the gain only a private one. The ritual of mourning draws people together, binds them as a community. *Guernica* has the same effect. It binds its viewers into a community of mourners, of witnesses. In this way, and especially now that it is returned to Spain, the painting helps to create the values and the new social consciousness that it imagines as being born out of the events of 1937.

Notes

- 1 For a fuller discussion of this important concept, see Wilden (1968:126–127, 270–271). I have also drawn on the clear and concise presentation of Lacan's ideas in Muller (1980:150–151). Lacan's principal discussion of the Name-of-the-Father appears in Lacan (1977:179–225). A less well known but important extension of Lacan is that of Rosolato (1969:36–58).
- 2 Frank D. Russell (1980:102ff.) argues that the scene is "a kind of daytime nocturne," neither night nor day but ambiguously both. I would grant the ambiguity as an interpretive enrichment, while insisting that in the final state of the mural all visual cues indicate a nocturnal setting. In earlier states of the painting, Picasso depicted a large, flowerlike sun overhead, but in the final state it is reduced to an electric lamp whose naked bulb casts jagged rays of light into the darkness. An observation by Anthony Blunt (1969:33) is also relevant in this context: "Given the important part played from the very beginning by the woman holding the lamp, it is reasonable to suppose that [Picasso] had always intended to darken the sky, even if this is not indicated in the drawings."
- 3 Gedo (1979:191–210) was the first critic to identify the earthquake as a source for the painting's imagery. See also Gedo 1980:173–184. A shorter version of the present essay was written before the publication of Gedo's article. Although some of our conclusions are similar, Gedo and I differ considerably in the use we make of the earthquake material as well as in the significance we attribute to certain figures in the painting, notably the bull. Gedo treats the earthquake as a childhood "trauma," leaving unconscious scars on the artist's psyche and causing him to reexperience "subjective fragmentation" when associations to the event are revived by the news of the bombing. My interpretation focuses less on the possible traumatic effects of the earthquake for the three-year-old child than on the use made of it by the adult painter. I consider the earthquake story as an extended visual metaphor: an integrative memory used consciously by Picasso and serving him as a means of mastery and control. For the sake of economy, I have chosen to pursue my own line of interpretation without noting every point at which Gedo and I agree or disagree.
- 4 For example, Russell (1980:8–77). Russell treats the bullfight theme and the Calvary theme as "scenarios" or "broken narratives" that underlie the Cubist surface of the painting. See also Chipp (1973–1974:100–115).
- 5 Both Arnheim (1962:57) and Russell (1980:184) see these extended limbs as arms, like the ones that project from windows at the far right and upper left center of the study. An ambiguity is of course possible. Anatomical logic, however, makes legs more plausible in this position, especially if we read the curved shape between the limbs as representing the mother's swollen belly.
- 6 Was Picasso deliberately trying in this drawing to imagine pregnancy through the mind—and thus the style—of a very young child?
- 7 Another link between the two figures is the woman's "pony tail" hairdo, her *queue de cheval* in French.
- 8 For a valuable discussion of the women in Picasso's life in relation to *Guernica*, see Chipp (1973–1974:103–112).
- 9 Gedo (1979:204) suggests that the lamp-holder may also be a figure for Picasso's mother.
- 10 The earthquake took place on the evening of December 25, 1884. In addition to the iconography of Crucifixion, we should thus not be surprised to find that of Nativity as well. Picasso's sister Lola was not actually born on the first night of the disaster, but three days later, on December 28. Both in the painting and in the story related by Sabartés, Picasso fused the two events into a single memory.
- 11 Russell (1980:124, 267) reads this arrow as the political symbol of Franco's military junta, the Falange, but he offers no explanation of why such a symbol should appear in the painting or why the arrow should occupy this particular position. In fact, the Falangist symbol bears little resemblance to Picasso's directional pointer, consisting rather of a group of arrows bound together near the middle of their shafts and radiating like spokes from this central point.
- 12 See Russell (1980:75–77), who also relates this wound to the one in Christ's side in a drawing of the Crucifixion from 1930–1931. It can of course be objected that in none of the preliminary studies for the painting is the bull ever shown goring the horse or in any way inflicting injury on it or on the other figures. While this is true, the presence of the *cornada* in the horse's belly immediately implicates the bull in an act of violence and recalls the inevitable cruelty of virtually every bull-horse encounter depicted in Picasso's oeuvre.
- 13 Russell (1980:320–321) is reluctant to accept Chipp's (1973–1974) identification of the light-bearer as Marie-Thérèse and suggests instead that this figure may represent Dora Maar in her role as photographer: "The capable wielder of the lamp and projector of intelligence and still-contained passion." I do not include Dora Maar in my discussion of the motif of domestic violence because I do not consider her (at least not in 1937) as a victim of Picasso's "brutality and darkness." If Picasso used her as a model for the weeping women of the *Guernica* postscripts, it is probably, as Pierre Daix (1977:282) suggests, because of her strong political sympathies and because her dark looks were better suited to represent Spanish womanhood than were the fair hair and features of Marie-Thérèse. Daix (pp. 267–269) gives a good brief account of Dora Maar's background and personality and of her place in Picasso's developing political consciousness during 1936–1937.
- 14 Chipp (1973–1974:111–112) calls attention to the many human features of the bull and compares the eyes in particular to those of Picasso's 1906 self-portrait.
- 15 Russell (1980:212–213) notes that the ocular dot-and-circle motif even invades the bull's ears, perhaps adding a visionary quality to his hearing as well.
- 16 When Russell (1980:56ff.) calls the bull of the mural "wavering," "baffled," and "irresolute," he is trying to find a satisfactory explanation for the contradictory elements that are essential to the bull's divided nature.
- 17 The popular view of Picasso as a ruthless sexual exploiter should not disqualify this interpretation. He was extraordinarily sensitive to the feelings of women, including their pain—even when he knew himself to be the cause.
- 18 Picasso may have wished to avoid using a symbol that implied some connection to the Communist party. Such, at least, is the suggestion of Anthony Blunt (1969:41), a keen observer of such matters. More likely, he wished to avoid obvious symbolism of any kind, either Christian or Republican—hence his rejection of the blatant Crucifixion motif as well as of the clenched-fist salute. Also, he saw that the martyred soldier risked overshadowing both horse and bull, who from the very first were intended as the principal actors in the painting. The deletion of the raised fist, however, left a blank in the composition that needed to be filled. Picasso solved this formal problem by raising the horse's head and by transforming the sun of state two into the electric light/eye of the completed mural. The addition of the bird in the penultimate state also helped restore some verticality to the composition.
- 19 Picasso did three studies of the warrior's head: on May 24, June 3, and June 4. The last of these is the one he settled on for the final state of the mural. Also on June 4, he did a study of the warrior's open hand. An earlier study of the hand with broken-sword dates from May 13.
- 20 For a discussion of classical elements in the painting, see Russell (1980:81–84, 115–123, *et passim*). Although he alludes to Picasso's "lifelong work, his salvaging and destroying of the classic" (p. 122), Russell does not accord this project the central importance in *Guernica* that I believe it deserves.

- 21** Clement Greenberg (1965:65) has wittily described this disorienting effect as follows: "Bulging and buckling as it does, this huge painting reminds one of a battle scene from a pediment that has been flattened by a defective steam-roller."
- 22** Russell (1980:22) argues that the stretched tendons of the arm and the crossed lines of the palm suggest a crucified hand.
- 23** Picasso's one direct statement about the bird is disingenuous in the extreme and sounds more like an exasperated response to academic symbol-hunters than a genuine effort to explain. According to Kahnweiler (quoted in Ashton 1972:155), Picasso said, "But this bull is a bull and this horse is a horse. There's a sort of bird, too, a chicken or a pigeon, I don't remember now exactly what it is, on a table. And this chicken is a chicken. Sure, they're symbols. But it isn't up to the painter to create the symbols. . . . It's up to the public to see what it wants to see."
- 24** Gedo (1979:207) also finds a possible allusion to Picasso's father in the figure of the bird, but sees no other references in the painting to paternal motifs.
- 25** The "family resemblance" of bull and bird is also apparent in the initial study of May 1 (Figure 6), where the "V" of the bull's horns is repeated in the shape of the bird's wings.
- 26** The much-discussed question of whether the painting has an indoor or an outdoor setting can be resolved with reference to the story of the earthquake. The right side of the mural takes place outside and shows the pregnant mother running through the streets and in front of buildings. The left side of the mural takes place inside (the lines of a wall and ceiling can be seen at the upper left) and shows the mother giving birth to her child in the neighbor's house. The two scenes are connected and given the illusion of simultaneity by a system of receding squares across the bottom of the canvas, suggesting a cobblestone street or a tile floor or—more likely—both.
- 27** A seldom-noted feature of the mural is the pair of tiny circles placed in the upper and lower quadrants of an "X" that appears between the horse's hind legs, just above the arrow. These, I believe, are all that remains of the warrior's torso. They are nipples, migrated from their position on his absent chest and settled here, devoid of any support save that of the canvas.

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Okpella Masks: In Search of the Parameters of the Beautiful and the Grotesque

Jean M. Borgatti

Introduction

The Okpella, an Edo-speaking people living north of Benin City in southern Nigeria, number about 35,000 persons in nine villages. They may be described as politically decentralized, although Okpella society is hierarchically organized according to a complex of factors including birthright, achievement, and age. The Okpella currently maintain three main masking traditions. The oldest, a fiber masquerade linked to age-sets and titles, is in the process of being supplanted by a group of cloth and wooden masks introduced circa 1900. These masks are performed in conjunction with a festival honoring ancestors. The third tradition, a dance widely performed in social contexts, was introduced after 1920. For this dance performers wear a specific set of costumes made of cloth appliqué.

Analysis of data collected in Okpella between 1972 and 1974 indicates that the people who today identify themselves as Okpella have undergone a series of transformations since the sixteenth century. Within relatively recent times, between 1880 and 1920, it can be documented that those transformations have been marked or accompanied by radical changes in aesthetic choices.¹ Both social change and shifts in taste may be seen as responses to historical circumstances: a period of great social upheaval followed by one of relative stability, increased interethnic contact during both periods, and the availability of new materials and technology.

The political and economic ferment characterizing Nigeria today creates a climate analogous in many respects to that which existed around the turn of the century, and change continues apace. Okpella, rather a backwater in 1973, now finds itself with an expanded economic base and an advantageous location for transshipping farm produce and other goods between the north and the south of Nigeria. The ancestral festival has flourished in this atmosphere, making it possible in 1979 to assess qualitatively changes in the festival—in masks, regalia, characterizations, patronage, the size and location of performing units, and so on, in relation to phenomena observed in 1973. At the same time a survey was carried out in an attempt to define more specifically the criteria underlying the Okpella aesthetic and the circumstances that affect aesthetic choices.²

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This article is a preliminary report on this research focusing on issues of aesthetic preference in one community, Ogiriga.³ Ogiriga was one of the points of origin for the Olimi festival, an annual festival honoring ancestors held by four of the nine Okpella villages. Olimi festival not only provides the context in which a variety of masquerades perform, but it also is the vehicle by which these masquerades were—and continue to be—introduced into Okpella. Ogiriga village is also the home of Okpella's best-known mask-makers: Lawrence Ajanaku, Stephen Isah, Samuel Belu, James John, and Shedetun Bekon.

Methodology

The survey questionnaire⁴ (300 questions) was administered to a random sample of Okpella households. In each of 70 compounds (*afe*), six people were interviewed: the male head of household, the senior female, two other adults, one male, one female chosen through a random process, one child chosen through a random process, and one specialist in the arts—an artist or craftsperson (*atsona*) or a virtuoso performer (*okelo*)—chosen by the compound head. (It is interesting that at least four of the six persons in each compound considered themselves to be craftspersons in one of a wide variety of categories or to be performers of note in one or more genres.) Two-thirds of the interviews were drawn from the four towns where the ancestral Olimi masking festival is held and one-third from the remaining five towns.

The survey was intended to elicit verbal statements about art and performance in a culture that chooses not to verbalize its criticism of consecrated objects, a culture in which the aesthetic is "unvoiced"—to use Roy Sieber's term. It is significant to note that people who refused to discuss preferences for specific masks when questioned informally with photographs in 1973 and 1974 had no hesitation in making preference statements when confronted with photographs of these same masks within a formal program of questions. Very few—indeed, fewer than anticipated—opted for responses of "no opinion" or "no reply" regardless of age, sex, or religious preference.

The survey was further intended to determine the bases for aesthetic judgment in Okpella culture, to find out what individuals look at when they admire a mask. Analysis of the survey data should permit the characterization of the ideal for a given category of mask in the mind's eye of each individual, as well as the measurement of deviation from this ideal image (in terms of personal preference). Ultimately, the intent is to determine the differences in aesthetic attitudes held by the articulators of the aesthetic—those most closely associated with the creation of art objects and the production of art events, the artists, elders, and cult leaders—and the consumers of aesthetic products, the general public that makes up the audience, and what other factors—age, sex, educa-

tion, religion, status, experience of the outside world, and so on — affect aesthetic choices.

The questionnaire included both open- and closed-ended questions. An attempt to find converging evidence was made in the overlapping of verbal questions based on hypothetical but culturally embedded art and performance situations and those focusing on the visual stimuli. The final version of the questionnaire was in the Okpella language, the language in which the interviews were held.⁵

Questions focusing on visual stimuli were interspersed with purely verbal ones in order to change the pace of the interview and help allay possible boredom and resulting response set.

Five research assistants were employed — one post-secondary school student, two secondary school graduates, one fourth-form student, and one graduate of primary six. The latter was the only woman and was the younger wife of a chief. The bulk of the interviewing was done in the respondents' homes. After preliminary visits in which the purpose of the survey was explained and the individuals to be interviewed selected, a research team consisting of interviewers and the principal investigator would return to the compound on an appointed day and interview simultaneously as many persons (up to five) as were available, returning at some later time to interview the remaining respondent(s). The principal investigator did no interviewing, monitoring instead each research assistant during his or her interview. Interviews averaged 1½ hours in length.

The questionnaire contained clusters of related questions as well as individual questions on art and performance. The first group of questions (1-10) was addressed to the compound head only and concerned general information about the compound and its inhabitants, e.g., location, the number of masquerades owned by compound members (if any), the number of persons considered craftspeople or virtuoso performers, and so on. The second cluster (11-80) focused on the individual respondent's background and lifestyle: place of birth, lineage affiliation, sex, age, age group, occupation, education, religion, marital status, places of residence, travel experience, exposure to the culture of other Nigerian ethnic groups, exposure to the outside world via radio, TV, or cinema, traditional status, involvement in craftwork or performance. There were questions on patronage situations (81-88, 112), specifically on the commissioning and acceptance of masks, to test the acceptability of certain deviations from existing norms or canons. Another series of questions (89-111, 113-120) was based on the appearance of masquerades typically representing a deceased female (*Olimi Nikeke*), the festival herald (*Anogiri*), and a deceased male (*Omeshe*). Contrasting descriptors in the answers were in part based on qualitatively elicited information from previous research and were chosen to test inferred information. Certain

contrasting descriptors were selected to test the comparability of Okpella's aesthetic criteria with those established by Thompson (1973) for the Yoruba.

Other important questions focused on the characteristics of the artist as a concept (e.g., 124) and on the characteristics of specific masquerade types. Questions 121, 122, and 123 (only one of which was asked of each respondent), for example, required a simple verbal statement focusing on the most significant aspect of the masquerade. Interestingly, responses to these questions center on performance rather than on costume, lending weight to a hypothesis suggested by several scholars (Cole 1971; Horton 1973; Borgatti 1976a) that aesthetic weight in a African culture falls on the performing rather than the plastic arts. There were also two series of questions on Okpella masquerade types (178-198 and 240-260), the first focusing on the visual aspect — mask and costume (*itsua*) — and the second on performance — music and dance (*ishimi*). The 7 types of masquerade were contrasted in all possible pairs and the respondents were asked to agree or disagree with "what people say" about the masquerades or their performance.⁶ This section was considered the most tedious by the Okpella respondents. However, using a paired preference technique permits respondents to be internally inconsistent in their choices, unlike simple ranking, and allows us to determine the number of factors that go into making particular choices as well as to determine the hierarchy of preference.

This technique was also used with the visual stimuli presented to the respondents in questions 138-177 and 199-238. The visual stimuli clustered around two concepts, the beautiful and the grotesque, represented visually in Okpella by two distinct mask types described respectively by the terms "beautiful" (*osomhotse*) and "grotesque" (*ulishi*) in the Okpella language. These images are relatively easily readable cross-culturally as belonging to these categories. Paired images representing a cluster of characteristics that are complementary in their opposition are widely found in West Africa (Blier 1974). Among the Anang Ibibio where the notions of beautiful and grotesque were specifically tested in the field (Messenger 1973), the grotesque image permitted the artist greater freedom of invention than the beautiful image in terms of his own perception. This suggests that the Okpella audience will appreciate a wider range of images as grotesque than as beautiful.

The stimuli consisted of ten images of Okpella beautiful masks commemorating individual women, ten masks from elsewhere in Africa falling into the category of beautiful within their respective cultures, ten images of Okpella grotesque masks representing the festival herald, and ten grotesques from elsewhere in Africa. Each respondent was presented with five images from each of the four categories. Each of the five images was presented in all possible paired combinations (ten pairs for

Chart A

Ogiriga: Okpella Beautiful Masks*



Okpella Beautiful Masks

- 1 Olimi Osihe (Afokpella)
Commemorative mask based on Knockout (Efofe), the Elders' masquerade; for a woman.

Artist: unknown

- Borgatti 1979a: plate 14

- 2 Olimi Oriyekia (Iddo)

Commemorative mask, typical, for a woman

Carver: Stephen Isah of Ogiriga, c. 1968

Borgatti 1979a: plate 8

- 3 Olimi Bebe (Ogute)

Entertainment version of com-

memorative mask

Carver: Lawrence Ajanaku, c. 1972

Borgatti 1976b: plate 13

- 4 Olimi Omonase (Afokpella)

Commemorative mask for a woman, typical but face left black

Carver: Lawrence Ajanaku of Ogiriga, c. 1969

Borgatti 1979a: plate 3

- 5 Olimi Imoetonoga (Afokpella)

Commemorative mask, female type, for a man

Carver: Lawrence Ajanaku of

Ogiriga, c. 1952

Unpublished

- 6 Olimi Mamuna (Afokpella)

Commemorative mask for a woman, typical

Carver: Odika of Weppa Wano, c. 1928

Borgatti 1979a: plate 5

- 7 Olimi Obo (Ogute)

Prestige version of commemorative mask; Ikot Ekpene face mask

Unpublished

- 8 Olimi Elewo (Iddo)

Commemorative mask, typical

Carver: Unknown Weppa-Wano man, c. 1935

Borgatti 1979a: plate 2

- 9 Olimi Idebua (Afokpella)

Commemorative mask, typical Carver: Asume of Ogiriga, c. 1970

Borgatti 1976b: plate 14

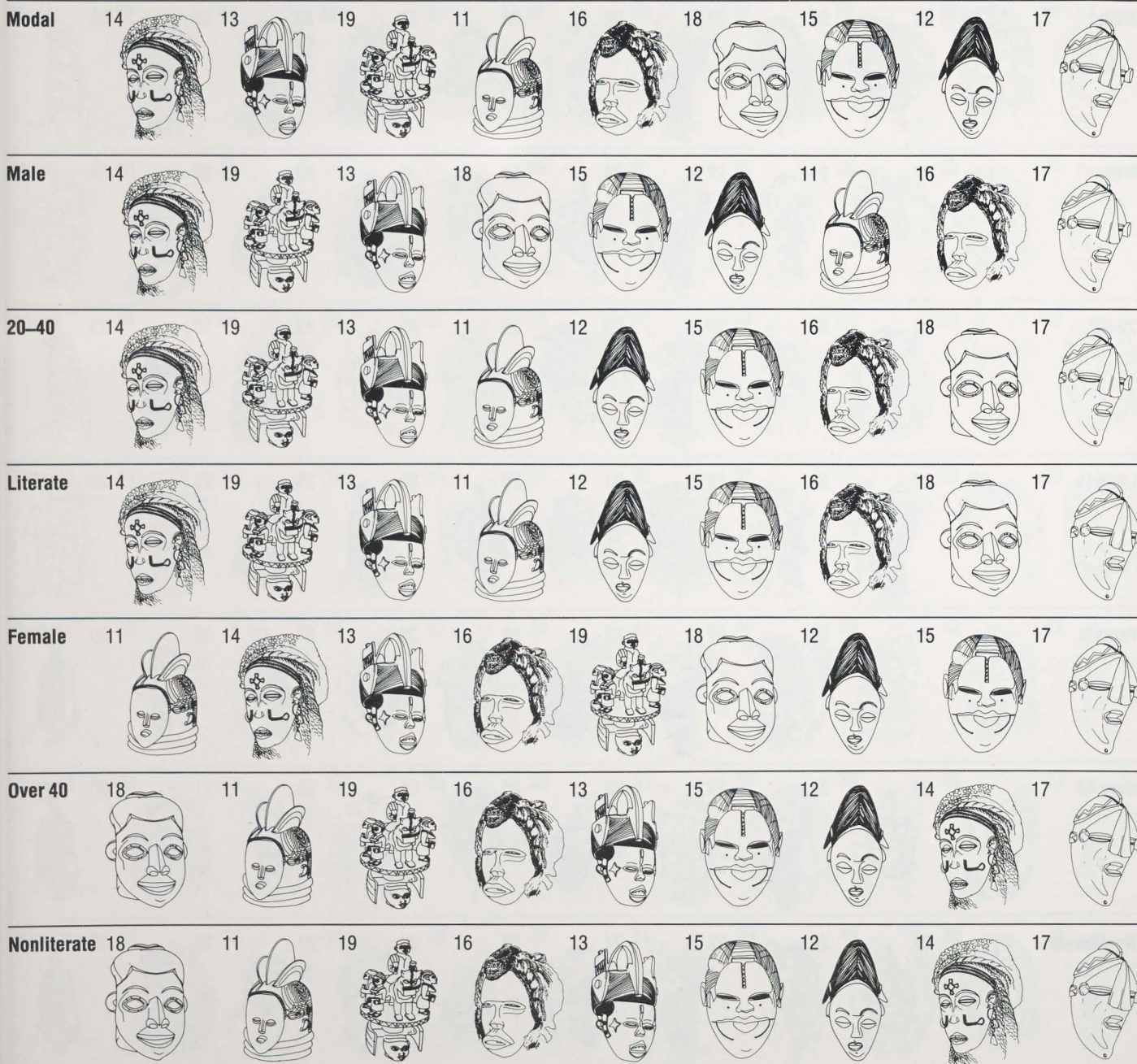
Borgatti 1979a: plate 1

- 10 Olimi Iresokpe (Ogiriga)

Commemorative mask, typical Carver: Shedet Bekon of Ogiriga, c. 1969

Unpublished

Ogiriga: African Beautiful Masks



- African Beautiful Masks**
- 11 Bundu mask
Mende? Sierra Leone
Atypical, ovoid, flattened facial
plane
Source: unlocated
- 12 Face mask, whitened, female
Punu, Gabon
Leiris and Delange 1968: plate
142
Collection: Private
- 13 White-faced, female mask
Idoma, Nigeria
Witmer and Arnett 1978: plate
244

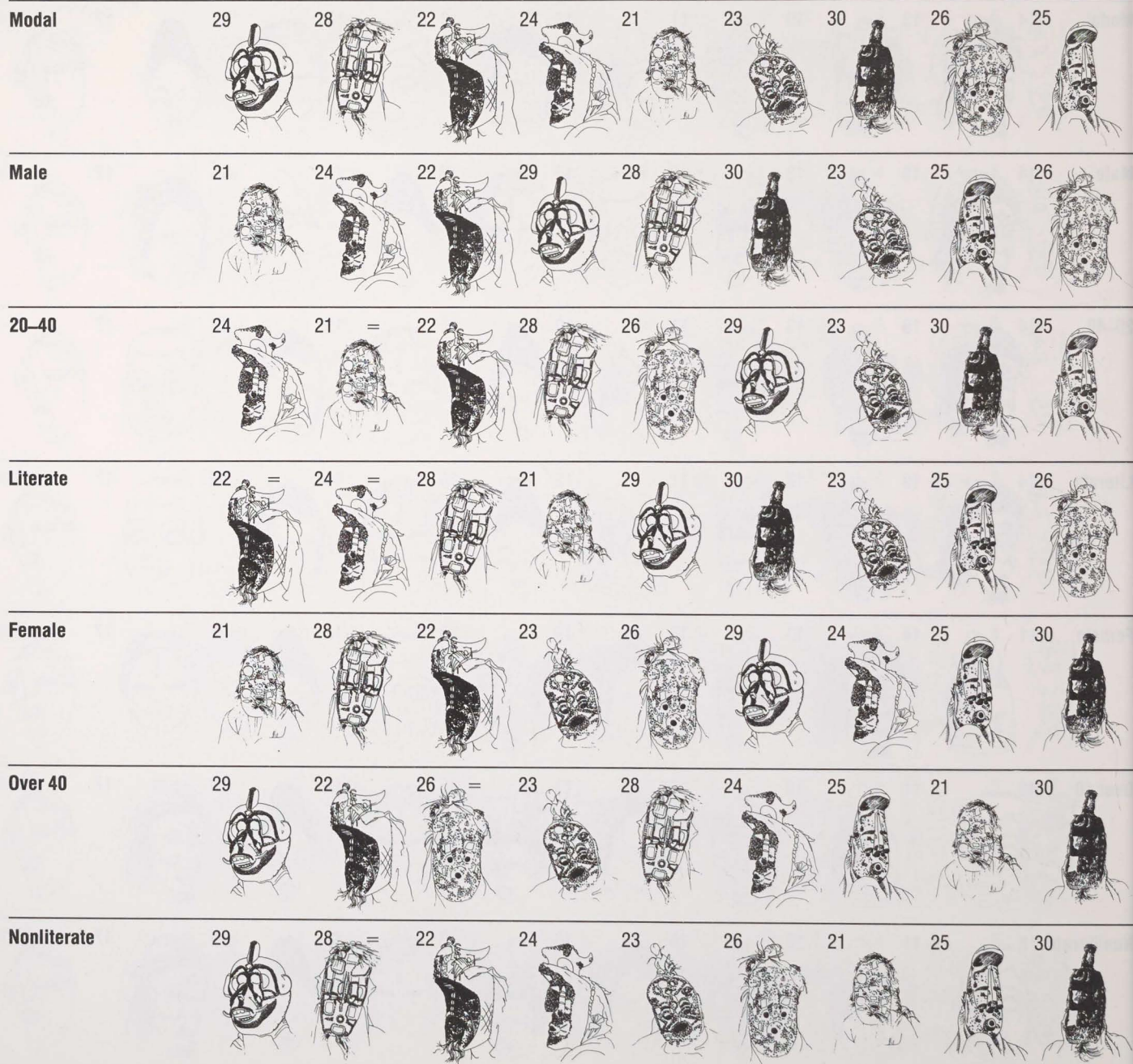
- Collection: William and Robert Ar-
nett
- 14 Female mask (Mwano Pwo)
Chokwe, Angola
Leiris and Delange 1968: plate 40
Collection: Museo do Dundo,
Lunda
- 15 White-faced, female mask
Ogoni, Nigeria
Witmer and Arnett 1978: plate
110
Collection: William and Robert Ar-
nett
- 16 Female mask
Dan, Liberia

- Fagg 1965: plate 11
Collection: M. Morris, J. Pinto,
Paris
- 17 Face mask
Lwalwa, Zaire
Fagg 1965: plate 99
Collection: MRAC, Tervuren
- 18 Mask representing a royal female
Kom, Cameroon
Northern 1973: plate 17
Collection: Georges Rodrigues
- 19 Gelede mask
Yoruba, Nigeria
Afrika Museum Catalogue
Collection: Afrika Museum Berg

- en Dal
- 20 White-faced mask, animal super-
structure
Ibo, Nigeria
Rubin 1976: plate 47
Collection: Chaim Gross

Chart B

Ogiriga: Okpella Grotesque Masks



- Okpella Grotesque Masks
- 21 Anogiri Odumi-A Iyeluwa-Afokpella
Carver: unknown
Unpublished
- 22 Anogiri Okebale Ogiriga
Carver: Stephen Isah of Ogiriga
Unpublished
- 23 Anogiri Odumi Iddo
Carver: Lawrence Ajanaku of Ogiriga
- 24 Unpublished Anogiri Olori Ogute
Carver: Lawrence Ajanaku of Ogiriga
- 25 Anogiri Odumi Ogiriga
Carver: unknown
Borgatti 1979c: plate 2 (3rd from left)
- 26 Anogiri Atogido Iddo
- 27 Unpublished
ELIMINATED FROM SAMPLE
- 28 Anogiri Iddo
Carver: Undetermined (c. 1974)
Unpublished
- 29 Anogiri Egibunu A Ogiriga
Carver: Shedetu Bekon of Ogiriga
Unpublished
- 30 Anogiri Akatapila Iddo
Carver: Kadiri of New Iddo
Unpublished

Ogiriga: African Grotesque Masks



African Grotesque Masks

- 31 Ekpo mask
Ibibio, Nigeria
Witmer and Arnett 1978: plate 161
Collection: William and Robert Arnett
- 32 Face mask
Teke, Republic of the Congo
Leuzinger 1972: facing p. 276
Private collection, Paris
- 33 Face mask
Songye, Zaire
Leiris and Delange 1968: plate 392

- Collection: M.R.A.C., Tervuren
- 34 Face mask
Gere, Ivory Coast
Arnett 1975: plate 92
Collection: William and Robert Arnett
- 35 Face mask
Mambunda, Zambia
Fagg 1965: plate 97
Livingstone Museum, Zambia
- 36 Face mask
Ogoni, Nigeria
Fagg 1965: plate 54
Collection: Nigerian Museum, Lagos

- 37 Ekpo mask
Ibibio, Nigeria
Source: temporarily unlocated
- 38 Buffalo mask
Grasslands, Cameroon
Source: temporarily unlocated
- 39 Face mask
Igbira, Nigeria
Picton 1974: plate 8
- 40 Face mask
Igbira, Nigeria
Picton 1974: plate 1

*Masks #1, #10, and #20 fell into the middle range of preference. Because of an error in the sampling procedure, however, it is impossible to evaluate their positions more precisely at this time. Thus, these masks have been dropped from the sample for purposes of analysis.

each five images). The respondent was asked to state a preference for one mask in each pair in the context of the hypothetical situation of his or her commissioning a mask of the beautiful or grotesque type. This placed the preference statement in a context that would be acceptable to Okpella respondents, even though Okpellans are reluctant to criticize openly or evaluate masks once consecrated.

Non-Okpella images were used for several reasons. It was hoped that respondents might feel less inhibited about evaluating the masks of other African peoples, as Thompson (1974) demonstrated with videotaped performances. It was expected that evaluations of other African masks would be made according to a set of criteria stemming from an Okpella aesthetic, and would therefore be instructive about the characteristics of the ideal beautiful or grotesque mask. Non-Okpella masks included examples quite close to the Okpella prototypes in their respective categories as well as examples which differed from this ideal representation in terms of the general shape of the head and coiffure, proportion of various parts to the whole, the placement and articulation of features, the nature of the surface finish and decorative detail, and so on. Line drawings based on the photographs used in the interviews may be found at the end of the article.

An assessment of the choices made among the non-Okpella material and the respondents' rationalizations of these choices should permit us to determine the elasticity of the Okpella aesthetic. Each preference statement was followed by an open-ended question concerning the specific thing that influenced the respondent in making his or her choice. (This material is currently being analyzed.) Looking at the photographs was the most interesting aspect of the survey for the respondents, and people were particularly interested in viewing the non-Okpella material. One elder summed it up nicely with his comment: "It's wonderful how many *Olimi* [spirits/masquerades] there are in this world!" Almost no one had difficulty in reading the photographs and many individuals evidenced a facility for mentally orienting the images when viewing them from an overhead position, just as the interviewers easily read texts upside-down.

Each respondent was also shown a selection of images in triads randomly selected from the 20 "beauties" and 20 "beasts" which made up the total sample. In questions 261–300, respondents were asked to state which two out of a given set of three were most alike and what characteristics he or she focused on in making a decision. This technique was intended to elicit the information that pinpoints the features or characteristics considered by individuals when making a judgment and thus to construct similarity and dissimilarity matrices that illustrate the bases of Okpella aesthetic judgment. This avenue of questioning was suggested by a study indicating that black and white subjects differed in the way they described faces. This was interpreted as reflecting differences in

attention to various aspects of facial detail with black subjects using a wider range of criteria (Deregowski, Ellis, and Shepherd 1975). An overall impression of the survey results indicates that Okpellans discriminate among a wide variety of features when assessing stylized faces (masks), lending some support to the interpretation of Deregowski et al. This section of the survey presented some difficulty for respondents whose abstracting capabilities were limited.⁷

The final section of the questionnaire was concerned with conditions under which the interview took place and the general reliability of the responses. The interviewers had some difficulty with this section and the responses they gave tend to be formulaic and not always reliable.

The questionnaire items were constructed in such a way as to make them amenable to various scaling techniques in order to construct reliable measures of aesthetic preferences. These techniques include both unidimensional and multidimensional methods. For example, similarity and dissimilarity matrices will be constructed in order to evaluate the dimensionality of aesthetic response and the variation in such response among individuals. In addition, this project will explore various non-Euclidian metrics, since recent work in cognitive psychology (e.g., Reed 1973) and the computer programs of the psychometricians (e.g., ALSCAL) indicate that appropriate metrics reflecting the human's relational processes in areas like preference cannot be adequately dealt with in a Euclidean framework. The normal measures of test reliability and other basic criteria of scale quality will be used to validate the scales as well.

Once measures for aesthetic preference and judgment have been constructed, they will be evaluated with respect to possible causal agents such as maturation (age), special talents, and experience with other cultures, as well as sex and status differences. Regression techniques as well as multivariate contingency analysis including log-linear models will be used to evaluate such questions.

Ogiriga

Ogiriga is the northeasternmost village of the Okpella cluster. Igbara and North Ibie people, the latter a northern Edo group like the Okpella, live to the north and the east of Ogiriga, while other Okpella-speaking people live to the west and south. It is the most remote of the eastern Okpella villages, located beyond Afokpella and connected to it by a narrow, winding bush road. Ogiriga consists of some 69 *afe* in its main site, although there is a growing settlement of Ogirigans (*Af'Ogiriga*) located along the road between the major Okpella marketplaces close to the highway linking Benin with Okene. *Afe* may be rather loosely defined as a household with a specific physical location whose members recognize a single head, either male or female. The members of a household, that is, the persons who have the right to live there because of kin connections, may in fact reside elsewhere.

Five of the six compounds chosen for interviewing at Ogiriga main site were selected through a random method. Each head of household or his representative was asked to choose a number from 1 to 12. Those whose numbers were matched by a roll of dice were eligible to participate in the survey. Eight compounds were selected in this manner; two were eliminated because they could not meet the sample requirements. Of the remaining six, the heads of the first five were asked to participate along with the appropriate members of their households. The chief's compound, chosen out of courtesy, completed a total of six. Arrangements were made to interview six persons in each household, according to the procedure described earlier. Individuals were interviewed in the principal investigator's house and the Ogiriga primary school, the premises of which were kindly made available by Headmaster Afemikhe. Several interviews were completed in respondents' homes. The results reported here are based on only 33 completed questionnaires, however. Three of the original 36 were lost through the failure of a research assistant-trainee to return them when he left the project.

Ogiriga represents only a small portion of the total survey sample (400 respondents). The views of Ogirigans are not necessarily representative of Okpella as a whole. Indeed, the concentration on Ogiriga main site lends the Ogiriga data a conservative bias, for the more educated and socially and economically mobile elements live in *Af'Ogiriga* near the main road. Of the 33 Ogirigans comprising the sample, 18 were men and 15 were women. They ranged in age from 12 to 80. Although most were farmers (21), traders (5), artisans (3), schoolchildren (3), and a traditional ruler (1) were represented. Sixteen of the individuals were nonliterate, 17 had had some schooling, but only one had earned a secondary-school certificate. With the exception of three who designated themselves as following their traditional religion, all referred to themselves as Christians. Twenty-one of the 33 had some experience in working with

their hands—the most important criterion for being an artist/craftsperson in Okpella; 25 claimed sufficient expertise in some performance category to perform solo, that is, to be *okelo* or a skilled performer. Members in four of the six households admitted to owning a total of seven masquerades.

The 33 Ogiriga questionnaires do not provide sufficient data to perform statistical procedures such as multi-dimensional and individual-differences scaling germane to the analysis of the total sample. Nonetheless, certain patterns emerge, giving preliminary answers to some of the basic questions underlying the research. These expectations may be summarized as follows: First, it is expected that the Okpella people have an aesthetic, i.e., a formal system of rules for evaluating sculpture and other art phenomena. Second, given the eclecticism of Okpella masking styles, it is expected that the aesthetic will permit an appreciation or the positive evaluation of a wide range of images. Third, given our understanding of African techniques for remembering faces, it is expected that the aesthetic criteria used in relation to facemasks will address details of feature and decoration. Fourth, given the categories beautiful and grotesque, it is expected that the aesthetic of the grotesque will permit greater deviation from the norm than the aesthetic of the beautiful. Fifth, it is expected that aesthetic attitudes will vary somewhat across individuals. Sixth, it is expected that variance in aesthetic attitudes will be consistent across individuals according to age, sex, and special skills or interests. Finally, it is expected that variation in formal schooling and exposure to the outside world will be reflected in variation in aesthetic attitudes. In this article, concern rests primarily with the strength and form of the Okpella aesthetic and with those factors such as age and sex that affect aesthetic choices.

Not only does Ogiriga represent a small portion of the total sample of persons interviewed in Okpella (400 persons in nine villages), but this article focuses only on a limited selection of the 300 questions asked of each respondent. We are concerned here specifically with the preferences expressed by respondents confronted with photographs of masks in pairwise comparisons. Each respondent was presented with five images from a total sample of ten in each of four categories: (1) Okpella beautiful masks; (2) African beautiful masks; (3) Okpella grotesque masks; and (4) African grotesque masks.

The first category, Okpella beautiful masks, consisted of examples of the type of mask most often used to commemorate a deceased woman of importance—the masks referred to as *Dead Mothers* elsewhere (Borgatti 1979a). The generic type is a wooden, three-quarter helmet mask representing a woman with an elaborate coiffure and/or figural superstructure. Okpellans describe this mask as beautiful (*osomhotse*)—a term connoting happiness and contentment (lack of suffering); com-

pleteness or fulfillment in terms of function (goodness); a perfection of physical form as well as an appropriateness of form (well made); and, importantly, embellishment or imaginatively rendered decoration (making the item better than good) (Borgatti 1979b:19).

The second category, African beautiful masks, was made up of masks generally considered feminine in type and evaluated positively within their respective cultural contexts. The masks in the sample do not necessarily represent the finest examples of their given types, but were chosen because of specific formal characteristics that in some way conformed or contrasted with those characteristics evidenced in the normative Okpella examples.

The third category, Okpella grotesque masks, consisted of examples of the mask worn by the Olimi Festival Herald (Anogiri)—a mask carved of wood and featuring an overhanging brow, a flat facial plane, and a pursed, projecting mouth. The blackened surface is studded with red abras seeds and embellished with mirrors and cowry shells. Okpellans describe these masks as grotesque or frightful, using the word *ulishi*—an antonym for *osomhotse* that embraces in its meanings radical distortion of form or a configuration confusing to the eye (Borgatti 1979b:19).

The fourth category, African grotesque masks, included masks considered grotesque in their respective cultures, like the Ibibio "bad ghost" or *mfon ekpo*, or those which differed so radically from the Okpella concept of the beautiful as evinced by the Dead Mother mask that they could be considered grotesque in Okpella terms—like the disk-shaped Teke masks or the cubistic *kifwebe* masks of the Songye, to mention two examples from either end of a spectrum of difference. A list of masks used in the sample and the sources of published illustrations, where available, are at the end of the article.

Each respondent was shown five masks in each of the four categories, and was shown these masks in all possible paired combinations—10 pairs for each 5 images and a total of 40 pairs in all. He or she was then asked to state a preference for one mask within each pair in the context of the questions: "If you were making a commemorative mask (Olimi) to remember your mother, which of these two would you want your own to resemble?" and "If you were making a Festival Herald (Anogiri) mask of your own, which of these two would you want your own to resemble?" This placed the question within an Okpella frame of reference, and placed the non-Okpella masks in a context in which they would be measured against an ideal image or set of criteria applied to masks representing specific characters or falling into specific performance categories.

Based on the responses to these questions, a modal profile of Ogiriga's preferences in each category was constructed—with an effort made to maintain the transitivity of the respondents' choices. Choices were also cross-tabulated with information on the respondents' age, sex, education, and special skills. Profiles in each of the four categories of imagery were then constructed, based on a ratio of the number of times a given mask was chosen over the number of times it was displayed to men, women, persons of different ages (0-19, 20-40, and over 40), nonliterate and literate persons, and persons designating themselves as craftsmen (*atsona*) or performers (*okelo*). In Okpella, the word *atsona* embraces all those persons who do some kind of handwork with a modicum of skill, including broommakers and hairplaiters, woodcarvers, weavers, and others. The word *okelo* refers to a person sufficiently skilled in some area of performance—song, dance, drumming, storytelling, and so on—that he or she may appear solo on appropriate occasions. The preference profiles keyed to numbered photographs appear at the end of the article.

The profiles reveal in a most striking way how very well-formed is the Ogiriga aesthetic, for even within this small sample of 33 individuals, there is a high degree of consistency among the three most preferred and the three least preferred masks in the ratings of each group (i.e., age, sex, etc.) vis-à-vis the rating of the masks in the modal profile for each category of image (i.e., Okpella beautiful, African beautiful, Okpella grotesque, and African grotesque). As expected, there is somewhat less consistency overall in the categories of grotesque imagery, lending support to the hypothesis that the aesthetic of the grotesque is more flexible than the aesthetic of the beautiful.

It is clear that for the people of Ogiriga, the evaluation of formal characteristics outweighed other criteria—most importantly, pride of ownership, the sanctity of age, and the weight of power—in the preferences expressed. Among the examples of Okpella beautiful masks, only one (#10) actually belongs to the community of Ogiriga. This mask ranked in the upper middle of Ogiriga's preferences, but not most highly. Three of the nine Okpella grotesques belonged to Ogiriga, and although two of these were highly regarded (#29 and #22), the oldest and ostensibly most sacred mask from Ogiriga (#25) was ranked last, while the oldest and most powerful mask in all Okpella (#21) was ranked in the fifth position.

In assessing the non-Okpella masks, Ogirigans ranked most highly examples closest to their own prototypical models. The images most preferred among the non-Okpella beautiful masks were an Idoma three-quarter helmet mask (#13) representing a woman with an elaborately carved and incised coiffure, and a whitened face with features and scarification marks picked out in black; and a Chokwe "beautiful maiden" mask (#14) with features clearly defined and scarification and brow-

line elegantly rendered in relief. The Chokwe mask's elaborate fiber coiffure provides an interesting textural variant in terms of surface design. The images most preferred among the non-Okpella grotesque masks were Igbara "messengers" (*ekuecici*) (#39 and #40)—the historic prototypes for the Okpella grotesque mask itself, i.e., the mask worn by the Festival Herald (Anogiri).

A comparison of distinctive group profiles with the modal one for each category of images revealed a correlation between the preferences of the female, over 40, and nonliterate groups. Although these three groups are not coterminous, it should be noted that females as a group and those over the age of 40 as a group correlate highly with those who are nonliterate. There was an equally marked correlation between the preferences of the male, 20-40, and literate groups. Again, these groups are not coterminous, but the first two groups correlate highly with the group that is literate. It is important to note that the preferences of these two clusters correlated within their respective selves and contrasted with each other as well as with the modal profile across all four categories of imagery. This is illustrated in profile charts A and B.

Within the two clusters respectively, there was less consistency in the preferences for grotesque images than for beautiful ones. Again, this is consistent with the notion that the grotesque gives greater scope for expression than the beautiful in the African context. Special skills did not significantly affect choices made by respondents in the Ogiriga sample—although the choices of those who were skilled performers—*okelo*—reflect a slightly higher percentage of women in this category than men and the choices of those persons calling themselves craftspersons—*atsona*—reflect the slightly higher percentage of men in this category.

Although the cluster represented by the male, 20-40, and literate groups might be expected to be the most experimental and open to innovation, it is in fact the cluster of female, over-40, and nonliterate groups that includes deviant masks among its most preferred ones, or excludes a more typical example in contradistinction to the mode established by the group as a whole. For example, among the Okpella beautiful masks we find in use an Ikot Ekpene face mask of the most pedestrian kind. It differs sharply from the normative mask used to represent a Dead Mother. The Ikot Ekpene mask (#7), a framed face mask rather than a three-quarter helmet with a three-dimensional carved coiffure or superstructure, displays features that are more softly and naturalistically modelled than those of the typical Okpella mask. Its brows are thin and arched, in contrast to the heavy, rather beetle-browed brows of most Okpella masks. Half-closed lids round over eyes contrasting with the more schematically rendered and heavily outlined eyes of Okpella masks.

Designs painted on the face are elegant and curvilinear as opposed to the generally more angular and incised patterns typically found on the faces of Okpella masks. The mask from Ikot Ekpene, supremely haughty in its expression, is preferred markedly by the female, over-40, and nonliterate groups. The difference in choices evidenced by women and persons over 40 is somewhat startling in the category African beautiful masks. Women clearly preferred a Mende (?) Sande society mask with a striking triple-crested coiffure to those modally preferred. Persons over 40 and nonliterate individuals expressed a marked preference for a Kom (Cameroon) mask with its extroverted forms and shining surfaces. Both masks depart radically from the aesthetic of the beautiful demonstrated by the normative Okpella examples. In contrast, the male, 20-40, literate groups express a preference for a Chokwe "beautiful maiden" (*mwana pwo*) mask (#14) much closer to Okpella prototypes than the masks mentioned above in the refined stylization of its features and emphasis on decorative detail.

In the category of Okpella grotesques, both men and women ranked most highly the oldest mask in Okpella (#21) in contradistinction to the modal profile where this mask falls into the middle range of choices. Women's choices differed from men's in this category, however, since they ranked more highly a mask with a clearly delineated and symmetrical pattern of abras seeds and mirrors (#28) than did men. The weight of the men's choice fell on a mask with a superstructure in the form of a chameleon (#24), a symbol of seniority in Okpella. Much more distinct differences in preference were evidenced in choices made among the non-Okpella grotesque masks. In this category, the female, over-40, and nonliterate groups consistently ranked a Mambunda mask (#35) or a Grassfield's buffalo (#38) more highly than the Igbara "messenger" (*ekuecici*) mask (#39), the mask ranked most highly in the modal profile. The Mambunda mask (#35) is not dissimilar from Okpella's Festival Herald with its bulging brow, flat facial plane, and projecting features, although the Mambunda mode is rounded and blown rather than angular and spare. The buffalo is relatively more naturalistic than Okpella's typical Festival Herald (Anogiri) mask, although it fits within an overall conception of what would be an appropriate Herald image as an animal with horns. More significant, perhaps, is this cluster's consistent low ranking of the two Igbara "messenger" masks (#39 and #40), the archetype for the Okpella Festival Herald (Anogiri), ranked first and second in the modal profile and by the male, 20-40, literate cluster of individuals.

That the cluster we expect to be most conservative—females, those over 40, and nonliterate—proves to be more open to innovation or modification of design demands some explanation. In Okpella, women as a group and men over the age of 40 fall into the category "spectator" rather than "performer" in masking displays featuring the Dead Mother (Olimi) or Festival Herald

(Anogiri). These are the people who might be expected to be the most secure in their understanding of Okpella's aesthetic, for they especially view, appreciate, and comment upon the masks as members of the audience. Moreover, these are groups whose social positions are also reasonably well-defined, as opposed to that of men in the 20-40 age bracket who are in the process of establishing themselves.⁸ Men in the 20-40 age group, involved in other affairs (especially today), may accept existing norms rather than expend any energy thinking about them. On the other hand, men in the 20-40 age bracket perform these masks. Because wearing a mask places one in a ritually dangerous and liminal state, performers may be more concerned with "correctness" of appearance than with "interesting variation."⁹ Because women as a group and men over the age of 40 are members of the audience rather than performers, they may be freer to think about aesthetic issues and thus to play the role of informal critic.

Since the Okpella people in general do not choose to articulate preferences or to discuss the merits of one mask over another in informal conversation, the Okpella aesthetic—or the Ogiriga version of that aesthetic—must be reconstructed from the choices made by respondents in the formal context of the survey. Clearly, the Ogiriga variant of the Okpella aesthetic is well-formed, for people can be shown to adhere to and depart from it in ways consistent with their own interests as represented by the categories of sex and age. These seem to be the most significant distinguishing factors for the Ogiriga sample with regard to this set of questions, and the other factors—education, craft, and performance skills—simply reflect the age and sex differences. A comparison of the most and least preferred masks in each category of imagery should outline the formal characteristics considered most appropriate for the masks functioning in a given category and meant to communicate a certain range of ideas to the audience.

A preference for elegance of shape, clarity in the definition of masses, clearly rendered and delicate surface ornamentation, symmetry, and an interest in decorative detail is evidenced in the comparison of most- and least-liked masks in both Okpella and non-Okpella beautiful categories. The least-liked Okpella mask actually commemorates a man, rather than a woman, and seems to be a coarser and more powerful sculpture than the more typical Dead Mother mask. It is almost completely lacking in decorative detail—the texturing of the surface of the head and coiffure, the carefully raised and delineated features (lips and eyebrows), and the more delicately incised and painted scarification patterns.

The most preferred non-Okpella beautiful masks, a Chokwe mask (#14) and an Idoma mask (#13), resemble closely the preferred Okpella types, although they are much finer carvings from the point of view of the Western connoisseur. The least preferred non-Okpella mask, a Lwalwa mask (#17), differs sharply from more admired masks and Okpella prototypes in the cubistic angularity of the overall conception of form, in proportion, in the placement of features, and in the absence of decorative detail. The Lwalwa mask was considered completely unsuitable to the Ogiriga audience as beautiful, for it was rejected by all respondents—the only mask in the entire sample that was never chosen by anyone under any circumstances.

Among the grotesque images, a preference for clearly articulated sculptural forms and symmetrical but imaginative decoration emerges from a comparison of the most and least admired masks. The least-liked grotesque (#25) perhaps represents an earlier aesthetic with its soaring forehead, while the others which were not well liked (#26 and #30) were sculpturally more amorphous—the characteristic overhanging brow, flat facial plane, and projecting features lacking definition—while the decorative scheme of abrus seeds, cowry shells, and mirrors on #26 is random and haphazard. The most-liked mask departs from the generic Herald (Anogiri) form described above, adding the fillip of novelty, in that it represents a bush-pig with eyes set close together over a long, projecting snout. Forms are emphasized and a second face is defined by the symmetrically placed mirrors and the linear patterns of abrus seeds playing over the surface of the mask. Of the non-Okpella grotesques, the Igbara masks (#39 and #40) are closer to the generic configuration of the Okpella Herald than are the others. The Igbara masks display a characteristic overhanging brow, flattened but slightly concave facial plane, projecting features—the pursed, projecting mouth beneath the nose like a dot completing an exclamation point. The masks carry a tangle of fibrous materials on the head that make an interesting textural contrast with the smooth and polished planes of face and that connote power to the Okpella audience. An incised pattern at the corner of the mouth is the only surface ornamentation. The least admired non-Okpella grotesques were an Ibibio helmet mask, horned and bumpy (#32), and a Songye mask of the type generally referred to as "Kifwebe" (#33). In assessing what is appropriate in a grotesque mask, Ogirigans appear to appreciate not only the ambiguity created by surface patterns but a more complex interplay of surface pattern with three-dimensional form. In looking at a less familiar range of images, Ogirigans seem to prefer key characteristics which assist in developing the Herald's complex character, appreciating the aggressive animal imagery found in the curving horns of #36 and #38 and the bristling additive elements of #34, or the humor inherent in the twisted nose of #31.

Summary

Briefly, the most important criterion, or valued quality, in a beautiful mask is clarity; in a grotesque mask, it is ambiguity, deriving not from formlessness but from a visual punning between surface ornamentation and sculptural form. Decorative detail is valued for both beautiful and grotesque types.

One more step remains to be taken in this analysis, and this is to bring out the critical vocabulary and the critical focus of Odirigans by carefully assessing the comments that respondents made following each statement of preference. In this way the aesthetic inferred from the objects will be qualified and elaborated. These comments must be tabulated and cross-referenced with the categories of age, sex, education, and special skills to determine whether or not any significant patterns emerge and to see if the notion is substantiated that women as a group and men over the age of 40 are Okpella's most informed and articulate critics.

As indicated in the introduction, this article constitutes a preliminary report on recent research and focuses on a limited sample of the total number of individuals surveyed for their responses to questions designed to elicit aesthetic commentary, as well as on a limited selection of the questions themselves. The entire data set provides much greater scope for analysis, as should be evident from a careful consideration of the information set forth in the section on methodology. Not only can the issues considered here be assessed with the greater finesse permitted by a larger sample, but comparative village studies may be carried out on a variety of questions significant in the light of Okpella's art and its complex history.

Notes

- 1 A summary version of this analysis may be found in Borgatti, 1976b and 1979c.
- 2 Research in Okpella between 1971 and 1974 was partially funded through an NDEA Title VI grant for graduate work, the Altman Memorial Award (Museum of Cultural History, UCLA), and the UCLA Patent Fund. Funding for the 1979 research was provided through a grant from the SSRC-ACLS Joint Committee on Africa.
- 3 This article is based on a paper written under the auspices of a Mellon Fellowship in the Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania (1979-1980). Continued analysis of the Okpella aesthetics data is being funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation.
- 4 The survey of aesthetic attitudes in Okpella was designed with the assistance of a specialist with experience in cross-cultural survey research, Donald G. Morrison, currently director of the Center for Social Science Computation and Research at the University of Washington, Seattle. Morrison is supervising the statistical analysis of the survey data.
- 5 The questionnaire was first translated by two Okpella-speaking university students in Ibadan, then back-translated by the research assistant with whom the principal investigator had worked closely between 1972 and 1974 in Okpella. Questions and translations were adjusted with the latter's assistance.
- 6 An analysis of this material for Odiriga was presented in 1980 at the African Studies Association Meetings in Philadelphia. This analysis is being published in a special volume on African art by *Bashiru*: A Journal of the Department of African Languages and Literature. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin.
- 7 Respondents had less difficulty answering "which is most different?" Because the questionnaire was so long, this question was not incorporated into the format. For precision in the analysis, however, both questions should be asked. (Personal communication, Charles Jones, 1980.)
- 8 This is the group most active traditionally in the junior night society *Iyabana* whose songs during the annual ancestral festival focus on the conflict between personal ambition and community cohesion; cf. Borgatti 1976a.
- 9 I am indebted to Dr. Margaret Hagen of the Psychology Department at Boston University for this suggested interpretation.

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Document of a Documentary: "Fate of a Child"

Leo Seltzer

Background

The film *Fate of a Child* was commissioned in the 1950s by the United Nations Technical Assistance Division to dramatize and personalize the need for a technical assistance program to help undeveloped countries.

I have made social documentaries in Latin America for various governmental and private agencies, in El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Bolivia, and Uruguay. Insofar as there never was more than a minimum, ineffective program of technical assistance in Latin America, and the countries continue to be economically and politically exploited, the film *Fate of a Child* reflects the conditions that exist today as precisely as it did in the 1950s, when it was made.

The name of the village, San Juan Ixtacala, is real, although it no longer exists. On a trip to Latin America several years after the film was made, Nacio, the artist/interpreter for the film, and I tried unsuccessfully to find the village, to renew our friendship with the people. The major source of employment and means of survival for the villagers had been the dairy farm, around which the village had developed over the years. When the absentee owners decided to close down the dairy farm, the resident workers were left with no local source of income and were forced to move to other locations to seek work. This situation, of course, reflects that of many underdeveloped countries whose economic and social welfare depends on the international market for the few raw materials they produce—except that the people usually cannot move to other countries or other locations to find work.

The living scene and the living story . . . the drama of real experience . . . the intimacy of involvement, the fulfillment of creative interpretation—these are the essential qualities of the documentary film, qualities that give drama and validity to the simplest story, that give life to an idea.

Photographs by Leo Seltzer

Leo Seltzer is Professor in Film, Brooklyn College. He is an eminent photographer and documentary filmmaker and has received many international awards for his work, including an Academy Award for Best Documentary. In 1962 he served as cinema-biographer to the White House for President Kennedy.

This is the story of how a documentary film, *Fate of a Child*, was made, to give face, voice, and dimension to the problems facing our neighboring continent, South America, helpless in the grip of a semicolonial economy.

The scene of *Fate of a Child* is one of Latin America's so-called underdeveloped areas, and the story searches out the basic reasons for the death of a child—one of the countless children living in these areas who die before reaching a first birthday.

To shoot the film, I, as documentary producer-director, and cameraperson Poul Gram drove 3000 miles south from New York with camera, lights, film, and a script that was essentially a list of specifications, to find not a studio and professional cast but a land and a people.

Because a documentary film must grow out of the subject in a natural way, it must at each step be tested against reality and translated into living terms, not only by the acuity of the writer and the art and intuition of the director but also by the openness and cooperation of the people who are its subject. It becomes then a film the people help to make, a film of their lives and their land.



The village of San Juan Ixtacala.

The Village

Once we were on location, this process of translation developed, from script to life, from life to film. It began with the finding of a village, which the writer, Joseph March, had described this way in his script:

... the street is squalid ... decrepit houses ... refuse in the gutters ... a pool of stagnant water in the rutted road. There are women in the street ... many children and dogs. The men are in the fields.

Ignacia Aguirre, called Nacio, our local guide and interpreter, knew his country and the people like the back of his hand. He was a mural artist, employed by the government to teach in the school of the arts and to travel to all parts of the country, to villages large and small for which a work of art had been planned. To Nacio the term "work of art" means what it says. It is an objective and accurate term rather than an emotional or critical phrase. The artist is considered a worker like any other worker, and he is called upon to exercise his craft in the same way as a bricklayer or an architect or a roadbuilder. Nacio had painted murals in many places, on the walls of post offices, stores, schools, and gas stations.

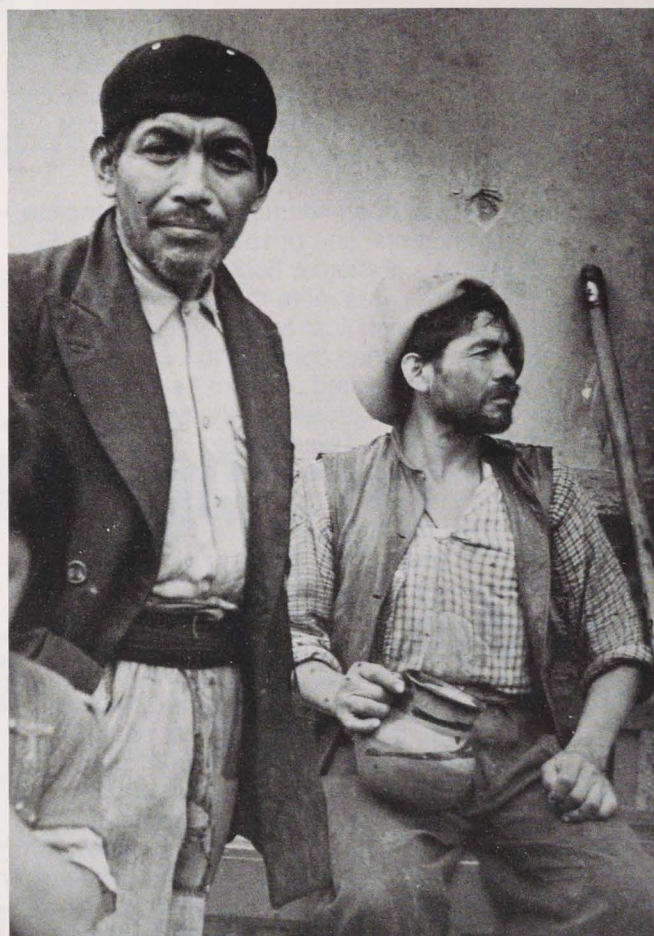
We spotted village after village along the highway, each following the same pattern: houses, backs to the road, behind high walls of adobe brick. The life of the villages went on behind these walls; we saw no people, no children, no animals. There was only the street, lined with adobe walls—only one perspective.

Finally, our search ended in the village of San Juan Ixtacala. A rutted dirt road led off the highway, skirted a canal bordered by eucalyptus trees, and dead-ended in a village square, surrounded by mud-brick houses set apart from one another. Some had fences, waist-high, of piled-up refuse and lopped-off branches, behind which pigs and chickens and dogs rooted and roosted, and children played. There were people in the square. Women washed clothes in the yards, ground corn with stone mortars, appeared in open doorways slapping tortillas between their hands. Everywhere there was the sound of that slapping.

An open sewer ran down the center of the street, leading to the village square, which had a stone cross and a spigot from which two girls were drawing water. Around the square were a few stores and the *pulqueria*—the local gin mill. In the near distance was a church spire.

The thing to do, Nacio explained, was to find the commissioner. A small village like Ixtacala elects a commissioner as manager of the village affairs. He would be the one to talk to about shooting the film here. The children collected around the car were delighted to show us the way to the commissioner's house. It was a short walk.

Ixtacala.



Anghil Fragosa is a welder and the father of eight children. Besides being commissioner, he is also an unofficial judge; because of his reputation in the community for honesty and wisdom he is often called upon by neighboring villagers to arbitrate disputes and help decide issues.

Anghil and his family live in a two-room adobe house. Chickens scatter in the yard. Two boys, his oldest sons, looked up from their work. They were heating a bar of iron over a blacksmith's forge and bending it into a spiral to replace a broken section of an iron grill fence.



The house was immaculate. It had a painted concrete floor of earthen yellow. Light from a glass-covered hole in the roof fell in a pattern of a square on the yellow floor and diffused throughout the room, which took on the color of sunshine.

Anghil was friendly and understanding. I explained through Nacio the purpose of our visit: that we came to make a film that would bring knowledge to the world of the problems faced by Anghil and his countrymen.

Nacio then told Anghil the story of the film. Anghil listened. His wife and dark-eyed children stood by and also listened.



Nacio.

... in this village a child, Jose Hernandez, has fallen sick. The parents, Luis and Felicia, do not know what to do for him. Luis is a worker in the fields. Felicia is young. Jose is their first child. No one—neither the neighbors, nor the priest, nor the estanciero, the landowner—can help. The child grows worse. Luis's anxiety and desperation turn to anger. Why has this happened? Why? Is he at fault? He reviews his life. Always he has worked hard, trying in every way to make a living. Still there has never been enough ... only poverty. Why?

The priest and the neighbors bury the child.

"This is roughly the story of the film," Nacio told Anghil. "You will see as we go along."

"It is *not* a story," Anghil exclaimed. "It *is* the way things are. It has happened to me and to many others. It is the way things happen here in my village." With Anghil and the villagers willing to help, the task of making *Fate of a Child* had begun.

The written script continues:

It is carnival time. Somewhere in Latin America, a child named Jose Hernandez died. ...

Carnival time. There is dancing and music. People throng the streets in costumes and masks.

In San Juan Ixtacala there was a celebration, a fiesta, September 15, their Independence Day. Benches were brought out from the schoolroom and arranged around the square. Refreshments were served. Anghil read the Proclamation of Independence to the people, who listened and who had their own understanding of the meaning of independence.

A recent experience in emancipation in this village had concerned fresh water, a schoolhouse, and a road that wasn't built. Up until a few years ago Ixtacala had not really been a village. It had been a collection of huts clustered around the walls of an *estancia*, or estate, a feudalistic remnant of the past which still greatly influenced the present village economy. The *estancia* was operated as a dairy. Those who worked for the *estancia* lived within its confines and were, in a sense, the village. The six *estancia* owners, members of a wealthy family living in the city, had not entirely abandoned their control over the village. There came up, for instance, the issue of fresh water, which those assembled to listen to Anghil's reading of the Proclamation of Independence certainly remembered.

Anghil, after his election to the position of commissioner, had made some improvements. The first of these was a water tank to replace the open well in the village square. The people built the water tank, a hand pump, and a spigot over the well, and planted grass in the square and flowers.

One day the six *estancia* owners came to Anghil in a body and asked him by what authority he had taken it upon himself to spend village money to make these "unnecessary" improvements. "Perhaps," said Anghil, appearing to give the matter some thought, "the six of you would care to take up this question directly with the four hundred people of Ixtacala, of whom I am only the representative."

The *estancia* owners retired to the city, but several days later a surveyor and his crew appeared and spent the day in the village, measuring and mapmaking. Word got around that the *estancia* owners themselves planned to improve the village to secure their status and control. They would build a new paved road from the village to the highway. This road would cut diagonally across the town to the square. A house or two would fall in the path of the bulldozers—Anghil's house, for instance.

The people dealt with the matter in their own way, and soon they had erected a clean, new, adobe schoolhouse, lying, coincidentally, in the path of the proposed new road. The *estancia* owners made a second trip to Ixtacala to see about things. They saw the schoolhouse, and went back to the city. They dared not suggest that the new schoolhouse be torn down to make way for the road. Nothing more was heard about the proposed road or about the bulldozers that would have cut through Anghil's house.

Although this episode had no direct bearing on the filming of *Fate of a Child*, it clarified the character and temper of the people about whom *Fate* was written.

When Anghil made his speech after reading the Proclamation, he told the people that their village had been chosen by the director and cameraman to be the location of a film. The film's plot, which he also told them, found a sympathetic response.

"This is to be a picture about ourselves," Anghil told them, "the way we live. It is about our village, and our people, and gives us an opportunity to help to strengthen the understanding between people. Here in our own village we help each other; so it may be in the world that nations will help each other, in the same way. That is the idea as I see it," Anghil said. "And this picture will be part of that idea."

The people of Ixtacala agreed to stand behind this idea and to help in any way they could.

... to end the darkness in which so many live and die ... people like this ... for behind the fiesta's mask, the mask of gaiety ... is the face of reality ... the face of the people ...

Casting

The next step in the making of *Fate* was the casting. It was clear to us that Anghil was meant to play the part of Luis.

"But I am not an actor," Anghil argued. "To help, yes, but I am not an actor." "That is the point the director wishes to make," Nacio assured him. "That for this picture people are wanted, not actors. Still it will be on a professional basis, the director wants it understood." Anghil was to be paid, since he would have to give up his own work for the time required to shoot the picture. Anghil agreed to try; he would play Luis.

The question remained of who would play Felicia, Luis's wife in the script:

... at the edge of the field where Luis is standing, a young woman comes forward with a pail of water and a dipper. It is Felicia. She is young and seems beautiful to him. Perhaps they had no right to marry. They couldn't afford it, but, even the poor fall in love. ...

Maria was one of three village women Anghil brought for my inspection. It was obvious why he had chosen her. Although she was self-conscious and shy, she did not conceal her interest nor her vivacity, and warmth. She would play Felicia.

Since Maria was not giving up profitable employment, I suggested that she be paid something less than Anghil. Maria was agreeable to the suggestion, but Anghil asked whether her work would be equal to his. If so, he pointed out, this village's custom was to provide equal pay for equal work. So Maria and Anghil were paid equally.

Filming

A production crew was organized: Tony, Anghil's 18-year-old son, and two helpers. As the story unfolded more and more of the village was drawn into the shooting of the film: a child playing, a woman's face, a house, a street, a worker, a priest ...

and so Luis and Felicia were married ... married by the priest ...

In a small village like Ixtacala, although there was sure to be a church, and in each house the family altar—a shelf against the wall with a crucifix, a candle, and a sprig of flowers—there was usually no resident priest. The film wedding of Luis and Felicia could not very well wait for the visiting priest, who traveled from village to village performing marriages, baptisms, and communions.

"There is a worker in the fields named Romero," Maria told me. "He is a lot older. He looks more like a priest than the priest." She was right.

Romero's arms, firmly adapted to the movements of the hoe and the pick, found it difficult to learn the new motion of holding a Bible and gesturing in the sign of a blessing. But the awkwardness of his movements was unimportant because of the gravity and beauty of his face, luminous and controlled as befits a dignitary of the church. Romero performed the marriage ceremony.

... and after the marriage, Luis takes Felicia home. Felicia looks around with shining eyes. The stove. The altar. The window. The floor. It is earth. A straw mat is spread out in the corner—the marriage bed. ...

The hut chosen as the home of Luis and Felicia was at the outer edge of town, where the houses were a little further apart from one another. Its curtained doorway and a row of cactus plants in front were framed by the feathered branches of a mimosa tree.

In the hut were what was left of a large bed, the entrails of a spring and a littered mattress—a questionable improvement over the usual *petate*, or straw mat for sleeping. The stove was an open brazier; there was the customary altar; there were no windows but a hole in the wall beside the doorway opening into the yard. The room was thick with flies. The family, mostly small children, followed and watched as arrangements for the shooting were made. The bed was moved out to make space for the camera. The family would live in an adjoining room during the making of *Fate*.

The "set" was prepared simply and naturally. The earthen floor was watered down and swept, and perhaps a table would be borrowed from a neighbor—and a cradle.

Carnival time. Somewhere in Latin America, a child named Jose Hernandez died, child of Luis and Felicia Hernandez, their first child. Why did Jose Hernandez die? It could be said he died of a fever. It could be said . . .

The child, one of twins, named Angelita was tiny, with a face that looked withered and aged. The other twin, robust and unconcerned, crawled with the animals and other children on the dirt floor. But this little one was not ill, simply tiny—no one knew why. Perhaps she was undernourished.

Angelita did not cry, like most of the much-loved and nurtured children in Latin America. She was nearly 2 years old but looked like an infant, an ancient infant. She would play the child who dies of a fever.

All day yesterday Jose was fretful. Felicia picks him up and rocks him in her arms. He is feverish. . . .

Maria had difficulty with this scene. There was no reason for trouble, certainly, in performing a gesture so natural. But now and then in the course of shooting she would suddenly become self-conscious, usually when performing a gesture as familiar as this. I explained that her movements did not seem right, that her action was not as important as her feelings. Maria was patient and smiling but helpless in the face of her own distress. She turned to Anghil for assurance. Anghil took her by the arm and together they walked up and down the room talking. Maria must have understood what he told her, because she came back into the part and was right. Anghil seemed to have this ability with others; he was noticeably trusted and reassuring.

Angelita's little 6-year-old sister carried the tiny baby with her wherever she went, swathed in the *rebozo*. She was always there watching the filming, always solemn, always with her tiny burden. She was the family's second mother. (In families where there are many children, the lot of caring for a new baby falls to a 5- or 6-year-old daughter, who is not yet old enough for school yet not so young that she cannot care for a baby. In well-to-do families the daughters of this age play house with their dolls.) For Angelita's second mother it was not play: it was reality.

Anghil, who takes the welfare of children to heart, told us that these little second mothers were problem students. School for them meant freedom and release from their burden and responsibility. They could not be made to sit down and learn; they wanted only to run and play with others of their age.

Anghil could not read or write. The percentage of literacy was very low even after the building of new schools, many of which the government could not afford to staff. And in most families there was no time to be spared for schooling.

The script often contrasts the wealth of the land and the poverty of the people, the wealth of the few and the poverty of the many, and the curious way in which the continent of Latin America has been throttled, cut off from the wealth of the world, even from its own wealth.

Luis paces up and down the room. He is caged. There is nothing he can do for his child. Why?—it is important to ask this—why must his child die? The candle burning on the altar gives Luis back his shadow, moving on the wall following him like his hardship and poverty; always poverty, no matter how hard he tried.

The land around him is rich in corn, in minerals, in food, but it has never come his way, not any of this wealth. It has always gone out somewhere, to others, out of this country. He had seen with his own eyes, for Luis had worked on the docks. . . .

Anghil had never been further from home than the city, an hour's ride—unless it was by bus, in which case it was likely to take forever. The bus often would end up in a field with the hood open and the driver and half of the passengers peering into the motor while the rest slept or decided to walk.

The Port City

The sequence of Luis working on the docks was to be shot in the nearest port city on the Pacific, a 2-day ride from Ixtacala. And it was to be shot over the coming weekend, which happened to be Anghil's birthday. The village had planned a small fiesta to honor Anghil, but he consoled himself and his friends with the recognition that this trip to a city and to an ocean he had never seen would be the best birthday present he could have.

Anghil had his first look at the Pacific, with a mile of beach and tremendous surf. As the sun went down Nacio's clothes came off and he dove in. I was next. Anghil, not hesitating to taste this new experience, stripped and plunged in to meet the waves. For three hours we played in the ocean like delighted children. Finally arriving at the hotel after dark, we explained why we were late, and were told "no one swims there—that place belongs to the sharks!"

In the morning there was a ship in port.

Luis's hands had helped load the ships with cargoes of wheat and beef—none of it for his own stomach, no matter how hungry he might be. . . .

Anghil, introduced to the foreman in charge of loading, was given a barrow and a hook. He fell into line, working along with the other longshoremen. They questioned him about the film, the same kind of skeptical questions that had been asked by the estancia workers of Ixtacala: Why show this? Why show the misery of the workers rather than the new tall buildings or the pyramids or the fiestas?

Anghil answered their questions this way: "In my region the land is green with corn and yet the people are poor and often go hungry. Why is this? Is it different here? Here we are all working and loading this ship with coffee and yet do you have coffee enough to drink, or money enough to buy it with? If we are to have help, we must show things the way they are."

The longshoreman answered Anghil's questions in turn. It was no different at the dock; this was the first ship to come to port in three days. Who knew when the next would appear? And meanwhile . . . they shrugged.

Was this part of the script? Was this where the story left off and life began? Certainly the dividing line between the two was thin.

The region depended on its foreign trade, with only food-stuffs and a few raw materials to be traded for the many necessities of life. When foreign trade slackened, the docks stood empty and people went hungry.

People in this port city did go hungry. In the mornings, the longshoremen told Anghil, men gathered on the dock, as many as a hundred or more in need of work. This gathering was called a shape-up. If a ship came in, the boss would pick a dozen men, maybe twenty. Men would stand around and wait until it became clear there was nothing more to wait for. Unemployment was more than just a line in the script.

The police station was a room 20 feet square with a wooden bench running around three sides of it. People sat and waited—old men, young men, women, a few children. At the table in the center sat the police chief, without a uniform, his shirt open at the throat. He was sympathetic but not optimistic about finding my still camera, which had been stolen from our station wagon. "In normal times," he said, "it is easier to trace these things. One knows at least where to look. Unemployment has made thievery anybody's business."

Our status as guests gave the matter special importance. Six men, plainclothesmen, were summoned from among those waiting on the benches. A secretary transcribed my testimony, including a description of the camera, a map of the location of the station wagon, and a map of the location of the camera on the seat of the car. Everything possible would be done.



Felicia and Luis are married (played by Maria and Anghil).



"After their marriage Luis took Felicia to their home."

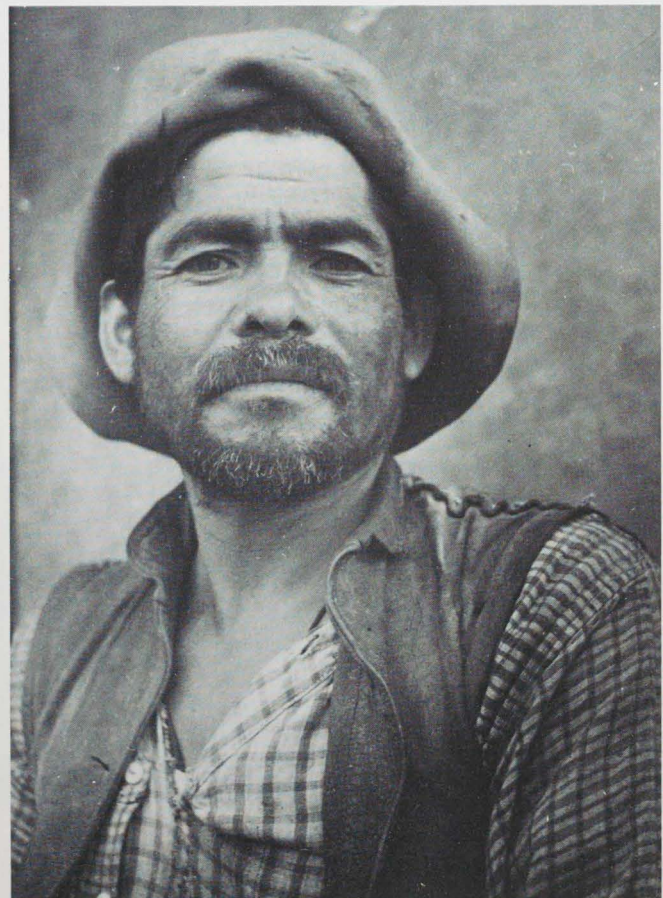


"A cradle—for their future hope."

Jalapa.



Angelita and her second mother.



Jalapa.

Nacio left his phone number with the police just in case. There was no use waiting around; it was this unemployment.

In the street people collect. A man on the steps of a public building speaks to a crowd of unemployed. There is a demonstration. Banners. Angry voices and gestures. . . .

Again our script would be paralleled by life. This sequence happens in the film just as it happened in reality.

Jalapa

Jalapa, a town of 1500 people, was our first stop on the way back to Ixtacala. Jalapa had a prosperous look, with a factory, paved streets, and many houses.

It was Sunday morning and many people were out in the streets, walking toward the square where there was a demonstration. The faces of the demonstrators reflected anxiety, anger, determination. Their absorption was such that none noticed our camera.

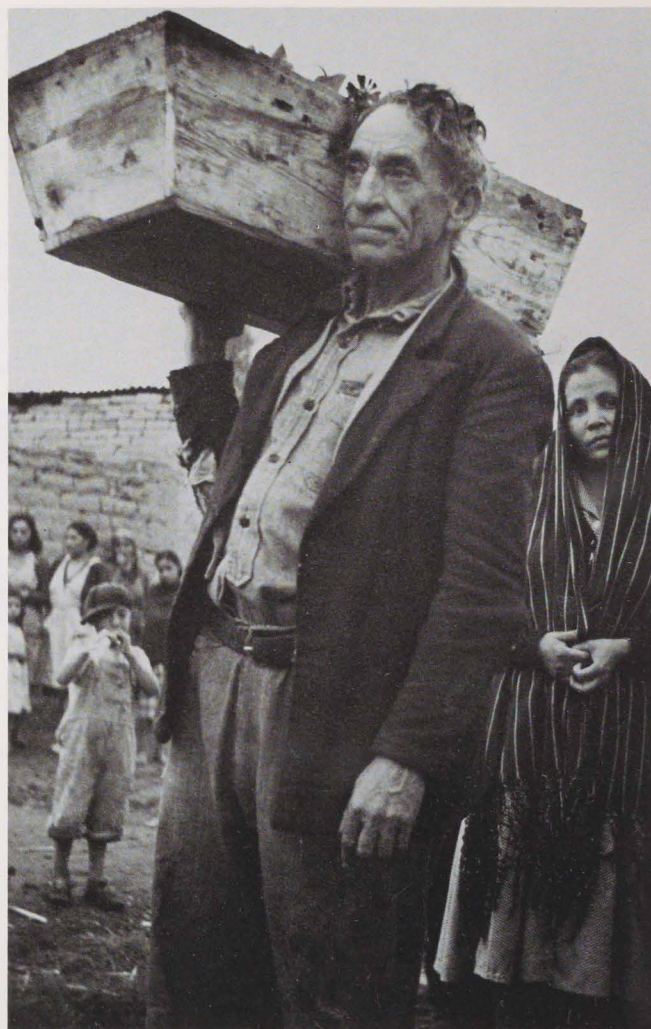
Anghil lost himself in the issue, which involved a protest against the high price of drinking water. The town's drinking water was supplied by a private concern; they had raised its price. The people could not pay the increase and considered it unjustified. Anghil could not be torn away. This organized, collective voice was something he had never heard before. In it echoed the voice of his own village, standing together in its own way against the new road, protecting its right to decide for itself, asserting its independence and its democracy.

. . . and beyond the bright lights of the industrial centers still lay the old darkness, the old way of life. Things were happening but they had not yet happened for the men who worked in the fields. And so a child by the name of Jose Hernandez died. . . .

The end of *Fate* approached. We were confronted with the problem of shooting the death of the child, the funeral, and the burial. Everyone was disturbed by the need to photograph the child in death. It touched perhaps too closely the reality it portrayed.

Death in Latin America is not a thing apart from life. It is too common an occurrence. One out of five children dies before the first birthday. Funerals are frequent sights—processions behind a coffin; flowers, palm leaves; mourners and children. The dead are not forgotten. Friends, the wife, the sons, the mother may picnic on a fine day beside the grave.

Shots of the funeral.





Romero and Felicia with
Jose's coffin.



Even the simulated death of a child, of Angelita, is disturbing. Angelita, taken from the arms of her sister, began to cry. Perhaps this is why attempting to film the child's death was so disquieting. A plan was worked out to keep her from crying.

Dressed in her best clothes, Angelita had her noon-time meal and was left to fall asleep on the family bed. Lying on that large bed, she looked tinier and more withered than ever. Her sister bumped the bed now and then to chase away the flies, the chickens, the cats and dogs. When Angelita was asleep, two boards, joined like the corner of a small coffin, were placed around her. The camera focused on the wooden corner of the quasi-coffin behind her head. Now and then in sleep she turned her head.

"Wait," Nacio advised. "Ten minutes and she will turn her head back again." She did so, although how Nacio knew this remained a mystery. With these 10-minute lapses in filming, all went well.

The next day we planned to shoot the scenes of the nailing down of the coffin lid. The bottomless coffin was ready to be placed like a frame over the sleeping child. Only this day the child would not fall asleep. She was remarkably awake and active.

Anghil and Angelita's mother talked, and Anghil reported the trouble: Coca-Cola. In every village, even those that have no other electric current, there are Coke coolers. Coke is a much-loved treat for children, preferred even to coffee and tortillas because it is special and American.

So that day they had allowed Angelita to have a Coke. There was nothing to be done about it. She could not sleep because of the caffeine in the drink.

Luis comes out of his house with Felicia, following the small coffin carried on the shoulders of a neighbor. Other neighbors leave their doorways and join the small procession. . . .

For the funeral procession, a cast was assembled from the villagers. No directions were needed; they were told only to behave as mourners behave. They had experienced their role too many times in reality.

Still, the funeral became something of an event and even a source of amusement to the village. The procession moved from street to street, following an itinerary dictated by the needs of the filming. It passed the house of Luis and Felicia, located at one end of town; it cut across the square and then through a field to reach the cemetery. I filmed this sequence during the afternoons when the sky became cloudy, just before the daily rain. The gray sky and soft natural light reinforced the somber mood of the action. For a few days the funeral procession could be seen here and there at various points along the way.

Romero, who had performed the wedding, was again called in from the fields, this time to assume the role of pallbearer. He found it easier to hold the coffin than the scriptures. The coffin was not an uncommon burden.

The morning of the shooting of the burial, a messenger was dispatched from Anghil to advise me that on this day there happened to be a real funeral. An old man had died and was to be buried that afternoon. The movie funeral should therefore get a good head start.

Everything went smoothly, although there was some confusion apparent among the villagers: "Is it this time the real funeral or the movie funeral?"

Small wooden crosses mark the graves. Some are weatherbeaten and grey with age. In the foreground is a freshly dug grave. Jose's coffin is lowered. . . .

Just as the shooting of the film funeral was completed, the real funeral approached the cemetery gates. A real coffin was lowered into a real grave. The camera turned from the staged burial of Luis's "child" to catch the stricken faces of the real mourners, who were captured on film to weep for the imagined death of a child.

Viewing the Rushes

From the film laboratory in New York came the rushes of the film. Anghil and Maria, Romero, Angelita's parents, and Tony and his two helpers wanted to see themselves and their village on the screen. A trip was organized to the city to project the unedited film.

The rushes of *Fate* took them by surprise, for in spite of everything they knew and understood about the making of this picture, it was like no other movie they had ever seen. It was nothing like the fantasies of Tarzan, for instance, shown once a month or so in the next village; it was nothing like the love story or the action of a western. It didn't look like a real movie, they confessed. They could have "acted" so much better if they had seen themselves earlier, they said. It was one thing to perform natural and understandable actions in front of the camera, but it was another to see the result on the screen, which had always been for them a source of fantasy.

It was, I pointed out, what they had seen on the screen before that had not been true to life. In our film they were *supposed* to look like themselves; their houses and streets and the way they ground corn and laid flowers on the altar and rocked their babies—all this was in the picture the way it really happened in their lives, not acted or contrived to be different or special. Still, it was not easy for them to accept the reality of their own lives reflected from the

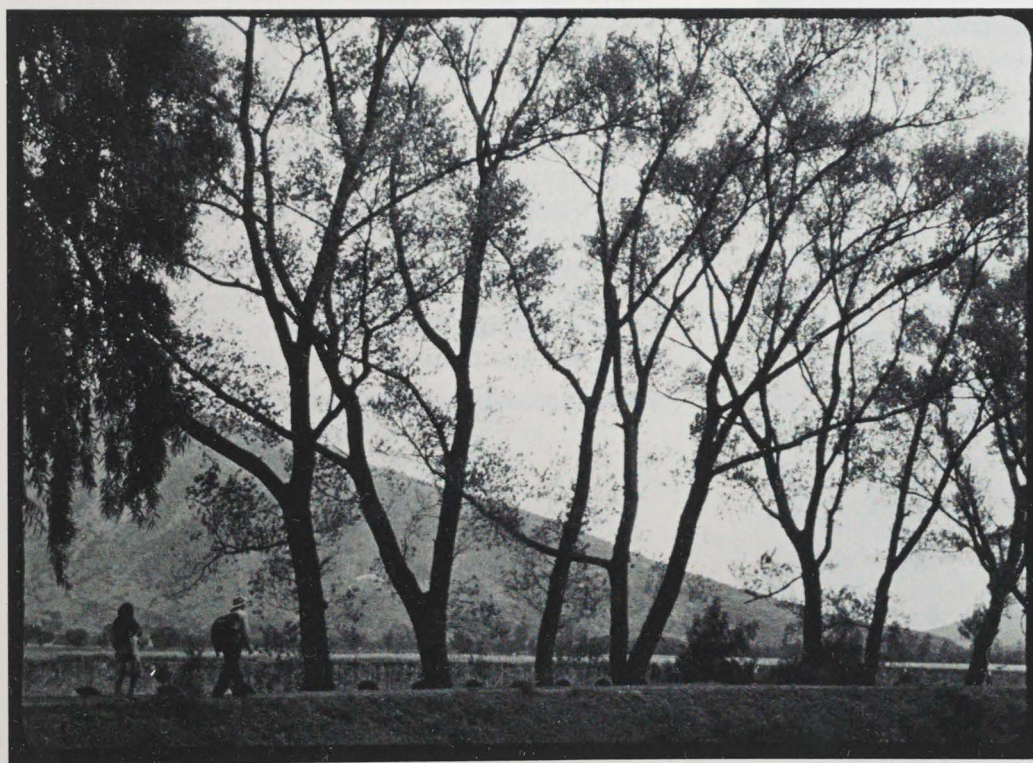
The World Without
War: A History of
Modern America



Nacio, Leo Seltzer, and Poul Gram.



Filming *Fate*.



"Luis and Felicia depart
from the sadness of their
village."



"The way things arrange themselves here in Latin America—the beauty of the landscape, the misery of the people."

movie screen on which they had previously seen only fantasy.

Meanwhile, certain changes had begun to take place in the village of Ixtacala, visible changes. . . .

Other countries might give valuable assistance, but the final results would have to be achieved by the people of Latin America themselves. . . .

At the house with the feathered mimosa tree in the yard, the house with the littered bed and the tiny child, a load of red brick and freshly quarried stone appeared one day, bought with the money earned by participation in the film. So this house would have a new fence, not a fence of piled-up refuse and lopped-off branches, but one of red bricks and stone, the first in the village of Ixtacala. Behind it the pigs and chickens and the half-naked children would enjoy the privacy and pride they had earned for themselves.

And in the yard of Maria's house, a fresh well and a cistern were dug and the water was piped into the house where, with the money Maria had earned in the making of *Fate*, a real bathroom had been built. It had green tile walls, a tub, and a toilet that flushed—the only one in Ixtacala.

"Yes, progress was quickening its pace . . ." and in the household of Anghil there was an improvement of another kind. A new shed, built with the money he had earned in the making of *Fate*, would serve as a workshop for his two sons. In Anghil's words: "My boys have to choose now, the way they will go as men, of work and achievement or of drifting and trouble. Perhaps this workshop of their own will help: help them to choose the right way."

Another of the changes that would come about for the villagers as a result of their contribution to the film was the pipes that would carry water into the houses of Ixtacala from the covered tank in the square.

In life, as in the script, the incidence of disease is high, but hunger and malnutrition are still the basic problems of Ixtacala, as they are in all underdeveloped areas of Latin America.

Jose Hernandez died because he lived in an underdeveloped area. But the old colonial system which was responsible for the death of this child was doomed. The people were determined to destroy it. Help was on the way and the knowledge put new hope into the hearts of the people.

Fate of a Child is a story about people forced to live under pressures of poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, people who in spite of these pressures live with natural grace and dignity, determined to make for themselves a way of life in which deprivation, ignorance, and death, as it came to Jose Hernandez, will no longer be. There can be no clearer statement of the aim and purpose of *Fate of a Child*.

The World Viewed: Works of Nineteenth-Century Realism

Marjorie Munsterberg

The delight bewilders the mind. . . . If the eye attempts to follow the flight of a gaudy butterfly, it is arrested by some strange tree or fruit; if watching an insect, one forgets it in the strange flower it is crawling over; if turning to admire the splendour of the scenery, the individual character of the foreground fixes the attention. The mind is a chaos of delight. . . .

—Charles Darwin, *Journal* (1831–1836)¹

[With the *Illustrated London News*] the public will have henceforth under their glance, and within their grasp, the very form and presence of events as they transpire, in all their substantial reality, and with evidence visible as well as circumstantial.

—Inaugural editorial, *Illustrated London News*
(May 14, 1842, p. 1)

Among the most provocative of the rediscoveries that have been made in nineteenth-century art in recent years are those pictures that employ an uncannily modern style of realism. Sketches, prints, and paintings, by Northern European artists in particular, exhibit a sensitivity to the structure of the pictorial composition and a fascination with the precisely rendered physical object that seem to anticipate works of the 1960s and 1970s. Despite the immediate visual appeal of these images, however, few historians have tried to make sense of the aesthetic they represent. Thus the intellectual challenge of Peter Galassi's *Before Photography* (1981; reviewed by Snyder 1982), which discussed them within the context of Western artistic traditions, offered special pleasure. It was the stimulation provided by his show and the accompanying catalog that prompted this article.

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The challenge as well as much of the charm of these mostly unpretentious, highly detailed depictions of the material world stems from their apparent lack of an appropriate historical context. Despite their plentitude and their ubiquity, the images do not seem to fit comfortably into the art of the nineteenth century. Lack of pictorial ambition and an often frankly illustrative nature bar them from the so-called modernist tradition, a partially self-proclaimed lineage born with the French Revolution and the painter Jacques-Louis David. These artists—Gustave Courbet, Edouard Manet, and Paul Cézanne, among others—form what to later generations became the avant-garde, a status that gave positive meaning to their failure to achieve contemporary critical success. Lack of pictorial ambition, unconventional subject matter, and frequently unorthodox compositions distinguish these works of realism from the art of the Academy, which especially in France filled the major public exhibitions with highly finished, richly detailed narrative pictures. Finally, both medium and purpose remove many of these works from the nineteenth century's vigorous tradition of popular imagery.

The lack of connection to a historically defined context encourages the modern viewer to see these pictures only with modern eyes, appreciating those qualities that accord with the values of the present alone without reference to the past. I will argue that seen within the context of their making, however, these pictures do not express a sensibility peculiarly similar to our own. Rather, they express a host of qualities that characterize the art of the nineteenth century, interests that have been gathered loosely under the rubric "realism." Although usually employed with self-defeating vagueness, the term can be developed with precision, and I believe that such study done on a large scale will provide a broad conceptual understanding of an important kind of nineteenth-century art. A richly developed set of attitudes can be discovered that encompasses pictures as diverse as prints, photographs, and unpretentious sketches, as well as the ambitious public art of major figures such as Joseph Mallord William Turner, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, and Edgar Degas. I hope to offer a small step toward such an understanding here.²

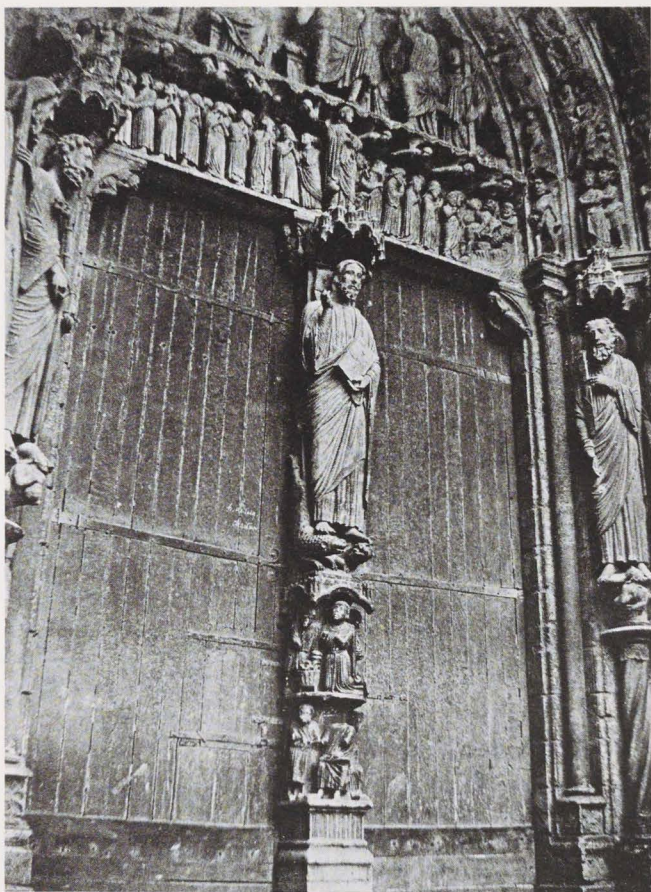


Figure 1 Henri Le Secq. *Chartres Cathedral, South Transept Porch, Central Portal*, 1852. Photolithograph. (Plate from *Fragments d'architecture et sculpture de la cathédrale de Chartres d'après les clichés de M. Le Secq, artiste peintre*, Paris, late 1870s, from negative made in 1852.) Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

Nineteenth-Century Notions of Reality

Sweeping historical generalizations by necessity run roughshod over the subtleties of the very topography which they seek to explicate. Nonetheless, such statements also have the virtue of their breadth: the placement of the given argument within a larger vision, the identification of a premise of the author's point of view. With these limitations firmly in mind, I would like to suggest that a fundamental aspect of the nineteenth century's distinctive brand of realism (not to be confused with the mid-century style of painting, Realism) is an obsessive fascination with the physical world, and more, a craving, an unquenchable thirst, for the direct experience of the tangible and material. It was not enough to read of places or people or things. One had to go, see, absorb, at first hand, and the closer one could get to the original—even if it was by means of deceptive illusion (a process which offered its own seductive attractions)—the better. The *Illustrated London News*, for example, destined to become one of the most popular magazines of the century, tried to entice readers by promising "the very form and presence of events as they transpire, in all their substantial reality" (May 14, 1842, p. 1). This interest was not in the particular as it represented and imperfectly expressed the ideal, but in the infinitely various shades and textures of the singular itself. Such an absorption in details (which threw Darwin's mind into a "chaos of delight" and provided "evidence visible as well as circumstantial" to the reader of the *Illustrated London News*) gave value to the unmediated experience of the world, the palpable presence of the real in all its splendid and multifarious variety.

Composition

The popularity of panoramas and dioramas in the nineteenth century offers the most frequently cited proof of these concerns, since the spectacles "relaxed the tension between the real object and the picture, for they aimed not only at imitating reality but at replacing it," as Werner Hoffman said in *The Earthly Paradise* (1961:193). I believe that this observation also explains the drive to invent photography—a problem that attracted a host of workers in the early nineteenth century—as well as the century's understanding of its possibilities. Photography, after all, is a medium, not a style; the term assumes certain physical facts of creation (like any other medium), but these in themselves do not dictate how the pictures will look. In other words, the new method of picture-making did not by its nature overthrow traditional means of composition; rather, the interests the photographs were to answer sometimes demanded new forms of presentation. That certain images consequently came to look unconventional did not cause



Figure 2 Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg. *A Courtyard in Rome*, 1813–1816. Oil on canvas. Kunstmuseum, Ribe, Denmark.

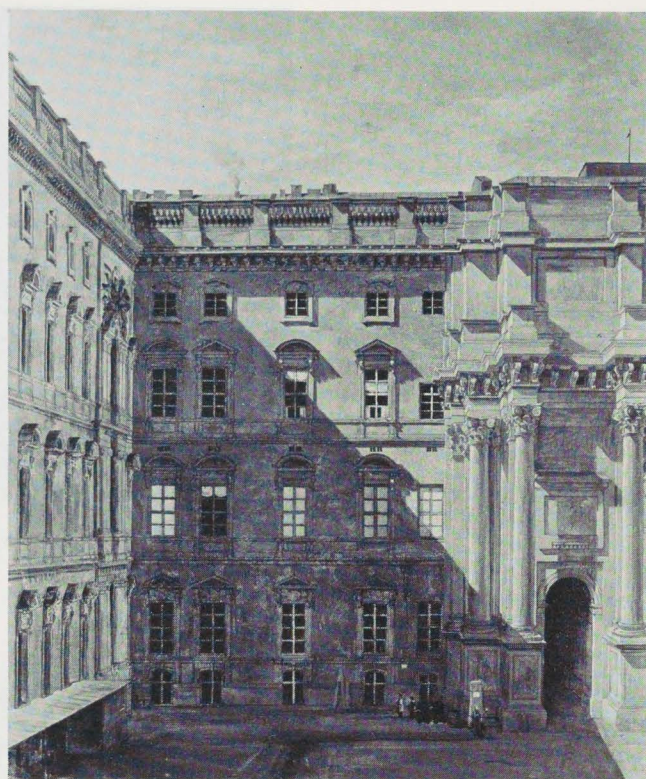


Figure 3 Eduard Gaertner. *Corner of the Eosander-Hof, or Outer Courtyard, of the Royal Palace, Berlin*, ca. 1831. Oil on canvas. Verwaltung der Staatlichen Schlösser und Gärten, Berlin.

particular concern, since they were to be synonymous with their subjects; the picture was successful to the extent that it dissolved into the material it held forth to the viewer.

I propose, then, an understanding of the act of artistic creation as a response to the pressure of a not-yet-seen audience and a fully seen world. Categorically unlike the splendidly isolated Romantic genius, these artists—in important part—worked to establish a relationship between the viewer and the world, not between themselves and their art. Even such highly sophisticated practitioners as Edgar Degas and Henri Le Secq, who never let the viewer forget their presence as creators of the image, make that presence felt while pretending disappearance; they play games with the nature of their role. Degas, for example, constructed pictures that strain but do not break the limits of physical possibility. Thus, his unexpected and often odd compositions excuse themselves by placing blame (as it were) at the door of the world outside. Yet, while claiming by their very plausibility to be passive reports of found configura-

tions, the pictures force us to become aware of the artistry of the images by their sharp challenge to the conventional. Henri Le Secq's view of the main portal of Chartres Cathedral's south transept (Figure 1) catapults us into an immediate and dramatic relationship with the entrance, and especially with the aloof and superior figure of Christ who stands far above our heads. At the same time, however, Le Secq's signature across the boards of the door playfully (but pointedly) denies the transparency of the work; this blunt reminder of the artist pulls us out of our absorption in the scene.

Simpler pictures than these attempt to eliminate the tension between the picture and the real object by suppressing traces of the making. A common compositional device, especially in the popular imagery of the nineteenth century, is the inclusion within the final image of the frame which creates the composition. The dark architecture outlining Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg's *Courtyard in Rome* (Figure 2), for example, claims that we saw what he saw, and even more, we stand where he stood, our place measured by the

Figure 4 Jean-Jacques Tissot. *What Christ Saw from the Cross*, 1886–1896. Gouache. (Illustration from *Life of Jesus Christ*, Paris, 1896–1897.) The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York.



neatly tiled floor of the foreground. Like the roofs so often included at the base of panoramas, the floor and the window frame denote the substitution of the viewer for the artist, as we both become passive admirers of what the world presents. Of course, the placement of the viewer need not be articulated so thoroughly. The clarity of the architectural structure in Eduard Gaertner's *Corner of the Eosander-Hof, or Outer Courtyard, of the Royal Palace, Berlin* (Figure 3), for example, compels us to comprehend our relationship to the composition on its terms; we look out the window directly across from (and surely identical in appearance to) the curtained window third from the left on the third floor. Thus both compositions imply that the artist has abdicated, or at least minimized, his role as maker of the image.

Eckersberg and Gaertner respect our distance from their pictures by placing us at a remove from the scene. They involve us in the work, but as spectators rather than participants. We also may become active members, however. Jean-Jacques Tissot's *What Christ Saw from the Cross* (Figure 4), one of his illustrations to the New Testament, forces us onto the cross itself, and shows with excruciating precision our bloody feet at the bottom of the page. Similarly, *View of London from a Painter's Platform* (Figure 5), a lithograph published by Rudolph Ackermann in 1829, transforms us into painters of the panorama that filled the Colosseum in London's Regent Park during the 1820s and 1830s. Suspended on one of the swinging perches erected before the mammoth canvas, we become creators of a view rather than passive admirers

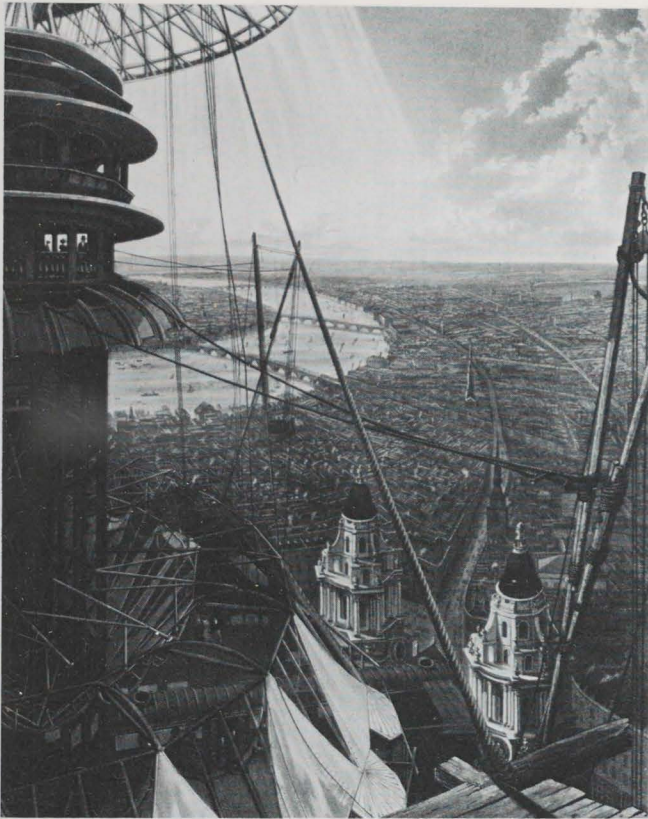


Figure 5 *View of London from a Painter's Platform*. Colored aquatint and etching. (Plate from *Graphic Illustrations of the Colosseum, Regent's Park*, published by Rudolf Ackermann, London, 1829.) Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

of the spectacle, distinguished by our activity from the tiny people who look out from the platform atop the pinnacle of the painted St. Paul's Cathedral.³

The Presentation of Information

Composition does not provide the only means of establishing our relationship to the image. These nineteenth-century works of realism commonly describe rich accumulations of detail, which draw us into the picture as we attempt to form a unity from the perhaps discordant and often disparate elements. A picture such as Frederick Mackenzie's detail of the roof

of Henry VII's chapel in Westminster Abbey (Figure 6), published in John Britton's *Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain* (London, 1807), seems shockingly abrupt in its composition. What we with twentieth-century sensibilities understand as pictorial revolution, however, far more likely reflects a desire to convey objective, factual information as compellingly as possible. The suddenness with which the pendant appears before our eyes makes us feel that we see the structure without the interference of reporting: we are there. In addition, though, the sharp, crisp detailing, set off by contrast to the relatively undefined background, plays a vital part in creating the specificity of the object. We read the intricacies of the carving as proof of immediate physical presence, and armed with this assurance we become drawn into making sense of the information presented by the picture.

Johan Christian Dahl's *View from Praestø* (Figure 7) manipulates the same process on a more ambitious scale. A crisp, clear light, so characteristic of the Northern artists of the period, defines the leaves, the rocks, the grasses, and the tree trunk in hypnotic detail. We become immersed in the reading of these visual facts, trying to shape the parts into the continuity of form that the apparently truthful and complete description persuades us exists. Unlike earlier works such as Albrecht Dürer's *Great Piece of Turf* (Albertina, Vienna), however, Dahl's view presents the tangle of natural growth as a detail of the whole but not an isolated one. As in Mackenzie's picture of the pendant, our sense of the complexity of the particular gains by contrast to the less precisely defined (but nonetheless visible) context. Dürer's work depicts a single phenomenon which he selected and offered for our attentive but passive inspection. The later artists recorded a point of view, and with it, an experience; they chose the spot on which we stand together.

Understood in this way, the inscriptions John Constable wrote on his cloud studies become critical and revealing elements of the pictures. The notation, for example, on the back of *Study of Clouds and Trees* (Figure 8) reads: "Hampstead, / Sept. 11, 1821. 10 to 11 Morning under the sun / Clouds silvery grey on warm ground / sultry. Light wind to the S.W. fine all day—but rain the night following." This textual commentary, so explicit in its re-creation of the conditions of time and place, substantiates what the style of the painting itself suggests: that the character and position of the cloud determined the picture's look. The trees both locate us and locate it, contributing placement to the description of the particular. These images are less experiments in picture-making than records of an analysis of the world, a generalization about Constable's sketches presumably in accord with his own definition of painting as a science that "should be pursued as an inquiry into the laws of nature" (Constable 1970:69).

Nineteenth-Century Photography

Photography seemed perfectly suited to such investigations, since the mechanical functioning of the camera apparently eliminated all possibility of human interference or manipulation. Further, the medium possessed the capacity to reproduce with ease and precision more detail than the eye could perceive. Hence to many viewers the process represented nature, not art. The French critic Jules Janin, for example, wrote that "the daguerreotype is not a picture . . . it is a faithful memory of what man has built throughout the world and of landscapes everywhere" (quoted in Newhall and Doty 1962:25–28). William Henry Fox Talbot, one of the inventors of photography, called two of his books *The Pencil of Nature* (London, 1844) and *Sun Pictures of Scotland* (London, 1845), descriptions of the medium which his contemporaries accepted for general use.⁴ Sometimes the photographs even seemed to offer a more complete experience than that presented by the world itself. Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1866:33), for example, wrote that one could never take too many photographs while restoring works of architecture, since "one often discovers in a print what one did not perceive in the thing itself." Others similarly remarked on their fuller perception of the world when seen through the eye of the camera.⁵

Portraits

Photographic portraiture surely provides the most convincing demonstration of the extent to which even we, the modern viewers, confuse these patently created images with their subjects, and hence their analysis illuminates the process of our viewing such images. There is still, a century and a half after the invention of photography, an instinctive belief in the photographic portrait as something more than simply a pictorial depiction of the subject. André Bazin discussed this belief in "The Ontology of the Photographic Image":

A very faithful drawing may actually tell us more about the model, but despite the promptings of our critical intelligence, it will never have the irrational power of the photograph to bear away our faith. . . . Hence the charm of family albums. Those grey or sepia shadows, phantomlike and almost indecipherable, are no longer traditional family portraits but rather the disturbing presence of lives halted at a set moment in their duration, freed from their destiny; not, however, by the prestige of art but by the power of an impassive mechanical process. [Bazin 1967:14]



Figure 6 Frederick MacKenzie. *Henry VII's Chapel*. Engraving and etching. (Plate 6, *The Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain*, by John Britton, vol. 1, London, 1807.) Avery Architectural Library, Columbia University, New York.



Figure 7 Johan Christian Dahl. *View from Praestø*, ca. 1814. Oil on canvas. Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo.

Bazin's term "irrational power" is apt and is amply demonstrated by stories from the last century as well as our own responses. Richard Rudisill (1971:218; Chapter 8, *passim*), for example, has analyzed mid-nineteenth-century America's faith in the camera's power, which even extended to the near creation of life itself. More than one sitter believed that the very act of photographing could endow the inanimate or absent with a full physical presence, and many employed it to photograph dead children, producing images which were to preserve the subjects as living, not dead, beings.

The basic formative component of most nineteenth-century photographic portraits is random, unexpected, and seemingly infinite detail. Taken together, these bits of information provide (as Lady Eastlake so perceptively remarked) "accurate landmarks and measurements for loving eyes and memories to deck with beauty and animate with expression, in perfect certainty that the ground plan is founded on fact" (quoted in Arts Council of Great Britain 1972:10). Lady Eastlake's decking and animating describe an intensified version of the process of empathetic pro-

jection that occurs with any portrait. Our active response to the apparently disparate facts offered by the picture shapes a convincing individual presence. We simultaneously become drawn into a specificity of time and of place, the necessary dimensions in which a particular person exists. The interior time of the image (which contains both person and place) merges with the exterior time of the viewer, so that the discrete entity of the work appears to be broken open and the relationship with the subject of the picture charged with intensity. Unlike our replacement of Christ in Tissot's *What Christ Saw from the Cross*, we are here apparently involved in a reciprocal relationship, and our tension during viewing comes from the maintaining of this exchange.

What such photographs offer as the conclusion of active viewing is the illusion of an immediate and tangible physical presence. It is this combination of the authenticity created by active viewing with the authenticity derived from faith in the photographic process that results in the extraordinary power of photographic portraits. Southworth and Hawes's portrait of one of Hawes's daughters (Figure 9) beauti-



Figure 8 John Constable. *Study of Clouds and Trees*, 1821. Oil on paper, mounted on board. Royal Academy of Arts, London.

Figure 9 Albert Sands Southworth and Josiah Johnson Hawes. *Marion Augusta Hawes or Alice Mary Hawes*, ca. 1855–1860. Daguerreotype. International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York.



fully illustrates this process. The disarming casualness of the child's pose and the intimacy implied by her apparent lack of awareness of us create an affecting and compelling image, but one that works precisely by denying its status as a consciously formed image. Our faith arises from its innocence, its claim to a lack of manipulation of the medium and the subject to produce a picture. At the same time, however, its consummate mastery becomes clear to any careful viewer: we are held spellbound through the calculations of the artist. Unlike so many anonymous snapshots, which charm by their awkwardness and even incompetence, this daguerreotype only pretends informality and chance.

Events and Places

Mid-century photographs of events, or of the places where events occurred, also exploit incidental detail in a similar fashion. The random disorder of dead bodies scattered across the ploughed field in Felix Beato's *Charge of the Dragoon's Guard at Palichian* (Figure 10) persuades exactly because it is not expected. This accidental quality testifies to the reliability of the evidence while absorbing us in the effort of assimilating all that detail into comprehensible form. Similarly, Humphrey Lloyd Hime's *Prairie on the Bank of the Red River, Looking South* (Figure 11)—a title which precisely locates us in a landscape where precision would seem to have no meaning—claims authority from the very absence of information: how could such banality contain falsehood? Maxime Du Camp's *Profile of the Great Sphinx, from the South* (Figure 12) also commands assurance but in a reverse manner. Confronted by a subject that bristled with conventional viewpoints, Du Camp photographed from an unfamiliar position and included such defiantly disfiguring elements as the large splotch of shadow sprawled across the sand. The result is un-

Figure 10 Felix Beato.
*Charge of the Dragoon's
Guard at Palichian, China,*
1860. Albumen print. The
Museum of Modern Art,
New York. Purchased as
the Gift of Shirley C.
Burden and the Estate of
Vera Louise Fraser.



mistakably jaunty—having a great time, wish you were here—and the picture becomes both proof of Du Camp's experience and a means of substitute experience for us.

Such readings of these and many other photographs consistently suggest that the images—like the contemporary pictures discussed above—came into being less to explore the pictorial innovation that seems so striking to us than to satisfy an insatiable desire for vivid and compellingly immediate descriptions of the physical world. Further, the same values can be found in works that do not employ formal innovation. I would argue, in fact, that most photographs (like most paintings) of the nineteenth century at least attempted to stay within the bounds of conventional pictorial construction. Their compositional instinct might be characterized as pointing at the object of interest rather than carving pictorial coherence out of the continuous flow of the world. Not surprisingly, then, both the fascination and the possible formal oddities of many photographs come from their detail rather than their structure.

Carleton Watkins, for example, one of the greatest of the century's photographers, judiciously centered his majestic trees in the middle of mammoth glass plates. *California Buckeye* (Figure 13) is typical: framed symmetrically by smaller, less significant masses of leaf, the buckeye bursts with an abundance of growth. The spectacle of the tree commands our attention; we become involved in the inspection, the treasuring, of such glorious proof of natural fecundity. That the work also lops off forms at the edge of the composition seems quite incidental to its primary purpose, and in pictures such as this one it seems downright perverse to suggest that the dominant concern of the photographer lay with anything other than the tree itself. (That we may choose to respond to other qualities—the odd effect of the light on the white walls of the cabin, for example—is a different issue, of course.)

Photographs also may be ordered with a formal logic that permits perfectly traditional pictorial analysis. A harbor scene by Gustave Le Gray (Figure 14), for example, delights with its sequence of echoing shapes that unfold from the center of the image, a

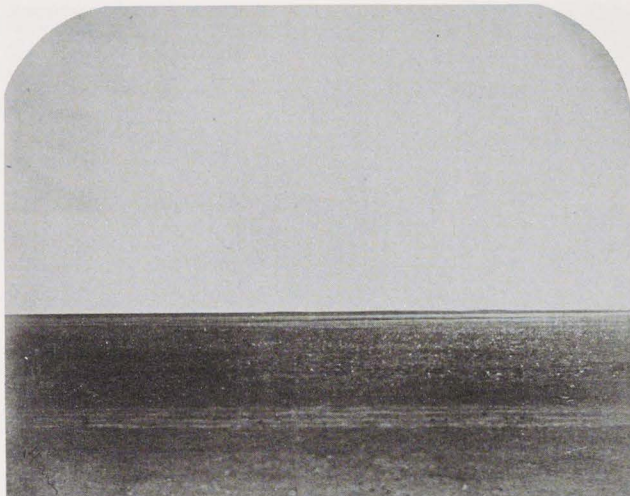


Figure 11 Humphrey Lloyd Hime. *The Prairie on the Bank of the Red River, Looking South*, 1858. Albumen print. The Notman Photographic Archives, McCord Museum, Montreal.



Figure 12 Maxime Du Camp. *Profile of the Great Sphinx, from the South*, 1849–1851. Salt print. Courtesy of the Gilman Paper Company Collection.

structure that visually disciplines the bustle and disorder of Honfleur's harbor into something stable and calm. Further, the formal principles used by Le Gray, as well as the compositional structure achieved, do not stray so far from the limits of art as he would have learned them as an art student, even if his means of arriving at them necessarily differed. Yet just as the extraordinary spectacle of the buckeye tree bursts out of Watkins's centered, balanced composition, so here too the fascination of the accumulated detail and, perhaps even more, the mundaneness of the ladder that fixes and focuses the composition, mark the work as different from the ordinary product of art school. Similarly, Charles Leander Weed's *River Scene in Nagasaki, Japan* (Figure 15) presents an alien landscape as if it were a familiar spot of British picturesque scenery. Entirely obedient to the strictures of writers such as the Reverend William Gilpin, the river winds back into space, the mountains and the trees close the horizon with gentle, misted curves, and the houses, rocks, and leaves repeat these windings and curvings. Nonetheless, the mammoth albumen print rivets our attention in a way quite unlike the usual watercolor or drawing of the picturesque landscape. We become hypnotized by the seemingly infinite vari-

ety of texture and shape, and slowly the restraint of the composition breaks down before the richness of the information.

Other photographs mask their formal order with the immediacy of the subject. Robert Macpherson's *Broken Arches in the Colosseum* (Figure 16), for example, pulls the complicated forms and surfaces into a tight and stable composition, while surprising us with the sudden, forceful presence of the ruins. The particulars inform the specialist and the Roman, both of whom can gather enough information about the far and the near to locate themselves precisely. For the ordinary viewer, though, Macpherson's photograph pleases with its description of the worn, overgrown stones and the repetition of shapes between foreground and background, light and dark. Most of all, we delight in the sense of being there, standing within the shadow of the bright Roman sun where the gladiators once waited for their appearance within the arena. Just as Weed's river scene appeals to the established category of the picturesque, so this view of classical ruins assumes that such sights thrill our imagination with their testament about the grandeur of a valued past. And for those who could not live in Rome, such a large, handsome photograph provided the next best thing.



Figure 13 Carleton E. Watkins. *California Buckeye*, 1860s. Albumen print. Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

Sale and Presentation

The original history of many of these images confirms the notion that the photographers kept a general audience firmly in mind. Most of the photographers already mentioned both exhibited and sold their work to the public. The photographs by Watkins, Weed, and Macpherson illustrated here, for example, were offered for sale through studios or dealers. The photograph by Maxime Du Camp of the Sphinx, on the other hand, did not appear in *Egypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie* (Paris, 1852), which used a neatly and far more conventionally ordered depiction of the Sphinx and the pyramids lined up along the horizon (Figure 17). Establishing these distinctions is important, since the original context of any work reveals something about its history and quite possibly, therefore, its making. In the case of photography, this general principle of research gains additional force, since the lack of an adequate history of the material increases the danger of confusing our response with that of the photographer. Further, photographs indicate less about their character than works in more traditional media; perceptible differences of form and style generally distinguish private sketches from paintings intended for public display, for example. Although study of the work of certain photographers

may reveal such distinctions—the presence of a signature, perhaps, or of an elaborate mount—one cannot expect them.

The original forms of presentation often provided an important context as well. Le Secq's view of the portal of Chartres, for instance, appeared as one plate in *Fragments d'architecture et sculpture de la cathédrale de Chartres d'après les clichés de M. Le Secq, artiste peintre*, a portfolio of photolithographs published in the late 1870s, some 25 years after Le Secq made the original paper negatives.⁶ Although highly individual and certainly unconventional in choice of viewpoints, the collection presents a beautiful and often very moving description of the Gothic cathedral as an architectural, sculptural, and also spiritual construction. Another plate from the same portfolio (Figure 18) perhaps suggests the extent of Le Secq's concern for conveying the quality of place. Just as he showed the doorway as we would experience it at the Cathedral, so he presents these columnar figures on the north porch emerging from the turn of the portal as we ourselves round the corner. Graceful and serene, they seem to transcend their gross stone nature as they look out at the temporal, material world that lies before them. We, their admirers and audience, can only hope to achieve similar beautitude.

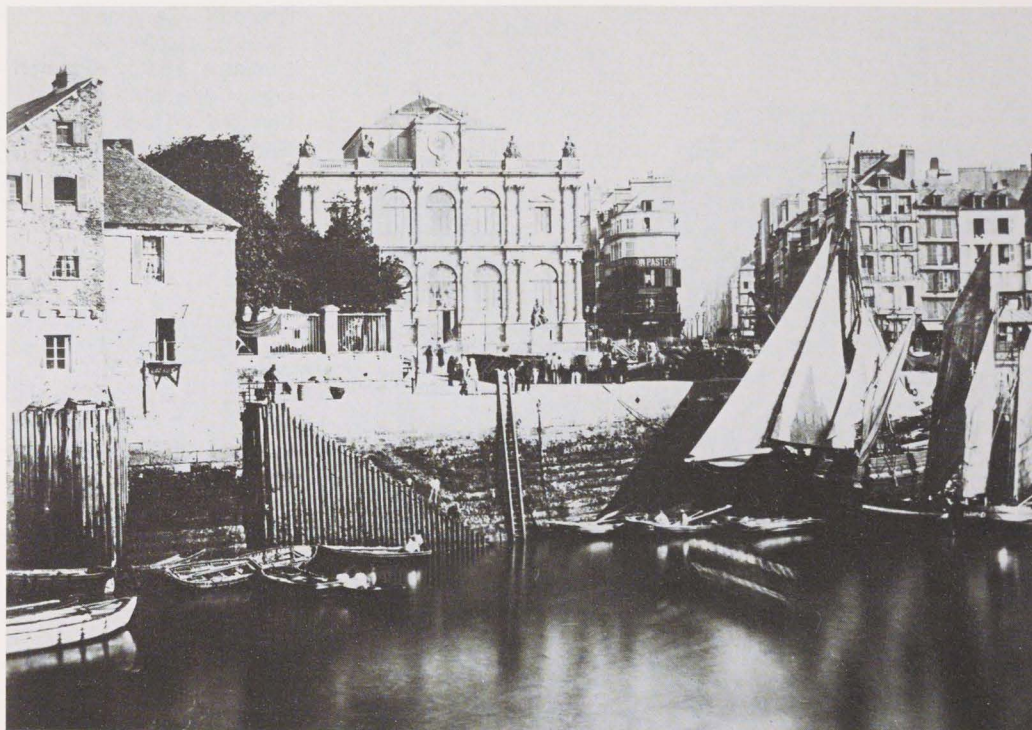


Figure 14 Gustave Le Gray. *Harbor, Honfleur*, ca. 1855. Albumen print. Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

Reconstruction of the original context also may turn an apparently exceptional picture into a perfectly explicable work. An example of such a transformation is William James Stillman's *Profile of the Eastern Facade, Showing the Curvature of the Stylobate* (Figure 19), plate 17 of *The Acropolis of Athens Illustrated Picturesquely and Architecturally in Photography* (London, 1870). Stillman's full caption explains the striking boldness of the detail, which illustrates a recently discovered and at that time still controversial aspect of the Parthenon's structure.⁷ The viewpoint Stillman chose offered the best position from which the deformity could be seen, despite the difficulty we have in making it out. (Ironically, the curvature cannot be photographed convincingly, although drawings and measurements describe it with clarity.) Once again, therefore, the photographer seems to have been concerned with the depiction of the world before the making of art, and the medium employed as something that provided transparency, the invisibility of the perfectly accurate transcription of the subject.

The Photographers' Analysis

Finally, perhaps, the clearest evidence of the period's understanding of the medium comes from the analysis offered by the most sophisticated of the photographers themselves, who reveal the period's aesthetic tastes and needs in their descriptions of the workings of the process. Unlike the ordinary critic or viewer, these photographers easily distinguished the formed image from its subject, recognizing the capacity of the photograph to express the vision of the maker as well as the physical facts of the thing represented. Revealingly, they did not discuss photography as something new and revolutionary. Rather, the medium seemed an efficient means of depiction that could be controlled with assurance and made to serve all manner of projects. Underlying all their discussions is the assumption that the most challenging task for the artist is to describe the world as fully and as compellingly as possible. The artistry of the image must not obscure the subject of the depiction. Charles Nègre, writing in the 1850s about his photographs of historical buildings in the south of France, eloquently expressed these ideas:

Figure 15 Charles Leander Weed. *River Scene in Nagasaki, Japan*, 1867. Albumen print. Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.



Photography is not a remote and barren art; it is, in fact, a rapid, sure, and uniform means of working, which is at the artist's service, and which can thus reproduce with mathematical precision the form and the effect of objects as well as that poetry which is the immediate result of all harmonious combinations. It is not only the varied and picturesque nature of the sites, the brightness of the sun, the purity of the atmosphere that I wished to show in my photographs; in addition to the beauties with which the Creator has endowed our climes and which stem from completely physical causes, I have searched for beauty of another order which also should be of importance to us because it relates to the study of art and history. Each generation has left a visible trail of its passage across the face of the earth—such as religious monuments, public or private—and it is through the study of these monuments that, today, we may form an exact idea of the various civilizations. [Borcoman 1976:6]

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Peter Galassi, of The Museum of Modern Art, New York, and J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, of New York University, both of whom contributed greatly to my thinking about the issues I discuss. I also would like to thank Richard Brilliant, of Columbia University, with whom I developed the understanding of the process of viewing photographs that I analyze here, and who generously criticized this article while it was still in draft form.



Figure 16 Robert Macpherson. *Broken Arches in the Colosseum*, before 1860. Albumen print. Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

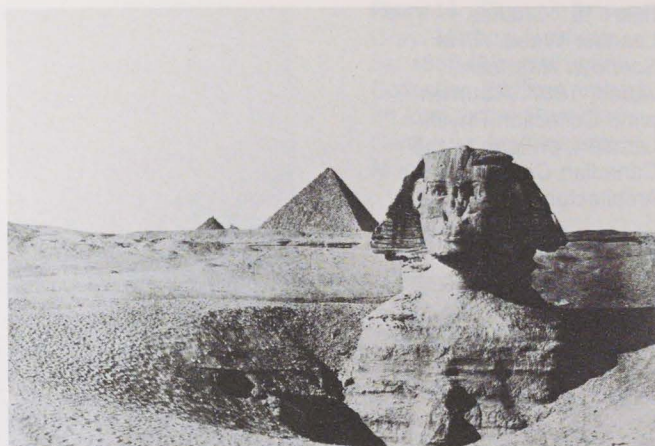


Figure 17 Maxime Du Camp. *Le Sphinx*. Salt print. (Plate 11, *Egypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie: Dessins photographiques recueillis pendant les années 1849, 1850 et 1851*, Paris, 1852). Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

Figure 18 Henri Le Secq. *Chartres Cathedral, Old Testament figures, North Porch*, 1852. Photolithograph. (Plate from *Fragments d'architecture et sculpture de la cathédrale de Chartres d'après les clichés de M. Le Secq, artiste peintre*, Paris, late 1870s, from negative made in 1852.) Collection Phyllis Lambert, on loan to the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

Notes

- 1 Quoted in the *Times Literary Supplement*, January 16, 1981, p. 57, from the journal Darwin kept during his first trip to the tropics.
- 2 I will discuss certain aspects of Turner's concern for involving the viewer in the depicted scene, particularly as it relates to his ideas about the nature of art and the artist, in my dissertation, "J. M. W. Turner's Reputation, 1800–1819," which is being written under the supervision of Allen Staley, Columbia University.
- 3 For a discussion of Ackermann's prints as well as the panorama itself, see Altick (1978:141–150).
- 4 Any survey of mid-nineteenth-century criticism indicates that Talbot selected his titles from commonly used terms of reference.
- 5 See also, for example, the description of Baron Gros's discovery of an antique statue he had overlooked on the Acropolis itself—"Le microscope a permis de relever ce document précieux, révélé par le daguerreotype, à sept cents lieues d'Athènes," *La Lumière* 1 (Feb. 9, 1851), p. 3.
- 6 Ten plates from the portfolio are reproduced in Buerger 1980.
- 7 There is still today disagreement about how to understand the systematic deviations of the Parthenon. See, for example, Pollitt 1973:74–78. The depiction of the Parthenon in the nineteenth century is to be the subject of an exhibition at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal.

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Figure 19 William James Stillman. *The Parthenon, Athens, Profile of the Eastern Facade (showing the curvature of the Stylobate)*, 1868–1869. Carbon print. (Plate 17, *The Acropolis of Athens Illustrated Picturesquely and Architecturally in Photography*, London, 1870.) The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Miss Frances Stillman.

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From the Hopi Snake Dance to "The Ten Commandments": Edward S. Curtis as Filmmaker

Mick Gidley

In the Land of the Head-Hunters, Edward S. Curtis's documentary feature film on the Kwakiutl of British Columbia, and the earliest movie of its kind, was released in 1914 (see Figure 1). The following year the poet Vachel Lindsay wrote of it in markedly laudatory terms in what probably constitutes the very first formulation of an aesthetic of the cinema, his book *The Art of the Moving Picture*:

The photoplay of the American Indian should in most instances be planned as a bronze in action. The tribes should not move so rapidly that the panther-like elasticity is lost in the riding, running, and scalping. On the other hand, the aborigines should be far from the temperateness of marble.

Mr. Edward S. Curtis, the super-photographer, has made an Ethnological collection of photographs of American Indians. This work of a lifetime, a supreme art achievement, shows the native as a figure in bronze. Mr. Curtis's photoplay, *The Land of the Head Hunters* [sic] (World Film Corporation), a romance of the Indians of the North-West, abounds in noble bronzes. [Lindsay 1922:114]¹

It may be that Lindsay's attention to the film was partly a result of his own residence in Spokane for a time, and his consequent extra knowledge of artistic activities in the Pacific Northwest. In any event, after this initial praise of Curtis's film as a sculpture-in-motion, it occasioned nothing more than a strange 50-year silence.

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The Work of Holm and Quimby

The exciting work of Bill Holm and George Quimby—first in reissuing the film in edited form as *In the Land of the War Canoes* (1973),² then in writing *Edward S. Curtis in the Land of the War Canoes: A Pioneer Cinematographer in the Pacific Northwest* (1980)—has done much to make amends for earlier neglect. Their book makes an extremely valuable contribution in at least five respects.

First, it gives a thorough account of how they discovered the film, came to edit it, and added a soundtrack, including details of the changes made.

Second, by using and reproducing a marvelous series of photographs which I traced for them, Holm and Quimby are able to offer a detailed reconstruction of the process by which the film was made; these photographs, by Curtis's cameraman and general business assistant, Edmund A. Schwinke, actually show such things as Curtis relaxing with his crew of actors, and George Hunt, the principal Kwakiutl informant, giving orders through a megaphone (see Figures 2 and 3).

Third, Holm's deep knowledge of the Kwakiutl and his collection of individual memories from among them enable Holm and Quimby to provide an assessment of the relationship between a people and their ethnological filmmakers which it would be impossible, I think, to supersede.

Fourth, the biographical accounts of Curtis and of various of his assistants—his brother Asahel Curtis, his nephew-in-law William W. Phillips, and William E. Myers, his chief ethnologist—are probably as accurate and as complete as reliance on the published record alone will allow. Notably effective use is made of city directories, *Who's Who in America*, and newspaper reports; moreover, through work on legal records, new information is provided on the Curtis family's early years in the Puget Sound region. The book provides a reliable outline both of Curtis and of the creation of his major work, *The North American Indian* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and Norwood, Connecticut, 1907–1930), which consisted of 20 volumes of illustrated text and 20 portfolios of photographs.

Finally, a firm connection is established between Curtis and the much-better-known endeavors of Robert Flaherty, creator of what has hitherto been considered the first full-length narrative documentary, *Nanook of the North* (1922). Here Holm and Quimby rely on the evidence of Frances Flaherty's diary, as transcribed by Jay Ruby of Temple University.

My purposes here are to outline some of Edward S. Curtis's film activities prior to his British Columbia film; to fill out the story of that movie somewhat by reference to previously unpublished materials; and to offer some preliminary findings—clues, really, as to possible avenues of future research—on Curtis's later activities in the film world.



Figure 1 Edward S. Curtis, ca. 1905. Photograph by Curtis's studio manager, Adolph F. Muhr.



Figure 2 Edmund August Schwinke: a previously unpublished self-portrait taken through a mirror in September 1912.

Curtis's Early Film Activity

Earle R. Forrest, the writer and photographer, recorded in his book *The Snake Dance of the Hopi Indians* (1961) that Curtis had made movie footage of the Oraibi snake dance as early as 1906:

I heard at the time that he had paid the Snake Society two hundred dollars for the privilege of filming motion pictures in the Snake Kiva, but I cannot vouch for this statement. In a recent letter, Robert E. Callahan, of Los Angeles, declared that making pictures in the Indian country in 1906 could hardly have been possible; that the process had not been adequately developed at that time. He should have told that to Mr. Curtis, who took those movies and the next winter toured eastern states showing them in theatres, once in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. [Forrest 1961:54–55]

Forrest is, in the main, a very reliable source on photographic matters; for example, long before I got corroboration of the fact for myself, he wrote to Ralph

Andrews, the photo-historian, to tell him that A. F. Muhr (later to be Curtis's Seattle studio manager) was the actual photographer of the 1898 Trans-Mississippi Omaha Exposition Indian pictures copyrighted by F. A. Rinehart (see Figure 2).³ Curtis himself, in the course of a speech delivered during the winter of 1906–1907, referred to his "photographic and other equipment" as if it normally included the following items: "several 6½ × 8½ cameras, a motion picture machine, phonograph for recording songs . . ." (Gidley 1978, emphasis added). Moreover, the 1906 summer fieldwork was largely devoted to various tribes of the Southwest.⁴

However, other evidence suggests that the motion picture work began even earlier. The *Portland Oregonian* of January 15, 1905, carried an item devoted to Curtis and one of his illustrated talks which had the following subheading: "New and Remarkable 'Motion Pictures' of Snake Dance and Other Mystic Ceremonies."⁵ This implies that the films were made during the summer of 1904. The *Seattle Times* for May 22, 1904, told the story of the first such motion picture:

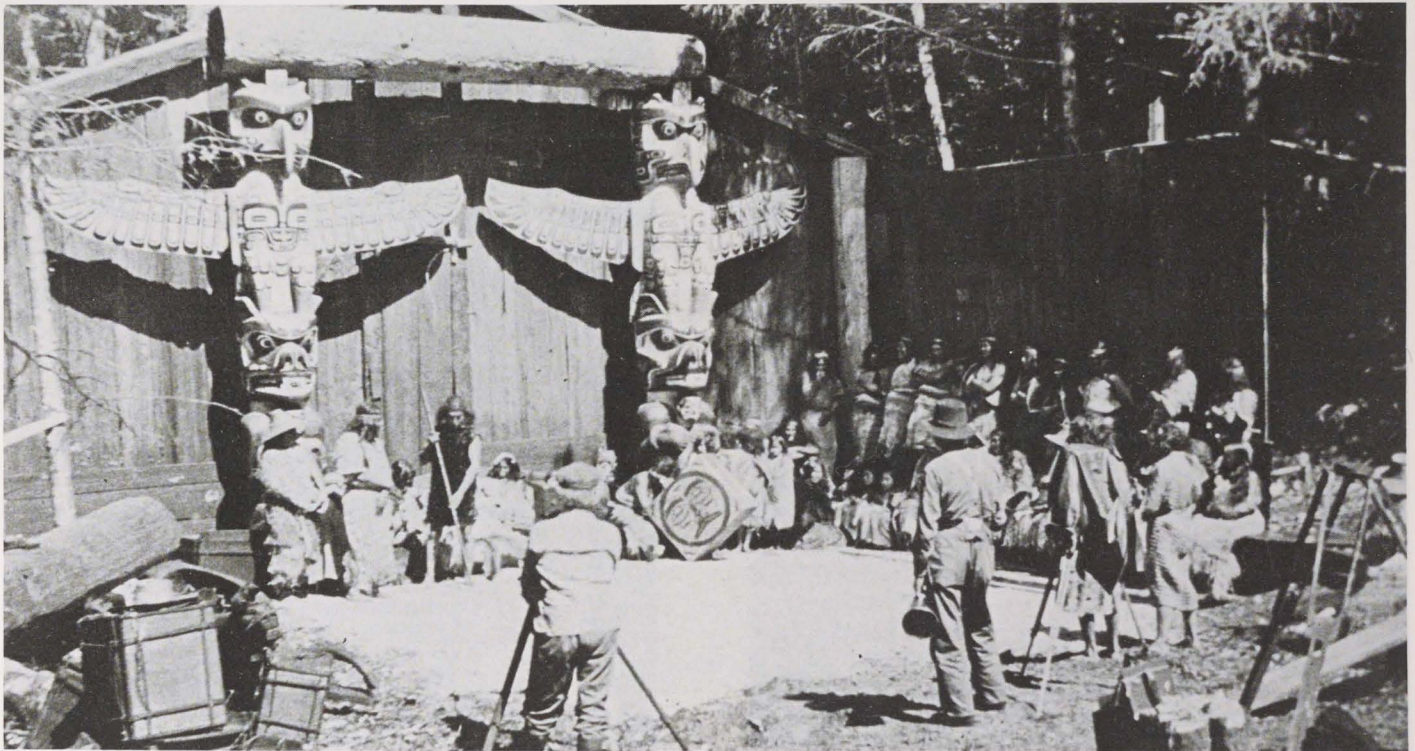


Figure 3 One of Schwinke's views of the filming process, showing Boas's and Curtis's Kwakiutl informant, George Hunt, megaphone in hand, in May 1914.

When Mr. Curtis was in Washington, D.C., recently, government scientists who have devoted a lifetime to the study of Indians, chanced to mention the great Yabachi dance. It seems this dance is hidden among the most sacred rites of the Navajos. It is a ceremony that lasts nine days, all told. . . . Smithsonian Institution men told Mr. Curtis that pictures of the dance . . . would be priceless from the standpoint of the Indian historian. But they also told him that the government had been working to get the views for twenty years without result, and . . . had reached the conclusion that it was beyond the pale of the possible. . . . Curtis started for the land of the Navajo. This trip he took with him a moving picture machine, something he had never carried before. To all questions he answered: "I am going to Arizona. I don't know how long I will be gone." And he went to Arizona, and he stayed just long enough to accomplish that which Uncle Sam, with all his power and authority, had tried for two decades to do and failed. . . . In addition to individual pictures of the masked dancers and the "fool," Curtis brought back a "moving picture" of the dance itself . . . something that thrown upon the screen will convey to the onlooker the exact and lifelike picture of a dance that, in its reality, had never been seen by light of day, or had been looked upon by the eyes of a white man. . . .⁶

In November 1904 the same newspaper recorded a similar Curtis coup in the case of the Hopi snake dance (see Figure 4). He had rented an Oraibi roof top; "it was from this roof," he said, "[that] I proposed to work the motion picture machine or kinetoscope. My other work I planned to do from the ground and get in as close and often as I could."⁷ Teri C. McLuhan's film, *The Shadow Catcher: Edward S. Curtis and the North American Indian* (1975), excerpts some of this early footage, including parts of the Yebichai and snake dance ceremonies.⁸

The other reason for favoring 1904 over 1906 as the motion picture year is that in 1906 Curtis himself actually danced in the snake ceremony. On September 26, 1906, he wrote from Seattle to report the season's activities to Frederick Webb Hodge, the editor of *The North American Indian*; "I was fortunate enough," his final paragraph reads, "to be able to go through the whole Snake ceremony participating . . . and in fact doing everything that a Snake man would do except the part in the public part of the Snake dance. The only reason I did not do that was that I feared newspaper publicity and missionary criticism."⁹ Unfortunately, over the years Curtis came to emphasize his participation in such events precisely to achieve publicity. The most extreme such instance, in that the story was obviously put together by a notably sensationalist reporter, appeared in the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* for November 8, 1908:

... "In the Hopi snake ceremony, which is intensely dramatic, I acted as a priest."

"Do you mean that you are a Pueblo priest in good standing?" asked the reporter.

"Yes," said Mr. Curtis, "and I am a priest in other nations. . . . The thing is to become a member of a secret order. That is the only way to learn their secrets. . . . Every ceremonial group you get into makes it easier to get into others. . . . My belonging to the Snake Order in Arizona helped me greatly when I tried to get into a ceremonial order in Alaska."

"You were a priest in Alaska, too?"

"Oh, yes." . . .

"But what would the Alaska Indians know about what was done so far off as Arizona?"

"Oh, when they saw my photographs of the snake dance and heard the phonograph records—"

"Do you mean to say that you photographed and phonographed these ceremonies while you were officiating as priest?"

"Yes. . . ." "Being a priest . . .," resumed Mr. Curtis, "is not an unmixing blessing. I remember once in the Navajo desert . . . when I had participated in [the Yebichai] ceremony—day and night, you understand, for nine days—and when I left them at dawn on the last day if any one had tried to pick up my trail he would have found it forty feet wide, though I was trying to walk a straight line."¹⁰

The likely basis for yarns like this is that in lectures Curtis would show his photographs and movies while very vividly describing his personal involvement with the people concerned. Indeed, it is possible that such a conflation of years occurred in Forrest's mind: he saw Curtis in the summer of 1906 and later assumed that the movies he saw in the winter of 1906–1907 were made then (see Figure 5).¹¹

The most elaborate lecture-performance of Curtis's career was the "musical" or "picture-opera" delivered in 1911 and 1912 in such places as Carnegie Hall in New York, the Belasco Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Metropolitan Theatre in Seattle, and numerous other venues around the nation. It included speech, lantern slides, music set by Henry F. Gilbert and performed by a small orchestra, and—most important for our present purposes—motion pictures.¹² Part of an unpublished typed script for one of these performances reads as follows:

At the close of the public ceremony . . . the priests race for the desert . . . the theory being that the snakes have been taken from the world's quarters, and must be returned there.

PICTURES

BLANK

MOTION PICTURE SNAKE DANCE

No 7 BLANK



Figure 4 Hopi snake priest, 1904. Photographed by Curtis.

The popular—if not commercial—success of these performances probably prompted Curtis to think in terms of the increasingly popular form, the motion picture itself. Another unpublished typed script has an interesting third section:

III. The Tribes of British Columbia, and their remarkable ceremonial life. Pictures show the general life and manners. "The Kominaka Dance," or dance of the skulls. The Whaler. The Whale Ceremony. Motion Picture, "Dance of the Mummy." "On the Shores of the North Pacific," a dissolving composition depicting life by the moonlit ocean. This series of pictures . . . contains some of the most remarkable ever taken of the secret rites of Indians.¹³

Since this same script contains references to the music composed especially for the 1911 tour, it is reasonable to suppose that Curtis had at that time already conceived part of what was to become *In the Land of the Head-Hunters* (see Figure 6); he had certainly made still photographs of Hamatsa ceremonies, the "Dance of the Mummy," and his narrative documentary was to include a motion picture version of what is called here "the dance of the skulls" (Rice 1976; cf. Holm and Quimby 1980:33).



Figure 5 A group of Sioux reenact, for Curtis's camera, in 1907, a war party of days gone by.

Figure 6 Goat, one of the Kwakiutl ceremonial figures filmed by Curtis for *In the Land of the Head-Hunters* in 1914. This is a previously unpublished photograph by Schwinke.



"In the Land of the Head-Hunters"

On March 28, 1912, Curtis wrote from his New York office to Frederick Webb Hodge; in the midst of discussion of various general matters, he imparted movie ideas to his tireless editor: "I am still doing some figuring on the possibility of a series of motion pictures, and am very much in hopes that it will materialize, as such an arrangement would materially strengthen the real cause [the fieldwork and publication of *The North American Indian*], as well as giving us some most valuable material in the motion pictures themselves."¹⁴ By May 2, as Jay Ruby discovered, Curtis had turned this vague notion into the grandiose scheme that he outlined to Charles Doolittle Walcott, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.¹⁵ Very soon thereafter Curtis's Continental Film Company, soon transformed into the Seattle Film Company, came into being, and the film itself, "produced" by the World Film Corporation, followed. Holm and Quimby's book tells the story of the making of the film with accuracy and verve (see Figure 6).¹⁶

The positive print was finally made from the negative in the middle of October, 1914,¹⁷ and Curtis sent complimentary tickets, on December 1, to the curator of ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History, Clark Wissler, and also included some for Herbert J. Spinden, another leading ethnologist of the time:

You will no doubt recall our discussion on Indian motion pictures. Following the plan I had in mind at that time, I have produced one dealing with the tribes of the British Columbia coast and it is to have its initial showing on December 7th. I am enclosing seats and hope you can join us.

I think you will find much in it of interest. The picture is a compromise between what I would like to make, if I was in a position to say—"the public be damned"—and what I think the public will support.

I am enclosing a couple of additional tickets which I would like to have you pass on to Mr. Spindon [sic] if he is in town.¹⁸

The only two contemporary reviews of the film I have been able to trace were both highly complimentary. The one by W. Stephen Bush in *The Moving Picture World* (reproduced very fully in Holm and Quimby) went so far as to call it "a gem of the motion picture art" which has "never been surpassed" (Holm and Quimby 1980:13–14). The other, an anonymous paean of praise which has not been quoted since its original appearance in the *Independent*, invokes ideas similar to the sculpture-in-motion view expressed by Vachel Lindsay:

It was thought to be a great educational advance when the American Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian set up groups of Indians modeled in wax and clothed in their everyday or gala costumes. But now a further step of equal importance has been taken by Edward S. Curtis. . . . The masks and costumes of the eagle and the bear which seemed merely grotesque when we saw them hung up in rows in the showcase at the museum become effective, even awe-inspiring, when seen on giant forms on the prow of a canoe filled with victorious warriors. . . . Mr. Curtis appreciates the effectiveness of the silhouette and the shadow and he is not afraid to point his camera in the face of the sun, contrary to the instructions of the Kodak primer. The scenes that elicited most applause from the audience were after all not those of Indian combats, but those of waves and clouds at sunset, the herd of sea lions leaping from the rocks and the fleet of canoes being driven swiftly forward. . . .¹⁹

The stirring quality of the film's photography and the educational impact of what Lindsay called its "noble bronzes" must have stayed in the minds of staff members at the American Museum of Natural History. In the early twenties—when, as we shall see, Curtis was engaged in another part of the film world—Pliny Earl Goddard, then curator of ethnology, approached Curtis in the hope of buying a print of *In the Land of the Head-Hunters*. Goddard wrote on January 25, 1923, and then again on March 9:

I have a strong feeling that your film ought to be preserved in some institution like our museum and besides we can make excellent use of it for our lecture work. You know how public institutions are. They are often out of money. This is the beginning of a year, however, and I am hopeful that some money might be found for such a purchase. If you will give your price I will do what I can toward securing it.

Curtis replied affirmatively from his Los Angeles studio at 668 South Rampart on March 1, 1923, adding, "The picture as now arranged is approximately 6,000 feet in length. As originally put out, while I had it on in New York, it was 10,000 feet. I question however the loss of much that was really vital in its trimming down. Few important incidents were left out; the trimming was largely in the form of shortening scenes."

This exchange marked the opening of protracted negotiation by correspondence between the two parties, and its elements are implicit here. The museum procrastinated, primarily because of lack of funds, and because Curtis's print of the film was physically in less than a fully satisfactory state. In a letter of January 17, 1924, a year after his initial inquiry, Goddard summarized the museum view:

You will think I have been very slow in regard to the Head-Hunter films. The Curator of the Department of Education last fall informed me that he could not purchase the film for his department. I decided, however, to keep it with the hope that some other arrangements could be made. Recently I ran it for Professor Franz Boas to see. He thought several sections of it should most certainly be preserved as a record. This had been my opinion, but since I had seen very little of Northwest Coast life I could not speak with authority. Our budget for 1924 is not complete but I am informed that it is not likely that there will be funds for the purchase of the film. When I consider a thing so essential as this, I never give it up for the lack of money.

What I really want is a negative of about 1,000 or 1,500 feet of the film covering in particular the dances and boat scenes. This negative, of course, could be made from a fresh positive, hardly from the positive that I have here.

Goddard went on to suggest a joint purchase with the collector George G. Heye, originator of the Museum of the American Indian (of which, interestingly enough, Frederick Webb Hodge had become director). Clearly, what Boas and Goddard wanted was the film's set pieces; they were not interested in that aspect of it which, from the viewpoint of film history, makes it unique in its own time, however absurd the story is in some respects. Moreover, it was precisely "dances," "boat scenes," games, and the like that Boas himself had the Kwakiutl perform "as a record" for his movie camera a few years later.²⁰ This indicates that Boas and Goddard, unlike Flaherty, did not understand the credibility that, paradoxically, fictional narrative—even "romance," if we agree with Vachel Lindsay—achieves. As Jay Ruby has said elsewhere, Curtis and Boas represent completely different approaches to anthropology.²¹

In 1924 the American Museum of Natural History was not the only party running out of money. On October 8, Curtis wired that because he was short of funds he would sell the "master print and negative" for \$1,500. A week later, on October 16, he sent the following letter:



Figure 7 A scene from Cecil B. De Mille's *The Ten Commandments*, 1923, as photographed by Curtis. (Courtesy California Historical Society.)

I shipped the film yesterday and included in the case first the negative which I think is complete. However, fearing that it might not be, I have sent the positive to you; also, I have included about a thousand feet of extra negative as it may contain some bits which may be of value to you, and I also included a few pieces of positive print which may not be included in the assembled print. I am enclosing a bill covering the matter; also, it is understood by this letter that I relinquish any claim to the copyright upon the film.

Unfortunately, I was unable to trace what happened to all this footage thereafter.²² In a postscript to his letter, Curtis asked for the return of any unwanted positive film, but there is no record of any such transaction. Thus, it may or may not be the case that the film George Quimby received at the Field Museum in 1947 was a part (or the whole) of the footage that Curtis sold in 1924.

Curtis's Later Filmmaking

Gifford Pinchot, a close associate of Theodore Roosevelt for many years, a keen outdoorsman, head of the U.S. Forest Service, and later governor of Pennsylvania, was acquainted with Curtis from at least the time of their participation in the Harriman Alaska Expedition of 1899. He encouraged Curtis, subscribed to *The North American Indian*, and even lent him money. Curtis would often write to subscribers on the progress of the project and associated activities. In this way he came to tell Pinchot of his movie activities, including the filming of seal and whale hunting for *In the Land of the Head-Hunters*.²³

One letter, of June 27, 1915, written mainly to thank Pinchot for a hefty loan, ends with these words: "I have just completed my motion picture of the Yosemite, and feel delighted with it. It is a wonderful region, and I was there at the season of the year when the waterfalls were at their best." This motion picture must be the same one to which Curtis referred in a couple of letters to Edmund Schwinke that are reprinted in Holm and Quimby. He mentioned the possibility of "a month's motion picture work and scenic stuff" in February which, by May, had become a "picture tour of the beauty spots of America" with plans for "fifty-two weeks of a scenic picture a week. The stills are going to Leslie's, and the motion pictures going through motion picture channels"; they were to start at the Grand Canyon, then proceed to Yosemite and Yellowstone.²⁴ As we know from the account by Holm and Quimby, Schwinke chose not to participate in this venture, but according to the files of Pinchot's correspondence and certain other letters, at least some such films were made.

On April 22, Curtis asked his old friend Professor Edmond S. Meany of the History Department, University of Washington, for permission to join the Mountaineers, a Northwest climbing club, on its ascent of Mount Rainier that summer, saying that he would be on an "active tour of the United States," working both in "regular photographs and motion photography." From other correspondence in the Meany files, notably a copy of a letter to Curtis from J. H. Weer, chairman of the Mountaineers' Outings Committee, it is clear that Curtis was expected to visit the Mount Rainier National Park during August in the company of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior, Stephen T. Mather.²⁵

The following February, on the 22d, Curtis wrote to Pinchot, partly to explain a delay in his loan repayment and partly to boast that the Secretary of the Interior had asked him "to go out to the Yellowstone and make a series of motion pictures of the animals." "They tell me," he added, "that there is an unusually large number down in the valley where they are being fed to some extent, and I should be able to get some

splendid things." By the spring of 1916 the work was probably complete, for Curtis invited Pinchot to a private view of what he termed, in his letter of April 12, "my park and Indian motion pictures."

Many years later Curtis provided the University of Washington Library with a copy of a letter from Herbert A. Smith (a former editor of *The Forester*, the journal of the U.S. Forest Service) in which he had asked Curtis to combine his work for *Leslie's* with securing pictures suitable for Forest Service use as "lantern slide illustrations, and for transparencies, bromides, etc." In an accompanying note, Curtis added a gloss to the effect that he had selected Yosemite as the best location (and here he was probably conflating two different commissions, since Yosemite was not administered by the Forest Service), that he was "furnished an army mule for [his] camera equipment," that "the trip through the high mountains" took "several weeks," but that he "and his helper" had "made enough motion picture footage for a [sic] evening program and enough still pictures to fill several magazines."²⁶

I have been unable to locate any record of a public showing of these scenic films or, indeed, any publication of the still photographs. It should be said, however, that the library of the man who acted as patron to *The North American Indian*, the J. Pierpont Morgan Library in New York City, does possess a series of Curtis transparencies that includes views of the Grand Canyon and other beauty spots, mule trains, and what might well be a party of VIPs.²⁷ Of the film footage there seems to be no trace at all.

In the years after 1916 it is unlikely that Curtis made any films of his own. For one thing, Bureau of Indian Affairs policy was opposed to the kind of ethnographic films Curtis was interested in. The *Annual Report of the Commissioner for Indian Affairs* for 1917 carries a note to the effect that the increasing number of requests for Indians to appear in motion pictures was habitually refused unless Indians were to feature in present-day scenes, not "'made-up' exhibitions of their old time customs and dances" (U.S. Government 1918:40). In any case, as Holm and Quimby's *Edward S. Curtis in the Land of the War Canoes* shows, *In the Land of the Head-Hunters* had proved a financial failure, and Curtis simply did not have the money for further film ventures of its kind. In fact, in the same letter in which he first told Pliny Earl Goddard that he would be willing to part with his Kwakiutl movie, he added that he had enjoyed a very satisfactory summer of fieldwork in California and southern Oregon the previous year. "I found far more interesting material for pictures than I had expected," he said, "and my only regret is that I could not [give] more time to the trip.

Unfortunately I did not have a motion picture camera with me as funds were not available for any work along that line." In the ethnological field—if we except the 16-mm footage of Curtis's 1927 Alaska trip with his daughter Beth Curtis Magnuson, which appears in Teri McLuhan's *The Shadow Catcher*—there were never again funds for work "along that line."

It is, therefore, especially ironic that Curtis was simultaneously deeply involved in other people's productions for Hollywood. "I am now working," he informed Goddard on May 15, 1923, "on the picturization of the 'Ten Commandments' and aside from breaking the one which mentions the fact that we should keep the Sabbath holy, I am working about eighteen hours a day, both on said Sabbath and on the days between" (see Figure 7).

The Ten Commandments (1923), directed by Cecil B. De Mille, was one of the great epics of the silent cinema. As early as 1962, Ralph Andrews's *Curtis' Western Indians* included mention of Curtis's work as a "stills photographer" on the film (p. 56), and this is very likely, since certain ones of such images survive.²⁸ Interestingly, De Mille himself, in his 1959 *Autobiography*, listed Curtis as "the second cameraman" (p. 252), and more recently film historians have also begun to record his definite employment as a movie camera operator (Higham 1973:115).

In fact, Curtis's Hollywood connections, despite the apparent absence of any screen credits at all, would repay further investigation. For instance, after his daughter Beth moved the Curtis Studio from Seattle to Los Angeles when her parents' marriage broke up just after the First World War, many of the Studio's clients for portraits were movie people, such as character actor Hobart Bosworth and screen writer John Monk Saunders. Curtis knew De Mille and D. W. Griffiths personally and was very friendly, apparently, with William S. Hart, the cowboy star, and Gene Stratton-Porter, the popular novelist, nature writer, photographer, and writer-producer for the movies.²⁹ In the 1924 and 1926 editions of *Who's Who in America* Curtis listed the Screen Writers' Club among the societies to which he belonged and at least once, in 1922, he gave a friend knowing advice about writing for the cinema.³⁰ He was associated with De Mille's *Adam's Rib* (1923) and probably the Tarzan films, most likely the serial begun in 1921 with Elmo Lincoln in the title role.³¹

The last film with which Curtis seems to have had a connection was a western, *The Plainsman*, made in 1936 with Gary Cooper as the male lead. With an undated letter to his friend Olive Daniels, Curtis sent a photograph, now lost; the note reads, "This picture I did while working on De Milles [sic] *The Plainsman*. . . ."³² Along with Cooper, a fictionalized Buffalo

Bill, and an invented General Custer, the film also featured several hundred Sioux and Cheyenne Indians who were drafted in from the Rosebud reservation. It would be interesting to know whether any of them recognized the man who, some thirty years before, in 1907, had urged numbers of their peoples to undertake a very different type of reconstruction of war and raiding parties, to follow the course of the same Little Big Horn battle, and to sit for portraits of themselves as representatives of the North American Indian for *The North American Indian*.³³

Notes

- 1 I first drew attention to this item in the bibliographical notes to my anthology (Gidley 1976:190).
- 2 The film is available from the University of Washington Press, Seattle.
- 3 Forrest to Andrews, October 16, 1963, Box 2, Andrews Papers, Manuscripts Division, University of Washington Libraries. Other evidence on Muhr appears in Bigart and Woodcock 1979:24–37, and Holm and Quimby 1980:23–25.
- 4 Gidley 1978, passim; see also the 1913 report of the fieldwork in D. C. Ewing, "The North American Indian in Forty Volumes," *Art in America*, 60 (July–August 1972), pp. 84–88.
- 5 Quoted in full in one of the publicity brochures issued by The North American Indian, Inc., *The North American Indian: Extracts from Reviews of the Book, and Comments on the Work of US Author, Edward S. Curtis*, n.d. Collection of the author.
- 6 "Seattle Man's Triumph," *Seattle Times*, Magazine Section, Sunday, May 22, 1904; in Biography-Curtis file, Northwest Collection, University of Washington Libraries.
- 7 "Sacred Rites of the Mokis and Navajoes," *Seattle Times*, Magazine Section, Sunday, November 27, 1904; in Biography-Curtis file, Northwest Collection, University of Washington Libraries. Interestingly, the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division contains several detailed sequences of Curtis's still photographs of these ceremonies.
- 8 *The Shadow Catcher* is available from Phoenix Films, New York, and from a number of rental agencies.
- 9 Curtis to Hodge, September 26, 1906, Hodge Papers, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles. I am grateful to Ruth M. Christensen for aiding my research in these papers. Cf. the more fanciful account that follows and the one written many years later which is quoted very fully in Graybill and Boesen 1976:78–79.
- 10 "Seattle Man's Book in London"; quoted in full in *The North American Indian* (note 5, above).
- 11 Katherine Bartlett of the Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, kindly informed me that she thinks this is probably what happened because in Forrest's photo records, etc., there is no record of a visit to Hopi land in 1904, but there is for 1906, though there are no known Forrest pictures of Curtis in the Museum's holdings.
- 12 The fullest insight into the musicale is provided by a simulated newspaper publicity brochure, presumably issued in 1912, entitled *E. S. Curtis and His Indian Picture-Opera "A Vanishing Race" Achieve Triumph*. Collection of the author.
- 13 Both these scripts are in the collection of Karl Kernberger. I am grateful to Mr. Kernberger for granting me access to them.
- 14 Curtis to Hodge, March 28, 1912, Hodge Papers, Southwest Museum, Los Angeles.
- 15 Curtis to Walcott, May 2, 1912, Smithsonian Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Quoted in full in Holm and Quimby 1980:32–33.
- 16 It is worth adding that the financing of the project must always have been somewhat more risky than Holm and Quimby indicate. For example, on February 17, 1913, Curtis wrote to Edgar L. Hewett, then serving as Director of Exhibits for the 1915 Panama Exposition in San Diego, suggesting that the exposition provide him with a loan to complete his film in exchange for using it as publicity for the exposition. Interestingly, when Curtis wrote this letter he anticipated completing the film by October 1, 1913 and had been delayed thus far mainly by the months "required to get the costumes together and make those which cannot be had"; he also said he would be hiring a "first class director of motion pictures" for the film. Curtis to Hewett, February 17, 1913, Hewett Papers, Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fé.
- 17 See Curtis to C. F. Newcombe, October 12, 1914, Newcombe Collection, Archives of British Columbia, Victoria.
- 18 Curtis to Clark Wissler, December 1, 1914, File 110, Anthropology Department Archives, American Museum of Natural History, New York. All subsequent American Museum letters are from this file. I am grateful to Belinda Kaye for granting me access to it.

- 19 "Ethnology in Action," *Independent*, January 11, 1915, p. 72.
- 20 Boas's 1930 Kwakiutl film footage, with printed notes by Bill Holm, is available from the University of Washington Press.
- 21 Ruby's comments appear on p. 13 of the transcript of the "Odyssey" television program devoted to Franz Boas (Boston: Public Broadcasting Associates, 1980); I am grateful to Robert Bieder for drawing my attention to this transcript.
- 22 In August 1980 Barbara Conklin of the Anthropology Department and Pamela Haas of the Photographic Collection assured me that the film no longer resides at the American Museum; I am grateful for their efforts on my behalf.
- 23 Curtis to Pinchot, August 5, 1914, Gifford Pinchot Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. All subsequent Pinchot letters are from this collection. If one is to believe this letter, and there is no reason not to, Curtis *did* go whale killing and seal hunting in earnest; cf. doubts expressed in Holm and Quimby 1980:67–69. At the same time, the letter to Pinchot does not include details of any injuries to Curtis from a whale or of a night spent stranded on a partly submerged island, stories Curtis was to tell later (see, e.g., Graybill and Boesen, 1976:67–70).
- 24 Curtis to Schwinke, February 15, 1915, and May 4, 1915, Schwinke Papers, Burke Museum Archives, University of Washington, Seattle; quoted very fully in Holm and Quimby 1980:108.
- 25 Curtis to Meany, April 22, 1915; J. H. Weer to Meany, June 23, 1915; and copy of Weer to Curtis, July 27, 1915, Meany Papers, University Archives, Records Center, University of Washington Libraries. I am grateful to Gary T. Lundell for his help in researching the Meany Papers.
- 26 Copy of Smith to Curtis, April 13, 1915, with letter by Curtis to Ronald Todd, July 8 [c. 1948], E. S. Curtis Vertical File, Manuscript Division, University of Washington Libraries. I would like to thank Richard Berner for aiding my research.
- 27 I am grateful to Thomas V. Lange of the Morgan Library for showing me these uncatalogued pictures.
- 28 The California Historical Society, San Francisco, has a number of these stills.
- 29 This information was kindly supplied by Curtis's family in interviews with the author: Harold P. Curtis (January 1977); Florence Curtis Graybill (December 1976 and August 1978); Manfred E. Magnuson (August 1978).
- 30 Curtis to Meany, April 5, 1922, Meany Papers, University Archives, Records Center, University of Washington Libraries.
- 31 See Brownlow 1978:338–344. His brief survey relies primarily on *The Shadow Catcher* and interviews with Teri McLuhan. There is an Elmo Lincoln Tarzan still reproduced in a sales catalogue published by the Los Angeles photographic dealers, the G. Ray Hawkins Gallery: *Edward S. Curtis Photographs* (1976), illustration to item 20.
- 32 I am grateful to the late Robert Hitchman for granting me access to this letter.
- 33 See the various works on De Mille cited in the references; cf. Meany:1908.

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Reviews and Discussion

Jean-Luc Godard: The Logic of Images— Two Reviews

Colin MacCabe. *Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics.* With Laura Mulvey ("Images of Woman, Images of Sexuality") and Mick Eaton ("Technology"). Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981. 175 pp. \$22.50 (cloth), \$9.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Ian Duncan
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The year 1968, to many but a transient phenomenon, was for Godard a genuine turning point in his cinematic practice. Godard's work around and subsequent to 1968, up to *Sauve Qui Peut* (*La Vie*) (in progress when MacCabe's book was written and since exhibited at Cannes), is the focus of this book.

Whatever else it might be, *Sauve Qui Peut* marks something of a return for Godard—to the commercially recognizable (if not commercial) cinema, to the use of stars, to large-scale public exposure. Much of the work discussed here is unfamiliar in Britain or America: the hard-line Maoist films made with the Dziga-Vertov cooperative (1968–1970), the collaborations with Jean-Pierre Gorin (1972), and the Sonimage work for film and television with Anne-Marie Miéville (1974–1980). MacCabe explicates these projects in terms of specific political concerns, and re-views earlier films in the light of these concerns; what is surprising is the emergence, unexpected and *malgré lui* no doubt, of Godard's humanistic quest for private truth and integrity, through and beyond the political engagement.

Godard's 1968 withdrawal from conventional structures of production/distribution is shown as a wider inquiry into the possibilities of "making films *politically*" (p. 19). Whatever one might feel about the result, MacCabe is certainly right to locate Godard's *récherche* at the center of current concern and debate as to the status and operations of mass media forms; it is with the process, rather than the achievement, that our interest is engaged. The commercial cinema audience is (somewhat simplistically) posited as reduced, economically de-signified, from its specific socioeconomic situations/relations, to the lowest consumer denominator of "willingness to surrender a certain sum of money" (p. 58), which determines a necessary coincidence of sound and image, with the former dominant (correct, defining the image) in documentary, the latter dominant (defining the sound-

track) in fiction. It is not enough to control the means of production, establish alternative means of distribution; renewal must come within the sound-image relation, deconstructing its received "unity." MacCabe demonstrates how Godard's search for redefinitions has involved rigorous attention to every level of production: the images and sounds themselves (a "correct" analytical soundtrack in tension with fragmented, "open" images, as in *British Sounds*, 1969), the relations and status of those working on the film (stars and fledgling actors in *Tout Va Bien*, "amateurs" and "experts" in the TV series "Six Fois Deux"), the technologies involved. Thus Godard has been concerned with laying bare the money determinisms in the cinematic process, by deconstructing our ways of seeing: a structuralist subjectivism is already figured in the pre-1968 work, where objects are not ontologically absolute but placed in a contextual and specific set of relations; hence the crucial role of advertising in films such as *Une Femme Mariée* (1964), where the images are re-located in terms of their production and consumption.

In this context, Godard's montage is seen as a refusal to fix unity, although the example given (the *Hor-nuss* game from *Sauve Qui Peut*) reveals this as a question of degree: "the heterogeneity of field" (p. 44) operates within a limited or directed aleatorism, like that practiced by certain composers, rather than a Cage-like "random camera": Godard asserts that reality is not "out there" to be captured by the camera, but is constructed by the production-consumption process, the technology itself.

The political film requires a different relation to its audience, according to the terms posited above:

it must be a participant in the reality that it attempts to articulate rather than presenting itself as an observer that can show us the truth of any situation. Insofar as politics is a complex set of struggles ranging from the economic to the ideological, it is impossible simply to represent it to people who, in that very relation, find themselves placed outside those struggles; rather it must address specific audiences in specific situations. [p. 54]

This meant new methods of work for Godard, within the cooperative context of the Dziga-Vertov group. The addressing of a *politically* specific audience (preaching to the converted) meant, however, that the political became over-determinant: all practices are "defined in terms of the political." We, outside the post-1968 Maoist audience for these films, may not accept the soundtrack's "voice of truth" (alarmingly anti-feminist, in the example from *Vent d'Est* cited on pp. 60–61) as the higher unifier into which the image and all other voices, however differentiated, monologically resolve. This, according to MacCabe, is what makes these films so "oddly formalistic" (p. 63). The Maoist discourse of *Lotte in Italia* (1970), with its

emphasis on the extension of the political to every field, "conceptualizing subjectivity in terms of class," indicated a movement toward a more Althusserian position: that there is no emancipation or "zero degree" from the ideological instance as "false consciousness," no point of transparency or truth: only the analysis of particular ideological struggles, specific practices within the system they constitute. This formulation, too, rests on the assumption of a standpoint—the political—which Godard was to understand increasingly as meaning a reductive comprehension of those specific practices. Thus, Godard's *Sonimage* films move away from politically closed forms to pose their political concerns in the terms of some of these specific practices, of which sexuality receives detailed discussion.

Many of Godard's weaknesses and contradictions are revealed in his treatment of women. Even his Dziga-Vertov tracts show a repressive masculine equation of woman with sexuality, an uneasy complicity with the object of his analysis: a formal subversion/demystification becomes very difficult and at best ambiguous with the choice of so culturally loaded an image as the nude female figure, as McCabe and Mulvey are scrupulous to point out, "ignoring the complex social determination of women's position in favour of an image of woman outside any social or economic context" (p. 87). On one level displaced, the equation is on another re-asserted. McCabe and Mulvey's discussion is particularly alert here. *Numéro Deux* (1975), as Godard's "most thorough and self-conscious attempt to depict the problem of sexuality under capitalism," extends the parameters of the sexual problematic to describe frustration, imprisonment, and violence pervading the whole nuclear family unit, and poses again the question of how to "effect a conscious and political interaction between the cultural forms of representation on one hand and economic and social relations on the other" (p. 100). To a large extent, the contradictions remain. Godard is notably evasive (and inaccurate) in the interview at the end of this chapter: "my originality is that I don't make any distinction between man and woman. . . . I don't think about whether it should be a man or woman" (p. 102).

Glossing over the alternately simplistic and sophisticated maxims of *Sonimage*—"Before appointing a minister of posts, perhaps we should ask if one needs or wants to write a letter, and to whom and why (to do what) and against what? . . . *Sonimage* is a manufacturer of light in the sense of throwing light on a situation to see it clearly or, on the contrary, to draw the veil" (p. 140)—McCabe points out that Godard's evolving communications theory (it appears he is now disenchanted with television, despite its centrality to his concerns) tends toward a reductive, nihilistic negation of the effectiveness of any political action. With resolution to a "correct" soundtrack and destructive

violence (ransacking a supermarket) at the end of *Tout Va Bien*, Godard's problems with the articulation of a successful political form heralded the failure of the European far left in the 1970s and its legacy of terrorism; the formula to begin the class struggle "everywhere at once" is "morally powerful but politically vacuous" (p. 71). Godard's subsequent directions are defined in ambiguous terms by McCabe: the recent films reintroduce ethical concerns "in a form, intellectually familiar from Nietzsche, but more readily available in a variety of popular radical traditions, of an emphasis on confronting one's own determinisms in an encounter for which no else can prepare you" (pp. 74–75). The vagueness and confusion over pronouns (however rhetorically effective) indicate, perhaps, unwillingness to describe Godard's progress in humanistic terms. It is toward solitude, private and individual resolutions, that Godard's more recent theory and practice seem to be going: a communications model based on ignorance and blockage as to "message," a privileging of single moments of communication (epiphanies? McCabe brings Joyce in elsewhere) when "everywhere changes places" when the individual "loses itself," somewhat obscurely, "in the effort of showing an image to someone else" (p. 153), over and above social forms of communication, which are stereotyped, repetitive, and hence able to communicate nothing. With the refusal of social meaning, and thus possibilities of communal action, repetition maintains us in a hermetic isolation. "To participate in the established forms . . . is to lose what is specific to your experience and situation" (p. 154). Godard's poetics of emargination assume the terms of an elitist withdrawal, a legacy of the romanticism McCabe elsewhere identifies.

Nor does McCabe hesitate to open up the contradictions here: Godard's alternative cinema, given the improbability of any realization of the production-distribution system he proposes, only works and engages our interest insofar as it is Godard's: a "star" himself, a name "constructed by traditional relations of production and consumption" (p. 147) that makes *Sonimage* possible. And McCabe suggests that it is this commitment to Godard that makes us willing to forego "the necessary pleasures and struggles of stereotype" and risk boredom. The book was written, one feels, on the defensive (the witty opening sequence), as much to investigate McCabe's own doubts as to refute the usual philistine dismissals: there is insecurity at the height of this debate in the dose of adjectives suddenly given to the *France/tour/detour*. . . project (1978): "astounding complexity," "an image of quite extraordinary force," "an extraordinary zoom shot," "an extraordinary montage" (pp. 149–151).

MacCabe is bold to bring up the issue of audience alienation and it is not a trivial one. The problem stands unresolved, as perhaps it must. On this point, as most others, Godard himself, in the interview extracts appended to each chapter, is amusingly, exasperatingly evasive, retreating from MacCabe's sharp questions into specious analogies. Godard (with some slyness, one feels) poses as the ingenuous, misunderstood, misunderstanding, macho inarticulate, just "looking for the truth"—perhaps.

MacCabe's descriptions of theoretical issues and specific films are highly readable (so much for recent terrified sneers about the necessary "obscurity" and "jargon" of this kind of Marxist-structuralist analysis); the accounts of "polyphonic" narrative forms and camera strategies, and (with Mulvey) women, are particularly stimulating. We are provided with a provocative and on the whole convincing account of Godard's recent directions, indispensable for anyone interested not just in the specific topic, but in the wider issue of political engagement and fictional/media forms.

Alfred Guzzetti. *Two or Three Things I Know about Her: Analysis of a Film by Godard.* Harvard Film Studies. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981. 366 + x pp. \$27.50.

Reviewed by John Paul Russo
University of Miami

And anyway, what is an object?
—Godard

In their *Literary Criticism: A Short History*, William Wimsatt and Cleanth Brooks described the method of New Criticism in terms of slowing down a film, stopping it from time to time, and reading it frame by frame. The danger lay in losing sense of the work as a whole, the difficulty in deciding when and where to limit the interpretation of polyvalent symbols or allusive references. But the advantage was in giving the interpreter time to allow the image to yield up its meaning, its relation to its narrator, its ambiguity, antithetical concepts, paradoxical resolutions, and the patterns of its organicity. Great poetry should be able to stand the test of close analysis. Or rather, on this view, poetry is great to the degree that it could stand the test of this particular method of analysis.

What is true of poetry is also true of film. Alfred Guzzetti has approached Jean-Luc Godard's *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* in a broadly New Crit-

ical spirit.¹ He respects the organicity of the work. He treats the film as film and not another thing, not an essay of Marxist analysis, not a play on the screen, not a pattern of images and sounds, but all together combined in their effect on the viewer. He comes to terms with "the persona of the director" himself, a voice-over commentator on (and critic of) his film as well as its author. The analysis of this 85-minute color film extends to the French text, sound, music, blocking, and cutting, and to the 285 shots (in black and white), with reference to many more. Godard's French text, Guzzetti's own translation, a description of sound effects, bar references to two Beethoven quartets, and the shots are printed on the left, with running commentary on the facing page. The book is handsomely published, as well it should be: this study is a landmark in the history of film criticism.

Guzzetti calls his theoretical procedure "empirical, since it begins from an organization of the seen and the heard" (p. 5). To one critic who argued that this method masked "the value judgment I deliver explicitly in this introduction" (that the film is "one of the masterpieces of the sound cinema," p. 4), Guzzetti replies by asserting his freedom to make value judgments. "It is true that, in interpreting what the film signifies at each moment, I accede to its terms in some very fundamental way and thus forgo a vantage point from which to articulate a more far-reaching criticism." By "far-reaching," one supposes Guzzetti means political or philosophical. On the other hand, he does not hesitate "to venture value judgments about many portions" of this and other films by Godard throughout the running commentary.

On what grounds are these value judgments made? "The organization of the seen and the heard" is Godard's organization, the *object*. Guzzetti's responses to the object are his original facts; he does not claim a dialectical relationship to it. Instead, he carries on his analysis most frequently in terms of two well-known questions: (1) What did the artist set out to achieve? and (2) How well did he achieve it? A filmmaker himself, Guzzetti explores all aspects of the media; a professor of visual studies and a scholar of literature and philosophy, he unpacks the corded bales of philosophy, politics, literature, and allusion to other films. But the final judgment is chiefly an aesthetic one. Thus, Guzzetti criticizes Sequence 15 as "thin and tedious": it is 14 minutes long (longest of the film's 18 sequences) with conversations on language, meaning, sex, utopia, communism, and a parody of Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*. But he praises Sequence 12 for its "complexity and beauty" (p. 4), "one of the richest and most complex segments" (p. 123)—an important clue: beauty arising through a unified complex is a New Critical tenet. "The service station scene is, in my view, one of the richest and most beautiful in the cinema. Its every detail of imagery,

phrase, and construction is brilliantly imagined and executed. It not only succeeds in mobilizing, elaborating, and advancing the entire complex of events and ideas developed throughout the first half of the film, but does so with precision, economy, and inventiveness" (p. 226). (Precision and economy are also New Critical values.) Another writer, he admits, might have found that Sequence 12 is an "artist's over-indulgent theatricalization of his problems" or that Sequence 15 impresses as an admirable "attempt at self-criticism." But Guzzetti bases his value judgments largely on aesthetic complexity, on the success to which the artist combines the realms of reference and adjusts them within a medium: on *aesthetic realization*.

There is of course a third question on which one bases value judgments: Is the work, finally, any good? Here Guzzetti links beauty with philosophic depth: "the film is the most complex and profound work of the most interesting and inventive filmmaker of our time" (p. 4).

What is happening here is an exhaustive empirical critique of an artist who insists on a dialectical one. Godard makes a Brechtian effort at including himself and his audience within the film, although this effort is not without some ironic undercutting. Guzzetti, however, resists inclusion. He cannot be "hypocrite lecteur [voyeur], mon semblable, mon frère," the film's Baudelairean refrain. Godard's most dazzling forays into the dialectical relationship of subject and object call forth an impressive interpretation of that presentation on its own empirical terms. The result is conflict and excitement. In the end, the only dialectic is one of intelligence.

In one scene, for example, the dialectical theme arises in the midst of Juliette's attempt to attract a potential client in a cafe. As Guzzetti points out, Godard's voice-over commentary is dramatized by his whispering, as if he were present and unwilling to disturb the players or the characters they play. Pressed in upon himself, recoiling from his observations, the tormented Godard reaches his most metaphysical speculation as the camera settles on the swirling surface of coffee:

Maybe an object is what permits us to relink . . . [Silence]
 . . . to pass from one subject to the other, therefore to
 live in society,

(The young man looks at Juliette. She returns his gaze.)
 to be together. But then,

(He looks down again.)
 since social relationships are always ambiguous,
 since my thought divides as much as it unites, since
 my speech brings nearer through that which it ex-
 presses and isolates through that about which it is
 silent,

(He looks at her again, then back down. She returns his
 gaze, then looks away.)
 since an immense gulf separates the subjective atti-
 tude I have of myself

(Actual sound clinking of spoon.)

from the objective truth that I am for others, since I
 do not cease to find myself guilty although I feel in-
 nocent, since each event transforms my daily life,
 since I ceaselessly fail to communicate—

(The spoon enters the frame and stirs the coffee.)

I mean, to understand, to love, to be loved—

(The spoon leaves the frame.)

and each failure makes me experience my solitude,
 since . . .

(Juliette looks up, off left. Shots of bartender, glistening
 faucet.)

since I cannot tear myself from the objectivity that
 crushes me,

(Shot of the swirling surface of the coffee in the cup.)

not from the subjectivity that exiles me, since I am
 permitted neither to lift myself to being nor to fall into
 nothingness, I must listen, I must look around me
 more than ever at the worlds my likeness, my
 brother.

(Room sounds slowly fade up.)

Guzzetti's interpretation of the sequence moves smoothly from the actors in the scene, to the Sartrean philosophical problem, to an earlier film by Godard where a bartender similar in looks to the one here is "a figure of atavistic sexuality." Guzzetti writes:

This reading is not to diminish the philosophical meanings of the sentences, rather to remind ourselves that they occur in a narrative film, indeed in the first scene of it in which the mediating director has intruded into the space of the narrative. Seen in this perspective, the long deferred conclusion—"I must listen, I must look around me more than ever"—though vague as a philosophical resolution, is precise as a response spoken by the persona of director in reference to the situation of the film. . . .
 [p. 139]

When Guzzetti ponders the referent of "hypocrite lecteur," he suggests the young man, Juliette herself, the spectator, possibly "le monde." But the critic himself is curiously absent from the list: *le dialectique échappé*.

Godard was 36 when he shot *Two or Three Things I Know about Her*, his thirteenth film, in 1967. He had begun to write about film in 1950. With François Truffaut, Eric Rohmer, and Jacques Rivette, his colleagues on the *Cahiers du Cinéma* in the 1950s, he believed criticism ought to be a necessary preparation for directing. In an interview in 1962 Godard said:

I have always wanted, basically, to make a research film in the form of a spectacle. The documentary side is a man in a particular situation. The spectacle comes when one makes this man a gangster or a secret agent. In *Une Femme est une Femme* the spectacle comes from the fact that the woman is an actress; in *Vivre sa Vie*, a prostitute.

As Guzzetti points out, these twin values of "research" and "spectacle" inform all Godard's work. *Breathless*, his first and most commercially successful film, leans toward spectacle: the narrative is well plotted; its characters are convincing psychological wholes; its director remains on the periphery. *La chinoise* (1967) is quasi-documentary and militantly political in Marxist-Leninist terms; characters are fragmentary; the director involves himself in the action: some shots have the effect of posters. An idea, not a story, organizes the film.² We are in the domain of research.

It is possible to view Godard's career from 1959 through the mid-seventies as the gradual disappearance of spectacle in a swamp of research. Perhaps he has no film in which he finely equilibrates his twin imperatives. *Two or Three Things I Know about Her* comes closest to such a balance and may well be his most representative film. Godard summons all his strengths and suppresses many of his excesses, though research wins out over spectacle. The error of overtrumping runs through Godard's work as a whole. It is absolutely fatal to art. One does not disagree with this or that idea *per se*; ideas objectionable to reason can be aesthetically justified. Rather, one objects to their imperfect combination in the medium and the total effect over the viewer. Thus, when Guzzetti claims that this film is "the most complex and profound work of the most interesting and inventive filmmaker of our time" (p. 4), I find myself in disagreement, both on the basis of aesthetic realization and philosophic content. With due respect for Godard's achievement I think of other author-directors that I would place above him: Bergman, and Bergman above all for his cinematic pilgrimage is unparalleled; Fellini, certainly. Then, if Resnais and Antonioni are not finer directors, it can at least be said that they have finer films. On the American side of things, Cimino's *The Deer Hunter* (1978) deals more effectively with the rupture of the social integument than does *Two or Three Things I Know about Her*. Besides, *The Deer Hunter* treats the problem more successfully in emotional terms. But, as Coleridge said, let us not introduce an Act of Uniformity against poets.

The title of Godard's film cannot be translated easily: "Her" refers to the actress Marina Vlady, the character Juliette Janson which she plays, or the Paris region (*la region* is feminine) in which the film is shot. At the outset Godard speaks: "This is Marina Vlady. She is an actress. She is wearing a midnight-blue sweater with two yellow stripes. She is of Russian extraction. Her hair is dark chestnut or light brown. I don't know which exactly." The actress replies "Yes, speak as if quoting truths. Old Brecht said that." She turns her head to the right and Godard comments: "Now she turns her head to the right but that isn't important." We are amused; we know we are going to enjoy all this. Then Godard: "This is Juliette Janson. She lives here. She is wearing a midnight

blue sweater with two yellow stripes. Her hair is dark chestnut or else light brown. I don't know which exactly." Juliette informs us that her husband makes the equivalent of \$225 a month. She turns her head. Godard comments: "Now she turns her head to the left but that isn't important." But, of course, it is crucial; Godard has simultaneously transformed one sign-system (actress/cinema) into another (housewife/capitalism), has renounced his "responsibility for her actions," and has pointed "with irony to the convention of film narrative according to which the action is portrayed as a spontaneous event" (p. 33). This slight act of turning the head is one of the first of the "one or two things," finally many many things, Godard will know about her.

The film concerns the social and economic effects of Gaullist prosperity in the mid-sixties. A new suburb of Paris is being carved out. There are many shots of bulldozers, building sites, girders, and concrete. Abrasive construction noise fills the air. There is not a single shot of old Paris (one recalls Pompidou's taunting remark to those who were resisting his modernization: "Dear old Paris—it's all over"). The housewives in the new high-rise apartments have taken to daytime prostitution, often with marital consent. They wish to supplement the family income in order to buy the consumer goods that are everywhere forced upon their attentions. Godard displays these goods now and again; there are signs, advertisements, scenes of buying and selling. Magazines show alluring pictures. "The Gaullist regime puts on the mask of reformer and organizer while wishing only to record and regularize the natural tendencies of big capitalism," Godard remarks in a voice-over. Juliette is one of these housewives. The film follows her through perhaps a day, with her son, with a young client, with another who turns her down, with her husband in bed at night. Her lovely face is often impassive and sometimes betrays depression. Other women enter and depart. Through all Godard comments, some 28 times, on the situation or his own mental state.

The central thesis of this film and also of much of Godard's work is that the self is forced to prostitute itself, to profane, to vulgarize itself, in the service of the Other, Nothingness, Capitalism. This prostitution extends from the housewives, to the director "whom modern life forces into prostitution," to the camera itself which, in Guzzetti's commentary, "at best evinces untruths and at worst is a party to voyeurism," to the audience (p. 129).

This theme reaches its fullest treatment in the twelfth sequence, and the failure to follow up on the ambivalent resolution of this sequence is seen as the most serious aesthetic and philosophical flaw of the film, an unfinished symphony, though satisfying in itself. The sequence takes place in a service station with a car wash where Juliette's husband Robert is

employed. Godard's problem, as he admits, is how "to give an account of events," of "exactly what happened" at "about 4:10 P.M." when living in society has become like living "in a giant comic strip." As Juliette chats with Robert and the car goes through the wash, the camera eye falls on various objects and signs and the narrator ponders what line he should take to pursue his rendering of reality. There are several options. Naturalistic realism: the car-wash is the twentieth-century equivalent of Zola's laundry in *L'Assommoir*. Literary symbolism: the autumn leaves remind him of Faulkner's *Wild Palms*. Personal reflection: he resumes his dialectical reflections. Are objects separate? Do their relations penetrate the being of one's own self? What media can one trust? Language, image, sound? Referring obliquely to Francis Ponge's *Le parti pris des choses*, Godard seems to yield to the ordinary life of things. It might be startling politically, but he would have been comfortable with Wallace Stevens's injunction, "Let be be the finale of seem," that is, let ordinary appearances give way to, not be inconsistent with, the real truth of things ("The Emperor of Ice-Cream"):

In the case of the image everything is permitted, the best and the worst. In front of me everyday good sense has come to restore the broken step of my reason. Objects exist, and if one gives to them a more attentive care than to people, it is precisely because they exist more than people. Dead objects are always alive. Living people are often already dead . . .

As the car emerges into the sunlight we get an "answer" to the problem of rendering reality. Guzzetti notes that this sequence "consolidates the insights of common sense and tries to lay to rest the battery of preceding doubts and questions." Godard confesses his hope for "happiness in a world where men and things will at one and the same time know harmonious relations":

That is my aim. It is in the end as much political as poetic. Should I have spoken of Juliette or of the leaves? Since in any case it is impossible really to do the two together let us say that both were trembling gently at the beginning of the end of an October afternoon.

Guzzetti finds this conclusion too "literary and precious" because we have not in fact seen Juliette "trembling." The farewell kiss seemed perfunctory. A more serious problem, however, is whether this credo is sufficient to bridge the philosophical abyss that the film opens up. Despite references to Ponge, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre, and Wittgenstein, and an excursus on the doctrine of internal relations, we have no logical arguments. Instead, a logic of images has revealed a qualified Romantic experience, a moment of vision: the loveliness of a late afternoon (but it *is* late, and it

is October), autumn leaves, the kiss, the ritual purification of the car wash, a bright red car. On the other side, the scene is informed by anomie; Juliette is often expressionless; the camera focuses on ugly things, on a very damaged car, on signs, on the spinning numbers of francs/per liter on the gas pump. When the scene closes with three bars from Beethoven's Sixteenth Quartet we feel that something must have been revealed. But what exactly? We cannot be certain.

Aristotle said, "many poets dramatists tie the knot well but unravel it ill." What might have been a climax turns out to be the source of new themes that radiate through the remainder of the film. In Sequence 14 a pornographer who speaks English and wears a T-shirt with an American flag on it photographs Juliette and a friend, their heads covered by airline handbags, with occasional shots of the horrors of Vietnam. It is the most poorly realized sequence in the entire film, and its symbolism is so leaden that only the comic episodes in the following sequence enable the film to regain momentum. In this sequence there are several conversations in a loud cafe; during the whole time an elderly woman is playing on a pinball machine. In a side booth a young girl questions a Nobel Prize-winner "Ivanoff" on a variety of issues, one of those interminable conversations that make the French film so intellectually credible and enjoyable (Eustaches's *The Mother and the Whore*, 1973, remains one of the best conversations of the 1970s):

Girl: What will the morality of communism be?

Ivanoff: I think that it will be the same thing as now. (He autographs his book.)

Girl: Yes, but what does that mean?

Ivanoff: Looking out for one another, working for one's country, loving it, loving the arts, science . . .

Girl: Then what will the difference be?

Ivanoff: With communism, that will be easier to explain.

The comic response to these lines masks the fact that we are dealing with cruder and less interesting materials, and Guzzetti concedes that the "film is running out of energy." The final scene, husband and wife reading in bed, does not advance the thought-structure of the film. Godard's commentary mixes oblivion and hope: "I set out calmly on the road of dreams and I forget the rest. I forget Hiroshima, I forget Auschwitz, I forget Budapest, I forget Vietnam, I forget the minimum wage, I forget the housing crisis, I forget the famine in India. I've forgotten everything except that, since I'm reduced to zero, it's from there that I shall have to set out again." He has become the hero of his film (Juliette said she is false if she stays the same, true if she changes). His reduction to zero represents a destruction of the old self and a point of setting forth, the way the French calendar began from

zero after the Revolution. Final shots of consumer products on the lawn seem as studied as a French parterre. The direction of Godard's career will be toward "research."

Notes

- 1 In his preface Guzzetti extends his gratitude to several of his teachers, including the late Professor Reuben A. Brower (who studied with I. A. Richards) and two of Brower's students, Richard Poirier and Anne Ferry.
- 2 "In *La chinoise* Jean-Pierre Léaud, after a declamatory statement, 'We need violence,' says (evidently to Godard), 'You're laughing; you think I'm showing off for the camera not at all!' whereupon Godard cuts to a reverse angle, showing the enormous camera. In Godard's *Far from Vietnam*, we see him delivering a monologue while standing next to a 35-mm Mitchell. Paraphrasing Vertov, he titles this film *Camera-Eye*, which, in conjunction with the imagery, expresses a distinction as much as an identity. In light of this it cannot be surprising that his post-1968 filmmaking collective should be named 'the Dziga-Vertov Group' and that its films should, like Vertov's, take pains to show, and account for the role of, the apparatus" (p. 228).

Arthur C. Danto. *The Transfiguration of the Commonplace.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981. 212 pp. \$17.50.

Richard Wollheim. *Art and Its Objects.* Second Edition, with Six Supplementary Essays. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980. 270 pp. \$29.50 cloth, \$8.95 paper.

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Aestheticians study in the abstract questions that art critics study in the concrete: what is art? why has it value? how do we interpret it, and why do we disagree about such interpretations? These books—two of the three great recent ones in aesthetics¹—both start with ontological questions: to describe art we must first determine what artworks are.

Consider visual artworks only. Obviously—someone carrying a Marden would certainly agree!—they are physical objects. But if paintings are physical objects, why do we disagree about their interpretation when we don't ordinarily disagree about descriptions of objects? We agree about the shape and weight of this journal, but not, probably, about how to describe the art illustrated in it. Interpretation of art is complex in part because sometimes facts "previously unnoticed or dismissed as irrelevant, can suddenly be seen to pertain to the work" (Wollheim). Interest in broken brush strokes leads to

admiration for Guardi; and we see Louis's color, "embedded in, or pressed down upon, the surface" as strikingly like Goya's. Restorations also raise such questions. If the painting *Bacchus and Ariadne* is a physical object made by Titian, then how can we object—and many people did—to cleaning it? When that physical object darkens, the painting darkens also. If we prefer the restored work, perhaps that is because we think of the painting as an arrangement of colors embodied only contingently in that object. The painting is incorruptible.

Even if artworks are physical objects, how we interpret them depends upon beliefs about qualities we can't see just by looking at them. Danto has a wonderful example. The same color pattern, a red square, could represent the Israelites crossing the Red Sea just when Pharaoh's army drowned; express Kierkegaard's mood; consist of the ground for an unrealized Giorgione; or be a non-representational, nonexpressive minimalist work. Analogously, we call *The Polish Rider* expressive because of how we think Rembrandt made it. An identical-looking object made by spinning paint in a centrifuge might not be expressive. Also, how we interpret a work depends upon when and by whom it is made, features often not determinable by visual inspection alone. Thus, a Morris hemp pile could not have become an artwork in the seventeenth century "because the concept of art had not then evolved in such a way as to be able to accommodate it" (Danto). And a depiction of a subway station anticipates the later motifs of Rothko if it were made by him, but not if it were made by Hopper.

Why do we value art? Saying "art is expressive" could suggest that it merely gives experiences we might have had in a world without art. Seeing a sunset, I may feel a Watteausque sense of transience. The advantage of Turner's paintings, Ruskin said, is that seeing them lets us easily view scenes which appear only rarely in nature. Danto and Wollheim find this view unsatisfactory. It is because the materials of art present unpredictable "difficulties that can be dealt with only in the actual working of them," Wollheim says, that "they are so suitable as expressive processes." Imagine how differently we would see paintings if we thought that paint never dripped or smeared. Artistic representations, Danto argues, are not just substitutes for what they represent. Lichtenstein's painting of Loran's diagram of a Cézanne portrait is, unlike that diagram, an artwork: "It is a transfiguration of the portrait. The viewer must know the portrait, know the Loran diagram, accept certain connotations of the concept of the diagram and infuse the portrait with those connotations." Saying an artwork expresses a feeling is not to imply that the feeling can be identified independently of the work. But though we can't paraphrase the feeling, we can use criticism or other possibly contrasting works to help someone "get" it. "We can compensate for how little we are able to say by how much we are able to do" (Wollheim).

To follow these arguments about particular aesthetic issues we must see how these books are parts of different philosophical frameworks. As Danto has said, study of individual philosophical issues in isolation isn't interesting; all important philosophy is systematic.

Danto's account of representations describes visual images, sentences, and artworks as both things and symbols. Seeing a pelican, I have a mental image which refers to that animal. A depiction of Christ is both just brown pigment and a representation of Him. His name, that black ink on this page, denotes Him. Even *Fountain* is both a material thing and something different from other identical-looking fixtures. They are only urinals; *Fountain* is an artwork.

Matching representations to the world always leaves room for skepticism. I see Sharon wearing a new coat and so believe she has purchased it. I am right, but my belief is not justified by what I see. Her coat is being hemmed, and she is wearing Barbara's. I flick the light switch and the lights go out. But I have not turned them off. The electrician is changing the fuse. Detesting a dirty room divider, a Japanese aesthete replaces it with a landscape: "The same distribution of grays and blacks may be found that defaced its merely domestic predecessor. *These blacks are mountains.*" Our earlier remark that you can't tell the properties of an artwork just by looking at it can be generalized. Beliefs, actions, and artworks are identifiable only when placed in relation to the system of our beliefs, actions, and artworks.

This metaphysics is philosophically controversial. Danto talks of "the space between language and the world," a vivid metaphor emphasizing how representations are both things in the world and symbols for things which may not even exist. (We can depict or talk about unicorns.) Naturalists deny that there exists anything outside the world. There is no space between representations and the world, and so such skepticism is impossible. Moral and aesthetic values, too, are only in the world. The value of art is rooted in nonartistic experience. For example, enjoyment of beauty is perhaps sublimated sexual pleasure, as Stendhal hinted: "Beauty is the promise of happiness."

Wollheim is a naturalist. Showing how aesthetic and moral values derive from certain more primitive feelings, he describes "psychic forces, such as the reparative drive or the desire to establish whole objects, without which art and its value would be barely comprehensible." This is not to say that art merely reproduces these infantile states. Freud's analysis of Leonardo's paintings as if they were dreams is deficient precisely because it makes that error. "No artistic impulse," Wollheim notes, "can be identified independently of the institutions of art." But we cannot comprehend art properly without noting its primitive roots.

These brief, therefore necessarily crude remarks characterize positions which call for more analysis. Calling Wollheim a naturalist and Danto an antinaturalist

is useful if we remember that subtle naturalists and equally subtle antinaturalists may not be all that far apart. The naturalist who connects envelopment in the baroque with those early states in which the child cannot yet distinguish self from other acknowledges that in the baroque those states acquire new meaning, that only then are they aesthetically significant. Conversely, Danto reads sympathetically Nietzsche's speculations about the origins of representation, at the distant epoch when representations were transformed from "magical incantations" — the actor imagined *becoming* the god — to "mere symbols," the actor now only representing that deity. Danto's statement that "we are representational systems," containing within ourselves representations of the world, echoes Wollheim's note that what counts about our childhood experiences is how they "represent themselves to us." When Danto says that "the greatest metaphors of art [are] those in which the spectator identifies himself with the represented character," we might develop his idea by appealing to Wollheim's detailed description of the mechanisms of imagination.

Certainly these philosophical problems are fascinating and complex. But what is the nonphilosopher to make of this? Wollheim imagines an interlocutor who, comparing the exciting but brief conclusion of his book with the earlier "dry and pedantic arguments," exclaims: "this is more like aesthetics." But hardly any *Artforum* article or review avoids making claims about the value of art or the nature of criticism which ultimately can only be justified by appeal to such "dry" arguments. If the distance between criticism and philosophy appears so great, that is partly — to the detriment of both aesthetics and criticism — because there has been too little work done on bridging that gap.

Style, Danto says, is "what remains of a representation when we subtract its content." Wollheim adds: "style resides in what happens to the content." The style of those books is part of their content. Their dense, deeply personal, almost Jamesian prose is not just decoration which more austere architects would eschew. Art is like philosophy when occasionally artworks seem almost diagrams of philosophical theories. A Johns flag illustrates one theory of self-reference. But philosophy, also, can be artlike. These reflections on, among other topics, style are themselves in a style that exemplifies the theory discussed. In thus welding together "form and matter" so that they present "one single effect to the 'imaginative reason,'" philosophy, like art, "aspires toward the condition of music."²

Notes

- 1 The third great book is discussed in my article in the October 1979 *Artforum*.
- 2 Danto's metaphysics is presented in his *Analytical Philosophy of Knowledge and Analytical Philosophy of Action*, and summarized in his *What Philosophy Is*. Wollheim's naturalism is discussed in his "On Persons and Their Lives" in Amélie Rorty, ed., *Explaining Emotions*, and in his British Academy lecture, *The Good Self and the Bad Self*. Some of his essays on imagination and art history and criticism are collected in his *On Art and the Mind*. The personal relation of these aestheticians to art is described in Danto's memorial to Munakata, *The Print Collector's Newsletter*, X(6) (January-February 1980); in Wollheim's account of his great friend, the critic Adrian Stokes, in *PN Review* 15, 7(1) (1980); and in Wollheim's novel *A Family Romance*, and his account of the implicit social background to that novel, "Babylon, Babylone," *Encounter*, May 1962.

P. D. A. Harvey. *The History of Topographic Maps: Symbols, Pictures and Surveys.* London: Thames and Hudson, 1980. 199 pp., maps, bibliography, index. \$29.95.

Reviewed by Wilbur Zelinsky
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Only once in a long while is cartographic literature enriched by a work that challenges the reader's critical faculties or asks interesting new questions. This is one of those rare occasions, for P. D. A. Harvey has done both. The author, professor of medieval history at the University of Durham, has provided us with the first detailed history of topographical maps from pre-historic times up through the sixteenth century (when they become recognizably modern); and, at the same time, he has proposed a theoretical framework to accommodate the available facts, one that compels us to wrestle with several basic issues in symbolic communication. Despite my reservations about his hypotheses, we have here a document I must strongly recommend to any serious student of visual communications, and not just cartography.

Before I begin jousting with some of Harvey's notions, let me offer the kindest of kind words about the book as an example of the art of bookmaking and for its packaging of a considerable mass of data. It is a lovely volume in terms of page design, typography, paper, dust jacket, and, especially, the 106 illustrations, some of them in color. Moreover, Harvey's lucid prose and avoidance of jargon or intellectual posturing make this a work that can appeal to the greenest of novices as well as the most advanced of specialists.

It is essential to note the limits in coverage. Harvey has tried to concern himself solely with topographic maps, that is, schematic representations at a large scale of segments of the earth's surface small enough to lie within sensory range of their inhabitants. In their modern form, such maps are drawn to scale and combine the skills of surveyor and cartographer. They stand in contrast to "geographic," or small-scale, maps that cover much larger tracts far beyond the ken of any single observer—a species of cartography much better documented and researched than the subjects of this study. Despite the practical and theoretical importance of the distinction between the two genres, the author is obliged, on occasion, to treat some aspects of small-scale mapping, for its evolution was not entirely unrelated to the development of topographic mapping.

In his Introduction and 11 chapters that pursue a rather elastic chronological sequence, Harvey presents and interprets what appears to be every available scrap of evidence. (One can only marvel at his zeal and erudition.) And, until late medieval (or early modern?) times, the surviving examples of topographic mapping are scrappy indeed. With the utmost catholicity, the author reviews such aboriginal items as we have recovered to date that seem to be wholly or largely free of European influences and maps from the early Far East, India, Mexico, the Near East, and medieval Europe as well as ancient Greece (a grand total of one Hellenic artifact!) and Rome. They exist in a variety of physical media, including sticks, sand, clay, stone, metal coins, and mosaic tiles as well as the more familiar parchment and paper; and Harvey has reviewed a variety of representational forms bearing directly or indirectly on the matter at hand: building plans, elevations, aerial photos, legal documents, cadastral surveys, diagram maps, bird's-eye views, picture maps, landscape paintings, itinerary maps, and nautical charts. I do regret his saying so little about landscape painting and its connections with map-making, especially in the exuberant artistic traditions of China, Japan, and Western Europe; the topic is pregnant with unrealized possibilities.

All of this evidence is arrayed so as to support the basic argument of the book, as suggested in its subtitle: that there has been a progression from an initial primitive phase, in which highly abstract symbols prevailed, to the next, in which landscape details are rendered pictorially as they might be seen laterally or in diagonal perspective from above, and that the picture-map is succeeded by a culminating form, the survey map, in which the results of methodical survey are drawn more or less true to scale using abstract conventions and only a few vestigial pictorial symbols. One wonders whether a similar scheme might be suggested for other modes of communication.

There are at least three other corollaries to this central theme: that "the form a map takes—whether of symbols or of pictures—reflects the general level of a society's culture"; that cartographic thinking is a rare phenomenon, appearing only sporadically in "islands of map-consciousness"; and that, given the foregoing premises, topographic mapping, and most especially its more advanced forms, diffused outward over space and time from these oases of cartographic precocity. In his Introduction, Harvey also flirts with the possibility that cartographic ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny by referring to the results of Denis Wood's investigation of the progression of hill symbols as used by untutored youngsters of various ages.

This is certainly an exciting idea, or cluster of ideas; but I am afraid that, for the time being, it must remain speculative rather than certain or even probable. In the first place, as already indicated, the evidence is too fragmentary, too widely dispersed areally and temporally to offer firm footing for any general explanation of the history of topographic mapping. Despite his extraordinary diligence, Harvey is unable to cite even one society that has experienced all three of the postulated phases in the proper order. Moreover, the two non-Western European civilizations for which we have the best cartographic records—the Roman and Chinese—seem to have undergone two partial cycles (from picture maps to survey maps, then the same sequence once again), but without any tangible clues of any primordial stage of symbolic mapping, and no adequate explanation by Harvey for the interruption of the first cycle. In addition, the author tends to undercut his own argument in a discussion of a Sumerian stone carving of the 3d millennium B.C. when he muses, "It is an interesting comment on the unevenness of man's advance in ideas and techniques that when we turn to the most sophisticated form of topographical map—the scale-map, drawn to a consistent scale from actual measurements—we have to start by looking at some of the oldest maps that are known to exist."

The Harvey thesis may be the correct one, although we shall have to recover and sort out much more evidence from neglected archives and archaeological digs to give it a fair hearing; but the facts, as presented in this volume, are susceptible to alternative, equally logical hypotheses. For example, one could make the case that all three modes of large-scale cartographic expression, the symbol, picture, and survey map, coexist now and have done so for thousands of years. Thus, just which type of drawing dominates at a given time or place may depend on a map's immediate purpose and the market it is intended to serve or the relative strength of various technologies. And, as a matter of fact, if we look at even the most sophisticated topographic quadrangles being published nowadays, it is not difficult to identify all three cartographic languages on the same sheet.

My most basic quarrel with this book—and with almost every other treatment of maps—is a reluctance to define precisely what it is that we are talking about. Although Harvey is courageous enough to ask, "Just what, after all, is a map?"—a question that goes to the very heart of any theory of communication—his answer is incomplete and evasive. Because of an unwillingness to confront this most central of issues, he confounds cartography with mapping: "... the capacity to make maps, the habit of mind that thinks cartographically, is something that cannot be taken for granted even in quite advanced societies; it involves ideas that are far less simple, far less a normal part of human intelligence than we are apt to suppose, and if we have interpreted the evidence correctly map-making seems to have appeared rather erratically in the course of man's history."

I cannot agree. Cartography, that is, the production of some relatively durable physical object that represents spatial relationships among various phenomena, is only one part, and a very small part at that, of a larger activity, i.e., mapping. And mapping, I would claim, in one form or another is a form of behavior that is universal among human beings, young and old, in every society and era and includes bodily gesture and movement and verbal expression, not to mention thought; its cartographic expression, though important, is incidental, and its absence does not denote creatures who do not practice nondocumentary forms of mapping. To say that "the capacity to make maps" is rare and limited is about as absurd as saying that human beings never danced until choreographic notation was invented a few decades ago or the first cinematographer recorded a ballet for the first time, or that people never sang until they learned how to set notes down on paper or never dined before the first menu was printed. Although this argument may strike the reader as frivolous or too subtle or far-fetched at first glance, I believe that after some reflection it will be granted some relevance. We cannot write a meaningful history of music or dance—or of drama and art—before arriving at meaningful definitions of these things. Harvey has given us an important initial statement about the early history of topographical *documents*. He or someone else could advance our understanding much further by placing the discussion within a broader, more realistic view of that basic human activity known as mapping.

Susan Meiselas. Nicaragua June 1978–July 1979. Edited with Claire Rosenberg. New York: Pantheon, 1981. 31 pp., 71 ills. \$22.95 (cloth), \$11.95 (paper).

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Contemporary consciousness is characterized by historical amnesia. Not only do we know little about history, but too often we view what little we know in terms of either nostalgia—celebration of the past—or progress—celebration of the present. However, the recognition of historical amnesia has stimulated some to begin the necessary task of reconstruction of historical consciousness, which John Berger has defined as “the experience of seeking to give meaning to our lives, of trying to understand the history of which we can become the active agents” (Berger 1972:33).

The effort to reconstruct historical consciousness requires more than merely the provision of *more* historical knowledge; it also requires a re-examination of the way(s) in which historical knowledge itself is constructed and presented. Such an effort, then, cannot be the burden of the historian alone, for the consequences of historical amnesia are not merely academic: “A people or class which is cut off from its own past is far less free to choose and to act as a people or class than one that has been able to situate itself in history” (ibid.).

The reexamination of the way historical knowledge is constructed and presented has, among other things, generated further interest in the study of oral cultures, given rise to the literary analysis of historical texts, and raised the question of perspective in historical studies, i.e., from whose perspective is the history written? Offering much to such a reexamination and the consideration of such problems and issues are the writings of Walter Benjamin. Most helpful perhaps are his essays “The Storyteller” (1969a), in which he argues that the practice of storytelling has been displaced, both by the novel and perhaps more significantly, in terms of narrative as a form, by the newspaper and *information*; and “Theses on the Philosophy of History” (1969b), in which he wrote: “Only that historian will have the gift of fanning the spark of hope in the past who is firmly convinced that even the dead will not be safe from the enemy [the ruling class] if he wins. And the enemy has not ceased to be victorious.”

Very much informed by Benjamin's writings is John Berger, who has for many years been concerned with and worked on the problem of historical consciousness. Most recently his work, alone and with the photographer Jean Mohr, has focused on the relationship among history, experience, memory, and storytelling in literature and photography. Specifically, with regard to visual communications, Berger has been anxious to contribute to the development of an alternative photography that does not merely reproduce the contemporary social order but rather, by contributing to the reconstruction of historical consciousness, opposes it (Berger 1980a and b).

By *alternative* photography, Berger is not referring to “photographs . . . used as a radical weapon in posters, newspapers, pamphlets, and so on” (of which he does, however, acknowledge the value), nor does he mean simply “aiming [the camera] at different targets.” Rather, he says, photography needs to change “its practice,” but “how?” He explains what he means by indicating the distinction between the private use of photography—“the context of the instant recorded is preserved so that the photograph lives in an ongoing continuity”—and the public use in which “torn from its context, [the photograph] becomes a dead object which, exactly because it is dead, lends itself to any arbitrary use” (Berger 1980a:56). And he argues that “the task of an alternative photography is to incorporate photography into social and political memory, instead of using it as a substitute which encourages the atrophy of any such memory.” The first principle of such a practice is that “the photographer . . . think of her or himself not so much as a reporter to the rest of the world but, rather, as a recorder for those involved in the events photographed.” In essence, what Berger goes on to urge is that the photographer understand herself or himself as a storyteller contributing to memory and historical consciousness (ibid.: 58–63).

I have discussed the issue of historical consciousness and noted the arguments of Walter Benjamin and John Berger as part of this short essay on Meiselas's *Nicaragua* not merely in order to indicate the concerns which inform the review but, more importantly, because this work of Meiselas is the best contemporary example I have seen of the alternative photography Berger is calling for. On this point, it should be known that when I first read *Nicaragua* I was not very enthusiastic. Yet, upon closer examination of the work and of my own reading of it, I realized that it was not merely a photo-history, reporting on the Nicaraguan Revolution to me, a North American student of Latin America, but rather a visual record and narrative (story) of the revolution for those who fought it. Thus, we can understand Meiselas's epigraph: “NICARAGUA/A year of news,/as if nothing had hap-

pened before,/as if the roots were not there,/and the victory not earned./This book was made so that we remember."

The struggle that culminated in the battles of 1978–1979 began more than 50 years ago. From 1912 to 1933 Nicaragua was virtually a protectorate of the United States. Except for a brief period in the 1920s, U.S. Marines occupied the country and U.S. financial agents directed Nicaragua's revenue system, national bank, and railways. This direct involvement by the U.S. government in Nicaragua was for the purpose of maintaining the country's political and economic stability and thereby protecting U.S. interests (which at the time included the real possibility of constructing a second trans-isthmus canal). It was during this 20-year period that the Nicaraguan economy was tied to that of the United States in a relationship that social scientists have termed "dependency." Also, in the late twenties, in order to prevent the possibility of a socialist or even Mexican-style revolution, the U.S. reorganized the Nicaraguan military into a National Guard to police the country. In 1934, this National Guard murdered the popular and progressive rebel leader Augusto Cesar Sandino. Not long after, the chief of the Guard, General Anastasio Somoza Garcia, became dictator (and sometime president) of the country. The regime he established was inherited by his sons. The Somoza dynasty ruled Nicaragua until the 1978–1979 revolution, which was led by a political and military force calling itself the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN)—the Sandinistas, in memory of the slain rebel leader.

In their 45-year rule of Nicaragua, the Somoza family put together a business empire worth almost \$500 million, the activities of which effectively controlled 60 percent of the nation's economy and included approximately 25 percent of the country's arable land (Harris 1981:4). At the same time, 50 percent of the population had an average annual income of \$90, unemployment was officially at 22 percent but affected 60 percent of the population, illiteracy was 50 percent nationwide (80 percent in many rural areas), and housing and health conditions were horrible. According to Meiselas, whose figures are derived from U.S. and U.N. agencies' statistics, "Of every 1,000 children born, 102 died. Of every 10 deaths, 6 were of infectious diseases, which are curable."

The Sandinista forces were recruited from among the peasants, the urban working class, and the semi-proletariat characteristic of Latin American cities. Also, there were middle-class students and intellectuals who joined to fight the Somoza regime. And, in the final stages of the armed struggle, the anti-Somoza forces consisted of a broad coalition of

classes and social groups, including elements of the upper class and Catholic Church (Jung 1979). Thus, the overthrow of the Somoza regime was truly a *popular* revolution.

Nicaragua is a work of 71 color photographs, followed by 31 pages of text, including a map of the country, titles for the photos, personal statements, prose and poetry by those who made and experienced the revolution, and a chronology of Nicaragua's history.

The photographs are presented in the form of a narrative of the revolution. Rather than breaking up the flow of the narrative into chapters, Meiselas (with her co-editor, Claire Rosenberg) indicates the temporality of what is to follow on a prefatory page (along with her note on the importance of remembering) dividing the photos into three sections: June 1978—The Somoza Regime; September 1978—Insurrection; and June–July 1979—The Final Offensive.

From the outset of the narrative, Meiselas records the experience of the Nicaraguan people. The photographs not only communicate the immediate experience but also incorporate and indicate the history that is present in that experience. Thus, the first photograph is of a traditional Indian dance mask which the rebels wore during the fight against Somoza in order to conceal their identities. Two photos later (the numbers in brackets indicate the number of the photograph in the book) we see a woman washing clothes in an open sewer-creek in downtown Managua [3]. The partially demolished buildings in the background recall the devastation of the 1972 earthquake and the corruption of the Somoza regime, which treated the international aid given to Nicaragua as a source of quick profits. There follows a photo of a farmworker harvesting sugar cane with a machete, his arm raised to slash—reminding one of a painting by Millet, and in the background stands one of Nicaragua's many volcanoes [4]. (According to historical legend, a Nicaraguan postage stamp, showing picturesque volcanoes, scared off the U.S. government from constructing a second Central American canal there.)

The next picture is of a laborer carrying a sack of coffee or grain up a gangplank to a ship destined for North America, or elsewhere [5]. Still another photo shows a young woman in a maid's uniform tending to two young children at a Managua country club [6]. Inequality in Latin America has been depicted visually in many ways (often such a photo, shot from a distance, shows us the shacks of the poor, sometimes standing next to a new "modern," luxury apartment building). But Meiselas is not merely indicating inequality and the labors of the poor. Rather, she is recording the lived experience of the people. Her pictures are close and at eye level. The people are the subject and the other elements in the photos support

the telling of their story. The narrative form is important, for individually the photos might be read quite differently (for example, the photo at the country club might have been taken by a relative of the children—except the maid's expression would have been different, perhaps, on the insistence of the photographer).

Thus, the photographs introduce the people of Nicaragua in relation to their past and present. However, the social and power structures are not yet complete. The pictures that immediately follow present the Somoza regime and its National Guard. One of the photos is a "graduation" picture at the Guard's elite infantry school [8]. The graduates are holding cans of Schlitz beer, reminding us both of the dependent relationship of Somoza's Nicaragua upon the United States and that the U.S. Marines originally organized the Guard.

The pictures of the Guard [8, 9, 11, 12] are defined by a photo [10] of a group of children standing before a bonfire and harassing guardsmen (who stand outside the picture). The terror and the tragedy of the Somoza regime are presented in a picture of a dismembered body on a hillside outside Managua [14]. The place, we are told in the text, was known as a site where the Guard assassinated those it viewed as a threat. The very next photo is of a wall on which is spray-painted the words, "Where is Norman Gonzalez? The dictatorship must answer" [15]. Such photos are not easily forgotten.

The 15 photos of the September insurrection show a people at war [23–37], "Events force us now to admit the courage of a people or a class; not the courage of a people as represented by their professional armies, but made manifest in the actions of the entire population, men and women, young and old" (Berger 1969:131). In Matagalpa, where many of Meiselas's photos were taken, the rebellion began spontaneously and encouraged similar uprisings elsewhere. The spontaneity of the insurrection and its rapid spread caught even the Sandinista forces by surprise. The photos Meiselas provides of the fighting shows "los muchachos" (youths) in baseball hats, faces covered with bandanas, armed with handguns and rifles, stationed by low piles of sandbags or moving through the streets. Other people stand in doorways observing. Los muchachos have control of the town but they are awaiting the Guard's counterattack. In the photos that follow the Guard is counterattacking with aerial bombardment and tanks. Buildings are destroyed; many are dead: "The strategy of total war recognizes that it is necessary to try to break the courage and resistance of a whole people" (ibid.). Looking through these photographs I recalled the novel *Reasons of State* by Alejo Carpentier (1977), which details the career of a Latin American dictator (such as Somoza). At one point, a long-time European acquaintance of the dictator makes excuses for being unable to have

dinner with him on his return to Paris after brutally suppressing a rebellion back home; then finally, regarding a report in the newspaper, he says, "I know there's a lot of exaggeration in it all. . . . They do extraordinary things nowadays in the way of trick photography . . . of course it's all false" (p. 85).

The defeat of the September insurrection did not diminish the struggle. The ranks of the Sandinista forces grew even faster, enabling them to expand the guerrilla war and prepare for the final offensive which came the following summer (Jung 1979:84–89). Meiselas's visual narrative shifts to the hills briefly [38, 39, 40], showing young men and women living and preparing to return to fight for the towns, and in the photographs that follow [41–46] she records the intensifying repression: schoolbuses are stopped and the children and young people are frisked by soldiers [42]; pregnant women are questioned at gunpoint by paramilitary squads [44].

The photos of the final offensive [47–64] and victory [65–71] are also well done and the experience well communicated. The photographs remain close to the experience, from behind the barricades to the liberation of town and city. In fact, even at those moments when you expect to view what is happening from a rooftop—for example, when the victory is being celebrated in the central plaza of Managua [68–69]—Meiselas continues to record the experience as it is being lived, that is, we see the celebration at eye level.

The struggle and victory over the Somoza regime "left 40,000 dead (1.5 percent of the population); 40,000 children orphaned; 200,000 families homeless . . ." (Meiselas). Somoza fled with his family to Miami, but a year-and-a-half later he was killed in Paraguay, which is still after 30 years under the rule of the Stroessner dictatorship.

Reading Meiselas's *Nicaragua* I was reminded of another book of photographs which I acquired about 12 years ago. It is a collection of pictures from the Mexican Revolution, 1910–1917 (Arenas Guzman 1969). There is a variety of photos in the two works that parallel, if not almost replicate, each other: the dictators taking part in ceremonies; the people in the streets carrying banners; cannons/tanks in the streets and the destruction wrought; young women rebels carrying rifles alongside the young men; a body being burned in the street to avoid epidemics; and so on. And there is a series of photos in the Mexican collection that does not appear in the Nicaraguan book, and hopefully will never need to be added: that is, photos of U.S. troops landing in and occupying Vera Cruz (a happening that Nicaraguans have already experienced this century).

In addition to its historic parallels to the Mexican Revolution, Meiselas's work, however much it is the telling of the Nicaraguan experience, draws our attention to the contemporary struggles elsewhere in Central America, specifically in El Salvador and Guatemala.

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Sarah Graham-Brown. *Palestinians and Their Society*. Boston: Quartet Books, 1981. \$25.00.

Reviewed by Yeshayahu Nir
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Quoting out of context is essential to the photographer's craft, says Szarkowski; a photograph's sense can be modified by the context in which it is published, says Barthes. Sarah Graham-Brown's photographic essay is an interesting example of a reconstructed context. Arab Palestinian inhabitants were often photographed since the late nineteenth century, posing for biblical allegories produced for the Christian foreign-and-pilgrim market. Graham-Brown analyzes some examples of such genre photographs to demonstrate the distortions of contemporary life they display. She suggests a new documentary reading of these and of other photographs to illustrate Arab social and economic realities in British Mandatory Palestine before 1948. Colonized societies were

all too often misrepresented in photography. They have been, and sometimes still are, both subjects and objects of a colonialist photographic discourse. The need for analysis is urgent. I therefore welcome Graham-Brown's effort and attempt, although her work is uneven.

The explication of life and society in Palestine through the careful reading of photographs from various sources is not a new endeavor. Professor Gustaf Dalman, head of the German Evangelical Institut, accompanied his monumental seven-volume work *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina (Work and Custom in Palestine)* by more than 500 photographs, quite a few of which are identical to those used by Graham-Brown. His work proves that biblical-scholarly reading of photographs—if scholarly it is—is not necessarily contradictory to the search for ethnographic authenticity. Some of his own photographs taken since 1900 and subsequently published in his books, of which the last volume appeared in 1942, would enrich Graham-Brown's essay.

In 1976, Shmuel Avitsur, Professor of Historical Geography at the University of Tel Aviv, published *Man and his Work: A Historical Atlas of Tools and Workshops in the Holy Land*. The atlas relies mostly on photographs, about 500 in number, many identical to those used by Dalman and by Graham-Brown, and on additional drawings. It also includes photographs of modernization and innovations introduced to Arab and Jewish society at the turn of the century.

There were early precursors not only in re-editing of photographs. Straightforward and unbiased documentary photographs were produced in the Holy Land since 1867. Bonfils himself, the French photographer in Beirut, Lebanon, whose typical studio output is criticized (with full justification) by Graham-Brown, produced such photographs of Palestinian Arabs and Jews since the 1870s. But the prominence of Bonfils's potpourri-portraits, consisting of "oriental" and "exotic" elements mixed with western-bourgeois photographic conventions, is due to publishers and buyers who preferred them to his more authentic photographs. The latter, more lifelike and less colorful, remained forgotten. The publishers often "adapted" many of Bonfils's already seasoned captions to improve sales or charitable donations. Graham-Brown sometimes reads captions more than images, and she does not sufficiently account for the difference—does not make the distinction between the photographers' original straightforward captions and the publishers' modifying ones. Sometimes she ignores the former even when they are visible in her reproductions, considering instead the latter ones that fit her thesis.

Since the turn of the century, photographers signing as "American Colony" in Jerusalem, of whom Graham-Brown mentions only Matson, produced an impressive body of straightforward documentation on Arab village life in the country. *National Geographic Magazine* published many of them in two outstanding selections in 1914 and 1915, along with some of the "biblical" genre portraits. The photographs speak forcefully for Lars Larsson, the uncredited photographer and Matson's tutor, and for his insight into contemporary Arab society. Graham-Brown publishes many of Larsson's and Matson's photographs, as did Dalman and Avitsur. Regrettably, she doesn't use most of the relevant documentary photographs produced between 1867 and 1918. Many of them would support her thesis by offering contrasting photographic approaches.

Graham-Brown claims that in photographs "power relationships . . . are only obvious when physical coercion is being used. . . . Otherwise, visual evidence of power and authority is largely symbolic. . . ." In fact, invisibility is in the very nature of power relationships and the dominant ideologies that are part of them. To render them visible is at the heart of documentary photography. The photographs in Graham-Brown's study showing Palestinian women in their daily work in fact and by implication constitute an eloquent representation of their status in the work force and society. The power relationship and exploitation to which they were submitted is obvious.

But Graham-Brown's explanatory captions which represent her readings of the photographs are worded so as to avoid the impression of social conflict inherent in the issue. Carrying water was "work normally performed by women and children"; it was "common for women to share in agricultural work"; "the whole family worked in the fields harvesting"; "domestic work was entirely the woman's domain"; and "domestic work was not just cleaning, cooking and looking after children; because villagers until the end of the Mandate continued to grow at least a proportion of their own food, there was a good deal of processing to be done." To sum up, there seems to be little work left for men to do. Moreover, as she writes later, "Dowries were paid initially to the bride's father, in part as compensation for the loss of her labour to his household." Still later, four photographs in a double spread show means of transportation. In three of them, only men are seen, in an airport, a railway station, a bus; in the fourth, two women walk with baskets on their heads "returning home from market in Jerusalem." The author creates here a forceful visual discourse showing that women do almost all the heavy and hard work in village life. But she does not suggest we read these photographs as socially relevant evidence of the existing power structures within which women lived.

The nonconflictual presentation of the status of women is seemingly part of the political subtext of the book. It mirrors the low-key treatment of the Arab-Jewish conflict in most of the texts and images. There are a few photographs about Jewish life and activity in the country. But the author's readings of them are a textbook demonstration of political rhetoric. Graham-Brown describes construction work undertaken by the British (at the Haifa port) as having been "built" by them, whereas Jewish-built industries are qualified as "Jewish-owned." "Jewish workers" appear almost exclusively in conjunction with unemployment. About the photograph of the Kadourie agricultural school in Tulkarm, the author tells that the donor wanted a single school set up for Jews and Arabs, but "Jewish insistence . . . led to the founding of two separate schools . . ."; there is no mention that Kadourie was Jewish. In short, the role of Jews in the development of the country is underplayed.

And so is the Arab-Jewish direct conflict. Only two photographs at the very end of the essay, show Arab-Jewish relationships in terms of a direct conflict, including "physical coercion." Her caption reads: "Jewish colonists trying to put out a fire started by Arabs on the Plain of Esdraelon, September 1936. Attacks of this kind continued, but most Arab hostility was directed against the British and against other Arabs who were seen as collaborators with the British or the Zionists. During this period, however, there was a substantial build-up of Jewish defense units." The two last sentences have less to do with the photograph and with historical facts than with a carefully elaborated verbal strategy. The closing picture of the essay is a crudely posed war photograph. Here is Graham-Brown's text: "Palestinians fighting in Jerusalem (probably in 1948). An old woman, with the insignia of a sergeant in the Arab civil guard on her coat, fights alongside men." The photograph shows, most probably, two soldiers of the British-commanded "Arab Legion," two civilians holding handguns and another person standing in the background, before the position itself. Nobody is really shooting, it's a pose; the "old woman" wears a man's headcover (quite improbably, for Arab customs), and does not look like a woman at all. Photographically speaking, this is a "costume study" in the best Bonfils tradition.

The book is designed by "Namara Features"; the publisher, Quartet Books, is a member of the "Namara Group"—certainly an Arab organization—and the book is possibly a collective work. The author's own background is nowhere described (at least in the softcover copy in my possession) and her relationship to her collaborators is somewhat unusually qualified. She acknowledges, among others, "many friends whom I also have to thank for listening to my ideas," a description of relationships which figures, along with more conventional expressions of an author's gratitude, in the short introduction. The essay is

a political pamphlet; photographs, of course, are political. The author's interpretation is consistent with the manipulation of images and the essay's visual strategy. That is to say, the author's analysis of manipulated images is here intermingled with her own manipulations of the same material.

However, without and even with its "soft-sell" propagandistic elements, the essay is also a photographic history of Palestinian Arab society written from that society's perspective. The photographic self-discovery of Arab society is a complex task. Photography is not culturally valued. A religious text published in Cairo at the beginning of this century still treated photography as unlawful from the Islamic standpoint; only later texts, from the 1930s, tolerate it. Graham-Brown, in one of her readings, points to superstition—fear of the evil eye—as preventing people from posing for photographers. In addition, socio-economic conditions in pre-industrial societies were not favorable for a wider diffusion of photography. To the best of my knowledge, there were no Moslem photographers in nineteenth-century Palestine, and even later; and the majority of the population was Sunni-Moslem. One studio portrait in this book is credited to D. Subrinji. This photographer, signed elsewhere Dawid Sabounji, perhaps the first Arab photographer in Palestine, lived in Jaffa and took photographs of Jews and Jewish institutions as early as 1892. I do not know of his photographs produced for an Arab clientele, or anything about his life (nor does Graham-Brown give any details). Khalil Raad, the first Arab photographer in Jerusalem, was a Christian from Lebanon. Afif Tannus, whose pictures are included in the book, has a Christian family name. Graham-Brown criticizes him as having "imbibed many of the paternalistic ideas common among the British (and Americans) in a colonial setting." Family portraits in this book, except for one or two, are of Christian families. The photographers who took them are not identified.

In conclusion, most of the photographed middle-class families, and most if not all of the photographers, are not representative of the attitudes toward photography prevailing among the majority of the indigenous population. Hence, the photographic self-discovery of the Arab Palestinian society in its historical dimension has to be based on systematic and critical analyses of photographs taken by others. Sarah Graham-Brown's essay contributes to the demystification of outward-manipulated images, and thus to a process of cultural decolonization. I therefore recommend it, with my expressed reservations, to the interested reader.

Adam Kendon, ed. *Nonverbal Communication, Interaction and Gesture*. New York: Mouton, 1981.

Reviewed by Bruce K. Eckman
New School for Social Research

Mouton has decided to publish a series, *Approaches to Semiotics*, under the general editorship of Thomas Sebeok and Jean Umiker-Sebeok. Each volume will draw from past articles in *Semiotica* and will be organized around a unified semiotic theme for use in research or as a textbook. A leading expert in the particular field will edit each volume, writing an introductory chapter to set each *Semiotica* piece within the field and within the larger research context, and to update the literature subsequent to the original articles' publication.

This book is Mouton's first effort and it is a good one. Adam Kendon has done a very fine job of setting nonverbal communication within a larger context. In fact, his introduction is really the most stimulating part of the book. In addition, teachers and students who want an overview of one theme and are not familiar with the area will find seminal articles in the field placed next to each other for critical comparison and comprehension.

The first section addresses theoretical and methodological issues. This is to be applauded as an attempt to lay out theoretical issues for future work in nonverbal communication, the need for which is frequently heard at conventions and professional gatherings. Kendon has made an admirable attempt to tease out the theoretical issues in his introduction, but more could and should have been done. Some of the researchers whose work is reprinted here (e.g., Ekman and Friesen, "The Repertoire of Nonverbal Behavior: Categories, Origins, Usage and Coding") have published much more recent work in other journals, which could have helped the new student in theory development. Kendon has moved the field forward in his introduction, but reading the original authors' changes in thinking and refinements would have been more illuminating.

A second limitation of this section is the combining of theoretical and methodological issues at the expense of the latter. In reading the various articles about social encounters and gesture, one question repeatedly comes to mind: "How did the authors code their observations to come to that conclusion?" Since this problem is at the heart of many nonverbal controversies, a whole section on methodology and its recent developments would have been useful.

Some of the articles in other sections outline their coding schemes (A. Kendon, "Some Functions of the Face in a Kissing Round" and H. G. Johnson, P. Ekman, and W. V. Friesen, "Communicative Body Movements: American Emblems"), while others (M. Rosenberg, "The Case of the Apple Turnover: An Experiment in Multichannel Communication Analysis") appear completely subjective, with no stated rules of analysis or hierarchies developed. Rosenberg optimistically claims that his analysis is "able to translate intuition into operation, . . . allowing one to know what he knows and to state this knowledge so it can be known to others," but he delivers very little on his promise.

Every new book of essays seems to be a forum for a particular point of view. This book is more broadly based, for instance, than Robert Rosenthal's *Skill in Nonverbal Communication: Individual Differences* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), because of *Semiotica's* wider range of authors and professional audiences. If there is a predominant "type" of research reported here, it is "situational" or "contextual" analysis as exemplified by Birdwhistell, Goffman, Schefflen, and Kendon.

Typically, contextual analysis is hampered by very good and very bad research. This volume, even if a little uneven, is better than most in its selections of contextual research. The best examples are ones such as Kendon's "Kissing Round," D. Schiffman's "Handwork as Ceremony," or W. John Smith, J. Chase, and A. K. Leiblich's "Tongue Showing," in which the contexts are set within a larger setting and make meaningful sense out of nonverbal patterns and rituals. Occasionally, the reader will wonder, "What can I do with this information now that I have it?" as in Rosenberg's "Case of the Apple Turnover." When this happens the author has not made clear and sufficient links between the research presented and the larger body of theory and/or research.

Overall, this book contains a number of good examples of research for the student reader. The selections do not particularly cover language and its relationship to nonverbal behavior or paralanguage. Two articles deal with speech and gesture, but they are not up to par with the rest of the book and do little to further understanding of the state of the art in these areas. However, there are several cross-cultural articles that are interrelated, building from one another; they could be springboards for cross-cultural interests. In addition, Kendon suggests in the introduction several areas of research that have not been systematically studied to date and deserve to be examined theoretically and empirically.

Considering the limitations of publishing only from a journal's past articles, the quality of this volume suggests how good *Semiotica* has been over the years as a professional outlet in the nonverbal field. It also portends of future volumes worth reading.

Briefly Noted

Jay Ruby, ed. *A Crack in the Mirror: Reflexive Perspectives in Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982. 299 + ix pp. \$20.00 (cloth).

Twelve essays which focus on the concept of "reflexivity" as it is manifested in the work of anthropologists, with an introduction by Barbara Myerhoff and Jay Ruby. The contributors include Richard Schechner (a version of whose essay was published in *Studies* 7:3), Victor Turner, Dennis Tedlock, and Barbara Babcock. Two of the papers, by Jay Ruby and Eric Michaels, deal specifically with the use of film and video in anthropological research.

International Directory of Film and TV Documentation

Sources. Brenda Davies, ed. *Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF)*, Brussels, 1980. SB. No price. 86 pp. Available in the United States from The Museum of Modern Art, Department of Film, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.

A valuable listing for film scholars of international organizations which contains materials for the study of film. Each entry contains names, addresses, hours of service, description of facilities, etc. It is a nice supplement to Nancy Allen's "Film Study Collections: A Guide to Their Development" (1979) and Linda Harris Mehr's "Motion Pictures, Television, and Radio: A Union Catalogue of Manuscripts and Special Collections in the Western United States" (1977).

Information for Authors

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Front Cover: "Fate of a Child," p. 41.

