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Contents

The Shanghai Art School and the Modern Mechanism of Artistic Celebrity (1913-1937)

Jane Zheng

Prior scholarship has illuminated the role of the publishing industry in assisting the initiation of a new mechanism of artistic celebrity in the emerging public space of painting in nineteenth century Shanghai. This article examines the relationship between the development of this mechanism and the new art institutions that started to dominate the early twentieth century Shanghai art world, by using the Shanghai Art School (Shanghai Meizhuan), which was the most important private art school in Republican China, as an example. Based on a number of primary sources such as school archives and newspapers, it argues that the School was a powerful agent in contributing to an artist's meteoric rise to fame by providing new effective short cuts towards that goal, such as promoting upward social mobility with its education and reputation, increasing the artist's public exposure and developing a group effect (group solidarity). The powerful influence of the School is further demonstrated by its role in transforming modern Chinese artistic criteria into a blend of social and aesthetic norms. In addition, the article provides some new perspectives towards understanding modern masters like Liu Haisu and modern Chinese art criticism.

The emergence of a new mechanism for attaining celebrity in the nineteenth century Shanghai art world has been recognized as one important phenomenon in the modernization process of Chinese painting. Jonathan Hay notes that three historical processes created the public space for painting in Shanghai: "a commercial and cultural crossroads at the intersection of a region, a network of littoral cities, and the outside world; the development of a leisure market into which painting was incorporated; and the emergence of a new social mechanism of artistic celebrity."[1] Artists were melded into the public domain and achieved their fame through public exposure instead of following the way of the ancient masters.[2] These discoveries have shed light on the transformation of the way artists rose to fame in the nineteenth century, and also have imposed questions on the succeeding story in the twentieth century, an era in which art institutions developed to the point of dominating the modern Shanghai art world.[3] Was there any relationship between these new

art institutions and the mechanisms of achieving fame? Moreover, as the publishing industry (e.g. calendar posters, books, magazines, etc.) is still a predominant topic in art institutional discourse, a research gap is evident in relation to other categories of art institutions, such as art galleries, museums, exhibitions, art schools, and art clubs. In comparison to the efficiency of the publishing industry in achieving artists' celebrity status, did there emerge any new more powerful art institution in the twentieth century?

This research makes use of the art school, which has attracted limited scholarly attention, as a new medium within which to explore these questions. It looks at the first half of the history of the Shanghai Art School, the most important private art school in the Republican period, and focuses on the School's engagement with mechanisms of creating artistic celebrity.[4] It argues that the School played a significant role in effectively and rapidly creating a group of famous artists and thus contributed to the development of artistic fame in the Shanghai art world. This argument is to be supported by evidence in two aspects. The first section shows that the School provided effective short cuts towards the achievement of celebrity such as promoting the upward social mobility of artists with its education and reputation, increasing artists' public exposure, and by developing a mutually beneficial group effect. The second section casts light on the transformation of artistic criteria in Chinese painting as concomitant to that of the meaning of fame to further demonstrate the powerful influence of the School in its engagement with fostering artistic celebrity.

The Short Cuts Toward Celebrity

The paths modern art institutions provided for artists to achieve fame in the nineteenth century have been studied, such as exposing their names and artwork to the public and jointly publishing in a group, which created an impression of a "community."[5] However, the efficiency of the path offered by the publishing industry can be dwarfed dramatically by that provided by the Shanghai Art School during the Republican period. The following text will demonstrate the influence of the School with descriptions of three short cuts to celebrity. "Upward social mobility" was a new path towards celebrity created by the School, which also developed additional and much more efficient functions within the existing paths of "public exposure" and "the group effect." All three testify to the School as a new and powerful agent in creating artistic celebrities.

Upward Social Mobility

One major short cut offered by the School was the promotion of art-

ists' upward social mobility with the School's education and reputation. This was first created by the School's particular geographic location in Shanghai, a city at the center of the Chinese art world. As Marie-Claire Berigère writes, "The growth of the great coastal cities resulted essentially from people flocking into the towns from the countryside."[6] The newly prospering city of Shanghai opened up new horizons for the influx of people from other provinces, among whom, were artists. They were able to achieve national celebrity if they could establish themselves in the Shanghai art scene. Huang Shiquan observed in the late nineteenth century, "The calligraphers and painters from different provinces who have gained a reputation from their art in Shanghai numbered upwards of a hundred at least."[7] This trend continued in the first half of the twentieth century. Li Ximou, an official in the Shanghai Education Bureau, wrote in the preface to the *1947 Art Year Book*:

> Shanghai with its convenient traffic is attracting modern intellectuals. She holds the leading position in culture, education, science, politics and commerce. In the field of art, different painting clans and theories are flourishing in Shanghai, the influence of which has even reached the international art world. Shanghai is the origin of new art in China. Artists who come from other provinces with artistic skills all achieve their fame and gain recognition in the market (*shou ming ding jia*). This situation is really similar to that in Rome as the Capital of Italy and Paris as the Capital of France.[8]

Shanghai meant both hope and opportunity for ambitious artists throughout the nation. Ni Yide recalled that when he taught in Guangzhou, Shanghai artists' works were copied and followed by young Guangzhou art students. When he finished teaching, some of his Guangzhou students followed him to Shanghai because "Shanghai is the cultural center of China; the environment for art studies is far better than that in Guangzhou."[9]

Secondly, upward social mobility is one effect caused by school education, and this was also true with the Shanghai Art School.[10] As the oldest and biggest art school in Shanghai, any relationship with the School, teaching or learning, would bring prestige. Social mobility promoted by the School can be observed through cases of both students and teachers. A certificate from the School was a solid foundation for students to start their art related careers, and was also a stepping-stone toward being accepted by the art world. This was particularly true for non-local students who wished to find a job in their hometowns. According to Chen Baoyi, when the School was first established the students were a mixture of both local Shanghai students and those from other provinces.[11] In 1922, most students in the School came from inland China to study Western style painting or art education.[12] The majority of them

went back to take up art teaching posts in middle schools. In addition, some graduates founded their own art schools. For example, Liu Qiuren, a Zhejiang student who graduated from the School, set up his private Zhejiang Art School (*Zhejiang Meishu Zhuanke Xuexiao*) in Hangzhou, which existed for three years.[13] Some graduates hosted solo or group exhibitions in their hometowns suggesting that they were accepted as members by the local art circle. Wang Yachen recorded several art exhibitions of this kind in the early 1920s: one was the Second Young Artists' Exhibition in Jiangsu showing eighteen graduates' works; the other was held by the Association of Fellow Provincials from Wuxi (a graduates' organization of the School), exhibiting around sixty paintings.[14]

The School was also important to those interested in developing a professional art career because its high reputation assisted graduates in pursuing further studies in other art schools in China or foreign countries. When Zhou Duo, a student in the research institute of the School, and later a member of the Storm Society,[15] decided to continue his studies in Japan the School delivered a letter to the Education Ministry.[16] Other students such as Yan Liang and Ma Duanyu, with the assistance of the School, also gained overseas study passes smoothly from the Education Ministry.[17] The School also helped students to contact foreign consuls. One letter signed by the acting Principal Wang Jiyuan was delivered to the Japanese Consul General, Seki Sha, for three students in the Western Painting Department; Wang Xuebang, Wen Xiuqing and Wang Yongshui.[18] In addition, as a famous art school in Shanghai, it was also assisted in these affairs by other social organizations such as the Global Students' Federation (*Huanqiu Zhongguo Xueshenghui*).[19] One letter from Jin Qijing, a student already in Japan, reported her situation in Tokyo to Liu Haisu, showing that Liu did help students in his School.[20]

Admittedly, the above were not guaranteed conditions for art students to gain a reputation, and it was said that "Getting a school certificate does not mean you are a successful artist."[21] However, the School provided opportunities for art graduates to join the art circle in China. Among them were some successful artists such as Cheng Shifa and some returning students, such as Zhang Xian, Liu Kang, Wu Hengqin, Liu Shi, and others. According to Tang Zheming's study, some graduates later became well known Chinese artists after 1949: Guo Meimo, a professor at the Central Art Academy; Xie Ruijie, the head of the Zhengzhou Art Academy; Hei Bolong, the head of the Shandong Art Academy; Wu Yifeng, a professor in the Sichuan Art Academy; Xiao Longshi, the head of the Anhui Painting and Calligraphy Academy; Xia Mingbo, the head of the North Chinese Art Society; and Chen Bayu, a professor at the Nanjing Art Academy.[22]

Compared to students, teachers enjoyed an obvious advantage. A teaching position at the Shanghai Art School granted an artist the prestige

equivalent to a certificate of professional qualification. For this reason, artists, particularly young teachers, liked to be affiliated with the School. For example, Zhang Tianqi showed sixty paintings in his solo finger painting exhibition at the School in 1933.[23] It was reported in the *Shenbao* that "Zhang Tianqi came from Wuxi, [and has been] teaching at the Shanghai Art School for many years. After class, he likes to do finger paintings."[24] When Ma Mengrong passed away in 1931, a news report specifically mentioned "From 1928, he served as a Chinese painting professor at the Shanghai Art School."[25] Comparatively speaking, salary became secondary to prestige as a reason for teachers to take up a post. Lu Youlan, the daughter of Lu Yifei, frankly told the author, "The prestige the Shanghai Art School provided was the major reason for an artist from other provinces to work there. With this prestige, it became easy for my father to get other teaching jobs, sell paintings and even to establish his own private art school."[26]

A teaching position in the School also meant admission to the famous artists' circle in Shanghai. In 1931, among the seventy-six "First Class Great Artists" advertised in *Yi Yuan* [Art Garden],[27] around fifty artists were teachers, ex-teachers, or graduates of the Shanghai Art School.[28] In 1933, the Chinese Art Exhibition in Europe organized by Xu Beihong, exhibited works done by sixty-six artists, twenty-five of whom were art teachers (or former teachers) from the Shanghai Art School.[29] In the 1940s, among the members of the largest art society in China, *the Zhongguo Huahui* [Chinese Art Society], twenty-seven were art teachers at the Shanghai Art School, and among the twelve general directors of the society, eight once taught at the School.[30]

Moreover, the reputation achieved through the path of the School was not merely local but also national. Instructors at the School were held in high esteem from artists outside Shanghai. For example, Hong Kong, a city known as "Small Shanghai," was a follower of Shanghai fashions in the 1930s. A private art school in Hong Kong, the Chinese Art Academy (*Zhonghua Meishu Xuexiao*), invited Liu Haisu, Pan Yuliang and Wang Jiyuan to be honorary lecturers in their school.[31] When Teng Gu and Wang Jiyuan visited this school, their trip was reported in Hong Kong's newspapers and the Shanghai Art School they came from was particularly mentioned.[32]

Individual artists' personal experience also provides strong supporting cases. Wang Jiyuan, Zhang Chenbo, Ni Yide, Wu Fuzhi, Xu Zuihou, Gu Kunbo, Zhang Tianqi, Huangxi, etc., were only young art students who had just graduated before starting their career at the School. Wen Zhaotong and Pan Tianshou were primary school teachers in some small remote villages before being hired. Lu Yifei, He Tianjian, Zhu Wenyun, Zhu Lesan and Zhu Wenhou were also anonymous artists in Shanghai before serving the School. However, all of them achieved meteoric national celebrity in the 1930s or 1940s, based on their prestige as professors at the Shanghai Art School. Among

these teachers, the outstanding example was the head of the School, Liu Haisu, who rose from being a middle school graduate without any formal art training to the "Great Master of the Renaissance of Chinese Art." He attracted much attention from the public because he was the principal of the School. As early as 1922, in Cai Yuanpei's (1868-1940) first article introducing Liu Haisu, he praised Liu for hav1912, he set up an art school in Shanghai. At first, there were only ten students... after 1914, the School gradually flourished, and now there are three to four hundred."[33] Nine years later M. Louis Laloy's preface to Liu Haisu's 1931 exhibition in Paris read, "Liu founded the Shanghai Art Academy [one early name of the School] with several friends at the age of sixteen, which later became the Shanghai Art School. It was the earliest art academy in China teaching European art."[34] Even sarcastic attacks on Liu did not exclude mentioning his school. Yu Jianhua satirized a kind of artist he called "fake Western artists" (*mao pai xi yang hua jia*), evidently alluding to Liu. He stated:

> This sort of person, though unqualified in art, is good at playing tricks. As they set up art schools early, having more students, they are quite powerful in this field. Although some students have realized that they are cheated, more are still at a loss.[35]

Admittedly, if anonymous young artists gained a teaching post in other art schools, national art schools in particular, they were also able to achieve fame. However, national art schools in most situations only engaged established artists, while the Shanghai Art School, which could only afford low salaries, relied heavily on talented but anonymous artists.[36] Therefore, the upward mobility which the School's education and reputation obviously promoted was a new stepping stone for artists who aspired to fame.

Public Exposure

"Public Exposure" was the second short cut offered by the School. From the late nineteenth century, it became an increasingly important path towards an artist's success. Jonathan Hay argues that "Fame had traditionally been associated with difficulty of access to the master's works, but now, through the art books, became associated with public exposure and accessibility."[37] However, compared with the publishing industry in the nineteenth century, I argue that the Shanghai Art School was more powerful as it synthesized a variety of existing paths and provided adequate opportunities for artists to gain public exposure in the twentieth century.

This short cut was first caused by the inter-dependent relationship between the reputation of both the School and its artists. Since the School's reputation relied heavily upon the qualifications of its teaching staff, it was

important, on the one hand, for the School to employ well-known artists so that it could attract prosperous students. This meant that even if its employees were anonymous as explained in the first section, it had to make them look famous. On the other hand, when the School advertised these artists for its own purposes, it actually promoted their fame. In the early years of the School, instructors' names were mentioned in its advertisements simply such as "Instructors: Zhang Yuguang, Xu Yongqing, Liu Haisu."[38] In the early 1920s, a brief introduction of their academic background was given such as "Li Chaoshi who returned from France; Jiang Xin, Zhou Qinhao graduated from the Tokyo Art School."[39] Later advertisements included more information to introduce artists. For instance one piece of news about Li Yishi read:

> The new teaching head of the Shanghai Art School, Li Yishi, arrived at the School to take up the post. Li studied at Glasgow University for many years; upon his return, he was appointed as a professor at Peking University and Director of the Western Painting Department at the Beijing Art School.[40]

Another piece of news about Fan Xinqiong read:

> The Shanghai Art School recently engaged the female artist Fan Xinqiong as a Western painting professor. Fan studied art in Europe for ten years and graduated from the Ecole Des Beaux-Arts and Lyon Art Academy. Her works were exhibited many times in Paris at international art exhibitions, winning high commendations in Europe.[41]

In 1932, when Teng Gu was awarded a Ph.D. degree in Germany, the Shanghai Art School actively advertised this news. According to the School diary, the news about Teng was mailed to the chief editors of several newspapers.[42] In the School journal of *Yishu Xunkan* the article "Teng Gu is awarded the art history doctoral degree" reported in great detail:

> The ex-professor at the Shanghai Art School, Teng Gu, went to Europe to study art history in 1929. He passed the oral defense conducted by experts from different fields such as philosophy, art history, archeology and history and was recently formally awarded the doctoral degree. The general grade is "Distinction." Berlin University has a rather strict examination system for art history and archeology Ph.D. programs. Usually after five to six or even more than ten years' study, many German students are still Ph.D. candidates; while it only took Dr. Teng two to three years to gain the degree. Moreover, this is an unprecedented international honor for China. Dr. Teng has decided to come back to China and will continue his teaching at the Shanghai Art School.[43]

The School also helped artists to publish their paintings and announce their prices to the public. According to the School diary in the principal's office in 1932, the School invited celebrities onto its board such as Cai Yuanpei, Wang Yiting, Jing Ziyuan, Chen Shuren, and Wu Tiecheng to jointly introduce their new art teacher Liang Kaishi,[44] and this news was sent to the newspaper for publication.[45] In addition, the School regularly issued press advertisements regarding internal issues in which artists' names frequently appeared; such as the name list of the teaching staff for summer school courses, the authors in the latest issue of the School journal, participants in the School exhibition and guests presenting at the School's commencements.

In contrast to the single medium of the publication industry, the School provided various modern media to expose artists' names to the public, such as exhibitions, publications (e.g. books, magazines and journals), and art club activities. Upon joining the School, both teachers' and students' works were naturally admitted to various art exhibitions, including the school achievement art exhibitions each semester, outdoor life drawing trip exhibitions and school anniversary exhibitions. For instance, it was reported that the outdoor life drawing trip exhibition in 1921 displayed eighteen oil paintings by Li Chaoshi, Zhou Qinhao, Cheng Xubai, and Qian Ding and about ten watercolor paintings by Liu Haisu, Wang Yachen and Wang Jiyuan.[46] Moreover, as a famous school in the art center of Shanghai, the School was often invited to attend art exhibitions outside Shanghai. For instance, during the four months from December 1921 to April 1922, the School received three art exhibition invitations from other provinces. One letter praised the School's achievements and invited its teachers and students to exhibit their works in the Tianjin art exhibition.[47] Another letter from an art exhibition for flood relief in Northern Jiangsu province read, "The excellence of the artworks in your school is well known. If you could attend this exhibition, your works would be widely acclaimed by the public."[48] The School also received accolades for its art education from the National Education Exhibition, which also invited the School to participate in the exhibition by promising a special room to display facilities and artworks of the Shanghai Art School.[49] New graduates such as Wan Guchan and Ni Yide, and young teachers like Xu Weibang, Wu Renwen, Gu Jiuhong and Zhu Zhijian,[50] exhibited their artworks at the Tianjin exhibition.[51]

Furthermore, artists were also given the opportunity to show their works overseas. In order to participate in the World Expo in Philadelphia, in 1926 the School sent fourteen artists' works oversees, most of which were *guohua* paintings. Among them were four ink paintings of chrysanthemums, lotus, loquats and plantains by Xie Gongzhan.[52] Pan Tianshou, a young artist who at that time had only worked for one year at the School, submitted three finger paintings.[53] Sometimes the School would send school artworks to international institutions as gifts. In 1933, for example, twenty paintings were sent

to the International Chinese Library in Geneva.[54] By taking advantage of these paths artists were able to exhibit their art and promote their names to an international audience, which in turn enhanced their reputations.

In addition to exhibitions, publishing was another important path that the School offered for artists to gain frequent public exposure. As school art education was a new and untouched research field in the early Republican period, artists in the School published a number of books and articles on their research. Although they differed in depth as academic writings, they were all helpful in the sense that the artists' fame was promoted. One student's letter to Zheng Wuchang praised Zheng highly as a master of both new and classical literary fields, as well as that of painting, which suggests that this student had not only seen Zheng's paintings but also had read his publications.[55] Liu Haisu's *Huaxue Quanzhen* [Art Truths] was a major reference book for many students outside of Shanghai, who obtained elementary knowledge of Western painting styles and also got to know the name of Liu Haisu. For example, Xie Haiyan used the book as a major reference during his middle school studies in Guangdong.[56] The School was also active from the 1910s in issuing school periodicals in large numbers, places where artists' names and works frequently appeared. Some information about artists was written in a style similar to reports on film stars. In the 1930s there was a special section reporting some artists' latest activities in *Yishu Xunkan*. It read:

> Liu Haisu is now painting sea scenes on the Putuo Island. He is expected to be back in September. . . . Wang Jiyjan was recently appointed the vice principal of the Shanghai Art School as well as director of the research institute. With his planning and management, the School now takes on a new look . . . Chen Shuren, from this autumn, will travel to Shanghai once a month for nude life studies at his leisure after political affairs. Pang Xunqin is preparing for his personal exhibition . . . Zhang Xian recently moved his residence to the Chinese Art Study Society (*Zhonghua Xueyi She*), working hard at Western style painting and calligraphy.[57]

Such information not only gave the artists' names but also provided interesting details about their private lives. This gained them greater recognition and/or created the impression that these artists were great celebrities whose daily activities were followed with interest by the public.

Art society activities at the School also contributed to artists' public exposure. Because the School had extensive links to other art institutions (e.g. the Aesthetic Education Society in the Jiangsu Education Society), artists also had their names and activities frequently reported in newspapers when they participated in these other organizations' activities. For instance, at least four news articles reported an educational excursion to Japan in 1926 sponsored

by the School along with another five art societies. Participants' names such as Wang Jiyuan, Teng Gu, Yu Jifan, Yang Qingqin and Liu Haisu appeared in each article.[58] Working at the School, artists gained numerous opportunities to expose their names and works to the public through art exhibitions, publications and art society activities. All the exposure might not confirm the artists' qualifications in painting but the oft-repeated appearance of artists' names was effective in achieving celebrity status for them in the eyes of the pubic.

Group Effect

Another important and peculiar short cut was the "group effect." The assembly of artists as a group generated interaction and mutual support among artists. Moreover, the organization developed its external relations with society. Both effectively enhanced artists' reputations.

By joining the School, students and anonymous young teachers were given the opportunity to meet and learn from established artists in the Shanghai art world. Wang Geyi recalled: "Liu Haisu was a frequent visitor to Wu Changshi's. Sometimes, he introduced several teachers (from the Shanghai Art School) to Wu; sometimes he guided year three college students to see Wu."[59] These opportunities for approaching established artists were important primarily because positive comments from those established artists could greatly benefit young artists' reputations once their talents were recognized. Pan Tianshou, for instance, entered the Shanghai art circle after being employed by the School.[60] According to Wang Geyi, Liu Haisu introduced Pan (at the age of 27) to Wu Changshi (who was 80 years old) by accompanying Pan to Wu's house. After that, Pan often visited Wu and showed Wu his paintings for comments.[61] Wu's high opinion of Pan's talents was clearly expressed in Wu's poems such as "The heaven and the land are awestruck when they see you paint; you are so talented that [you] are able to naturally integrate talk and chat in alleys into your poems" (*tian jing di guai jian luo bi, xiang yu jie tan zong ru shi*), and "Pan is now only in his twenties, but his talent is immeasurable" (*nian jin luo guan cai dou liang*).[62] These verses are always cited, even in today's essays on Pan's artistic attainments, which at that time undoubtedly enabled Pan to win fame in the Shanghai art world. In the 1930s Liu Haisu was already a celebrated artist. Sometimes he would compose colophons and prefaces for graduates and colleagues to introduce these young artists to the art world. For instance, he inscribed the preface for the second version of Zhang Shuqi's *Bird Painting Collection* (*Lingmao Ji*) with "Both color and spirit are excellent. They are really pleasant to our eyes."[63]

Young artists also gained opportunities to expose their names and works to the public along with famous artists, particularly at one category of School art exhibitions principally aimed at raising funds.[64] In the 1930s, fre-

quent school art exhibitions of this type entitled 'Masters' Art Exhibitions were hosted, but most works for sale were actually done by young school-teachers instead of established artists. In the 'Masters' Art Exhibition of 1933, the still-anonymous young artists Liu Kang, Lu Yifei, Zhang Tianqi and Wu Kechang were included and shared the title of "Contemporary Master."[65] Although a minority, some students were even allowed to exhibit their works at formal exhibitions together with their teachers and other famous artists. For example, Ni Yide and Xue Zhen exhibited their works at the Heaven Horse Society Art Exhibitions during their student days.[66] Zhu Zhijian participated in the Third Art Exhibition of the Heaven Horse Society as a third year student.[67] The publication of their works and names in the same book with firmly established artists was equally helpful to young artists. Liu Haisu was an example of this. In 1914, as an anonymous young artist at the age of nineteen, he began to publish his works with famous local artists such as Zhang Yuguang, Ding Song, and others. Through this exposure, for instance his inclusion in *Zhenqing Shuhua Ji* [Zhenqing Calligraphy and Painting Collection],[68] and in a series of *qianbi xihua tie* [pencil model books],[69] Liu was soon recognized as an equally successful artist.

The "group effect" also greatly benefited the established artists as younger and less famous artists often did the actual work in painting, research and other jobs, which strongly supported the established artists' reputations. This was most typical of Liu Haisu, as others worked for him in both the school operations and publications. In the School's internal administrative affairs Wang Jiyuan was an assistant to Liu from the 1910s to 1935, while Xie Haiyan was in charge of almost everything from 1935 to 1952.[70] Even Liu's personal exhibition of 1932, well known for its grand scale, was in reality arranged in all details by other artists at the School (primarily by Wang Jiyuan).[71] In recent years rising scholarly attention has been paid to Liu Haisu's plagiarism. According to Wang Zhen's study, part of the papers and other publications authored by Liu Haisu were actually not Liu's works: *Zhongguo Huihua Shang de Liufa Lun* [Six Laws in Chinese Painting][72] was in fact written by Teng Gu; *Xiandai Huihua Lun* [On Modern Paintings][73] was translated by his nephew Liu Sixun; and *Shijiu Shiji Falanxi de Meishu* [19th Century French Art][74] was translated by Ni Yide. Zheng Wuchang was virtually a private writer for Liu Haisu and wrote most drafts for Liu's lectures during his trips to Europe from 1929 to 1931.[75] All these authors were Liu's teaching staff in his private art school. In this group these artists did the work and Liu enjoyed the fame. In addition to the publications, this group also actively echoed the praises of other people regarding Liu's artistic achievements. At *Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition* school teachers showed their great admiration by composing articles for complimenting him, such as Ni Yide's "Liu Haisu's Art," Gong Bizheng's "After Seeing Mr. Liu Haisu's Oil Paintings," Zheng

Wuchang's "From Haisu's Publications to Art Exhibitions,"[76] and Fu Lei's "On Liu Haisu."[77] This suggests that a group of artists in the Shanghai Art School led by Liu worked jointly to create the artist's great name: "Liu Haisu."

Finally, the School's social network played a significant role in creating famous artists. As the school board was comprised of influential political and business figures and the education elite, it not only supported the development of the School but also paved the way for the growth of artists' reputations. Again, Liu Haisu was a prominent case. School board members directly participated in promoting Liu, and the most active figure was Cai Yuanpei. In 1922 Cai published "Jieshao Yishu Jia Liu Haisu" [Introducing the Artist Liu Haisu], which was the first important step in Liu's rise to national fame.[78] In 1926 he also composed the preface for Liu Haisu's painting collection, *The Haisu Jinzuo* [Latest Works by Liu Haisu], praising Liu's style as close to that of Gauguin and Van Gogh.[79] When Liu Haisu's career fell to its lowest point in 1928 due to the campus upheaval, Cai Yuanpei as head of the University Academy (*Da Xue Yuan*), arranged Liu's trip to Europe, laying a fundamental step in the building of Liu's international reputation.[80] Before his departure, Cai Yuanpei, along with other school board members such as Jiang Mengling (the Education Minister), Jing Hengyi, Hu Shi, Shi Liangcai and Gao Ru, attended Liu Haisu's personal exhibition *Liu Haisu's Farewell Art Exhibition* (Liu Haisu Liubie Jinian Huazhan), showing the West that Liu was a contemporary art master in China. Cai also extolled Liu's contributions on many occasions after Liu returned. After Liu came back from the Berprincipal of a small private art school attracted considerable public attention overnight. After this incident Liu's fame leapt beyond the Shanghai art world to reach the masses. In one 1926 issue of *Shanghai Huabao* [*the Shanghai Painting Poster*], an image of a nude female model was used as a humorous symbol indicating Liu Haisu, which also suggests that Liu was widely known in Shanghai at the time because of that incident.

The initial intention of developing the social connections of the School might have been based in a desire to foster the school's operation and art education, but these social connections concurrently assisted in boosting artists' personal fame. In another paper, I argue that the Shanghai Art School that Liu Haisu created was a wonder in that it survived and thrived for forty years as a private art school. Here, I would argue that another wonder of the School was the creation of the brilliant fame of "Liu Haisu," a celebrated artist and legendary figure in the era. If the parallels of the School history and Liu's personal history are closely examined, intimate interactive relationships can be illuminated; without the Shanghai Art School Liu Haisu might still have existed as a good artist but would not have been the "Great Master of the Renaissance of Chinese Art" as we know him today.

In conclusion, by synthesizing the three dimensions of "upward so-

cial mobility," increased "public exposure," and the "group effect," the Shanghai Art School became a very powerful agent in creating artists' fame. By ascending the ladder of the School, a large group of artists achieved fame in a meteoric fashion that contrasted sharply with the limited number of ancient masters who became famous after several decades or even after life long efforts. Moreover the School even eclipsed the success of the Shanghai press at creating widely influential celebrity: the press created the local reputation of artists such as "Zhang Yuguang" and "Shen Bochen," while the School achieved the internationally recognized artistic celebrity of "Liu Haisu" in the twentieth century.

Fame and The New Artistic Criteria

As fame traditionally embodied artistic excellence, it was intimately connected to artistic criteria. Therefore, the efficiency of the School in churning out famous artists can be observed not only in the short cuts it provided to that success, but also in the process by which it transformed the modern artistic criteria in Chinese painting to include social influence through fame. This process was composed of two stages. First, with the engagement of the School the meaning of fame was changed as the truth about the real achievement of artists and the real quality of renowned artworks was downplayed. Secondly, this increased fame directly influenced modern artistic criteria and played an important part in guiding art practice and criticism in the modern art world. The resulting criteria were a blend of artistic and social norms that developed concomitant to the transformation of the meaning of fame and the new ways of achieving fame.

The first stage accompanied the process by which the School effectively exposed artists to greater masses, resulting in a chain of reactions amongst society that were wider in scope and to a greater degree than ever before in the nineteenth century.[90] One distinctive feature of this greater public was that it even included people in the Western art world. Liu Haisu, again, was an example of this. In contrast to Xu Beihong and Lin Fengmian, who were trained in European academies and were recognized by the West through their academic merits, Liu Haisu's international reputation was primarily an "echo" of his success in China. M. Louis Laloy's essay based the appellation of "Chinese Master," which he generously gave Liu, on two reasons; the first being that Liu's painting suggested a poetic flavor emphasized in ancient Chinese painting theories; the second being the fact that Liu had an important career of art education in China. However both reasons reflected inaccurate understandings of Chinese cultural history.[91] His was not a serious conclusion drawn from a careful comparison of a full range of Chinese artists, but one presumably drawn only according to whatever had been learned of the artist in Europe.

However, this problematic appreciation of the "Chinese Master" offered by M. Louis Laloy aroused "enthusiastic echoes" in China, as Westerners' accolades were viewed as an international glory. The Shanghai mayor Mr. Wu began his catalog preface, "A modern master painter, leader and exponent of our new art, Mr. Liu Haisu . . . received high commendation and esteem from the art fraternity of Paris."[92] After this, the social elite, other officials, newspaper journalists, and others offered their appreciations.

Moreover, the participation of a wide sphere of the public exerted considerable social influence on "fame" because their comments contained little professional assessment, in contrast to artists' peer-appreciation in the nineteenth century. Most key figures who contributed to Liu's success were not people in the art field. Strictly speaking, even Cai Yuanpei was a statesman and art lover more than an art critic. As independent art criticism had not really started in China at that time, and it was government officials who did the majority of art criticism, artists' fame bore even less correlation to artists' real qualifications in an artistic sense. Differing voices were weak; among all the "critical" articles published about *Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition*, only one pointed out that it was the grand scale of Liu's exhibition rather than Liu's art itself that deserved the most attention:

> It is out of question that China needs art. The broad scale, strong publicity and the great social influence of Liu Haisu's exhibition really deserve our attention . . . However, honestly speaking, the Chinese art world does not have any new views; or there are already new views but no successful artistic expressions yet. Mr. Liu is no exception. He only talks about "line", "color", "composition" and "tone" too . . . In short, Mr. Liu has his own merits as well as shortcomings - known to all artists.[93]

At the end he observed the audience at Liu's exhibition and found that most of them knew little about art and were not confident in their understanding of art: "They know too little about art, visiting the exhibition only for the noble cause of art."[94]

According to Huang Shiquan in nineteenth century Shanghai, "The finest work does not necessarily come from the most famous artists, and the work of famous artists is not guaranteed to be fine."[95] In this case this same phenomenon was accentuated by the fact that the majority of participants, both exhibition organizers and customif Obviously this viewer did not admire Liu Haisu's art according to existing aesthetic criteria but was making an effort under the pressure of the artist's fame to understand something new, which might even be in conflict with his entrenched artistic concepts. In other words, fame, which was decided more by various social factors aligning with the involvement of the art institution, tried to educate the masses on what artistic

excellence was. This can be supported by two results in late twentieth century China, most notably in the contemporary art world. First, the sole criterion of literati painting was abandoned; more forms of artistic expression might be considered good. Second, there was wide confusion about what good art was, which was caused by the sudden rise of some artists whose works did not show much artistic excellence - whether according to traditional Chinese or "Western" criteria. Because the transformed artistic criteria blended with social norms were not clear or persuasive enough in contrast to those in literati painting, the whole twentieth century Chinese art world was at a loss to know which direction it was going to take, and was characterized by constant suspicion, denial and debate. Overall, the artistic standards of the twentieth century were reformulated with the intrusion of much social influence, and the Shanghai Art School was involved in this process.

Conclusion

The mechanism of artistic celebrity that developed in the late nineteenth century began to encompass increasingly complex social factors in the twentieth century. The public space of painting became more complicated as it was greatly expanded: the Western art world began to play a part in the Chinese mechanism of artistic fame; a wide range of non artworld people (e.g. governmental officials, businessmen, social elite, journalists, etc.) were extensively involved; and various art institutions and public art activities were also engaged. In this context the new art institution of the Shanghai Art School provided short cuts for artists towards achieving success. It promoted upward social mobility, increased artists' public exposure, and developed an effective group effect. Its influential engagement in the mechanism of developing fame from simple structured units to multi-functional organizations, and these new institutions played a significant role in developing the mechanism of artistic fame in the Republican period. The Shanghai Art School, in particular, emerged as a most powerful agent in churning out widely influential overnight artistic celebrities.

Several additional points might also be useful to future studies of art institutions and other related research projects. As the article shows, art institutions in the twentieth century were not independent separate units. Actually, various complex public relationships developed among them and this became a typical feature of the development of these institutions. It also offers the art school as a new angle from which to understand modern Chinese "masters" like Liu Haisu, and provides a new perspective on the relationship between fame, artistic criteria and art, from which one can study the transformation of artistic criteria and its influence on modern Chinese art. Furthermore, it shows that government officials instead of independent art scholars or critics did the

majority of art criticism in the twentieth century. Their participation mixed personal opinions and friendship with "criticism," and to some degree suppressed the growth of independent art criticism in the modern Chinese art world. This might also provide a new avenue for future studies of art and art criticism in Republican China.

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Notes:

[1] Jonathan Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Late Nineteenth Century," in *Art at the Close of China's Empire Temple* ed. Ju-hsi Chou (Arizona: Arizona State University, 1998), 164.

[2] Ibid., 173.

[3] In the recent decade of studies, the modernizing function of art institutions has been high lighted. It is believed that the major transition in twentieth century Chinese art does not only lie in the nature of the art itself, but also in the art world: institutions including magazines, museums, schools, dealers and auction houses that serve the artists and their patrons... through which "Modernity in its various guises" should be recognized. (AAS Annual Meeting, "Session 158: Modernity and Patronage in Visual Culture of Qing China," abstracts of the 1999 AAS Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, March 11-14, 1999, http://www.aasianst.org/absts/china1999abst/c-158.htm.) The notion of "New artistic institutions, or institution-like structures" in Republican Shanghai was also discussed in another recent conference. (AAS Annual Meeting, "Session 77: Modern Institutions of Art in Republican China," abstracts of the 2005 AAS Annual Meeting, Hyatt Regency, Chicago, March 31-April 3, 2005, http://www.aasianst.org/absts/2005abst/china/c-77.htm.)

[4] The Shanghai Art School changed its name seven times during its history. Its final official title was the Shanghai College of Fine Arts (*Shanghai Meishu Zhuanke Xuexiao*). Its popular name from 1917 to 1931 was the Shanghai Art School (*Shanghai Meishu Zhuanmen Xuexiao*), adopted in this article. The School was founded by Wu Shiguang (1885-?). Liu Haisu (1896-1994) became the School president from 1919 to 1952. He is famous for an open dispute with the Warlord of Sun Chuanfang in the Nude Model Incident of 1926.

[5] Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Late Nineteenth Century," 173.

[6] See Marie-Claire Berigère, *The Golden Age of the Chinese Bourgeoisie, 1911-1937*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 100.

[7] Huang Shiquan, *Songnan Mengying Lu* [Records of the Illusive Dream of Shanghai], cited in Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Late Nineteenth Century," 159.

[8] Li Ximou, preface to *Minguo Sanshiliunian Meishu Nianjian* [The 1947 Art Year Book] (Shanghai, 1947), 1.

[9] Ni Yide, "Ji jige meishu qingnian" [About Several Young Art Students], in *Ni Yide Yishu Suibi* [Random Art Essays by Ni Yide], ed. Ni Yide and Ding Yanshao (Shanghai: *Shanghai Wenyi Chubanshe*, 1999), 149.

[10] Daniel Levine and Robert J. Havighurst note that "Education is widely believed to help young people move up the social scale by preparing them for higher status occupations . . . increasing their power . . . and by giving them more of the general knowledge of the past and the present that mark middle-class people." See Daniel U. Levine and Robert J. Havighurst, *Society and Education* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1992), 213.

[11] Chen Baoyi, "Yanghua Yundong Guocheng Lueshu" [A Brief Record of the Western Painting Movement], in *Bainian Zhongguo Meishu Jingdian Wenku* [An Anthology of Classical Essays during the One Hundred Years], ed. Gu Sen (Shenzhen: Haitian chubanshe), vol. 5, 30.

[12] Ibid., 34. For the distribution of the provinces of origins of students, see the statistical chart in *The 25th Anniversary Commemorative Book of the Shanghai Art School, 1936.*

[13] Jiang Danshu, *Jiang Danshu Yishu Jiaoyu Zazhu* [Jiang Danshu's Random Essays on Art Education] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1987), 160.

[14] Wang Yachen, "Kanle Wuxi Huanzhan Yihou" [After Visiting the Wuxi Art Exhibition] in *Shishi Xinbao* [Newspaper Everyday], July 14, 1923, Arts Section, 4., and "Kanle Qingnian Huahui di'er Jie Zhanlanhui de Suigan" [The Impression of the Second Young Artists' Exhibition] in *Shishi Xinbao*, July 5, 1922, Arts Section, 4.

[15] The Storm Society (*Jue Lan She*) was an art society, which aimed at exploring and experimenting with new artistic representations by importing the ideas and techniques of modern and modernist European art. It was founded by Pang Xunqin in Shanghai in 1932 and became defunct in 1935. For more details, see Ralph Croizier, "Post-Impressionists in Pre-War Shanghai: The Juelanshe (Storm Society) and the Fate of Modernism in Republican China," in *Modernity in Asian Art*, ed. John Clark (Broadway, N.S.W.: Wild Peony Press, 1993), 135-54.

[16] The letter read, "The student in our Western Painting Department in the research institution: Zhou Duo plans to study art in Japan for further achievements. . . . We have checked the student's academic records in the painting research institute this semester; they belong to a high level. Now he has made a decision to pursue his studies abroad. For that reason, we are submitting the student's certificate and two photos and 3-*yuan*-stamp tax, waiting for the examination by the Ministry." (The official letter from the Shanghai Art School, delivered to the Education Ministry in 1933, in the *Shanghai Meizhuan dang'an* [the archives of the Shanghai Art School], collected in the Shanghai Archive House in Shanghai, hereafter cited as SMZDA.)

[17] See the School's official letters to the Education Ministry on January 30, 1933 and August 16, 1933, SMZDA.

[18] See Wang Jiyuan's letter to the Japanese Consul General Seki Sha on November 5, 1934, SMZDA.

[19] A Letter by Zhu Shaoping (the general secretary of the Global Chinese Students' Federation) to the principal of the Shanghai Art School on April 17, 1933, SMZDA.

[20] See Jin Qingjing's letter to Liu Haisu in the 1930s, date unknown, SMZDA.

[21] *Yishu Xunkan* [The Three Times a Month Art Journal] 1/2 (September 11, 1932): 13.

[22] See Tang Zheming, "Haishang Zhongguo Hua Baiwushi Nian Lungang" [One Hundred and Fifty Years' History of Shanghai School Painting], in *Studies on Shanghai School Paintings* (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe, 2001), 179.

[23] Finger painting (*zhi hua*) is a special category in *guohua* which is done with the fingers. For more details about finger painting, see David Clarke, "Cross-cultural Dialogue and Artistic Innovation: Teng Baiye and Mark Tobey," in *Shanghai Modern 1919-1945*, ed. Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, Lum Ken and Zheng Shengtian (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2005), 101.

[24] See *Shenbao* [Shanghai Daily], May 28, 1933, 12.

[25] See *Shenbao*, September 27, 1932, 15.

[26] A personal interview with Ms. Lu Youlan at Lu's home in Shanghai on July 16, 2003, 2:00p.m - 4:00p.m.

[27] The *Art Garden* was called "An anthology of master pieces by old and new national famous artists." See "Yiyuan," *Wenhua* [The Culture Arts Review], November, 1932.

[28] Ibid. These artists were as following: Wang Shizi, Wang Yiting, Wang Taomin, Wang Jiyuan, Wang Yuanbo, Zhu Qizhan, Zhu Zengjun, Jiang Xiaojian, Wang Yachen, Wu Yifeng, Wu Hengqin, Li Qiujun, Li Zuhan, Li Yishi, Qiu Daiming, Jin Qijing, Yu Jifan, Fan Xinqiong, Jiang Danshu, Tang Juan, Tang Yunyu, Yao Yuqin, Ma Shide, Ma Mengrong, Liu Yanren, Ni Yide, Chen Ziqing, Chen Shuren, Huang Binhong, Cao Yunzhong, Zhang Yuguang, Zhang Hongwei, Zhang Daqian, Zhang Chenbo, Zhang Shanzi, Yang Qingqin, Rong Junli, Ye Wengui, Zheng Manqing, Zheng Wuchang, Pan Yuliang, Pan Tianshou, Pan Sitong, Zhu Wenyun, Jiang Zhouhe, Qian Shoutie, Xie Gongzhan, Yan Ganyuan, Gu Kunbo, and Zhou Lihua.

[29] For details, see Xu Zhongnian, "Ouzhou Zhongguo Meizhan de Shiming" [The Commission of the Chinese Art Exhibition in Europe], *Meishu Shenghuo* [Arts and Life], 7 (1934).

[30] The eight people were He Tianjian, Wang Yachen, Zheng Wuchang, Zhang Yuguang, Qian Xhoutie, Ma Gongyu, Zhang Daqian, and Wang Shizi. ("Address Book of the Chinese Art Society" in the archive of the Chinese painting and calligraphy society collected in the Shanghai Archive House, 1942.)

[31] See Li Jianqiang and Li Shizhuang, "A Chronology of Hong Kong Visual Art Activities 1900-1930," in *Besides: A Journal of Art History & Criticism* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Art History Research Society, 1997), vol.1, 227.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Cai Yuanpei, "Jieshao Yishu Jia Liu Haisu" [Introducing the Artist Liu Haisu], in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji* [The Anthology of Cai Yuanpei's Aesthetic Education Essays], ed. Gao Shuping (Hunan: Hunan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1987), 155-6.

[34] M. Louis Laloy, "Preface to Liu Haisu's Exhibition," trans. Fu Lei, *Wenhua*

(October 25, 1932), 39-44.

[35] See Yu Jianhua, "Xiandai Zhongguo Hua Tan de Zhuangkuang" [The Situation of the Contemporary Chinese Art World], in *Yu Jianhua Meishu Lunwen Ji* [Anthology of Yu Jianhua's Art Essays], ed. Zhou Jiyan (Jinan: Shandong Meishu Chubanshe, 1986), 71-73. In the following text, he stated "Because these paintings do not look like Western paintings, they were then claimed to be self-expression, life expression and the development of individuality. Later, these artists learned several of the terms of Post-Impressionism, Expressionism and Futurism, claiming to be Cezanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin. In fact, they had little basic training but cheated themselves and others with unashamed exaggerations. Now [that] the truth is to be revealed, so some of them plan to have a trip to Japan or France for a gilded reputation." In 1928, Liu undertook his first trip to Europe.

[36] For the financial situation of the School, see Zheng Jie, "The Shanghai Art College, 1913-1937" (M.Phil. diss., Hong Kong University, 2006).

[37] See Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Late Nineteenth Century," 173.

[38] *Shenbao*, July 19, 1914, 1.

[39] *Shenbao*, April 14, 1920, 11.

[40] *Shenbao*, July 29, 1921, 15.

[41] *Shenbao*, September 1, 1929, 15.

[42] The School diary recorded, "[Today] we mailed two pieces of news to chief editors or editors in the news section of various newspapers; the publication of *Yishu Xunkan* and the news that our professor Teng Gu was awarded an Art History Ph.D. degree in Germany." (See the diary at the school principal's office on August 31, 1932, SMZDA.)

[43] "Latest News," *Yishu Xunkan* 1/2 (September 21, 1932): 13; *Shenbao*, September 2, 1932, 11.

[44] Liang Kaishi graduated from the Shanghai Art School and taught there in 1931 and 1932.

[45] See the diary at the school principal's office, October 10, 1932, SMZDA.

[46] See *Shenbao*, October 15, 1921, 11.

[47] Yan Zhihui's letter to Liu Haisu on March 2, 1922, SMZDA.

[48] A letter from the Flood Relief Exhibition to Liu Haisu on December 16, 1921, SMZDA.

[49] The General Secretary of the National Education Exhibition, Tao Zhixing, and Xu Zeling's letter to Liu Haisu on April 16, 1922, SMZDA.

[50] All of them graduated from the School one or two years prior and stayed to teach. Li Chaoshi, Liu Haisu and Wang Jiyuang also attended the exhibition.

[51] See the checklist of painters and their works for the Tianjin Industrial Exhibition on September 16, 1922, SMZDA.

[52] See the submission list of the Shanghai Art School for the World Expo in Philadelphia in the U.S. in 1926, SMZDA.

[53] Ibid.

[54] The record of the Fifth Administrative Affairs Meeting of the Shanghai Art School on July 6, 1933, SMZDA.

[55] "A Letter to Zheng Wuchang," *Shanghai Meishu Zhuanke Xuexiao Jikan* [The Shanghai Art School Quarterly] 2 (1929): 52.

[56] See Liu Haisu, "Bujuan de Yuanding Xie Haiyan" [A Tireless Gardener Xie Haiyan], *Nanyi Xuebao* [The Academic Post of the Nanjing Art Academy] 1 (1988): 5.

[57] See "Latest News about Artists," *Yishu Xunkan* 1/1 (September 1, 1932): 15.

[58] *Shenbao* January 28, 1926; 10; March 1, 1926; 11; March 6, 1926, 7; April 27, 1926, 7.

[59] Wang Geyi, *Wang Geyi Suixiang Lu* [Random Reminiscences of Wang Geyi] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe, 1982), 52.

[60] In 1924 Pan joined the Art Research Society. At the election for commentators, Pan only gained 10 votes, in contrast to Wang Jiyuan who gained the most votes of 22. This suggests that in 1924 Pan as a young artist had low prestige in the circle. (See the record of the general meeting of the Jiangsu Province Art Research Society on August 15, 1924, SMZDA.)

[61] See Wang Geyi, *Wang Geyi Suixiang Lu*, 52-53. See also Liu Haisu, "Wangshi Yixi Huai A Shou" [Recalling Pan Tianshou], in *Pan Tianshou Yanjiu* [Studies of Pan Tianshou], ed. Lu Xin (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Meishu Xueyuan Chubanshe, 1989), 28.

[62] Wu Changshi, "Du Pan A Shou Shanshui Zhangzi" [Pan Tianshou's Landscape Paintings], in *Pan Tianshou Pingzhuan* [A Critical Biography of Pan Tianshou], ed. Pan Gongzhan (Hong Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan), 17-18.

[63] Hong Rui, "Zhang Shuqi Nianbiao" [A Chronology of Zhang Shuqi], *Duoyun* [Art Cloud] 31 (1991): 36-40.

[64] The School had two categories of art exhibitions; one being regular exhibitions displaying students' progress, and the other category aimed at raising funds. In the face of financial problems in the 1930s, the latter was frequently held.

[65] *Shenbao*, December 18, 1933, 4.

[66] See *Shenbao,* March 18, 1922, 15. At the Fifth Heaven Horse Society Art Exhibition, Ni Yide as a third year student attended. See also *Shenbao,* July 24, 1923, 15. At the Sixth Heaven Horse Society Art Exhibition, Xue Zhen as a second year student attended.

[67] See *Shenbao*, August 5, 1921, 15.

[68] *Zhenqing Shuhua Ji* no.1 was issued in October, 1914 (*Shenbao,* October 11, 1914, 10-11), *Zhenqing Shuhua Ji* no.2 was issued in November. Liu Haisu published his Landscape and Beast paintings. In this book, there were artists' personal photos (*Shenbao,* November 12, 1914, 4). In December, the Pencil Model Book (*Qianbi Xi Hua Tie*) no.1 was issued, and Liu was the editor.

[69] It was reported that artists Ding Song, Zhang Yuguang, Liu Haisu, and Chen Baoyi did new model pencil paintings in view of a deficiency in new model paintings for students' practice (*Shenbao,* November 30, 1914, 10 and *Shenbao,* December 11, 1914, 13). This model book was published three times from 1914 to 1916. No.4 was issued In 1918.

[70] Wen Zhaotong recalled that "The school headmaster handed all the School affairs to Mr. Xie." See Wen Zhaotong, "Xinqin Gengyun Liushi Chun" [Hard Working for 60 Years], *Nanyi Xuebao* 3 (1988): 25.

[71] The School diary recorded that, "These days I am kept extremely busy in preparing for Master Liu's European Art Exhibition." (See the dairy at the school principal's office, October 14, 1932, SMZDA.)

[72] Liu Haisu, *Zhongguo Huihua Shang de Liufalu* [Six Laws in Chinese Painting History] (Shanghai: Zhonghua Shuju, 1931).

[73] T.W.Earp, *Xiandai Huihua Lun* [Modern Movement in Painting], trans. Liu Haisu (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1936).

[74] Liu Haisu, *Shijiu Shiji Falanxi de Meishu* [Nineteenth Century French Art] (Shanghai: Zhonghua shuju, 1935).

[75] See Wang Zhen, "Yijiang chenggong wangu ku- Liu Haisu ruhe jiangziji daban cheng xianqu" [One General's success at the cost of millions of lives: How did Liu Haisu make himself a forerunner], *The Front Line Magazine* (Qianshao Yuekan) (September, 2000): 126. Part of his evidence came from Shen Jianwen's interview records in 1957, *Da Cheng* 62 (1979) and Wang's personal interview with Zheng Wuchang's student Chen Shilai. For other articles concerning Liu Haisu's plagiarism, see Zhao Yaoqing, "Liu Haisu Shi Ren Haishi Gui – Dalu Meishu Jie de Yichang Zhengyi" [Is Liu Haisu a Human or Ghost? – One Controversy in the Art World in Mainland China], *The Front-line Magazine* (Qianshao Yukan) 2 (1998): 36-38.

[76] See *Yishu Xunkan* 1/6 (September 1, 1932).

[77] See *Yishu Xunkan* 1/3 (September 21, 1932).

[78] See Cai Yuanpei, "Jieshao Yishujia Liu Haisu" [Introducing the Artist, Liu Haisu], *Xin Shehui Bao* [New Social Post], January 15, 1922. It was republished as a postscript one year later in *Haisu's Paintings* (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenhua Company, 1923).

[79] Cai Yuanpei, "Preface to the Latest Works by Liu Haisu," in *Haisu Jinzuo* [Latest Works by Liu Haisu] (Shanghai: Shanghai Wenhua Company, 1928, reprinted in 1932).

[80] See *Shanghai Manhua* [Shanghai Sketch] 31 (November 17, 1928): 6.

[81] This lecture was published in *Shenbao*, July 22, 1935, 14.

[82] This exhibition showed 250 works of Liu's, which were comprised of four parts: works done in Europe, works done before the European trip, new works after coming back and Chinese painting works (*guo hua*). The exhibition setting was an imitation of a French Autumn Salon.

[83] See the diary at the school principal's office, October 15, 1932, SMZDA.

[84] *Shenbao,* October 14, 1932, 15.

[85] *Shenbao,* October 27, 1932, 15.

[86] *Shenbao,* October 19, 1932, 8.

[87] *Shenbao,* October 20, 1932, 16.

[88] *Liu Haisu Ouyou Huazhan* [Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition] (Shanghai, 1932).

[89] For details of this incident see Julia F. Andrews, "Luotihua Lunzheng ji Zhongguo Xiandai Meishushi de Jiangou" [The Nude Painting Controversy and the Construction of Modern Chinese Art History] in *Studies on Shanghai School Paintings*, (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe, 2001), 117-50.

[90] Huang Shiquan observed that in the nineteenth century artists' reputations were created in Shanghai when "one person offers praise and the crowd echoes it." (Huang Shiquan, *Songnan Mengying Lu*, cited in Jonathan Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Late Nineteenth Century," 170.) In the twentieth century, this crowd who offered praise or echoed appreciation was distributed throughout a

far wider social sphere.

[91] M. Louis Laloy was a professor in Paris. In his preface for Liu Haisu's *Art Exhibition in Paris*, he emphasized the Chinese poetic flavor in Liu's paintings and Liu's personal experience in China as the president of the famous Shanghai Fine Arts College as well as an ambassador sent by the Chinese government. On the first point, "Chinese paintings" were generalized by applying ancient Chinese painting theories to all Chinese work. No special or clear explanation was given concerning how Liu's painting showed a Chinese flavor. Actually, there was not much connection in Liu's paintings with the Six Laws, but a more complex influence may originated from Japanese Yoga paintings, which was not noticed by Laloy. This suggests that the essay was a perfunctory writing about Chinese painting and Liu's work. For more information about the Japanese influence, see my "A Local Response to the National Ideal: Aesthetic Education in the Shanghai Art School (1913-1937)" published here. Also, the many mistakes in Laloy's article concerning basic historical facts about Liu and his School suggest that Laloy's writing was based on information Liu provided instead of investigating the facts for himself (M.Louis Laloy, "Chinese Renaissance Master- Preface to Liu Haisu's Art Exhibition in Paris," trans. Fu Lei, Wenhua (October 25, 1932): 39-40).

[92] Wu Tiecheng, "Preface to Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition," in *Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition* (Shanghai, 1932), 1.

[93] Lou Jinsheng, "Guanyu Liu Haisu Ouyou Zuopin Zhanlan Hui" [About Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition], *Wenhua* (October 25, 1932): 40-41. This article is not included in any anthologies of Liu Haisu later published.

[94] Ibid.

[95] See Huang Shiquan, *Songnan Mengying Lu*, cited in Jonathan Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Late Nineteenth Century," 170.

[96] Jiang Xiaojian, Zhang Chenbo and Pan Yuliang sponsored this exhibition. (*Shenbao*, February 22, 1931, 6.)

[97] *Shenbao*, September 2, 1932, 11.

[98] *Shenbao*, September 4, 1932, 16. See also "Zuiyi Liu Shi Geren Huazhan Shengkuang" [Recalling the Spectacular Occasion of Liu Shi's Personal Art Exhibition], *Yishu Xunkan* 1/3 (September 21, 1932): 11.

[99] See Yu, "I do not say Liu Shi is already a successful painter now, but Liu Shi is really hopeful," *Yishu Xunkan* 1/2 (September 11, 1932): 13.

[100] Ni Te, "Liu Shi Gezhan Gaiping" [General Comments on Liu Shi's Personal Exhibition], *Yishu Xunkan* 1/1 (September 1, 1932): 11.

[101] See Cui Zhibi's letter to the editor of *Wenhua*, in *Wenhua* (October 25, 1932): 41.

A Local Response to the National Ideal: Aesthetic Education in the Shanghai Art School (1913-1937)

Jane Zheng

Breaking away from the perspective of previous scholarship that examined aesthetic education as a policy at the national level, this article illuminates local variability in the implementation of the policy using the Shanghai Art School (Shanghai Meizhuan) as an example. Based on a number of school archives and other primary sources, it focuses on the transformation of the aesthetic education policy in the School's practice. It argues that the enacted aesthetic education contrasted with that in Cai Yuanpei's proposal: the School imported educational reform based on its own need for survival and development; it embraced various cultural visions to approach European art and contributed to an indigenized European art scene which contained multicultural elements in Shanghai. Finally, the article suggests a new way of understanding aesthetic education in China's modernization of art.

Twentieth-century Chinese art history is demonstrated by scholars as a process of modernization in art, focusing on the nation's response to the influence of the West. In this movement, Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940) is viewed as an unarguably important figure in reforming and developing modern Chinese art education with his aesthetic education proposal.[1] Sullivan notes that Cai played an important part in promoting the national acceptance of Western art: "The tremendous change in attitudes to Western art that took place in the decade after the 1911 revolution was due above all to the influence of a truly remarkable figure in modern China- Cai Yuanpei."[2] Kao believes that utilitarianism dominated modern art education thinking in China until Cai advocated aesthetic education in 1912. Cai brought about the watershed in the Western-style art movement by developing the "expressive and aesthetic aspects" of Western-style art.[3] Other scholars note that Cai Yuanpei stimulated the transformation in modern Chinese art education from its modeling on Japanese art education to modeling it on French art education.[4] He also prompted the flourishing of aesthetic education by directly participating in art activities and providing other support.[5] Although concentrating on different aspects, all these discussions provided one answer, which was how the Chinese government, with Cai as a high official or member of the influential national elite,

responded to Western influence through reforms in art education at the national level.

This, however, is actually an incomplete answer concerning the notion of a "Chinese response," since the complexity of China in both its social structure and culture has been neglected. In such a large country as China in the Republican period, there were many complications between local and central infrastructures and considerable cultural divergence among different places. This meant that a political order from the central government might generate a different interpretation after it filtered down to a particular society and was carried out in the local context. Local variability in education concealed by the institutional homogenization has more recently aroused scholarly attention. Sutton and Levinson argue that macro-sociological approaches ignore the status of non-elite individuals and collectivities as well as the disparity between proposed official policies and the enacted policies in reality.[6] Fuller and Watson-Gegeo note that education in one place differed from that in another and the enacted reform in local schools could be greatly different from the original spirit of the government's proposal.[7] Some scholars of Chinese educational history note that the neglect of considering this transformation has led to a research gap, namely the Western influence on Chinese schooling at the state and local level in Republican China.[8] In the case of studying the aesthetic education policy, more comprehensive scholarship entails the reexamination not only of the national educational system, but also the local art education, particularly that of private art schools out of the government educational system. This will work to develop a real understanding of aesthetic education as a "Chinese" response to the West.

What should be explained is that focusing on the "disparity" does not mean that this article ignores the apparent phenomenon of institutional homogeneity caused by the national educational reform. On the contrary, the exploration at the micro-level is actually based on the macro-level picture prior scholars have given, and might function in the same way as Clunas' concentration on the economic factor in Chinese garden studies "As a way of correcting an equally unbalanced concentration in past literature."[9]

With this research purpose, this article looks at the first half of the history of the Shanghai Art School (*Shanghai Meizhuan*), the most important private art school in modern Chinese art history.[10] The School was set up by a businessman and art lover Wu Shiguang (1885-?) as a private tutorial art school in 1913. Before 1917, it operated according to competitive market principles and provided commercial art training.[11] From 1917 to 1919, it went through a basic shift in its school system and teaching structure. This shift and the consequent success of the School in the 1920s were closely related to Cai Yuanpei and the aesthetic education policy, which makes the School a suitable case for this study.

Drawing on a number of primary sources, this article sheds light on a series of school events, its Western-style painting education and other activities related to aesthetic education from 1913 to 1937, thus creating the foundation of the research. It focuses on the transformation of the aesthetic education policy in the School's practice. It argues that the enacted aesthetic education contrasted with the proposed official line in the purpose, method of implementation and the final result: the School enthusiastically imported the reform based on its own need for survival and development, and with local methods of practice, it contributed to an indigenized European art scene which encompassed various cultural elements. The main body of the article is comprised of two sections. The first section examines the shift in the school history in the late 1910s and the School's development in the 1920s, revealing that the School's reason for importing the reform contrasted with the national ideal. The second section explores the method the School used in its practice and argues that, in contrast to the proposed official method, the School embraced different cultural visions through its importation of European art
and thus contributed to a hybrid of multi-cultures in Shanghai.

Survival and Development: The Local Intention

As scholars note, by encompassing Liang Qichao's (1873-1929) views on mass education, Cai Yuanpei's aesthetic philosophy was based on a concern for social progress and improvement as part of his political ideal.[12] Cai believed that aesthetic education was a powerful and effective implementation of ethical education and the improvement of the national character,[13] which was "The true path to the building of a new society and a better China."[14] These ideas were addressed in a series of Cai's important public lectures.[15] They aroused the government's interest in art education and led to the redefinition of the meaning and function of art education in the national educational system and the reform of its content—art education was liberated from utilitarian thinking, as Kao notes.[16] In 1914, the government issued a special order, requiring primary and teacher training schools to attach importance to art courses. It ascribed the decline of the national morality to lack of aesthetic sensibility and emphasized the paramount position in education of the four courses (i.e. Chinese literature, handicraft, painting and music).[17] Aesthetic education was also incorporated into the national educational aim of placing "The emphasis . . . on ethics education. This aim is to be achieved with the assistance of utilitarian and military education, and more importantly, with aesthetic education."[18] However, this ideal of enacting the national aesthetic education policy was not the purpose of the private local art school, which was more concerned with its own well-being.

This argument is based first on the fact that the Shanghai Art School

did not respond to the call for aesthetic education when Cai first put it forward in "My Views on the Aims of Education" (*Duiyu Jiaoyu Fangzhen zhi Yijian*) on February 11, 1912.[19] The Shanghai Art School was not founded as a response to any movement, but as a response to the demand for commercial art training in the Shanghai market. In 1914, the School had the leading commercial artist Zhang Yuguang (1885-1968) as the school principal,[20] and other accomplished artists such as the cartoon artist Ding Song (1891-1972), Shen Bochen (1889-1920), and the calendar painter Xu Yongqing (1880-1953), as its teaching staff.[21] The training specialized in teaching calendar painting and drawing, illustrating, and painting scenic stage design. These programs were essentially different from those given in European academies and also sharply contrasted with those proposed in aesthetic education that attempted to model itself on the French art academies. The School was accused by Xu Beihong (1893-1953) of having un-rigorous and misleading pedagogies because of this.[22] Aesthetic educators did not appreciate Shanghai commercial paintings. Cai Yuanpei, who did not know much about the early history of the School, for example, praised Liu Haisu's artwork in 1922 for its tendency toward Post-Impressionism instead of the "Shanghai fashionable dress and beautiful women" painting of the time.[23] At this point, before 1917, the School did not share many similarities with those private schools holding aesthetic educational ideals, such as the Eastern City Women's School (*Chengdong Nüxue*) founded in 1902.[24] Its cold response to the national call might partly be accounted for by the fact that Cai actually stayed at the post for only half a year,[25] but it was also partly because the School was able to survive modestly in its early years by relying on the market demand for commercial art training in Shanghai.[26]

It was during the period from 1917 to 1919 that the School reformed its educational goal. This change basically came out of the School's need for development, and the aesthetic education reemphasized by Cai on his return served as the crucial impetus. Admittedly, the market demand for illustrations, calendars, cartoons and advertisements in Shanghai did not cease until the late 1940s. Cases of commercially oriented schools could be enumerated such as Hang Zhiying's art studio in the 1930s, and the Zhongbiao Art Institute, which was set up in 1927 and specialized in Shanghai commercial art training.[27] However, these schools with their small-scale operations and unstable foundations were ill suited to deal with any fluctuation in the economic world and without exception had short life spans.[28] Although the Shanghai Art School had already distinguished itself among those schools by 1917, it was also confronted with many similar potential perils. For that reason, in search of better conditions for survival, the school had to strengthen its foundation and seek wider markets. Moreover, the vice president Liu Haisu was an ambitious person, and at that point an art school at a local level was not able to satisfy his great ambition.[29]

The Beijing Art School, the national art school established in 1918, became a model for imitation and also a competitor. To illustrate his ambition, Liu quoted from Napoleon, "The word 'difficult' does not exist in a hero's dictionary."[30] In this context, the School recognized that the reformed educational system was a major job market for its graduates, since it was comprised of primary and secondary schools throughout the country and therefore provided an increasing number of positions for art teachers.[31] This led to a shift in the School's educational goal from training commercial artists to training art teachers for primary and secondary schools. In 1917, three months after Cai Yuanpei delivered his lecture "Replacing Religion with Aesthetic Education," the School set up a teacher-training program in its affiliated department. Liu stated its aim:

> In the past six years, some of our graduates have established their own art schools, some are making a living in art, and others are teaching art. However, as the academy does not provide professional training for art teaching at primary or high primary schools, our graduates are not suitable for teaching posts. For this reason, the academy particularly sets up the summer school program this semester, providing art teacher-training courses, aiming at fostering art educators for primary and high primary schools.[32]

In September 1917 the teacher-training program formally started and twenty students enrolled in the course.[33] In the same semester, new courses such as natural science (*bo wu xue*) and physical education were scheduled into the compulsory curriculum.[34] In 1921 the training goal of the School was changed to that of "Fostering qualified art experts to improve society and develop national aesthetics." A secondary goal was to "foster industrial art specialists to serve the industry and enhance commoners' interests in art."[35]

The practical purpose of the School was more clearly shown in the process by which it sought governmental approval for registration at the highest level – the Ministry of Education. This was a key step for a local art school in reaching the national level. All the consequent efforts it made in practicing aesthetic education in the late 1910s were not directly related to the national ideal but simply done with the intention of tailoring itself to the official requirements for registration.

In the same month that the Beijing Art School was founded, the Shanghai Art School submitted its registration application.[36] However, the response from the Ministry was a rebuke aimed at its quality of education in all the key elements. The most severe criticism from the Ministry was directed at the qualifications of the school's teaching staff:

> None of the teaching and administrative staff graduated from pro-

> fessional schools and most of the students do not hold middle school degrees. The school is not qualified according to the professional school regulations. Their application for registration should not be approved.[37]

This meant that its teaching staff, composed of famous Shanghai local commercial artists, did not fit the new school goal and even served to slow down the School's development. Because not many teacher training schools provided professional art training in China at that time, the school's deficiency was paralleled by the generally low number of teachers having a formal academic background.[38] The School changed its attitude towards artists who returned from overseas when it noticed that the Beijing Art School had seven faculty headed by Zheng Jin (1883-1959), all of whom had graduated from art colleges in Japan. In September, the School reported to the Ministry that they had engaged Jiang Xiaojian (1894-1939) and Wang Yachen (1894-1983), two graduates of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, as teachers. In fact, Wang Yachen was still studying in Tokyo. The cold reception Chen Baoyi (1893-1945) encountered in 1914 contrasted sharply with the warm welcome that greeted Wang.[39]

On the other hand, the School no longer favored Shanghai commercial artists without formal academic training. Divergence in views between Liu Haisu and commercial artists (such as the school president Zhang Yuguang and the teaching head Ding Song) emerged in their lectures after 1918, since Liu's instructions began to focus on the social responsibility students should realize as citizens of the nation, obviously following the educational views of some national elite in 1918.[40] This dispute later culminated in the resignation and departure of Zhang Yuguang in May 1919.[41] Mr. Zhang Xiuping told the author that his father and Liu Haisu did not have any personal animosity. Zhang left because they had different views on art education.[42] Around the same time, other local commercial artists also faded out of the teaching staff team.[43] The person who took Zhang's position as the school principal was Liu Haisu at the age of twenty-four.[44] Except for returning artists, the new faculty was composed of graduates from the School as well as state-run colleges, national colleges, and of those who had teaching experience in government schools.[45]

The practical importance for the School to enthusiastically respond to the national educational reform also lay in the fact that this enabled the School to easily garner wider support. In order to gain official approval with registration, Liu Haisu not only reformed the teaching structure, but also directly sought support from Cai Yuanpei whose help paved the way for the School's success in the 1920s. In 1917, as soon as Cai's "Replacing Religion with Aesthetics" was published, Liu wrote letters to Cai expressing his deep respect for Cai and his views, and also seeking Cai's support for his School.[46]

In response Cai inscribed four characters on a horizontal board "wide, restrained, deep and beautiful" (*hong yue shen mei*), and presented it to the Shanghai Art School as an encouragement. In 1919, accepting the invitation from Liu Haisu, Cai took up the post as the chairman of the board of the School. After hearing of the death of Cai's wife in 1921, Liu painted Madam Cai's portrait and sent it to Cai as a gift in memory of his late wife. That autumn Liu traveled to Beijing for the first time in his life to personally visit Cai.[47] From then on, their friendship strengthened and Cai directly participated in the administrative affairs of the School. In the 1920s, the School eventually succeeded in obtaining official registration with crucial help from Cai in solving a number of problems. What follows are several examples of these problems.

In 1919, although more "qualified teachers" were engaged, the Ministry of Education pointed out another problem. The order read:

> There is a serious malpractice concerning item number 33 in the School's regulation, which states that the School relies on irregular donations instead of having fixed funding. This does not conform to the official regulation for private professional schools.[48]

Under this pressure, the school organized a school board, whose purpose was to "Consolidate the school foundation and develop school affairs' and [develop] one important group of board members who financially supported the School.[49] Cai Yuanpei, as the chairman, invited his friends and others of the social elite such as Liang Qichao, Huang Yanpei (1878-1945), Shen Enfu (1864-1944) and Yuan Guanlan (1866-1930), to join the school board.[50] Their reputation and prestige convinced a number of merchants that the School had a bright future.[51] Cai even directly participated in activities concerning the School's funding collection. For example, in 1922 when the School sought funding for school building construction, Liu wrote a letter to engage Cai as the head of the fund raising team.[52] In another letter to Cai, Liu explained that the funding collection had not reached expectations and he hoped that Cai could bring in more donations by the use of his personal contacts.[53] With the help from board members and Cai, the School solved its financial problems.

In 1921, when the School encountered other difficulties in registration, Liu again sought help from Cai.[54] Two weeks later, Huang Yanpei wrote to the Minister emphasizing the importance of aesthetic education and requested that he approve the registration.[55] Soon after that, registration without formal confirmation was achieved. In 1926 when the school was confronted with the problem of formal confirmation, all the board members headed by Cai Yuanpei wrote two letters to the Minister, strongly recommending this qualified private art school and Liu Haisu as a reliable art educator.[56] In that year, the seal of

governmental approval from the Ministry of Education was eventually set on the application of the School.

By 1926 the School had reached its zenith. It became the first government approved private art school, extending its influence throughout the nation. The official letter from the Education Department of Jiangsu Province (*Jiangsusheng Jiaoyu Ting*) highly praised the achievements of the School. It read, "The school has a grand scale, calm academic atmosphere and brilliant achievements. It really deserves an award."[57] When reviewing the school's history in the 1930s, Liu also admitted that, "The school developed at its fastest pace by 1926."[58] To acknowledge his debt to Cai, Liu wrote:

> In the latest one or two years, far more students came to study in our school. Though our art is still far from perfect, solid progress has been made. This semester we admitted 150 students and we originally had 584 students. All these achievements would not have been possible without your support and we young people have greatly benefited from your help.[59]

The above shows, as argued in this section, that the purpose for the School's enthusiastic adoption of the aesthetic education policy was based on its inherent need for survival and development.

To further demonstrate the importance of this positive response to private local art schools, Zhou Xiang's schools serve as a comparative case.[60] Zhou was totally unaware of the implications of aesthetic education and finally lost his customers and had to shut down his schools. In the face of the call for aesthetic education, and in contrast to the efforts Liu had made, Zhou Xiang's response was obviously out of step with the prevailing education practice. For example, in 1918, while Liu was substituting returning students for local commercial artists, Zhou began to hire local commercial artists to strengthen his teaching output and put out several advertisements for his new teaching head Xu Yongqing.[61] As the principal of an established private art school in Shanghai, Cai Yuanpei whose letter of support was published once also encouraged him in his campus journal, *Zhonghua Meishu Bao* [Chinese Art News]. However, his school was still specializing in Shanghai commercial art training, such as cartoons, scenic background painting, advertisement and photography, which failed to attract further interest from Cai.[62] Moreover, in 1920, as a respectable educator, he was elected to be the art editor for *Meiyu* [Aesthetic Education], a periodical aimed at promoting new aesthetic thoughts. In the first issue he published parts of his two essays "Scenic Backdrop Painting Techniques" (*Wutai Beijing Huafa*), which he wrote in 1911, and "Biographies for Artists" (*Jinshi Meishu Jia Xiaozhuan*) about some artists in Zhejiang and Jiangsu Province active in the late Qing period. Both of them were com-

pletely unrelated to the topic of aesthetic education in the era. The committee soon discharged him from the post, and his two uncompleted essays were not continued.[63]

In 1919 he attempted to maintain his schools by reducing tuition fees several times but still failed to attract sufficient enrollment.[64] His last school was shut down in 1922, and afterwards he left Shanghai. His student Ding Jianxing ascribed his downfall to the competition his students launched against him.[65] However, Cai Yuanpei commented in one of his private letters to Liu Haisu that Zhou Xiang "has long been buried in garbage paper."[66] The key point was that the aesthetic education policy as the national call of the era held significant implications for the survival and development of local private art schools. Zhou, unfortunately, did not see this.

Carrying Out Aesthetic Education on Campus

By demonstrating the transformation of the policy I have shown that the School's principal purpose in adopting the educational reform was not the goal of realizing the national ideal. This section will continue this exploration by examining the way the School carried out the reform and its consequences. Although Cai also suggested developing the compatibility of various cultural forms (*jian rong bing xu*), the major content of aesthetic education was devoted to importing European art. Sullivan notes that Cai's concept, rather than providing any real new ideas, was more effective in inspiring the acceptance of Western art in the 1920s.[67] Cai believed that even *guohua* [traditional Chinese painting] painters should study Western style painting first.[68] The method Cai proposed to achieve this aim was that of importing French art and reforming art school education by modeling it on French art academic training. Cai revealed this idea in his lectures, such as his lecture at the Painting Method Research Institute at Peking University, which stated that many accomplished artists had emerged from Paris, the art capital of the world, a city imbued with traditional Italian art. He hoped that more French art could be introduced to the students.[69] He sponsored official programs dispatching students to France, and encouraged and supported artists' studies in France. From the 1920s to 1930s, Cai supported a series of Sino-foreign art exchange activities such as the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes a Paris* in 1925, and the art exhibitions organized by Xu Beihong and Liu Haisu in Europe in the 1930s.[70]

Based on these facts, he is believed to have promoted the shift in modern Chinese art education from "learning from Japan" to "learning from France."[71] However, when aesthetic education was carried out in a local art school, they relied heavily on the local socio-cultural tradition, and Cai's proposed method for practice was not strictly adhered to. The Shanghai Art School

did not select the French academy as the specific model for imitation, but instead exposed itself to a wide variety of Western-oriented cultural visions in its interactions with European art.

Employing Returning and Visiting Artists from Overseas

For the Shanghai Art School, local Shanghai society had its inherent advantages as contact channels with the West. Hay explored "The emergence of Shanghai as a commercial and cultural crossroads at the intersection of a region, a network of littoral cities and the outside world."[72] It incorporated artists from various places and developed the extensive character of its art world.[73] From the late 1910s, more Chinese artists with overseas academic backgrounds returned and many of them chose to reside in Shanghai. According to Chen Baoyi, around 1917, the Western art scene in Shanghai began to change with the influx of these returning students. Most of them taught Western style painting in the Shanghai Art School.[74] They became the first important media introducing European art to the School. Because the School did not have a definite bias toward a specific training mode from a particular culture, it broadly employed artists from different places and embraced the various training methods they brought. The following examples exemplify the policy towards faculty employment from 1919.

In 1919, two months after Liu's inauguration, Jiang Xiaojian, a graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, replaced cartoon artist Ding Song as the teaching head.[75] At the school's opening ceremony three days later he gave a lecture comparing Western and Chinese paintings. In the same month, a Medical Bachelor from the Tokyo Empire University, Lu Lusha, was engaged as an art anatomy teacher and Cheng Xubai was appointed as the director of the teaching-training program.[76] On December 24, 1919, Li Chaoshi (1893-1971), a graduate from the École Beaux-Arts who had studied for seven years in France was invited to deliver a lecture on the French art school system.[77] In February of 1920, Liu Haisu assisted Li in holding his personal art exhibition at the Global Chinese Students' Association, which was exhibiting his works in France.[78] Not long after, he was appointed as a professor at the School.[79] He taught nude life sketching and French. After class he helped interested students prepare for their future studies in France. In March the School appointed Li Dianchun, a graduate of the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, as a *xihua* [Western style painting] professor.[80] In April a graduate from Japan named Zhou Qinhao joined the School.[81] On August 13, Zhou Jingshu (a female artist) returned from America and one month later she began teaching in the Western Painting Department.[82] Around the same time Chen Xiaojiang, a graduate of the School who had later studied in France, was hired.[83] In June 1921, Wang Yachen completed his studies in Japan, and upon his return to Shanghai resumed his

teaching post at the School.[84] In July 1921, Li Yishi (1886-1942), a graduate of Glasgow University who once taught at Peking University, was invited to give a lecture at the summer school.[85] During Liu Haisu's trip to Beijing that winter Cai Yuanpei introduced him to several artists at the Beijing Art School. Of them, Wu Xinwu (1883-1924) who once studied at the Coraransse Art Institute and graduated from the École des Beaux-Arts, was invited by Liu to teach at the summer school.[86] In 1923 Wu left the Beijing Art School and was inaugurated as the teaching head of the Shanghai Art School. Unfortunately he died of a sudden heart disease two months later. Liu then composed a mourning essay showing their friendship and also expressing his deep respect for returned artists. Li Yishi was appointed as the teaching head after Wu's death.[87]

From 1923, more artists who had returned were employed. In July, Wen Jingmei, a graduate of the Royal College of Art, was hired.[88] Chen Baoyi, who graduated from the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, taught *xihua*. Yu Jifan, a graduate of the Painting and Handicraft Department at the Japanese High Normal School, was appointed as the director of the High Normal Academy.[89] In November 1924, Chen Hong returned from Paris and was hired to teach life sketching from nude figures at the High Normal Academy. After class he also supervised students' violin practice.[90] Hua Lin, who had studied in France for ten years, taught Greek and art history.[91]

In the early 1920s, the Western art scene in Shanghai further developed due to the appearance of an increasing number of visiting foreign artists. They held art exhibitions in Shanghai such as the European Modern Art Exhibition by Madam Macleod, a French artist's personal exhibition in the Shanghai Municipal Council in 1919,[92] the French artist I. Ruedolf's personal art exhibition in October 1921, a French and Italian Art Exhibition held in December 1920, the Danish artist Madsen's exhibition in 1922, and the British sculptress Miss Elizabeth Keith's art exhibition on December 4, 1922.[93] After the Russian revolution in 1917, large numbers of Russians went to Shanghai to seek refuge, and among them were artists who quickly joined the Shanghai art circles. Foreign artists organized their own associations. One of them was named the Chinese Society of Science and Arts, which organized regular art activities. Liu Haisu and Li Yishi were two minority Chinese members in this society.[94] These art activities provided opportunities for direct contacts between the School and Western artists. From 1923 on the School began to have foreign artists teach art courses, and in July 1923 the Russian artist V. Podgoarsky was engaged by the school.[95] He taught life sketching after plaster models and nude figures until 1929. In addition to teaching he also attended school administrative meetings and took part in some school activities. In November 1924, another Russian artist, Stopin, arrived in Shanghai along with 700 artworks from Russia. Liu Haisu assisted him in holding a big art

exhibition in Shanghai.[96] Two months later he was appointed as a director in the Industrial Art and Pattern Department in the Shanghai Art School.[97] A Belgian artist, A. Kats, who taught at the Painting Method Research Institute in Beijing in 1919, went to Shanghai in April 1924. He attended a meeting held by the Myriad Country Art Exhibition Committee, showed his works in the following art exhibition, and became acquainted with other participants including Liu Haisu, Wang Yachen and other art teachers at the School.[98] He taught painting practice at the School for one or two semesters that year and later left for Hong Kong.[99] Another Japanese artist Tsuji Motohiro taught at the School for around one year in 1925.[100]

On one hand, the employment of these returned and visiting artists from various foreign countries resulted in the creation of foreign language courses and basic Western art training courses (e.g. perspective, color studies, art history and anatomy),[101] culminating in a growing enthusiasm towards the study of European culture. On the other hand, different pedagogies were brought to the Western-style painting training. For instance, V. Podgoarsky emphasized accuracy in life sketching. He required students to repeatedly sketch one plaster model from three or four different perspectives to comprehend the variation in the contours caused by the change of the painters' viewpoint.[102] Zhang Xian (1901-1936) emphasized composition and students' personal expression, so he gave more lectures and tests on composition, but did not correct students' works off-handedly.[103] The School did not lay down strict criteria governing pedagogical approach, but allowed the coexistence of various training methods. Moreover, the School encouraged artists to preserve and develop their individual teaching and artistic styles by providing teachers with individual studios and allowing students to decide which studio they liked to join and with whom they wished to study.[104]

The Western-Style Painting Education in the School

The previous subsection demonstrated the contrast that existed between a targeted approach in the national proposal toward a specific training mode and a broad embrace of different cultural visions in the School's hiring choices. This subsection will further develop that argument by demonstrating that the Western-style painting education provided by the School encompassed multi-cultural visions.

First of all, the French hierarchical training mode was adopted as the teaching structure. The training started from life sketching from plaster models in pencil or charcoal (year one); succeeded by watercolor studies and oil painting practices for life sketching (year two); and life sketching from nude figures or from nature at the highest level (year three and year four).[105] A series of courses taught in French academies were set up and given impor-

tance, including black and white sketching (*su miao*), rapid sketching (*su xie*), composition, etc. This teaching structure was similar to that of the contemporary government art schools (e.g. the Art Department in the Central University and the Hangzhou Art Academy). The fact that Chinese literati aesthetic tastes were incorporated, and more importantly that Japanese cultural vision guided modernist painting practice were factors that distinguished the Western painting training in the School.[106]

Although the School reformed the teaching structure and course content in the late 1910s, some local literati aesthetic taste still remained in the training and was sometimes used as a standard by which to judge a painting's quality. For instance, one student praised another student's *xihua* work in this way, "His Western painting is done in a simple and quiet (*su han shi se*) way, suggesting a pure and lively tone (*qing dan ming kuai*), so detached that it seems to keep aloof from the dusty world."[107] Obviously, seeking a pure taste was characteristic of the Chinese literati aesthetic sensibility but not necessarily of European art.

More important influences came from the Japanese art world. In contrast to the proposed shift from "learning from Japan" to "learning from France," the School did not withdraw its active efforts of "learning from Japan." To most artists in the School, Japan was still the ideal country from which to learn European art due to its geographic proximity to Shanghai and its achievements in art under Western influences. In 1921 the school headmaster Liu Haisu went on a short trip to Japan. In memory of his first overseas trip Liu published essays about Japanese art education upon his return. In 1926, in view of the low standard of art education in primary schools in China, Liu suggested an investigation into art education at Japanese primary schools.[108] Yu Jifan, Teng Gu (1901-1941), and Wang Jiyuan (1893-1975) were elected as representatives. They collected around 700 artworks by Japanese primary school students and held an exhibition from June 26 to 28 (1926) in Shanghai,[109] which was highly praised in *Shenbao* as "The first voice of Sino-Japanese international art exchange."[110] Moreover, two decades after Cai put forward his initial proposal, close to half of the graduates of the School who pursued their studies in foreign countries still chose to study in Japan while only around 25% went to France.[111] In addition, teachers and students did not stop translating Japanese scholars' research on Western art: Duan Youping translated Satomi Seizo's study on composition in 1933; Xu Xingzhi (1904-1991) translated Murayama Tomonori's research on artistic representations in 1933; and Feng Zikai (1898-1975) translated Ina Nobukawa's report which analyzed the social and historical background after World War I for art activities and categorized modern art into four groups.[112]

The close connection between the School and Japanese art education can also be discerned in the modernist paintings of the School's teachers and

students. In contrast to the only realistic style of painting taught in the Art Department in the Central University due to Xu Beihong's strict adherence to the French academic training mode, Post-Impressionism and avant-garde styles dominated the mainstream of *xihua* practice in the School from the late 1920s on. The reason, to be argued here, is that the Japanese cultural vision of modern European art served as a guide.

First, the scope of Modern European masters' styles adopted by the School's teachers and students did not exceed that of Japanese artists. These Shanghai artworks signaled the significant interest in Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism and Surrealism, etc., and the remarkable influence of Courbet, Cezanne, Derain, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse, Chirico, and others. However, all these masters had attracted Japanese artists' interest much earlier. According to Clark, Impressionist painting had become familiar to the Japanese art audience since 1893.[113] Munsterberg notes that Japanese artists who studied in France during the Meiji period learned from their contemporaries' developments. Japanese artists responded to avant-garde artists earlier than the Chinese, and before Shanghai artists like Liu Haisu and Wang Jiyuan took an interest in modernist styles in the early 1910s, studies of Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism and Surrealism were already one or two decades old in Japan.[114]

Further scrutiny shows that there was a concomitant transformation of European masters' styles in the artistic representation in these Shanghai artists' works, and what this transformation demonstrates was a close adherence to the Japanese *Yoga* strain. For instance, most works by teachers and students' in the School were characterized by a system of using black bold lines structuring the delineated objects. Although this kind of line was also employed in Gauguin, Cezanne and other European artists' works, it was not a major representative element. However, in Japanese artists' works like Yasui Sotaro's *Granddaughter* and *Seated Figure*, lines had important "decorative values."[115] Also, the color contrast and the flat pictorial effect in landscape paintings by Shanghai artists reformulated Cezanne and Matisse's styles in a decorative way, sharing considerable similarity with some Japanese *Yoga* works. Japanese and Shanghai artists' concerns in European masters' works had several representative elements in common, which suggests observations from the same artistic perspective. The Japanese *Yoga* strain, according to Clark, was "A type of Post-Impressionism and Fauvist painting which had been remolded to one strain of Japanese pictorial sensibility."[116] It was firmly established in the Japanese art world in the 1910s and dominated official painting exhibitions by the mid-1930s in contrast to the later emergence and regional popularity of some similar representations in China.[117] This suggests that these Shanghai *xihua* were deeply influenced by the "remolded" modernist art in the Japanese *Yoga* strain and were guided by the Japanese cultural vision toward

modernist painting in Europe.

In the 1930s because European academies did not teach modernist art but only academic realistic styles, this Japanese cultural vision, instead of being discarded, still served as the major approach available even when some artists in the School (Liu Haisu, Wang Jiyuan, Chen Renhao, Liu Kang, etc.) were directly exposed to modernist European art in France.[118] This is supported by the fact that their paintings showed little new inspiration after direct contact with French art. One critical article commented on an exhibition of Liu Haisu's paintings after his return from France in 1932, "The Chinese art world does not have any new views . . . only 'line', 'color', 'composition' and 'tone'."[119] The official favor toward the French art training did not reduce the local enthusiasm of "learning from Japan." The Japanese influence, mixed within the French training structure and Chinese literati tastes, continued in the *xihua* education in the School.

Aesthetic Activities in a Public Space

In addition to its hiring choices and Western style painting training, the School also embraced various cultural visions by prompting the flowering of public art activities on campus. The prospering of public art activities deserves special attention since it demonstrates that the School did not borrow art from the outside world and instill it into the local masses, but introduced the topic to the public and stimulated ideas from different fields, places and individuals to encourage mutual inspiration. This blurred the boundary between campus and society, and also embraced local and other cultural visions. What should be noted is that the role the School played in developing a space for public art in society was not included in Cai's proposal. According to Cai, the major function of an art school was cultivating students' aesthetic sensibility as one stage in the whole procedure.[120] However, the School had more functions than that, which enabled it to develop its own methods of practice. From the late 1910s, the School began to regularly organize public lectures on the theme of art and society, art and the common people, and European art studies. Artists, scholars, educators and politicians delivered lectures on a wide range of topics. What follows are several examples: The artist Wang Yizhi gave a lecture on "The Grand Occasion of Overseas Arts" (*Guowai Meishu Shengkuang*) in 1919; in 1922 the statesman and advocate of the New Culture Movement, Chen Duxiu (1879-1942) gave a lecture about art and society, political scholar Zhang Jiashen (1887-1969) talked about "Three Doctrines in Art" (*Meishu Shang de San da Zhuyi*), and politician and writer Liang Qichao presented "Art and Life" (*Yishu he Shenghuo*); in 1923 the actor Ouyang Yuqian (1889-1962) lectured on "The Origin of Clothing and its Tendency" (*Yifu zhi Qiyuan Jiqi Yuanliu*); Zhang Dongsun (?-1973), the journalist of the *Shishi*

Xinbao, lectured on "Cognition and Its Relation to Art" (*Renshi Lun ji qi Yishu Xiangguan Zhidian*), and Zhu Jingmeng (1887-1951) gave a talk titled "Renaissance" (*Wenyi Fuxing*); in 1924 the principal of the Chinese Public University (*Zhongguo Gongxue*), Chen Zhushan, discussed "Art and Life" (*Meishu yu Rensheng*), and the art historian Teng Gu presented his research of "Culture History and Art History" (*Wenhua Shi he Meishu Shi*).[121] Because these lecturers came from different fields they provided their viewpoints on art, both academic and non-academic, from various perspectives. The open public form of discussion, in contrast to traditional literati discussions within a confined coterie, also aroused wider resonance and interaction between the speaker and audience.

Teachers' and students' art-related activities also thrived. In October 1919 the Heaven Horse Society (*Tianma Hui*) was established as suggested by Jiang Xiaojian. Society members were primarily comprised of art teachers from the School, and its aim was to "Develop human character, cultivate aesthetic sensibilities, study art by following the progress of the era, and create art for beauty."[122] Liu Haisu organized several art societies conducting studies in art education. The Jiangsu Art Research Association (*Jiangsusheng Jiaoyuhui Meishu Yanjiuhui*), which had Liu Haisu as the chairman and many members from the School, surveyed art curricula and facilities at private and public art schools,[123] and discussed the effectiveness of school art education.[124] Students' activities also flourished on campus, and by the year of 1921 there were the Chinese painting research society, the music research society, the literature society, and other after-class carving, dancing, and lecture clubs.[125]

After 1917 the School regularly hosted art exhibitions, of which there were two formats every year. One was held every semester, showing students' progress and exhibiting teachers' recent works. The other was the School's annual art exhibition, celebrating school anniversaries. Various art clubs such as the Heaven Horse Society also held additional art exhibitions. By being open to society these works prompted public participation.

At this stage, growth was also evident in the publications of the school. Besides Meishu [Art], another periodical *Meizhuan Yuekan* [The Shanghai Art School Monthly] was issued on December 20, 1921. This periodical aimed at promoting discussions on art and sought to popularize and develop art.[126] In the late 1920s there were *Cong Ling* [Verdant Mountain] and other students' periodicals. More teachers' publications on art and art education also appeared. In 1917 Jiang Danshu (1885-1962) published the first textbook for the art history course, titled *Art History*. Pan Tianshou (1897-1971) published *Chinese Painting History* (Zhongguo Huihua Shi) in 1926, and Zheng Wuchang published *A General History of Chinese painting* (Zhongguo Huaxue Quanshi) in 1929.[127]

Public art activities on campus also included Sino-foreign exchange

activities. From the mid-1920s, most official activities that the School participated in were held between China and the West (Europe and America).[128] For instance, in March 1926, the Sun Chuanfang government collected artworks for the World Expo held in Philadelphia in America. Liu Haisu arranged for the collection and examination of the artworks, subsequently sending forty works by teachers and students to this exhibition.[129] According to Cai Yuanpei, the School also participated in the Chinese art exhibition in Paris in 1925.[130]

In the 1930s, Liu Haisu visited Europe twice and organized several art exhibitions and other activities as entrusted by Cai Yuanpei. More frequently however, were non-official activities held between the School and the Japanese art world. For instance, in 1919, the Japanese artist Ishii Hakutei visited the Shanghai Art School.[131] In 1924, Ton Gukan was invited by the School to give a lecture on anatomy and art.[132] In the same year, another Japanese artist Sugiura Shunka exhibited his Chinese literati style paintings in the First Academy of the School and more than one hundred Japanese and Chinese guests visited the exhibition.[133] In 1925, the Shanghai Art School professor Teng Gu was invited by the Japanese Shanghai Tour Youth Association to give lectures on Chinese calligraphy each week.[134] The Japanese art tour visited Shanghai in 1926, and teachers in the School met with them to discuss Sino-Japanese art exhibitions.[135] Wang Jiyuan and other professors at the School were the major organizers of the Sino-Japanese art exhibition that was held in Shanghai in 1929.[136]

With this flourishing of art-related activities, the small private art school distinguished itself by assisting the evolution of a public art space in Shanghai. According to artists' records of that era, these public activities flourished far more in the School than in the government-run Beijing Art School at the same time. Wang wrote, "The art school in Beijing was no more than a decoration. It has operated for several years, but what has it achieved? It is worse than nothing. . . . What a great disappointment to artists and art majored students. . . . In the sordid atmosphere, the only consolation comes from the South, where art schools, institutions and art societies are flourishing."[137] Along with the formulation of public art space, a local understanding of European art was developed and different cultural visions were also incorporated into the School's practice.

Conclusion

Cai Yuanpei's thinking about aesthetic education did not mean the same thing to the government educational system and local private art schools. In the former, educational reform was part of a proposed course of action meant to realize a national ideal. In the latter, at the local level, the motive for responding enthusiastically to educational reform was imbedded in the School's

intrinsic need for survival and development. Aesthetic education under Cai's advocacy turned out to be a significant opportunity for the School to grow from a local tutorial art school to an established government-approved art school. The methods that the School adopted in its practice also contrasted with that of Cai's proposal. Instead of modeling itself on the French style of academic training, the School embraced a greater variety of cultural visions of European influence. Firstly, the School employed returning and visiting artists from various countries who brought different training methods with them. Secondly, the Western style painting education provided by the School encompassed different concepts of European art from various cultures. Training was based on the French academic hierarchical model, but was mixed with certain literati aesthetic sensibilities combined with the Japanese cultural vision of modernist European art. Thirdly, public art activities that were organized by the School prospered, which stimulated local discussion and wide public participation, and contributed to the interweaving of views from different fields, places and individuals. As practiced through these local efforts, the School's aesthetic education policy resulted in the development of an indigenous European art scene, which contained multicultural elements, in Shanghai.

It deserves to be noted that the Shanghai Art School only represented one category of local schools that willingly and enthusiastically adopted the national educational reform. In future studies, other local art schools that played with or rejected the national reform might also be discussed as case studies. However, with the policy/practice dichotomy, the case of the Shanghai Art School helps to illuminate the local variability in education, and the transformation of a national education policy within the local context. This case study suggests an improved understanding of aesthetic education: under Cai Yuanpei's advocacy, aesthetic education not only initiated the government-run formal art academic training in China, but also effectively fostered the educational advancement of local private art schools, the growth of which diversified the category of modern art schools in China. Also, aesthetic education not only led to a reform in the national educational system of shifting from "learning from Japan" to "learning from France," but also resulted in an indigenized European cultural scene that was basically a hybrid of multi-cultures in Shanghai. This conclusion also suggests that there was not one unanimous Chinese response toward Western influence, or in other words, there was not only one process of "China's modernization of art." Local schools in different places in China carried out the national educational reform according to their own needs and with local methods, which may have resulted in different directions in their modernization processes.

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Notes:

[1] Cai Yuanpei joined the Allied Association (*Tong Meng Hui*) in 1904 and was appointed as the chairman of the Shanghai branch by Sun Yat-sen. Four years later, at the age of forty he began to study German and French. He visited Europe twice in 1908 and 1912, and was influenced by European scholars (e.g. Wilhelm Wundt, Lipps). When the Republican government was founded in 1912, he was appointed as the first Minister of Education. In that year, he published "My Views on the Aims of Education" (*Duiyu Jiaoyu Fangzhen zhi Yijian*) which placed education above politics and ranked aesthetic education as equal to utilitarian, moral, military and world-view education. Scholars usually view this as the beginning of aesthetic education. For more information about Yuanpei and aesthetic education see: William J. Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-pei: Educator of Modern China* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 1977); and Shu Xincheng, *Jindai Zhongguo Jiaoyu Sixiang Shi* [The History of Educational Thought in Modern China] (Shanghai: Zhonghua Shuju, 1932), 155.

[2] Michael Sullivan, Art and Artists of Twentieth-century China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 32.

[3] See Maysching Kao, "China's Response to the West in Art: 1898-1937" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1972) and Maysching Kao, "Reforms in Education and the Beginning of the Western-style Painting Movement in China," in *A Century in Crisis:* Modernity and Tradition in the Art of Twentieth-century China, eds. Julia F. Andrews and Shen Kuiyi (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 1998), 153-4.

[4] Wan Qingli, "Cai Yuanpei he Zhongguo Jindai Meishu Jiaoyu" [Cai Yuanpei and Modern Chinese Art Education], in *Ershi Shiji Zhongguo Meishu Jiaoyu* [Twentieth Century Chinese Art Education], ed. Pan Yaochang (Shanghai: Shanghai Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1999), 1-7; Liu Xiaolu, "Cong Beijing dao Xihu: Beijing Yizhuan he Hangzhou Yizhuan de Bijiao" [From Beijing to the West Lake: A Comparison Between the Beijing Art School and the Hangzhou Art Academy], in *Lin Fengmian he Ershi Shiji Zhongguo Meishu* [Lin Fengmian and Twentieth Century Chinese Art] (Hangzhou: Zhongguo Meishu Xueyuan Chubanshe, 1999), 22-40.

[5] Pan Yaochang, "Cai Yuanpei yu Shanghai Huatan" [Cai Yuanpei and the Shanghai Art World], in *Studies on Shanghai Paintings* (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe, 2000), 833-53.

[6] Margaret Sutton and Bradley Levinson, ed., *Policy as Practice: Toward a Comparative Socio-cultural Analysis of Educational Policy* (Westport and

London: Ablex Pub. Corporation, 2001); K.A. Watson-Gegeo and D.W. Gegeo, "Schooling, Knowledge and Power: Social Transformation in the Solomon Islands," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 23/1 (1992): 10-29.

[7] Bruce Fuller, *Growing up Modern: The Western State Builds Third-world Schools* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[8] For example see, Douglas R. Reynolds, "Sino-Foreign Interactions in Education," in *Education, Culture and Identity in 20th Century China*, ed. Glen Peterson, Ruth Hayhoe and Lu Yongling (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press and Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 24.

[9] Craig Clunas, Fruitful Sites: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 49.

[10] The Shanghai Art School changed its name seven times during its history. Its final official title was the Shanghai College of Fine Arts (*Shanghai Meishu Zhuanke Xuexiao*). Its popular name from 1917 to 1931 was the Shanghai Art School (*Shanghai Meishu Zhuanmen Xuexiao*), adopted in this article. The School is famous for an open dispute with a Warlord in the Nude Model Incident of 1926.

[11] Zheng Jie, "The Shanghai Art College" (M.Phil. diss., Hong Kong University, 2006).

[12] For example see, Liang Qichao, "Xuexiao Zonglun" [General Discussion of Schools], in *Zhongguo Jindai Jiaoyushi Ziliao* [Materials of Modern Chinese Educational History], ed. Shu Xincheng (Beijing: Renmin Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1961).

[13] For instance see: Duiker, *Ts'ai Yuan-pei: Educator of Modern China*, 1977; Sullivan, Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China, 1996; Yu-Hsin Tsai, *The Educational Philosophy of Ts'aio, Yuan-Pei: Chancellor of Peking University* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1995).

[14] Kao, "Reforms in Education and the Beginning of the Western-style Painting Movement in China," 1998, 153.

[15] See Cai Yuanpei's articles and lectures, such as Cai Yuanpei, "Duiyu Jiaoyu Fangzhen zhi Yijian" [My Views on the Aims of Education], 1912, in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji* [The Anthology of Cai Yuanpei's Aesthetic Education Essays], ed. Gao Pingshu (Changsha: Hunan Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1987), 1-8; Cai Yuanpei, "Meiyu dai Zongjiao" [Replacing Religions with Aesthetics], in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji*, ed. Gao Pingshu, 1987, 46.

[16] Kao, "Reforms in Education and the Beginning of the Western-style Painting Movement in China," 1998, 153.

[17] The Ministry of Education, "Jiaoyu Bu zhi gesheng shifan ji xiaoxue zhuzhong guowen shougong tuhua yinyue" [The Ministry of Education requires much importance to be attached to the curriculums of Chinese, handicraft, painting and music in teachers' schools and primary schools], no.27, 1914, in *Zhongguo Jindai Jiaoyushi Ziliao Huibian, Putong Jiaoyu* [A Compilation of Modern Chinese Educational History Materials, Mass Education], ed. Li Guilin, Qi Mingxiu and Qian Manqian (Shanghai: Shanghai Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1995), no.6, 475-6.

[18] The Ministry of Education, "Jiaoyu Bu Gongbu Jiaoyu Zongzhi Ling" [The Order Issued by the Ministry Concerning Education Aims], 1919, in *Zhongguo Jindai Jiaoyushi Ziliao Huibian, Xuezhi Yanbian* [A Compilation of Modern Chinese

Educational History Materials, the Transition of the Educational System], ed. Ju Xingui and Tang Liangyan (Shanghai: Shanghai Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1991), no.2, 651.

[19] Kao claimed, "The year 1912 proved to be a watershed for the movement. . . . Significant events were also occurring outside the government educational system in 1912, notably the first academy of art: the Shanghai Art Academy." (Kao, "Reforms in Education and the Beginning of the Western-style Painting Movement in China," 1998, 159.) However, although his views held historical significance, the influence obviously did not reach the Shanghai Art School founded in 1913.

[20] *Shenbao* [Shanghai Daily], January 1, 1915, 1.

[21] See *Shenbao*, July 14, 1914, p.1; July 19, 1914, 1.

[22] Xu criticized the academy for not offering basic painting courses like anatomy, perspective, and art history, and for not having plaster casts - it only used old picture books bought at bookstands on Beijing Road as textbooks. See Xu Beihong, "Xu Beihong Qishi" [The Announcement by Xu Beihong], *Shen Bao*, November 3, 1932, 5.

[23] Cai Yuanpei, "Jieshao Yishujia Liu Haisu" [Introducing an Artist, Liu Haisu], 1922, in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji*, ed. Gao Pingshu, 1987, 155-8.

[24] The *Chengdong Nüxue* was founded by Yang Baimin (1874-1924), a student with clear educational ideals, who had returned from Japan. Andrews notes in the 1910s that art education at the Eastern City Women's School was more systematic and advanced than that at the Shanghai Art School, at least under the circumstances of its day (Julia F. Andrews, "Luotihua Lunzheng ji Zhongguo Xiandai Meishushi de Jiangou" [The Nude Painting Controversy and the Construction of Modern Chinese Art History], in *Studies on Shanghai School Paintings* (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe, 2001), 124.) According to Wu Mengfei (1893-1979), the school was established in 1903. Yang Yi and Zheng Yimei wrote that the school was set up in 1894 (Andrews, "Luotihua Lunzheng ji Zhongguo Xiandai Meishushi de Jiangou," 2001, 146.) However, in 1917 it was reported that the school celebrated its 15th anniversary suggesting that the school was actually established in 1902. See *Shenbao*, May 26, 1917, 11.

[25] After July 1912, political events interrupted the aesthetic education course and Cai himself left China for Europe.

[26] According to Liu Haisu there were only five or six students at the beginning and no more than thirteen before 1917. See Liu Haisu, "Shanghai Meizhuan Shinian Huigu" [Looking back into the Ten Years' History of the Shanghai Art School], 1922, in *Liu Haisu Yishu Wenxuan* [A Selected Anthology of Liu Haisu's Art Essays], ed. Zhu Jinlou and Yuan Zhihuang (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 1987), 26-43; Zhu Youxian, ed., *Zhongguo Jindai Xuezhi Shiliao* [Historical Materials of Modern Education in China] (Shanghai: Huadong Shifan Daxue Chubanshe, 1983), 777-89.

[27] See *Shenbao*, November 18, 1930, 9.

[28] Sullivan, Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China, 1996.

[29] Liu Haisu (1896-1994) was one of Wu Shiguang's classmates. He participated in founding the school and taught there. When Zhang Yuguang was the school

principal, he was the vice principal.

[30] Liu Haisu, "An Essay for the First Issue of the School Journal *Art*," *Meishu* [Art] (a journal of the Shanghai Art School) 1 (1918): 1.

[31] From 1912 onwards, the number of primary and middle schools dramatically increased. In 1913, in Jiangsu province, there were 5,283 primary schools and 231,758 students. In July 1916, the school numbers reached 6,214 and the student enrolment was 292,433. In Zhejiang Province, there were around 6,300 primary schools in 1912. They even planned to found 10,000 more in the next ten years (Li Guilin, Qi ManXiu and Qian ManQian, ed., *Zhongguo Jindai Jiaoyushi Ziliao Huibian, Putong Jiaoyu*, 1995, 512-42). According to the school statistics, by 1937 most graduates obtained art teaching jobs in primary and secondary schools.

[32] *Meishu*, 1 (1918): 24. Liu is referring to the fact that in the late Qing and Republican period, primary school education was composed of two programs which consisted of a three year elementary primary school program and a three or four year high primary school program.

[33] Ibid., 24-25.

[34] Ibid., 25.

[35] See the archives of the Shanghai Art School, collected in the Shanghai Archive House (hereafter cited as SMZDA), 1921, Q250-1-2. In earlier school advertisements, the published training aim was teaching commercial art techniques such as copperplate drawing, and rubber-carbon techniques for calendar paintings. See *Shenbao*, January 28, 1913, p.12; February 16, 1914, 1.

[36] SMZDA, 1921, Q250-1-2.

[37] "The order from the Ministry of Education forwarded by the governor of the Jiangsu province on July 19, 1918,' in SMZDA, 1918, Q250-1-2.

[38] The School stated in its reply that "In the West and East many countries have a long history of professional art education, but in our country, there was no such school before. . . . Therefore, specialists in this field are unusually rare, which leads to the difficulty of employing professional teaching and administrative staff." See SMZDA, 1918, Q250-1-2.

[39] Chen Baoyi studied art in Japan and worked in the School on his return, but three commercial artists overshadowed him in 1914. This suggests local commercial artists were regarded much higher than returned art students at that time. Also, Chen Baoyi's failure in reforming "copy" teaching methods further supports this viewpoint. See *Shenbao*, July 12, 1914, p.1; July 19, 1914, 1.

[40] *Meishu*, 1918.

[41] Zhang Yuguang, "Zhang Yuguang Qishi" [The Announcement by Zhang Yuguang] in *Shenbao*, May 24, 1919, 2.

[42] Private Interview with Mr. Zhang Xiuping on September 2, 2004, 9:30 a.m. - 10:50 a.m., at Zhang Xiuping's home in Shanghai.

[43] Ding Song resigned the post as the teaching head (*jiao wu zhang*). He taught part-time Western Style painting and concurrently held other positions outside of the school. Xu Yongqing and Shen Bochen did not teach at the School either. See Ding Song, "Shanghai Zaoqi de Xiyanghua Meishu Jiaoyu" [Early Western Art Education in Shanghai], in *Shanghai Difangshi Ziliao* [Materials for Shanghai Local History Studies] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shehui Kexueyuan Chubanshe,

1986), vol. 5, 208-11.

[44] *Shenbao*, July 1, 1919, p.2; SMZDA, 1919, Q250-1-2.

[45] For example, Hong Ye (1901-1932) who once worked at the Shanghai Jingxiong Women's School was appointed as the director in the Correspondence Department. Other teachers hired included Tang Jisheng, who once taught painting at the Shanghai Minli Girls' School, and Gui Shaolie, who graduated from the Liang Jiang Normal School (SMZDA, 1919, Q250-1-2). As the number of teachers available was insufficient, Liu employed sixteen graduates from his own school, accounting for 43.2% of all the staff.

[46] Liu Haisu, "Huiyi Cai Yuanpei" [Recall Cai Yuanpei], in *Liu Haisu Sanwen* [Liu Haisu Essays], ed. Shen Hu (Guangzhou: Huacheng Chubanshe, 1999), 159-88.

[47] Liu, "Huiyi Cai Yuanpei," 1999, 159-88.

[48] SMZDA, 1919, Q250-1-2.

[49] According to regulation, the school board was comprised of four types of people: firstly, honorable directors who donated 50,000 *yuan* or above; secondly, founding sponsors of the school or those who donated 30,000 *yuan* or above; thirdly, school headmasters ex officio directors; and fourthly, directors who enjoyed a high reputation in education or art circles, and who were generous in contributions and had donated a large amount of money ("The Regulation of the Board at the Shanghai Art School," in SMZDA, 1920, Q250-1-2).

[50] Liu, "Huiyi Cai Yuanpei," 1999, 159-88.

[51] The first list of names of school board members in 1921 included: Yu Qiaqing (1867-1945), the chairman of the Qi Hai Stock Exchange and a famous leader in Shanghai gang organizations; Qian Wenxuan (1874-?), the chairman of Zhejiang Salt Affairs Institute; and Zhao Jujiao and Zhao Liushi, two merchants who later donated a piece of land to the Xu Jiahui Road. Other board members included Wang Zhen (Yiting) (1867-1938), a merchant and also a famous artist; Zhang Dongsun (1886-1973), a journalist working for *Shishi Xinbao* [Newspaper Everyday]; Jiang Fengzhen, a lieutenant general of the ground army; Xu Langxi (1885-1961), a merchant; a leader of the Shanghai gang organization with great interest in art education; and Fang Qian, a member of the legislative assembly. Li Yunshu (1867-?), Zhang Weigao, and Zhang Yuzhong were all merchants. Tang Xiong was a merchant and also artist, and Zhang Yu and Liu Xuling were principals of private schools. See "The regulation of the board at the Shanghai Art School," in SMZDA, 1920, Q250-1-2.

[52] Cai Yuanpei, *Meiyu Shishi de Fangfa* [The Methods for Carrying out Aesthetic Education] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1922). See also Gao Pingshu and Wang Shiru ed., *Cai Yuanpei Shuxin Ji* [Letter Collections of Cai Yuanpei] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 2000), 157.

[53] Liu Haisu's Letter to Cai Yuanpei on June 7, 1922, in SMZDA, 1922, Q250-1-254.

[54] Liu Haisu's letter to Cai Yuanpei on February 21, 1922, in SMZDA, 1922, Q250-1-4.

[55] Huang Yanpei's letter to Shen Enfu on March 4, 1922, in SMZDA, 1922, Q250-1-2.

[56] SMZDA, 1926, Q250-1-2.

[57] See *Shenbao*, April 2, 1926, 7.

[58] SMZDA, 1932, Q250-1-43.

[59] Liu Haisu's letter to Cai Yuanpei on November 10, 1922, in SMZDA, 1922, Q250-1-254.

[60] Zhou Xiang (1870-1933) began to operate tutorial art schools in 1910. The founder of the Shanghai Art School, Wu Shiguang and his fellows such as Liu Haisu, Xia Jiangkang, Wang Yingxue, Ding Song, Chen Baoyi etc., all studied together in Zhou's school in 1911. See Wang Zhen, "Liu Haisu yu qi Laoshi Zhou Xiang de Jiuge" [Liu Haisu and his teacher Zhou Xiang], *Jiading Wenshi Ziliao* [Literature and History in Jiading] 20 (2002): 56-64. These students later set up their own school, the Shanghai Art School. In order to attract prospective students, they competed with Zhou by publishing attacking articles in *Shenbao* in August, 1913.

[61] See *Shenbao*, August 11, 1918, 2; *Shenbao*, September 2, 1918, 2.

[62] See *Shenbao*, July 6, 1918, 11; *Shenbao*, September 22, 1922, 7.

[63] Wang Zhen, "Zhouxiang he Zhonghua Meishu hui" [Zhou Xiang and Chinese Aesthetic Association], *Jiading Wenshi* 21 (2004):154-9; *Shenbao*, August 4, 1919, 9.

[64] Wang Zhen, "Guanyu Zhou Xiang Chuangban Meishu Xuexiao de Kaozheng" [The Ascertain for Zhou Xiang's Schools], *Jiading Wenshi* 19 (2002): 71.

[65] Ding Jianxing, "Zhou Xiang Xiansheng Xiaozhuan" [A Biography of Mr. Zhou Xiang], in *Zhou Xiang Shanshui Huapu* [A Compilation of Zhou Xiang's Landscape Paintings] (Shanghai, 1946), no. 4.

[66] Cai Yuanpei's private letter to Liu Haisu on June 1, 1922, in SMZDA, 1922, Q250-1-4.

[67] Sullivan, Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China, 1996, 32.

[68] Cai Yuanpei, "Yu Shidai Huabao Jizhe Tanhua" [An Interview with Cai Yuanpei by a Journalist of *Times*], 1930, in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji*, ed. Gao Pingshu, 1987, 213-5.

[69] Cai Yuanpei, "Zai Beida Huafa Yanjiuhui Qiuji Huiyi Yanshuo ci" [A Lecture at the Autumn Meeting of the Painting Method Research Institute at Peking University], 1919, in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji*, ed. Gao Pingshu, 1987, 55.

[70] Craig Clunas, "Chinese Art and Chinese Artists in France 1924-1925," *Arts Asiatiques* 44 (1989): 100-6.

[71] For example see, Wan Qingli, "Cai Yuanpei he Zhongguo Jindai Meishu Jiaoyu," 2000.

[72] Jonathan Hay, "Painters and Publishing in Shanghai," in *Art at the Close of China's Empire Temple*, ed. Ju-his Chou (Temple: Arizona State University, 1998), 164.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Chen Baoyi, "Yanghua Yundong Guocheng Lueshu" [A Brief Record of the Western Painting Movement], 1943, in *Bainian Zhongguo Meishu Jingdian Wenku* [An Anthology of Classical Essays During the One Hundred Years], ed. Gu Sen (Shenzhen: Haitian Chubanshe, 1998), no.5, 33.

[75] *Shenbao*, September 9, 1919, 11.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Yuan Zhihuang and Chen Zu'en, *Liu Haisu Nianpu* [The Chronology of Liu Haisu] (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Chubanshe, 1992).

[78] *Minguo Ribao* [The Republic News], February 12, 1920, 10.
[79] *Shenbao*, March 3, 1920, 3.
[80] *Shenbao*, March 16, 1920, 11.
[81] *Shenbao*, April 14, 1920, 11.
[82] SMZDA, 1920, Q250-1-35.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Wang Zhen and Rong Junli, eds., *Wang Yachen, Rong Junli Nianpu Hebian* [A Combined Chronology of Wang Yachen and Rong Junli] (Beijing: Minhzu yu Jianshe Chubanshe, 1996).
[85] *Shenbao*, July 29, 1921, 15; July 3, 1921, 3.
[86] See "A Survey of the Summer School at the Shanghai Art School in 1922," in SMZDA, 1922.
[87] Liu Haisu, "Daonian Wu Xinwu" [Mourning Mr. Wu Xinwu], 1924, in *Liu Haisu Yishu Wenxuan*, eds. Zhu Jinlou and Yuan Zhihuang (Shanghai: Shanghai Renmin Meishu Chubanshe, 1987), 301-8.
[88] *Shenbao*, September 30, 1923, 18.
[89] *Shenbao*, July 29, 1923, p.20.
[90] *Shenbao*, November 10, 1924, supplemental pages, 2.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Liu Haisu, "Canguan Fa Zonghui Meishu Bolanhui" [A Brief Record of the Art Explored at the French Association], *Meishu* (June, 1919): 2.
[93] These exhibitions are found in the following issues of *Shenbao*, November 11, 1919, 11; November 22, 1919, 11; October 8, 1921, 4; December 21, 1920, 10; October 17, 1922, 13. November 16, 1922, 17.
[94] Its member list was as following, "Mrs. M. H. Swan, Mrs. G.E. Tucker, Mrs. Charis Ferguson, Mrs. R. Roberts, Mrs. H. E. Gilson, Mr. R. Ulz, Mrs. E. M. Gall, Mr. Peywn Griffin, Mr. Akets J, Mrs. Warren Manlaz, Mr. J. Frost, Liu Haisu and Li Yishu etc." See *Shenbao*, May 6, 1924, 15.
[95] *Shenbao*, July 29, 1923, 20.
[96] *Shenbao*, November 23, 1924, 15.
[97] SMZDA, 1925, Q250-1-40.
[98] *Shishi Xinbao* [Newspaper Everyday], April 27, 1924, 4.
[99] Li Jianqiang and Li Shizhuang, "A Chronology of Hong Kong Visual Art Activities 1900-1930," in *Besides: A Journal of Art History & Criticism* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Art History Research Society, 1997), vol.1, 227.
[100] See "A Survey of the Shanghai Art School in 1925," in SMZDA, 1925.
[101] SMZDA, 1921, Q250-1-39; SMZDA, 1924, Q250-1-40.
[102] Liu Kang, "Jian Jiaoyuzhe he Huajia de Chen Renhao" [An Artist and Art Educator Chen Renhao], in *Liu Kang Wenji* [The Anthology of Liu Kang] (Singapore: Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1981), 116-21.
[103] Ye Ma, "Zhang Xian Lun" [On Zhang Xian] in *The 13th Year Book of the Shanghai College of Fine Arts* (Shanghai: The Shanghai College of Fine Arts, 1932), 1-4.
[104] When the School completed a new school building in 1926, it had over ten *xihua* studios, including the Liu Li Studio (taught by Liu Haisu, and Li Yishi); the Li Pu Studio (taught by Li Chaoshi and V. Podgoursky); the Yachen Studio; the Jiyuan Studio; and others. See *Shenbao*, March 31, 1926, 10. It was decided at

the department meeting in September that students in each studio were to be supervised by the appointed instructor(s). (SMZDA, 1926, Q250-1-41). This policy was interrupted by the Campus Upheaval in 1927 and was resumed in 1931. Liu announced on his return from Europe that, "I plan to resume the former school policy: professors are the units of studios. This means that professors work in their fixed classrooms and students go to the teachers' studios as they wish." (SMZDA, 1931, Q250-1-43)

[105] See "A Survey of the Shanghai Art School in 1924," in SMZDA, 1924. According to Boime, private studios in France provided four major divisions for training which were "Elementary drawing lessons, drawing and painting after a life model, and compositional studies in the form of sketches and copying." Students were assigned to a particular rank that was suitable to their standards. (Alert Boime, The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century (London: Phaidon, 1971), 24.)

[106] "Modernist painting" in the School refers to the Western style paintings that were no longer bound to realistic styles but open to experimentation based on modern and modernist European painting styles such as Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, Expressionism etc.

[107] See *The 15th Year Book of the Shanghai College of Fine Arts*, in SMZDA, 1935.

[108] SMZDA, 1924-1926, Q250-1-23.

[109] SMZDA, 1926, Q250-1-23.

[110] *Shenbao*, March 1, 1926, 11.

[111] See "The 25th Anniversary Commemorative Book of the Shanghai Fine Arts College," in SMZDA, 1937.

Feng Zikai, "Zuijin Shijie Yishu de Qushi" [The Latest Trend of the World's Art], 1933, in *Yishu Cong Hua* [Random Essays on Art] (Hong Kong: Xinwenxue Yanjiu She, 1976), 3-19.

[112] John Clark, "Modernity in Japanese Painting," *Art History* 9/2 (June 1986): 213-31.

[113] See, Munsterberg, The Art of Modern Japan: from The Meiji Restoration to the Meiji Centennial, 1868-1968, 1978. On pages 58-59, Munsterberg provides the following examples: Asai Chu (1856-1907) did Courbet's style and the Barbizon school of the late nineteenth century, and later Monet and Pissarro; Yasui Sotaro's (1888-1955) paintings showed the explicit influence of Cezanne and Matisse between 1910 and 1913; and Umehara Ryuzaburo (1888-1986) was strongly influenced by Cezanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin in 1913.

[114] Clark, "Modernity in Japanese Painting," 1986, 226.

[115] Ibid., 213.

[116] Ibid., 213-31.

[117] According to Pevsner, only one or two European art academies accepted Post-Impressionism in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Most schools did not relate to the modern movement. For instance, the Royal Academy in London was called to bear "Only a nominal relation to contemporary British art." In France the contemporary style still seemed to develop "Almost entirely outside the public establishments." The École Nationale Supérieure de Beaux Arts still preserved the old educational system. Italy preserved studio training and modern consciousness had just begun to awaken. See Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art*

Past and Present (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 287-9.

[118] Lou Jinsheng, "Guanyu Liu Haisu Ouyou Zuopin Zhanlan Hui" [About Liu Haisu's European Trip Art Exhibition], *Wenhua* [The Culture Arts Review] (October 25, 1932): 40-1.

[119] Cai Yuanpei believed that aesthetic education should be carried out in three fields: family, school and society. He suggested that all the school courses from kindergarten to college should contribute to developing students' aesthetic sensibility. After-class activities (e.g. debates, concerts, exhibitions) and the physical campus surroundings should also assist this purpose (Cai Yuanpei, *Meiyu Shishi de Fangfa*, 3-5). He proposed that the family should create a harmonious and elegant atmosphere for children, while society should provide a beautiful, elegant and harmonious urban environment (Cai, *Meiyu Shishi de Fangfa*, 1925.)

[120] The article "Meizhuan Xiaoyou Hui zhi Chen Duxiu Yanjiang" [A lecture by Chen Duxiu at the Alumni of the Shanghai Art School] commented that "The Shanghai Art School places much emphasis on public lectures." *Shenbao*, June 23, 1922, 15. For the information above, see *Shenbao*, August 14, 1922, 15; October 5, 1919, 10; School surveys in 1922 and 1924 in SMZDA.

[121] See Liu Haisu, "Tianma hui Jiujing shi Shenme?" [What is the Heaven Horse Society?], *Yishu Zhoukan* [Art Weekly] (August 4, 1923). In "Shanghai Meizhuan Shinian Huigu", Liu Haisu claimed that when the school was founded they published an announcement: "Firstly, we must develop the indigenous art of the East and study the mysteries of Western art; secondly, we want to fulfill our responsibility of promoting art in a society that is callous, apathetic, desiccated, and decaying. We shall work for the rejuvenation of Chinese art, because we believe art can save present-day Chinese society from confusion and arouse the general public from their dreams; thirdly, we are far from knowledgeable, yet we are confident in our sincerity to study and promote [art]." (Liu, "Shanghai Meizhuan Shinian Huigu," 1922, cited and translated in Kao, "Reforms in Education and the Beginning of the Western-style Painting Movement in China," 1998, 169-71.) I have reasons to doubt whether this announcement existed, or if it was published at the School's inception. Firstly, it did not conform to the school goal before 1917. In order to attract prospective students, they had to exaggerate their qualifications in art education instead of sincerely confessing their real standards, just as they did in 1913. They claimed that they were well-grounded experts and denied having been Zhou Xiang's students. Secondly, the notion of "fulfilling our responsibility of promoting art in a society" was not a national call in 1912. Even the definition of "art" was still unclear to the public. Who could have been the audience? Thirdly, as Liu was just a follower, not the real founder of the School, even if he himself had this operational goal, how could Wu Shiguang, a businessman, have published this? Fourthly, a comparison between this announcement and that of the Heaven Horse Society shows many similarities. Whether judged from its tone or aim, Liu's announcement seemed to be an active response to the aesthetic education policy, which should not have been written earlier than 1917, in fact probably around 1920. Last but not least, this announcement has not been discovered in the newspaper surveys up to now.

[122] SMZDA, 1924, Q250-1-23

[123] "The record of the administrative meeting on March 1, 1926," in SMZDA, 1926, Q250-1-23.

[124] *Shenbao*, November 19, 1921, 15.

[125] *Shanghai Meizhuan Yuekan*, 1921.

[126] Chen Chiyun, "Ershi Shiji Shang Ban ye Shanghai zhi Meishu Yanjiu Gaiping" [A Review of The First Half of the Twentieth Century of Shanghai Art Studies], in *Studies on Shanghai School Paintings* (Shanghai: Shanghai Shuhua Chubanshe, 2001), 387-405.

[127] Here, official activities refer to those organized by the Chinese government.

[128] *Shenbao*, March 26, 1926, p.11; SMZDA, 1926, Q250-1-235.

[129] See Cai Yuanpei, "Bali Wanguo Meishu Gongyi Bolanhui Zhongguo Huichang Chenliepin Muluxu" [The Preface for the Exhibition Catalog], 1925, in *Cai Yuanpei Meiyu Lunji* [The Anthology of Cai Yuanpei's Aesthetic Education Essays], ed. Gao Pingshu, 1987, 180-2; Craig Clunas, "Chinese Art and Chinese Artists in France 1924-1925," 1989.

[130] Yuan Zhihuang and Chen Zu'en, *Liu Haisu Nianpu*, 1992.

[131] *Shishi Xinbao*, April 20, 1924, 4.

[132] *Shenbao*, July 24, 1924, supplemental pages, 2.

[133] *Shishi Xinbao*, October 29, 1925, Arts Section, 2.

[134] *Shenbao*, August 25, 1926, 11.

[135] *Shenbao*, August 12, 1929, 16.

[136] Wang Yachen, "Luyou Guoren Meishu Zhanlanhui de Ganxiang" [The Impression of the Art Exhibition held by Chinese Artists who are in Europe], 1924, in *Wang Yachen Yishu Wenji*, eds. Wang Zhen and Rong Junli, 1990, 524-7.

Greenberg Disciplining Greenberg

Randall K. Van Schepen

In his spirited defense of the modernist definition of the work of art, Clement Greenberg is known as one of the most supremely self-confident critics of modern art. However, in what follows, I would suggest that the image of Greenberg's vehement, late, and defensive posture be softened by a reading of Greenberg's early critical writing, which is characterized by a more tentative and probing manner. First on the scene as a critic in the 1940s, Greenberg's criticism was riddled with doubts, contains crucial errors and even provides definitions of the work of art that his later criticism comes to contradict. His late critical model, exemplified by "Modernist Painting," reaches its familiar Olympian heights of aestheticism and pure visuality by departing significantly from Greenberg's early emphasis on the materiality of the work of art.[1]

It is on this hinge of the materiality/image status of painting in particular that Greenberg's transformation takes place, a transformation fully undertaken by the late 1950s. Although his critics maintain otherwise, Greenberg's early critical writing demonstrates openness to spontaneous aesthetic experience as well as a lack of consistency with his more strident later pronouncements. A careful account of the relationship of Greenberg's early and late criticism around the issue of "discipline" will demonstrate its greater relativity and can in fact temper or "discipline" the stridency of his later work. I suggest then, that there is a split between the historical Greenberg revealed in the full range of his critical statements and the perceived Greenberg who has recently played an important role as a foil in determining what works of art after modernism do not do.

Greenberg's Critics

The strength of Greenberg's convictions and his consequent influence on art criticism and art history did not prevent his work from being critiqued by writers as varied as Meyer Schapiro, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Leo Steinberg and Harold Rosenberg. In fact, one is tempted to say that the stridency of Greenberg's position vis-à-vis his critical colleagues may be understood through Jackson Pollock's famous statement about his teacher, Thomas Hart Benton. Like Benton, Greenberg was a more rather than less "resistant" personality

and thus gave the critics of his time something against which to press. Contemporary responses to Greenberg's criticism ranged from bemused tolerance to open hostility, and from oblique reference to direct critical exchange. And yet the history of this consistent contemporary engagement with Greenberg's ideas over the length of his career is rarely acknowledged in the attacks on his position that were leveled in the 1970s and 1980s. The increasing arrogance of Greenberg's writing and persona in the late 1950s may be one of the reasons that the postmodern critical response to his work was as heated and one-sided as it was. The larger project of dismantling modernist ideology seemed more pressing than the obligations to parse Greenberg's more subtle or tenuous critical statements or stages. Fortunately this has been changing.[2]

Among the more public exchanges of critical disagreement was the give and take between Greenberg and F. R. Leavis in 1955 over the legacy of Kafka. Although it invigorated Greenberg to spar with a critic he considered at the time to be the "greatest, and truest, living literary critic," he also realized that he came off none too well. This exchange was one of a number of other significant personal and professional experiences from around 1955; his breakup with Helen Frankenthaler, his own emotional breakdown and consequent alignment with a strange psychological therapy group he called "Newtonians," and the unaccountable success of Rosenberg's "American Action Painters." These all contributed to a dramatic shift in his criticism at this time away from a personal and emotional engagement with the materiality of the work of art by the surrealist-tinged artists of Abstract Expressionism to an Apollonian criticism heralding the arrival of pure fields of Post-painterly color.[3]

By drawing on currents that played a less prominent role in his earlier essays, Greenberg's position circa 1955 solidified into the "Modernist" one for which he is best known—Greenberg renounces the ambiguity of modern art's status as object/image and instead asserts that the aesthetic of works of art has a purely visual character. One of the unfortunate results of Greenberg's success in the late 1950s and 1960s is that his earlier criticism is often read through the lens of this doctrinaire modernist definition of art.[4] Greenberg's early criticism is less developed, less philosophically rooted, and less sure than the conviction that informs his mature "modernist" statements. But these limitations, the critical confusions sometimes excised by Greenberg in his self edited collection Art and Culture (1959), are turned for us into an advantage as the very tentative character Greenberg excises from early criticism makes it seem all the more fresh, responsive, and compelling to us than his tidier packages of mature pronouncements. I suggest that Greenberg's own early criticism functions to temper or "discipline" the conceits and utopianism of his later criticism through its relative humility and greater positivistic spirit.

Critical arrogance and what might be called postmodern "historical amnesia" perpetuate the widely held perception that strong critiques of

Greenberg's formalism only coincided with the rise of late 1960s student radicalism. Rosalind Krauss's fed this idea of historical rupture when she recollected her falling out with Greenberg around 1968, and her subsequent public denunciation of his treatment of David Smith's sculpture in her 1974 article "Changing the Work of David Smith." According to this sociologically motivated history of postwar American criticism, it took the American arrival of the "linguistic turn" in critical discourse, courtesy of a critical legacy flowing from the founts of Michel Foucault, Roland Barthes, and Jacques Derrida, to fully unseat Greenbergian formalism from its position of unquestioned authority. And while it may have required these alternative modes of intellectual inquiry to explode some of the central myths of the "formalist fallacy"—to rephrase an earlier modernist critical injunction against the "intentional fallacy"—the critique that Greenberg's own early writing might provide for his later doctrinaire approach can be equally as effective in pointing to its limitations.

Greenberg, Discipline, and Foucault

The continental philosophical models used for postmodern cultural critical analysis since the late 1960s are now themselves decades old and have presently reached the point where their own limitations are increasingly obvious. But despite the tired trotting out of the usual litany of names, at least one concept key to the postmodern approach evident in "the French connection" is helpful in analyzing Greenberg, and that is "discipline." As the key figure in modern art criticism (and one might even claim in the writing of much art history in the mid-twentieth century) against which postmodern methodologies have been applied, Greenberg's late criticism reifies the disembodied, Cartesian, Modernist subject whose visual omniscience can be compared to Michel Foucault's notion of the panoptic gaze. For example, while Greenberg frequently complained of the misinterpretation of his use of the word "purity," he nevertheless did little to discourage the perception of himself as a comparably infallible "eye" or judge of quality in purely visual terms.

While discipline and power, the major themes of Foucault's work, are evident in Greenberg's criticism, I would like to point to how the idea of "discipline" provides two specific ways of framing Greenberg. First, Greenberg's critical approach is predicated on a historical understanding of the nature of modern disciplinarity. This is the Greenberg most familiar to us and is found in varying forms in his earliest essays of 1939/40, and his later essays of the 1950s and 1960s. His framing of modernist art as "disciplinary" is the most compelling and simultaneously the most limiting observation he made throughout his long and varied career. Greenberg had good reasons for his self-assuredness. Although personal hubris becomes his scarlet letter, his

early critical confidence came from the fact that his narrative of modern art, one that accounts for hierarchical and cyclical relationships of various creative disciplines, really was the most convincing argument at the time. From his earliest essays, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1939) and "Towards a Newer Laocoön" (1940), Greenberg argues that the significance of individual disciplines arises because of broader cultural processes of specialization in modern industries, science and the economy. In his account, from within this broader process of specialization there is a rise and fall of influence of any given form of expression—a baton that was passed from literature to visual art by the end of the nineteenth century. This awareness of disciplinary limitations informed Greenberg's understanding of criticism as a primarily "formalist" enterprise, although he consistently resisted using this term to describe what he did throughout his career. Most significantly, this awareness also limits Greenberg's later interest in the discipline of painting to the realm of the purely visual.[5]

Secondly, by using the word "discipline" in the sense of correction, I believe it is fruitful to undertake a reading of Greenberg's textual corpus against itself. By analyzing Greenberg's work and intentions against himself, this essay reveals an inherent tension between the quite evident uni-disciplinary tendencies in Greenberg's work and his more tentative "on the beat" criticism in the 1940s. This counter-reading is at odds with frequent interpretations of his work that see Greenberg as a cartoonish figure embodying a unitary and therefore easily dismissed critical viewpoint. In this sense, I suggest that Greenberg's criticism when considered as a disparate whole can be said to discipline or "correct" itself. Granted, this "self-correction" or "self-discipline" is only partial at best, but it does problematize Greenberg's work to make our encounter with it fresher than it might otherwise be. It should be clear that what I mean by "self-criticism" here is distinct from the notion of "self-discipline" so central to Greenberg's definition of modernism in "Modernist Painting." Greenberg's notion is closer to the idea of purification, which is necessary because of painting's constant obsession with its own fragile identity. What I mean to do here is reveal a form of self-critique that develops from reading his work against itself. Rather than Greenberg's Kantian invocation of self-criticism I will invoke points early in his career where he writes about art in ways that provide an effective "self-disciplining" critique of his later modernist assumptions.

The significance of disciplinarity for Greenberg's criticism can hardly be overestimated. The more familiar sense of discipline in Greenberg is where the significance of a modernist work (particularly painting) is defined almost entirely by its participation in disciplinary issues. Greenberg's first two critical essays on art, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" and "Towards a Newer Laocoön," are as steeped in modern ideas of the nature of the humanistic disciplines as they are in Greenberg's Trotskyite, anti-Stalinist, New York intellectual political sources. In both essays Greenberg sets the problem before himself of dis-

tinguishing the unique character of a given discipline, especially painting, in relation to other creative cultural production in popular and "high" art. Some of Greenberg's commentators make a direct connection between his early loosely Marxist social critiques of 1939 and 1940 and his art criticism of the late-1950s and early-1960s, the "Modernist Painting" period.[6] Despite the shift in Greenberg's political motivations over this lengthy and contentious period of time, his primary critical issue does remain the same, disciplinarity. When Greenberg later defines the summation of his modernist project as embodied in Post-Painterly abstraction, his late and more purely aesthetic definition is barely inflected with the leftist leanings of his early criticism. But even as capitalism came to supersede communism, Greenberg's aestheticist impulses superseded his leftist politics. In the process of his political and aesthetic transformation, a political turn of left to right, of social progressive to cultural mandarin, Greenberg claims his credentials as a Cold War cultural warrior. He makes a particularly compelling warrior because of his passage through the refining fire of his own youthful Marxist explorations. At least this is a reading that the later Greenberg actively encourages.

At either end of the political spectrum of positions he comes to take, Greenberg is obsessed with how the notion of the specificity of a disciplinary approach is a key characteristic of the modern period. When a discipline such as oil on canvas develops over a period of hundreds of years, a debilitating encrustation of conventionality takes place. The rules governing its modes of operation come to seem oppressive to the creative nature of the discipline, becoming ends in themselves rather than serving the discipline's communicative purpose. Greenberg suggests that this fossilization in painting came from stifling academicization in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, leading to the revolt of the avant-garde. Thus, one way to understand Greenberg's vast critical career is to suggest that it too underwent just such a consistent outworking of disciplinary streamlining. Greenberg's criticism embodies the element of "self-criticism" that he ascribed to Kant and to the project of Modernist painting. Accordingly, Greenberg's criticism becomes ever more esoterically refined to an essence, his later essays working out the implications and suggestive potential of his youthful Marxist indiscretions.

The opening quote in "Modernist Painting" sets the stage: "I identify Modernism with the intensification, almost the exacerbation, of this self critical tendency that began with the philosopher Kant. Because he was the first to criticize the means itself of criticism, I conceive of Kant as the first real Modernist."[7] When "Kant used logic to establish the limits of logic," he set in play a course of self-criticism that ran throughout "every formal social activity."[8] Eventually reaching from philosophy to the arts in the nineteenth century, this self-criticism is said to make the place of each such formal social endeavor all the more sure because it can justify its own existence. Whatever is superfluous

to the "characteristic methods of a discipline" is eliminated in favor of the essential and unique.[9]

"Self-criticism" is the modernist's refining fire; subjecting modern life to relentless scrutiny, purifying and burning away conventions, leaving behind an essential core of the human subject or discipline. This process of constant paring, smoothing extraneous detail down to a Brancusi-like form, and planing-down a painting to a plane is what is known as Greenbergian modernism. In contrast to this essentialist model of disciplinarity, Michel Foucault suggests that humanistic disciplines are primarily methods of social control and/or "techniques for assuring the ordering of human multiplicities."[10] Foucault's interpretation of disciplinarity is rooted in his distrust of the organizing logic behind cultural forms; hidden sources of power and control that seek to subjugate individual freedom, idiosyncratic action and personal liberty to the controlling interests of an officially sanctioned culture. For Foucault, the ordering of culture according to prescribed disciplinary forms has little to do with purity and everything to do with power. Foucault might suggest that Greenberg's refining disciplinary singularity should be understood as a working out of culture's homogenizing institutional interests. For Foucault, discipline, at its root tied to education and instruction, is power at the service of the hierarchal ordering of humans in an institution or society.

To apply Foucault's idea of discipline to Greenberg, one might turn to the three main mechanisms that Foucault suggests are necessary for the maintenance of discipline: hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and examinations. Each of these three supports the institutionalized nature of discipline. Foucault is interested in "discipline" in the context of ideas supporting the modern penal system, defining outlaw behavior and the tracing of the history of legal punishment. His reference points are thus more sociological than aesthetic. But if we look at the manner in which discipline is administered through these three mechanisms in Foucault's analysis, the parallels to modernist aesthetics become clear. Furthermore, Greenberg's reputation of being a "disciplinary figurehead" was cemented by his autocratic reputation as well as his representation as an army general in Mark Tansey's painting The New York School (1983).

Hierarchical observation is the idea of having "eyes that see without being seen" or the objective seeing eye/I of the Enlightenment subject.[11] Foucault famously saw the Bentham prison as a physical embodiment of a controlling modern scopic regime. The prison was designed with an all-seeing guard tower at the center of prison cells arranged in a circle around it. The guards could thereby view inmates without being viewed. What makes this a powerful metaphor for Foucault is not so much the fact that the guards do actually see everything, but that the prisoners think that they do. Foucault notes how the modern subject fosters this self-control by internalizing the oppressive gaze.

Foucault analyzes modernity as a comparable prison house, as the reign of the panopticon, an all-seeing bureaucracy.[12] Greenberg's late disciplinary criticism furthered this Modernist/Enlightenment project in aesthetics. One might say that the historical justification for abstract art found in "Towards a Newer Laocoön" is transformed into an aesthetic justification in Greenberg's high modernist theory. This aesthetic is articulated as taking place only within pure vision. By his later writing Greenberg becomes fascinated with what might be called "visuality," and around this we could cluster terms such as "opticality," "visibility," "instantaneous unity," or "at-onceness."

Contrary to Herbert Read, who proposes that sculpture relies on "palpation," "touching," and "handling," Greenberg instead suggests that despite sculpture's three-dimensionality virtually all sculpture-based aesthetic experience is visual and "invokes touch" through sight.[13] Greenberg thus argues that even when an explicitly physical form is presented, it is the discrete and distinct eye that provides the appropriate experience. Visual experience comes without the body; it is a wholly disembodied and free-floating visual desire, a voyeuristic consumption of visuality. These are all characteristic of the ideal perceptual state that Greenberg elucidates in his most modernist statements. To see absolutely and purely requires denying one's other senses to fully experience the instantaneous visual plenitude available via the modernist work. According to Greenberg, part of what makes this pure visuality so powerful is its unreflective quality, the manner in which the work can impress itself upon consciousness in an instant through the immediacy of the visual encounter. This visual immediacy is encouraged in painting through a number of means, two of which are large size and uniformity.[14] Large size overwhelms our ability to comprehend one part at a time by its power, forcing the viewer to be bathed in a saturating environment; uniformity de-emphasizes subject matter and emphasizes form. Greenberg's search for the "seeing but not seen" spectator is a more contemporary version of Schiller's late apolitical aestheticism. Disillusioned with the connection between politics and aesthetics late in his Aesthetic Letters, Schiller disparages how subject matter reflects back on life and limits our appreciation of it, by making specific our associations: "subject-matter...however sublime and all-embracing it may be, always has a limiting effect on the spirit, and it is only from form that true aesthetic freedom can be looked for."[15] Greenberg's modernist statements thus embody this first Foucauldian mechanism by presenting aesthetic experience and being seen by an eye without a body. The disembodied pure seeing eye of modernist aesthetics can be omniscient in a manner not possible when situated in a historical and lived body.

Foucault's other two mechanisms of discipline are also present in Greenberg's criticism. "Normalizing judgment" is the attempt to make what are vested judgments appear to be neutral, scientific or most compellingly,

natural. The charges that Greenberg's critical judgments were prescriptive dogged him late in life. These accusations became particularly acute in the wake of the Krauss's public feud over David Smith's estate. Greenberg consistently claimed that his work was descriptive rather than prescriptive. As he notes in "Towards a Newer Laocoön," abstract art may have an obvious superiority in 1940, but that preeminence is "historical" and cannot be "compelled."[16] Even in his late modernist criticism Greenberg suggests that his criticism is not a wish list or marching orders, but rather reflects his lived aesthetic experience in front of countless works of art. Even in his most strident critical essays, a careful reading of Greenberg's corpus suggests that his judgments were most frequently couched in terms that were descriptive statements acting as facts. For example, in "Modernist Painting" Greenberg pronounces: "Modernism has found that these limits can be pushed back indefinitely before a picture stops being a picture and turns into an arbitrary object; but it has also found that the further back these limits are pushed the more explicitly they have to be observed and indicated." In this and many other passages Greenberg refuses to introduce "I" into his descriptions, instead investing "Modernism" with the power to "find" and to "push."[17]

So rather than personally prescribing a mode of operation for modernism to continue, an approach that would have lent his essays a more personal and perhaps initially more persuasive character, Greenberg states the nature of the problems of modern art using declarative and "normalizing" language. His adoption of a very "flat" and unremarkable language was meant to be in contrast to the more florid style of Harold Rosenberg and against the French emotive tradition in art criticism. As a result, Greenberg comes to sound convincing and sure-minded rather than individualistic and fugitive. The fact that Greenberg rarely uses personal reflection or experience for his aesthetic explanations furthers the idea that his is a non-personal, objective seeing eye disconnected from a living, historical and personally situated body.

The last mechanism of discipline for Foucault is "examination," by which he means the development of a fail-proof means of perfect surveillance and observation. But it also means "examining" those things that are not "normalized" according to the aforementioned "normalizing discourse." In other words, any possible apostasy or heretical approach is singled out for special examination. Greenberg's criticism is filled with such constant patrolling, whether it is his denigration of Pollock's late re-engagement with figuration, or his frustration over the easy effects of second generation Abstract Expressionism.[18]

It is relatively common to hear Greenberg described as an autocratic leader actively patrolling the boundaries of his discipline. Although Tansey's painting depicts him as a general in the American Army (thereby also portraying him as a leader in New York's bid to become the postwar cultural center),

a more accurate portrayal of his common reputation might be as the leader of an aesthetic Gestapo, cracking down on aesthetic dissidents. On the most basic of levels this is all that a critic does, examines a work according to a predilection, which is either personal or theoretical. Greenberg, however, uses his "examination" to support the normalizing of his aesthetic preferences. This is not always stated as a prerogative but implied through his active participation in patrolling the borders of the aesthetic object. In fact, some of Greenberg's most strongly worded and critical language is reserved for artists/approaches that demonstrate an aesthetic sympathy with his approach.

Even Greenberg's active patrolling of disciplinary borders, so clearly a part of Greenberg's support of abstraction and his tense relationship to more representational works such as Pollock's after 1949, is made secondary to his late criticism's emphasis on "pure" opticality.[19] This is true even to the point of his overriding sculpture's inherent three-dimensionality in order to emphasize the manner in which it follows painting's imperative to visuality in 1958:

> The desire for "purity" works, as I have indicated, to put an even higher premium on sheer visibility and an even lower one on the tactile and its associations, which include that of weight as well as impermeability.... Rendering substance entirely optical, and form, whether pictorial, sculptural or architectural, as an integral part of ambient space—this brings anti-illusionism full circle. Instead of the illusion of things we are now offered the illusion of modalities: namely that matter is incorporeal, weightless and exists only optically, like a mirage.[20]

Here Greenberg's fervent desire for discipline is outweighed by his belief that, in following the line of argumentation in "Towards a Newer Laocoön," painting remains the dominant artform of his time. As such, even three-dimensional sculpture forgoes its cultural form in order to mimic painting's opticality. In other words, despite its non-disciplinary specific emphasis on its visual rather than material nature, sculpture can still be said to follow the model of a disciplinary dominance over an era by a singular cultural form.

Disciplining Greenberg

Thus, it is possible to read Greenberg as a "disciplinarian" across a wide range of his career, from his early "Towards a Newer Laocoön" to his later "Modernist Painting." His "seeing eye that is not seen," his normalizing discourse, and his examination and patrolling of the borders of apostate artists all point to the significance and even centrality of these ideas for understanding Greenberg's project. But such a reading, across decades of writing and history and ranging over dozens of critical essays, makes little of the numer-

ous and fascinating shifts in Greenberg's career between his strident early and late essays. The fact that Greenberg himself encourages such a "misreading" should not make the project of recovering the more tentative conclusions of his early criticism any less important. Greenberg's refashioning of his critical career through the self-anthologized Art and Culture presents a unified image of a more complex reality. The perception of Greenberg as wholly anti-materialist and uni-disciplinary is as flat and monotonous as some of the painting he comes to espouse. In fact, Greenberg's earlier less triumphant criticism of the 1940s and early 1950s contradicts his later, more frequently anthologized essays at many points.[21] One might characterize the tension in Greenberg's earlier criticism as a struggle to determine whether the purity or essence of painting is physical or optical, a distinction that has since haunted poststructuralist critiques of his work.[22]

Other models of aesthetic engagement were certainly available to Greenberg in his formative critical years. However, a familiarity with T. S. Elliot's modernist poetry, an informal study of Germanic philosophy, and his Trotskyite tendencies lent his criticism a teleological thrust as well as aestheticist air. Kantian references begin to flow freely in Greenberg's writing in the late 1950s; however these predilections are held in check by a streak of pragmatism in his early criticism. This pragmatic outlook lent itself to focusing on the work of art's material constitution. An excellent example of this already occurs in his "Towards a Newer Laocoön," an essay in which he sets the historical grounds for his consequent obsession with opticality, but which also more clearly displays the tension between the modern work's physical nature and visual emphasis.

Accounting for the contemporaneous development of collage and pasted elements on the progressively flat Cubist picture, Greenberg suggests that the movement of the pictorial plane continued to progress forward only to emerge on the other side (the viewer's side) of the canvas:

> Painting, having been pushed up from the fictive depths, is forced through the surface of the canvas to emerge on the other side in the form of paper, cloth, cement, and actual objects of wood and other materials pasted, glued, or nailed to what was originally a transparent picture plane, which the painter no longer dares to puncture—or if he does it is only to dare.[23]

At this stage Greenberg develops a definition of a painting as a physically flat painted surface that self-consciously acknowledges its two-dimensional limitations while pushing beyond them. The fact that such a surface becomes something which one can paste, nail, or cement things onto, emphasizes the materiality of its three dimensional presence, eventually leading to one of Greenberg's biggest critical dilemmas; how to distinguish a canvas tacked on the wall from

a painting. By 1962 these implications were becoming clear to Greenberg who wrote in "After Abstract Expressionism" of "two constitutive conventions or norms [of painting]: flatness and the delimitation of flatness." His ambivalence about flatness as the defining character of painting became evident in the completion of his thought: "and that the observance of merely these two norms is enough to create an object which can be experienced as a picture: thus a stretched or tacked-up canvas already exists as a picture—though not necessarily as a successful one."[24] So while repressing the physical materiality of the modernist work was necessary in order to fully develop his theory of modernism, it nevertheless returns later to haunt him in the form of a "readymade" painting.

By limiting itself to neutral colors and flat forms, Cubism first flattened pictorial space and then:

> . . . lift[s] the extraneous elements above the surface of the picture and secure[s] the effects of depths and volume by bringing this or that part of the picture physically close to the eye, as in bas-relief. In this case three-dimensionality was no longer effect or illusion, but literal reality itself, as in sculpture. By 1912 Picasso was venturing into a kind of bas-relief construction.... The picture had now attained to the full and declared three-dimensionality we automatically attribute to the notion, 'object'....[25]

Because "the literal nature of the medium of painting consists in configurations of pigment on a flat surface, just as the essential medium of poetry consists in the rhythmic configurations of words arranged according to the rules of language," when painting ventures off its flat surface in the form of pasted elements it becomes a "new sculpture." So instead of reifying the disciplinary distinction between sculpture and painting we are led to note the similarities of the two by Cubism's push forward from fictive pictorial space.

Greenberg's description of fictive planes progressively coming to the surface of the modernist canvas as exemplified in the layering and pushing forward of collage has striking similarities to a work never associated with Greenberg or formalism; Marcel Duchamp's Mile of String (1942) at the First Papers of Surrealism exhibition. In fact, Duchamp's work has been described in anti-formalist terms, because the web of connections never allowed a clear unobstructed view. In this work, obstructive webs of string cordoned off works from each other while also constructing physical connections between them. This was so far out of the aesthetic mainstream that it hardly seems comparable in any way to Greenberg's mature statements about modernism.[26] One cannot imagine Greenberg attempting to grapple with the implications of such a physically intrusive and "far out" work of art; but it was one of the most challenging models available to a critic learning on the job.

As Brian O'Doherty notes in his 1976 essays that later make up the book Inside the White Cube, the disciplinary implications of Duchamp's tangled web were marginalized by critics and historians in favor of a theoretical purist aesthetic, one established by Alfred Barr and subsequently supported by Greenberg's model of modernism.[27] Duchamp's 1942 work made explicit his point that a work's intertextual/interdisciplinary web of connections led to its obfuscation as a discrete object of perception. O'Doherty's text suggests that formalism's obsession with art's visual and optical rather than physical aesthetic engagement was responsible for the modernist trope of the pristine white cube gallery exemplified by MoMA's display aesthetic. The disembodiment of the autonomous modernist eye established the dematerialized optical nature of modern art and thereby denied its interdisciplinary plenitude.

But in his evocative description of collage's three-dimensional implications, Greenberg suggests that the physical obtrusiveness of the pasted and sculptural materials in synthetic cubist works is similar to Duchamp's string in its offensively physical nature. By seeming to explode off the canvases in the exhibition, Duchamp's Mile of String is an ironic reminder of collage's physical implications in a show of work that largely ignored cubism's pictorial developments. In fact, one could make a case that the logical conclusion of Cubist collage was Duchamp's readymade aesthetic, not the aesthetic distinction between modern sculpture and painting. Coming from an artist who admitted to being repulsed by the olfactory and visual seduction of painting by 1912, Duchamp's stringed provocation flew in the face of the Surrealist fictive depths of the 1942 exhibition's paintings. For example, works by Masson and Ernst allowed viewers to lose themselves neo-romantically in a work. By 1942 the surrealist project was in dire need of reinvigoration, something that even Duchamp's string may not have been able to provide.[28]

Both Duchamp and Greenberg, each in a mutually exclusive manner, were set against such tame romantic flights of fancy. Both rejected the notion of art as elaborate fantasy; Duchamp wanted to place painting at the service of the mind, where Greenberg developed a theory to place it at the service of the eye. Perhaps Duchampian "string critique" is layered with yet another irony, the fact that at roughly this time Duchamp had shifted his own production away from his well known and essentially two-dimensional approach, as evident in The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (1915-23), to the secretly-produced and voyeuristically three-dimensional installation Etant donnes: 1[degrees] La chute d'eau / 2[degrees] Le gaz d'eclairage (Given: 1. The Waterfall / 2. The Illuminating Gas).[29]

There are numerous qualities in Greenberg's early criticism that, contrary to O'Doherty's assertions, remarkably find congruence with Duchamp.[30] Although Greenberg did not review Duchamp's Surrealist installation, he did review a similarly innovative mode of display from Duchamp's close friend

and roommate in 1942, Frederick Kiesler.[31] Kiesler's gallery design for Peggy Guggenheim's collection of modern art employed a disciplinary free-for-all approach comparable to Duchamp's strings.[32] Kiesler theorized the unity of art, architecture, space and viewer by treating the works displayed as material rather than mere visual appearances.[33] Modernism supposes an absolute distinction between visual and actual space while Kiesler's gallery design created spatial continuities between the interior and psychological space of the paintings and the physical space. Kiesler's work thus began eroding the subject/object distinction so key to Western aesthetics.[34]

In his 1942 response to Kiesler's new gallery, Greenberg stands in striking opposition to his later purely unidisciplinary opticality. Greenberg's appreciative review notes how Kiesler displayed modern paintings like so many objects around the room:

> [Modern art's] pictorial content no less than the physical fact of the canvas itself is to enter the actual presence of the spectator on the same terms, and as completely, as do the walls, the furniture, and the people. What takes place within the borders of the picture has the same immediate status as the borders themselves.[35]

This was a surprising assertion suggesting that the works have no borders of consequence or perhaps have become all border. In contrast to later Greenbergian criticism, which makes heroic efforts to patrol the boundary of the pictorial frame, here Greenberg asserts an equivalency between the framing border and the painting itself...providing a stark contrast to what he later calls the "delimitation of flatness."[36]

Greenberg concludes that there is equality between modern paintings and the surrounding furniture, frames, and architecture. He feels that the conceit of Kiesler's exhibition creates "a sense of exhilaration and provides relief from other usually over-upholstered or over-sanitary museums and galleries."[37] This review comes to terms with the "disemboweling" of painting in order to note the visceral object character of modern art and its relation to other modern approaches. Greenberg historically justifies his interest in the physical character of modern art. The 19th century instituted an age of great positivism that came to define the character of modern Western culture through the mid-20th century. And Greenberg looked to modern art to provide a "first-hand," physical and materialist experience of art appropriate for the affirmatively material and empirical social structure evident in Marxism, Darwinism, psychoanalysis, industrialization and the conversion of Western economies to capitalism.[38]

By drawing on his early Marxism Greenberg understood that the primary processes of artistic production parallel an increasingly empirical social

development. In another review of the period, a 1943 review of David Smith's work, he explored the socially determined meanings of metal handling found in Smith's working method. Greenberg writes that by utilizing methods appropriate to the age "Smith's linear style is perhaps closer to the nature of metal itself as we feel it today, for metal has become pliable under the welder's tools."[39] Greenberg's connection between welders working in a prewar industrial moment and Smith's innovative sculptural means is tantalizingly undeveloped for its possible associative richness, and is no doubt a connection made possible by Smith's earlier anti-war Medals of Dishonor.

In stark contrast to his later emphasis on the purity of color and ethereal fields of paint, Greenberg's early criticism points to how modern art provides material, obdurate, intractable facts to a modern mind which thrives on them. The reduction of means in painting was not simply a change in taste but suited the mental landscape of an empirically obsessed West. Experience matters. Matter is experience.[40] Greenberg's belief that "modern life can be radically confronted, understood and dealt with only in material terms [and] what matters is not what one believes but what happens to one," is a tenet of faith in the transformative potential of an interwoven material world.[41]

Carrying this interest in the materiality of art forward to the 20th century, Greenberg asserts in 1948 that Cubism was the first movement that "expressed [this] positivist or empirical state of mind."[42] In this same year he also claims that by 1912 Picasso's collages and sculpture have "attained to the full and declared three-dimensionality we automatically attribute to the notion, 'object.'"[43] The literalness of abstract art provided the viewer a concentrated form of much-needed first-hand experience as an antidote to the increasingly abstract modern experience of life.[44] Greenberg's early criticism thus still clings to the belief that the materiality of abstract art will participate in the unmasking of social illusions by shedding its own illusions: "The deeper meaning of this transformation [of modern art] is that in a period in which illusions of every kind are being destroyed the illusionist methods of art must also be renounced."[45]

From our vantage point today, understanding the modern work of art as a material trace harbors more hope for establishing its interdisciplinary status than Greenberg's late modernist position. When painting becomes an object of the mind rather than body, the potential connections between the arts and between the various modes of apprehension whether visual or physical become tenuous.[46] Ultimately by 1955 Greenberg comes to adopt a more restrictive notion of modernist abstraction as his operative definition. But the unequivocal voice and position he develops concurrently with his publishing of Art and Culture in the mid-nineteen fifties is not an accurate reflection of the content or character of his early criticism.

A Disciplined Reading

Discipline has proved to be a fruitful critical term to apply to Greenberg. While Greenberg himself spoke of the artist willingly submitting to the demands of their medium as a form of self-discipline/self-criticism/self-correction, self-criticism could also be understood to operate between stages of Greenberg's criticism as well. His early criticism points to a central oppositional problematic in modern art: the irresolvable dilemma between materiality and visuality. It is only later that Greenberg comes to embrace the opticality of modernist art as its most distinctive contribution to culture. The critique that his earlier writing provides for the cocksure attitude of later Greenberg undermines the holistic self-image produced by Greenberg himself as well as by his most vehement critics. Self-criticism in this case can be understood in terms similar to a deconstructionist approach, where the fissures within a text serve to provide a critique of its suppositions. Likewise, the use of "discipline" (used to refer to the uni-disciplinary tendencies present throughout his career and the manner in which he argues that a medium "disciplines" itself into a state of specialized "purity") can also suggest the way in which these modernist tendencies in Greenberg's criticism become an embodiment of Foucault's idea of "discipline" as an internalized mode of social control. But "discipline" can also be used to describe what happens when the two parts of Greenberg's career evident here are placed side-by-side. Greenberg thus disciplines himself, with the character of his early criticism providing a limited but nonetheless interesting foil for the false omniscience he later develops. To understand Greenberg as an unequivocal advocate of "purity" therefore requires a willful misreading of much of his corpus. That Greenberg himself actively encouraged such a misreading through his later essays and his self-editing of Art and Culture, is only to allow his self-fashioned image to continue to reign. Though charged with an overemphasis on pure visuality, this characterization is not so much entirely wrong as it is incomplete.

Ironically, the materialist tendencies in modern art that were evident in the work that the young Greenberg reviewed were the very things that led to the undoing of his well-established critical framework. When Minimalism later made good on Greenberg's early promise of abstraction providing "first hand experience," he became disturbed by the implications of "the work of art as object" that he had earlier praised in Kiesler's interpretive space.[47] The ambiguous status of the Minimalist object was more than Greenberg could bear. Greenberg disingenuously criticized Minimalism for being too much a feat of mere ideation...emphasizing its conceptual rather than material side, when it was its obvious materiality that posed the most direct challenge to his theories circa 1960. It took Michael Fried, who departed from Greenbergian formalism for just this reason, to point out how Greenberg's theory of modernist art led to

a contradictory and inherent materialist and interdisciplinary notion of art. And while this is something that might have been troubling to an arch-formalist in 1963, it is something that we, in the present situation, might have reason to celebrate.

Notes:

[1] Thanks to Marek Wieczorek and Marshall Brown for accepting an early version of this paper for their panel at the 2004 College Art Association conference, "Modernist Abstract Across the Disciplines." Their encouragement and comments were helpful in focusing my argument and it was a pleasure to be a part of their panel.

[2] Every since John O'Brian's publication of Greenberg's collected writings, albeit an incomplete collected writings, there has been a re-evaluation of Greenberg's larger corpus. This re-engagement with the breadth of Greenberg's work interestingly parallels the appearance of Greenberg's own anthology *Art and Culture* in 1959. By the late 1980s further publications of Greenberg's collected works allowed not only easy access to a wider range of his essays, but also created a conceptual category of "Greenberg" that could be plumbed for its consistencies and inconsistencies. Thierry de Duve, Charles Harrison, Francis Frascina, and Caroline Jones have recently done other important work in this area. References to Greenberg's writings will be cited as *Collected Essays and Criticism* followed by the volume number in O'Brian's four edited volumes. Publication is by the University of Chicago Press; dates for volume I and II are 1986, for volumes III and IV are 1993.

[3] The coverage of this pivotal period of Greenberg's life is one of the most valuable contributions of Florence Rubenfeld's biography of Greenberg. In a chapter entitled "Breakup, Breakdown, and Literary Backlash: 1955-57," she gives the most well-balanced account to date of the turmoil, both professional and personal, of this transitional stage [*Clement Greenberg: A Life* (New York: Scribner, 1994), 186-209.]

[4] James Meyer recently introduced a newly discovered Greenberg essay on Pop art that while critical, nevertheless admits its putative value at highlighting the failure of current abstraction [see Clement Greenberg, "Pop Art," *Artforum International* (October, 2004): V43N2 51-55].

[5] Greenberg also sets more obvious disciplinary boundaries for what an art critic can convincingly write about and took it upon himself to patrol the boundaries of writing about art, much more so than more "literary" critics such as Harold Rosenberg. The discipline of art criticism, a field that could barely be called a discipline before Greenberg, is thus comparably focused narrowly on its own sphere of sovereignty. There is interesting work to be done on the self-fashioning of such a discipline by Greenberg.

[6] Thanks to Saul Ostrow for tempering my reference to Marxism in relation to Greenberg. Ostrow recounted a conversation with Greenberg in which he recoiled from the Marxist tag, instead substituting "anti-Stalinist" (conversation with Ostrow, January 2004, College Art Association annual meeting).

[7] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. IV*, "Modernist Painting," 85. David Carrier's "Greenberg, Fried, and Philosophy: American-Type Formalism" proposes that Greenberg means by this: "(1) the aesthetic is a distinct sort of experience, based upon feeling, not taste and intellectual comprehension; (2) the aesthetic is an experience of formal values of the artwork; (3) these formal values suggest aesthetic ideas; and (4) the aesthetic experience is either of the beautiful or the sublime" [*Aesthetics: A Critical Anthology* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1977), 461].

[8] There is, of course, considerable debate within Greenberg scholarship as to Greenberg's use/misuse of Kant's aesthetic. See Mark Cheetham, *Kant, Art and Art History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), and Thierry de Duve, *Kant After Duchamp* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1998) and *Clement Greenberg Between the Lines* (Paris: Editions Dis Voir, 1996).

[9] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. IV*, "Modernist Painting," 85.

[10] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (New York: Vintage Press, 1995), 218.

[11] Ibid., 171.

[12] See Caroline Jones, *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). Jones's project, to account for Greenberg's uni-sensory obsession in broader cultural terms, has given us a new way to consider the opticality issue so prevalent in Greenberg and Michael Fried's writing.

[13] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. III*, "Roundness Isn't All: Review of *The Art of Sculpture* by Herbert Read," 272.

[14] See my *"American-Type" Formalism: The Art Criticism of Alfred Barr, Clement Greenberg, and Michael Fried* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota, 1999), Chapter 5, "Clement Greenberg: Late Criticism and Theory," for a fuller discussion of these issues.

[15] J.C. Friedrich Von Schiller, *On The Aesthetic Education of Man in a Series of Letters* (1793-4), ed. David Simpson, *German Aesthetic and Literary Criticism: Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Schopenhauer, Hegel* (Cambridge University Press: New York, 1984), 144.

[16] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I*, "Towards a Newer Laocoön," 23, 37.

[17] Here one might suggest that although Greenberg's primary philosophical sources are German and American, he along with Foucault, participates in what Martin Jay calls the "scopophobia," which is an odd charge to make against a critic who so believes in the power of the visible. The fact is that visibility is also a threat to Greenberg. His subjective visibility in a review essay indicates that the visible is not merely in the realm of freely-acting modernist subjects as he proposes; but is also something to which individuals must guard against [Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in 20th Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994)]. In light of Jay's work we can also find why it is that French-influenced postmodern theorists found Greenberg's writing so particularly offensive: "Vision was still the privileged sense, but what that privilege produced in the modern world was damned as almost entirely pernicious" (Jay, 384). Or, in Jay commenting on the Panopticon one can hear echoes of Greenbergian critiques: "...the Panopticon, with its hidden and invisible God, was an architectural embodiment of the most

paranoid of Sartrean fantasies about the 'absolute look'" (Jay, 410).

[18] This aspect of Greenberg's criticism is carried forward by Michael Fried in his most polemical policing essay "Art and Objecthood" published in *Artforum* in 1967: reprinted in his anthology of the same name, *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[19] For Greenberg's faint support of Pollock's third, post-drip phase containing representational elements, note the change in his attitude from a 1952 review of "Jackson Pollock's New Style," in which he states that Pollock's change to representation is "not as great as it may seem," to his 1955 "American-Type Painting" in which he says of the same stage of Pollock that in the last "two or three years he has pulled back" (*Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. III*, 106, 227).

[20] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. IV*, "Sculpture in Our Time," 60.

[21] As an indication of Greenberg's tenuous self-image as critic, he once characterized his discipline as follows: "Art criticism, I would say, is about the most ungrateful form of "elevated" writing I know of. It may also be one of the most challenging—if only because so few people have done it well enough to be remembered—but I'm not sure the challenge is worth it" (*Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. III*, "Autobiographical Statement" 196.) O'Brian notes that this entry was written in 1953 and published in 1955. It is well known that Greenberg would have preferred to be a literary critic at *Partisan Review*, but the competition was too stiff.

[22] See Hope Mauzerall, "What's the Matter with Matter? Problems in the Criticism of Greenberg, Fried, and Krauss," *Art Criticism* 13 no. 1 (1998): 81-96. Mauzerall also approaches the issue of "opticality" and "physicality" as a problematic in formalist criticism and traces this problematic from Greenberg to the difficulties that Michael Fried and Rosalind Krauss struggle with in their subsequent criticism. My project points to both the continuities within Greenberg's work and distinguishes its particular and developmental character. The problematic highlighted by Mauzerall can be made more specifically one made between stages of Greenberg's career.

[23] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I*, "Towards a Newer Laocoön," 36.

[24] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. IV*, "After Abstract Expressionism," 131.

[25] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II*, "Review of the Exhibition *Collage*," 260-61.

[26] Another example is his encounter with Mondrian's new painting style in 1942-43. Mondrian had moved from his trademark primary colors and black and white, precise edges and discrete fields of color, to using secondary colors, wavering edges and small squares of color within the dividing lines which themselves had become a neutral gray. The expansively interdisciplinary implications for Mondrian's new less "pure" modern paintings seems to have become quite evident to Greenberg, although such a connection is left for the reader to surmise. I would suggest that the notorious error Greenberg made *vis-à-vis* the colors of the new style came about from his inability to deal with the new "impurities" of Mondrian which began to pulse off the canvases rather than staying within the bounds of their "neat" and primary former executions.

[27] Brian O'Doherty's essays constituting *Inside the White Cube* were originally

published in *Artforum* in 1976. They are currently available in a 2000 edition printed by the University of California Press, Berkeley

[28] For example see Robert Coates in his doubt about both Duchamp and Surrealism's prospects: "String is boring. So is Surrealism. It has grown tired, tedious, and a little repetitive" [in "The Art Galleries," *The New Yorker*, November 1, 1942; in Marticia Sawin, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), 227].

[29] Duchamp first rented the studio in which he created *Etant Donnes* in 1943 and is thought to have begun working on it in earnest in 1946.

[30] Greenberg's criticism eventually comes full circle in this regard by ultimately accepting Duchamp's absolutely relative definition of the work of art in his late theoretical papers; his "Seminar" essays.

[31] Duchamp is only mentioned once in the first two volumes of Greenberg's collected writings.

[32] In likely collaboration with Duchamp, Kiesler also installed his *Vision Machine* to view parts of Duchamp's *Bôite en Valise*.

[33] On Kiesler's innovative display aesthetic, see Lewis Kachur, "Frederick Kiesler's Surrealist Installations," *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dali, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001), 200-204; and Bruce Altshuler, *The Avant-Garde in Exhibition: New Art in the 20th Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 149-52.

[34] Kiesler organized the three gallery spaces in the Guggenheim gallery as "Abstract," "Surrealist," and "Kinetic." In this regard his division follows the organizational model set out by Barr and MoMA in its 1936/37 shows. But Kiesler's addition of "Kinetic" art presents a challenge to the "static" object espoused even in the multidisciplinary model of the MoMA that Barr develops.

[35] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I,* "Review of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection," 140. Greenberg goes on to note how Kiesler takes advantage of the literal and physical truth of the works through the gallery he designed and his method of hanging Peggy Guggenheim's Collection: "Unframed paintings are suspended in mid-air by ropes running from ceiling to floor, hung on panels at right angles to the wall, thrust out from concave walls on arms, placed on racks at knee level, or, with seeming paradox, put into peepshows and view-boxes." Greenberg's assessment of this unusual hanging arrangement is predominantly positive. The evidence that "Mr. Kiesler knows what he is about" is the example of Kiesler's choice of a Klee for a peepshow box. Klee is appropriate because he maintains a "fictive nature of the world within the picture frame" (Ibid., 141). This interest in the literal features of abstraction eventually leads Greenberg to follow Duchamp, proclaiming that all objects have a possible aesthetic status in his later "Seminar" essays.

[36] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II,* "After Abstract Expressionism,"130.

[37] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I,* "Review of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection," 141.

[38] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I,* "Review of Four Exhibitions of Abstract Art," 103.

[39] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I,* "Review of the Exhibition *American Sculpture of Our Time*," 140.

[40] Donald Kuspit chooses an apt statement of Whitehead's to summarize Greenberg's reduction of aesthetic theory to material fact: " matter-of-fact is an abstraction, arrived at by confining thought to purely formal relations which then masquerade as final reality," [Alfred N. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 1956), 25; in Donald Kuspit, *Clement Greenberg* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), 171].

[41] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II*, "The Present Prospects of American Painting and Sculpture," 164.

[42] Greenberg on Cubism: ". . . its refusal to refer to anything outside the concrete experience of the particular discipline, field, or medium in which one worked." Cubism however can also be said to lead to an understanding of the particularity of disciplinary interests. He continues: "...and it also expressed the empiricist's faith in the supreme reality of concrete experience" (*Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II*, "The Decline of Cubism," 214). This essay is a response to the return to representation by many of the modern movement after World War II; a situation that mirrored the post-WW I work of the Paris school. Greenberg sees this as a result of an understandable loss of optimism. Abstract art is best created in an atmosphere of unbridled optimism and positivism.

[43] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II*, "Review of the Exhibition *Collage*," 260-1.

[44] By 1948 Greenberg declared that Western culture had reached the point of destroying the illusions that maintained its historical hierarchies: "there are no longer first or last things, the only valid distinction [is] between the more and less immediate." In the wake of this momentous development, American painting (think Jackson Pollock's drips in 1947) develops an aesthetic of "uniformity" in order to provide an experience of immediacy fulfilling the spectator's "taste for the actual, immediate, [and] first-hand. painting, sculpture, music, poetry become more concrete by confining themselves strictly to that which is most palpable in them, namely their mediums." Greenberg goes on to contrast this justification of specialization with Lessing's: "This does not mean what Lessing meant when he protested against the confusion of the arts; Lessing still thought of the arts as imitative of an external reality which was to be incorporated by means of illusion; but modern sensibility asks for the exclusion of all reality external to the medium of the respective art—for the exclusion, that is, of subject matter" (*Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II*, "The New Sculpture," 314). In part this is a disingenuous criticism, which faults Lessing for not proposing abstraction in the eighteenth century. The greater distinction Greenberg should have made was between his attempts at a historically specific justification of the specialization of the arts in contrast to Lessing's ahistorical/ semiotic theoretical model (*Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. II*, "The Crisis of the Easel Picture," 224). Admittedly, Greenberg is quite hesitant in making this connection between social attitudes and style. Nevertheless, once he places it in the open one can see the possibilities for further exploration. This is the line of thinking T. J. Clark wishes Greenberg would explore more fully.

[45] *Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. I*, "Abstract Art," 203.

[46] In an essay of 1954 Greenberg puts forth a description of abstraction that contains many of the characteristics of his Early Criticism. Here, however, Greenberg

downplays the historical connection between "literal art" and "an age of positivism" and begins to concentrate more fully on abstraction's aesthetic effect:

The picture has now become an object of literally the same spatial order as our bodies. . . . It has lost its "inside" and become almost all "outside," all plane surface. . .the abstract or quasi-abstract picture returns [us] to... .space in all its brute literalness. . . . Often we. . .have to take the whole of it as one single, continuous center of interest, which in turn compels us to feel and judge it in terms of its over-all unity to the exclusion of everything else. (*Collected Essays and Criticism Vol. IV,* "Abstract and Representational," 191)

This essay stands at the brink of Greenberg's shift from the materialism of his early criticism to the anti-materialism of his late criticism—and the quote itself teeters on this edge. I suggest the shift is fully embodied only when Greenberg writes "American-Type Painting" in 1955—largely a response to Rosenberg's popular theory of "Action painting" in his "The American Action Painters" of 1952.

[47] This is why Greenberg can readily move from his optically defined modernism of "Modernist Painting" to his late theoretical pronouncements on the aesthetic challenge of Duchamp. Greenberg, perhaps more radically than any champion of Dada might, understands the implications of defining the work as a material entity, one that exists in a manner similar to other ordinary objects.

Gorky's Centauromachia: Betrothal and Betrayal

Martin Ries

"Qui plane sur le vie et comprend sans effort
Le langage des fleurs et des choses muettes!"
Charles Baudelaire, *Élévation*

"They were as fed horses in the morning: everyone neighed after his neighbor's wife . . . "
Jeremiah, 5:8.

Arshile Gorky was born Vosdanik Manook Adoian in Van, a center of ancient Armenian culture. In 1914 the Ottoman Turkish government started a systematic persecution of the Armenians and began a savage campaign with massacres, sieges, and forced marches that was the twentieth century's first genocide. Gorky's mother, Shushan, died of starvation in her son's arms. Gorky fled Van, arrived at Ellis Island, and stayed with relatives in Massachusetts. He attended the New School of Design in Boston, moved to New York City, and changed his name to Arshile (a variant of Achilles) Gorky (an allusion to Maxim Gorky).

Throughout the 1920s Gorky's art was influenced by old and modern masters; during the 1930s he was one of the most technically accomplished painters in New York. Jacob Kainen recalled going with Gorky and John Graham to the Durlacher Gallery in early 1940 to see Poussin's *Triumph of Bacchus* (on loan from the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art). Kainen, well educated and knowledgeable about art, was a few years younger than Gorky while Graham was a generation older: "Although I knew about primary compositional movements, obviously there were underlying shuttlings I hadn't grasped." Kainen enumerated: "color sequences . . . back and forward movements . . . pulls and pulsations, . . . This sort of analysis was a revelation to me."[1]

Gorky talked of being "with" painters: "I was with Cézanne for a long time and then naturally I was with Picasso."[2] In the 1940s he was affected by the work of the European Surrealists, particularly Roberto Matta Echaurren. He married Agnes Magruder in 1941 and called her "Mougouch," an Armenian term of endearment. In the summer of 1942 on a visit to Connecticut he

began to work from nature, something he had not done for almost fifteen years. He was inspired by Kandinsky's early abstract landscapes as well as Miró's and Picasso's fusing of personal memories into their own procreant works from nature. The next year was spent at Crooked Run Farm, Mougouch's parents' estate in Virginia, where Gorky began a series of drawings in which the forms of nature were transformed into the artist's singular abstract style. There he produced hundreds of drawings, which he later drew on for his paintings. Landscape and interior space seemed to mingle and he emerged as a truly original and important artist.

Most critics, art historians, and commentators are convinced that Gorky's imagery, however abstract, has a basis in nature. Some of the shapes suggest floral, plant and animal forms with connotations of fertility, while others evoke associations with body parts so that the paintings exude an aura of sensuality or even sexuality. According to Janie C. Lee, "these late drawings . . . suggestive of leaves, petal, or grass . . . some believe Gorky's inventions were inspired by plants and insects . . . while others claim that these images recall genitals or viscera and must have swelled up from Gorky's subconscious fantasies."[3]

Gorky had many opportunities to see examples of ancient Greek architecture in the Metropolitan Museum, one of his favorite haunts. Whereas the composite capital, with its scroll-like volutes was originally based on ram's horns, and the *Anthemion* or "honeysuckle ornament" was patterned on palmettes and flowers, these were abstracted in the Ionic and Corinthian columns. Just as Poussin saw the torso of a girl and compared it to the columns of the Maison Carrée of Nímes, Gorky abstracted nature in his own distinctive way. The forms in his drawings suggest a Wordsworthian aesthetic of cells, seeds, lichens, grasses, flora and fauna, and even invented life forms.

In *Virginia Landscape*, (1943, pencil and crayon on paper, private collection) Jim M. Jordan saw "a flowering form . . . which could be milkweed leaves or distant tree limbs, . . . colored with a blazing plume of crayon."[4] Indeed, Picasso used colored crayons in sketches for *Guernica*: ". . . amid the grayness of the drawings was a sudden outburst of vivid color."[5] "Gorky worked *in* the landscape," Mougouch explained, "He thought the landscape was part of the drawing, as opposed to looking at it and then drawing it." Gorky said, "I got them [the abstract forms] from getting down close to the earth." When he looked into the grass, he looked with such fierce concentration that his vision turned inwards and dredged up remembrances, "I could hear it and smell it. Like a little world down there."[6] This is no Hudson River School view of nature, no American Regionalism; it is non-spatial and mental.

We, the observer, are not outside looking at bucolic scenery but rather are in the midst of a pantheism of fungi, matter, and verdant shags of grassland. What he realized in his numerous nature drawings was an act of thinking;

Gorky looked into the grass and drew his "first thoughts."[7] Ironically, the Museum of Modern Art purchased Andrew Wyeth's Christina's World, showing the protagonist crawling across a sea of grass, in 1948.

Gorky grew up in small feudal village on Lake Van where agrarian cultures saw earth as a mothering womb, seeds as spermatozoon, furrows as female genitalia, ploughs as male organs and crops as offspring. The coming together of earth, seed, furrow and plow was a marriage ceremony, the worship of the generative power in nature as symbolized in the Dionysiac festivals of ancient Greece. W.K.C. Guthrie pointed out that this "primitive practice is carried on . . . where the union of the human sexes on the actual ground where crops are to grow . . . is considered to promote fruitfulness."[8] "For the Armenian peasant," wrote Herrera, "farming was a religious ritual ruled by ancient traditions . . . The men did the sowing and the plowing; they . . . were the bearers of seed."[9]

The rutting dynamics of nature churn in cycles of mold, decomposition, fertilization and regeneration as photosynthesizing cells become plants. Gorky is taxonomically ambiguous, and his abstractions, like a constantly mutating contagion in cycles of regeneration, are liable to vanish and reappear unexpectedly in other drawings and paintings. Variations on many of these shapes can be found throughout his work of the 1940s. The organic dominates, suggesting close-up views of vegetal-animal forms full of details that seem to overflow with meaning, but specifics remain largely inaccessible. Just as photosynthesizing cells become plants, Gorky's vegetal-animal kingdom became the artist's unique abstract style. In 1993, ribonucleic acid research revealed that fungi are more closely related to animals than to plants: they reproduce by spores that are able to propel themselves in an "animal-like movement" by cilia.[10] His comprehension of nature's bursting variety, the forces of nature and of art, are what poet Charles Baudelaire earlier characterized as "Qui plane sur le vie et comprend sans effort / Le langage des fleurs et des choses muettes!" [Who, hovering over life, knows without trying / The language of silent things and of flowers!]

The artist did a series of *Fireplace in Virginia* drawings; indeed, paintings derived from the drawings are typically represented in *Good Hope Road (Hugging)* where elements of farm and farmhouse interiors are combined.[11] Herrera suggested that the sooty interior of the fireplace (traditional symbol of hearth and home), top center, is where "flame like shapes seems to glow in its blackness."[12] Matthew Spender noted that the backdrop in the 1912 photograph of Gorky and his mother was a painted chimneypiece: "The original photo of Shushan and her son which Gorky took as his model includes a hearth in the background - not a real hearth but a painted hearth, whose canvassy surface is just perceptible in the photograph."[13]

André Breton, one of the great art impresarios (Lionel Abel dubbed

him "the most courtly person I have ever known"), claimed Gorky for the Surrealists and pronounced him "the first painter to whom the secret has been completely revealed." It was Breton who invented the term "hybrid" to describe Gorky's mysterious, ambiguous images. By means of these biomorphic hybrid forms Gorky was able to reconcile the figurative with the nonfigurative. Breton characterized hybrids as "the resultants provoked in an observer contemplating a natural spectacle and a flux of childhood and *other memories*." He further stated that Gorky was the only surrealist who maintained direct contact with nature, penetrating nature's secrets to discover the "guiding thread" that links together "the innumerable physical and mental structures," the language of silent things and of flowers.[14]

Drawing (1946, Yale University Art Gallery) most likely portrays cows grazing on lush grass near the home of Gorky's dealer, Julien Levy. The two cows (admittedly, not bulls) have legs that begin to mutate into Picassoid limbs that we see again in the Betrothals. The front leg of the center cow morphs into a curve and point, or sickle-like shape, a recurring motif that Ethel Schwabacher refers to as the "Persian slipper." This gives us a clue as to how Gorky took a scene from nature and in the process of abstraction transforms it into a Gorkian concept. Indeed, the tails in *Drawing*, as they rise from the cow's haunches and fall to pointed ends, climb like four-pronged "heads" with Miró-like petals in the Betrothals. Other forms in *Drawing* are similarly rooted in art or nature or in both. But without documentary evidence, specific readings of his forms remain speculative. And, as Herrera so accurately stated, "He did not see an object and then proceed to obfuscate or disguise it. Rather he saw objects as full of visual and metamorphic possibility, so that one image might have several referents . . . Gorky was very much a formalist: what he put on canvas or paper was largely determined by aesthetic concerns."[15] *Drawing* also has a sun form, similar in placement to the sun in *Guernica* Second State.

Gorky was fascinated by Paolo Uccello's tri-part *Battle of San Romano* (National Gallery, London, Uffizi, and Louvre). Indeed, the almost *carrousel* depiction of horses, with their arbitrary colors, plumed helmet crests like flowering bushes, ornate armor, trumpets, banners, lances, and no bloodshed, appealed to Gorky's Armenian aesthetic. Robert Reiff's diagram, directed on the far right horseman in the National Gallery panel, portrays the Florentine Captain-General, Niccolo Mauruzzi da Tolentino, at the head of his troops, putting his foes to flight.[16] However, a more meaningful and dramatic scene is the unhorsing of the Sienese commander, Bernardino della Ciarda, in the Uffizi panel, where the priapic diagonal of his straightened leg, with its slipper-like armored foot pushing against the stirrup, creates greater tension and is easily abstracted into the angled portion of Gorky's central upright figure in all the Betrothals.

Interestingly, the rider in Gorky's *Man on Horse* (c.1939, Fogg Art

Museum), after the Panathenaic Frieze around the walls of the Parthenon cella, shows a cavalcade of Athenian knights on horseback with angled legs similar to the angled "leg" of the erect upright form in the Betrothals. Careful attention to details in his drawing show a slipper-delineated foot on the horseman, as well as on the second rider to the right; even the hoof of the forward horse has a slipper-like shape, worked over and superimposed.

Melvin P. Lader pointed out that Pieter Brueghel's *The Peasant Dance* (c.1567, Kunsthistorisches Museum) was reproduced in *The Arts* magazine in September 1926, with a detailed notation by Gorky in the margin. Gorky focused on "the shape of the hat of a seated figure, sketching it along the lower right edge of the page."[17] However, if we reverse the shape of the musician's right leg with its emphatic slipper, we find another shape and slant similar to the angled portion of Gorky's vertical upright rider in the Betrothals, and of course it also compares with Bernardino della Ciarda's priapic leg. Furthermore, in *Self Portrait, Study for the Artist's Mother* (c.1936) the young Gorky's slippered foot is emphasized, worked over, and also is similar to the oblique leg of the Betrothals' upright rider.[18]

The Betrothals differ significantly from the landscape style, and evidently Gorky reverted to Picasso's formidable influence once again. Not that he consciously sought out Picasso's authority as he did in the 1930s; rather he very probably recalled unconsciously the Guernican phenomenon. Certainly many of the forms and shapes that appear in *Guernica* and related studies can be found in the Betrothals. While the landscape and nature drawings formed the basis for many paintings, the Betrothal series abruptly incorporated a post-cubist matrix for its dominant shapes.

Gorky worshiped Picasso, according to Kainen, and he told Balcomb Greene, "I feel Picasso running in my finger tips."[19] Picasso had such a hold on him that he easily could have equated the tragedy of the Spanish Civil War with his own tragedies in the Armenian holocaust, as well as Picasso's marital problems with his own. Picasso had passed through a time of painful conflict in his personal life, and the "conflicts had provided the imagery for much of his art from about 1933 to 1937 . . . These images and symbols constitute a kind of iconography of his life . . . involving Minotaurs and women as well as the familiar theme of the struggle between the horse [always a white mare] and the bull," totems that culminated in *Guernica*.[20] On a trip to Spain in the summer of 1934 the fifty-three year old Picasso was accompanied not by his wife, but by the twenty-four year old Marie-Thérèse Walter. On 12 July 1935, the day of Olga and Picasso's wedding anniversary, she left him. For many months Olga and Picasso were engaged through lawyers in vitriolic conflicts over terms of separation, assets, estates, income, and art.

According to Chipp, the bombing of Guernica "had a strong impact on a Spaniard who, because he was even then deeply committed to the Repub-

lican cause, already considered himself a refugee." Reiff said of Gorky: "He never became thoroughly 'Americanized' . . . His thick accent and his exotic appearance made him keenly feel the differences."[21] Spender also mentioned, "the phrase which was constantly on Gorky's lips was 'my country'."[22] Certainly the slaughter of over a million Armenians, the flight from Armenia, and the loss of his mother left Gorky a refugee.

Dora Maar photographed Picasso's mural in progressive stages, and these photographs were reproduced in *Cahiers d'Art.* The publication's aim became increasingly to chronicle Picasso's entire development, which Gorky assiduously consulted. It also kept American artists up to date on recent developments in Parisian modernism, and many artists at that time used images from *Guernica* and related studies in their work.

In the sweeping circular neck of Picasso's horse in a *Composition Sketch,* (pencil and gouache on gesso on wood, 2 May 1937) the neck is emphasized as ovoid or semi-circular, an emphasis that is continued in other studies. This form is metamorphosed into the horse's chest in *Guernica* Fourth State. This semi-circular curve also appears as a horse-bull shape in the Betrothals on which an upright rider, or "bride", is seated (here the sexual position known as Equitation is implied, possibly suggested by details in *Dream and Lie of Franco*). The bull's haunches are suggested at the left in all the Betrothals. The bull's pendant testicles, readily apparent in Picasso's many studies as well as in *Guernica* Sixth State to the finished painting, are in the same relative position in the Betrothals.

"Large pointed shapes reminiscent of Gorky's Armenian slipper motif" as Lader pointed out, "refer to the natural processes of penetration, fertilization, birth, and growth."[23] April Kingsley elaborated on this when she stated that "Gorky's form language - curve and point - evolved early in his development . . . When Gorky's basic form is doubled into a heart shape . . . It is simultaneously a symbol of love and pain . . . Gorky's passionate dialogue between sex and destruction is to be found in this simple union of vulnerable curve and piercing point."[24] Reiff saw a "plump heart" in *Composition II* (1946, Baltimore Museum of Art); and in his diagrams of that drawing he documented the "repetition of heart shapes."[25] This heart shape is used numerous times in Picasso's symbology, from the forehead in *Woman's Head (Fernande)* [1909, bronze, Museum of Modern Art] to the chins, ears, and even handkerchiefs of many of the *Weeping Woman* series of the late 1930s. The "moment of truth" is when the matador's final thrust (*La Estocada*) pierces the bull's heart - as Picasso well knew. Indeed, the heart shape is in much of Picasso's depictions of bulls' testicles; these two organs, hearts and testicles, relate to man's emotional life as they bind psyche and soma along with a substantial and inevitable identity.

Klaus Kertess noticed that in the Betrothals there appeared to be "the

torso of a nude female leaning out of a rectangle (window) in the upper left corner."[26] Michael Auping suggested that "Gorky uses the breasts in their insert at upper left almost as a key signature . . . and suggest organically growing things with one of Gorky's favorite devices - darkened centers within the forms that are like the nucleus of living cells."[27] Indeed, the upper lefts of all three Betrothals have rectangle window-like forms similar to the window with the Girls and Doves of Venus in Picasso's *Minotauromachia.*

In *The Betrothal* (Yale) the abstract forms within the "rectangle (window)" are very much Gorky's "soft and dependent breasts"[28] (1942 statement for the files in the Museum of Modern Art). She is there "with breasts decisively delineated." [29] Further similarities between the two artists can also be recognized through an analysis of the evolution and repetition of breast forms in their works. In Gorky's work:

-The forms in *Betrothal I* (MOCA) are more abstract, while in *Betrothal II* (Whitney) they are less mammalian.
-To the right of these abstract window-forms in the gridded *Study for The Betrothal* (Courtney Ross-Holst Collection) is a star shape with nurturing breasts on either side.
-In *The Betrothal* (Yale) there is a similar star shape with breasts on either side.
-In *The Betrothal I* (MOCA) the breasts become less obvious and the concave-star more obvious.
-In *The Betrothal II* (Whitney) there is a concave-star within a concave rectangle.

These Gorkian forms are similar to the window of the Woman with Light in *Guernica* whose left hand forms a star (a symbol of Venus?) between her circular breasts.[30] Interestingly, for Picasso this star-like hand begins in his early *Composition Study* (pencil on gesso on wood, 1 May 1937), where the raised hand of the Woman with Light, bosom bared, has "serrated" fingers. Like Gorky, Picasso has also experimented at length with a similar combination of forms:

-In *Composition Study* (2 May 1937) the "serrated" fingers are at the window-sill, one breast suggested, and a bold line extends down from the Woman with Light.
-This strong, very emphatic vertical line first appears in *Composition Study* (pencil on blue paper, 1 May 1937) from the top of the building to the Woman with Light down to the bottom of the building.
-In *Composition Study* (9 May 1937) mammae are just indicated, and a black wedge delineates the vertical line.

-In *Guernica* First State, as in the preceding 9 May *Composition*, the breasts are indicated but no descending vertical line appears.
-In *Guernica* Second State busts are indicated and the vertical line is suggested by the edge of a black shadow below.
-In *Guernica* Third State, (and in remaining States) the hand of the Woman with Light has a star-shaped hand between her breasts and the line continues down as the edge of a black shadow. This strong, very structural, vertical line appears in *Minotauromachia* as well.

All five women have uncovered mammae in *Guernica*, States One and Two; the hindquarters of the Rushing Woman first appear in State Three. The circular breasts and the strong vertical line linking the steatopygia of the Rushing Woman continue through the rest of the States to the finished mural. Picasso saw the female element as "the very substance of mankind;"[31] indeed, in the final mural, despite the carnage and except for the baby, all the women are still alive. Gorky couldn't have failed to notice the role reversal in his own tragedy.

In all the Betrothals a strong vertical descends from the (breasted) star shapes to a series of horizontal ovals, like counterpoised busts and bottoms analogous to the breasts and derrières of Picasso's Rushing Woman in her various transformations. Gorky's variation on the mammae and posteriors of Picasso's Rushing Woman is a display of ovals, like counter weights, on either side of his long vertical ciliate line.

A small sprig, or spray of vegetation, underwent many changes in *Guernica* (lower right), as well as many changes in its interpretations: in *Guernica* First State, the dead female figure (she disappears by the Fifth State) was described by Arnheim: "Nothing will remain of her but the fingers of her hand, transformed into a flower."[32] Blunt described the segment as a "woman lying across the foreground . . . a flower growing beside her head,"[33] and Chipp stated, "There appears to be a flower held in the hand above her head and a bird fluttering at her side."[34] The Rushing Woman of *Guernica* with the large knee genuflects before amoebic vegetation.[35] This finger-flower-amoebic vegetation form appears in the lower right corner of the Betrothals: "surrounding a dark green parallelogram, are several shapes, many in pairs. They include raindrop and Persian slipper shapes."[36]

Gorky's view of marriage was as a traditional contractual union for the purpose of raising a family, or derivatively, for sexual gratification and domestic security. Marriage makes possible a commitment that gives conjugal love its value creating "that moral centaur, man and wife" (Byron, *Don Juan*, CIII, clviii). Even King Lear (or was it Shakespeare?) complained that "Down from the waist they are Centaurs / Though women all above" (IV, vi, 123). Kertess wrote, "in the gridded study, the horse's head takes on a downward

looking, male visage. Is this centaur Gorky?"[37] The centaur, being the antithesis of the knight (Gorky's mother was a "Lady"), surely would have attracted Gorky to the stately Parthenon knights, as well as the clamorous throng of Uccello's knights.

Matossian notes that "Shushan's family . . . are listed in the annals of the religious centre of Etchmiadzin as priests, keepers of the monastery, going back thirty-six generations. The claim that the family descended from royal blood was made, and Shushan was styled Lady."[38] Herrera stated:

> According to family legend, the Adoians were descended from a fifth-century knight called Adom . . . Karlen Mooradian and his mother [Vartoosh] were apt to invent grand genealogies for their family . . . calls Shushan 'Lady Shushan', when in fact what was left of Armenian aristocracy on the Anatolian plateau was wiped out in the thirteenth century.[39]

In preparing their biographies of Arshile Gorky, Matossian and Spender independently discovered that many of Gorky's letters published by Karlen Mooradian were fakes. Herrera explained:

> Mooradian invented these letters, perhaps because he wanted to present Gorky as an Armenian rather than an American artist . . . In general, the parts of the published letters that speak about art or about Gorky's attachment to Armenian culture are not written by Gorky. In an appendix Matossian lists the letters alleged to be by Gorky for which no originals exist.[40]

A close friend quoted him as saying "he was from royalty;"[41] perhaps Gorky believed the family legend.

The analogies of Picasso and Gorky indicate that both artists left visual minutiae and references of their private lives as well as influences in their works. Like Picasso, Gorky's old-world concept of male-female relations made for difficulties: an early love-interest complained that "he wanted something pleasant to look at like a statue but never to interfere in his mind or soul."[42] Spender cited "The emotions of possession, jealousy, and violence flowed indistinguishably one into the next. They were his proofs of love . . . a kind of ruthlessness had emerged from him since his marriage," and "he complained constantly to Jeanne [Reynal] about the 'disrespect' of American women in general and Mougouch in particular."[43] Mougouch didn't learn his real name until nearly a decade after his death. Herrera reported: "In Corinne [Michael West], Gorky had found yet another provincial whom he could mold" and that he "was attracted to a beautiful painter [Mercedes Carles, later Mercedes Matter] whom he thought he could mold." Herrera saw the Betrothals as a marriage

ceremony: "on the left, an equestrian bride wearing a wreath or a crown . . . Perhaps the Betrothal series is based on memories of traditional Armenian weddings in which the groom would ride to fetch his bride . . . The bride would then be brought to him on a horse."[44] However, Matossian countered, "Gorky may have . . . registered the stages of disintegration of his marriage in each successive canvas."[45]

In 1946 Gorky endured a devastating studio fire where he lost much of his work, then a colostomy for rectal cancer, and in 1948 a car accident left his neck fractured and his painting arm paralyzed (Julien Levy was driving but only Gorky was injured). His jealousy, aggression and paranoia were made worse by his tragedies, and the marriage collapsed under the strain. Mougouch, worn down by his dominance, hostility and violence, and out of desperation rather than betrayal, had a brief affair with Matta. Gorky felt betrayed. In a collar brace and brandishing a cane with his only functional hand, he threatened Matta, "I'm going to give you a good beating. You are very charming, but you have interfered with my family life." Matta fled; Gorky returned to his studio and hanged himself.

The tragic death of the man Breton considered one of the greatest painters in America devastated him, and it incensed him to think that his protégé Matta had precipitated the suicide of the man he cherished. When Matta tried to explain that he had merely followed surrealist precepts, allowing him to be guided by unconscious desires (Breton had proclaimed "to each according to his desires," paraphrasing Marx), the usually courteous and courtly Breton, like a modern Jeremiah, shrieked "Assassin! Murderer!" He summoned a meeting of the Surrealist circle and Matta was excommunicated from the Surrealist group for "intellectual disqualification and moral ignominy."

Character is destiny, form is inseparable from content and there is no thought without composition; the Betrothals, with or without Picasso's influence and despite Gorky's secret and personal temperament, were painted from his own ethical stance. Art historian Elie Faure, who is renowned for his multivolumed *History of* Art (1921), wrote, "It is like those voices of silence that we hear and follow in their interminable round when we listen only to ourselves." But Gorky, "fervent scrutinizer" of works of art, also heard the "language of silent things and of flowers." The connection between Gorky's art and his Armenian past is difficult to untangle. Heartened by his marriage and growing family, Gorky created lush bountiful Landscapes as his personal style, and gained acceptance in the art world.

Just as *Guernica* exemplified Picasso's misfortunes, the Betrothals, with a post-cubist matrix and organized by elegant Ingresesque lines, characterized the artist's tragedies. "Gorky's paintings are full of complexity," as Reiff rightly pointed out in "The Late Works of Arshile Gorky,"[46] and restated in his *Stylistic Analysis of Arshile Gorky's Art*,[47] "Not only are the parts many,

they also preserve their identities as parts and must be composed." Details of his paintings, especially in the Betrothals, may be parsed iconographically, and the interpretations of the paintings may be incomplete, but the attempt is undoubtedly necessary. With all their hermeticisms, they are distinctly Gorkian masterworks.

Notes:

[1] Jacob Kainen, "Memories of Arshile Gorky" *Arts* (March 1976): 97.
Kainen moved to Washington DC in 1942 to take a position as curator at the Division of Graphic Arts at the Smithsonian Institution.

[2] Julien Levy, foreword to William C. Seitz, *Arshile Gorky: Paintings, Drawings, Studies*, (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1962) 7.

[3] Janie C. Lee and Melvin P. Lader, *Arshile Gorky: A Retrospective of Drawings* (Whitney Museum of American Art, New York: Harry N Abrams, 2003) 63.

[4] Jim M. Jordan, "Arshile Gorky at Crooked Run Farm" *Arts* (March 1976):102.

[5] Herschel B Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica: History, Transformation, Meanings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) 101.

[6] Hayden Herrera, *Arshile Gorky: His Life and Work* (New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 2003) 421.

[7] Lee and Lader, *A Retrospective* , 57.

[8] W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and Their Gods* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955) 56; also J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough: The Magic Art*, vol. 2 ch. 2; or as Axel W. Persson wrote: "According to the very basic principles of homeopathic magic, the phallus and the sexual act are prerequisites for the renewal of nature." Carl Jung saw the foot, not only as Man's relationship with the earth but also phallic in significance. Interestingly, the seed, slipped into the ground and tamped down by the sower's foot [Latin, *planta*, sole of the foot], gives us the word "plant".

[9] Herrera, *Arshile Gorky,* 29. Herrera points out that Armenian farmers were known for their industry and agricultural skills. In Khorkom, the village where Gorky's father lived, the rich soil is irrigated by the Shamiram canal, an ancient irrigation system almost 2500 years old still flowing to this day. The canal is said to have been built by the Queen of Ninevah, Semiramis - Shamiram in Armenian).

[10] David Moore, *Slayers, Saviors, Servants, and Sex: An Expose of Kingdom Fungi* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 2001) Also see the US National Fungus Collections, Beltsville MD. Earlier, Gustave-Adolphe Thuret (1817-1875), a French biologist, had elucidated the sexual reproduction of seaweeds.

[11] *Good Hope Road (Hugging)* from 1945 is in the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection. "Good Hope Road" was the address of artist-friend, David Hare

[12] Herrera, *Arshile Gorky*, 488.

[13] Matthew Spender, *From a High Place: A Life of Arshile Gorky* (New York: A.A.Knopf, 1999) 182.

[14] André Breton, "The Eye-Spring: Arshile Gorky" the foreword to *Arshile Gorky* (New York: Julien Levy Gallery exhibition catalogs, 1945, 1948).

[15] Herrera, *Arshile Gorky* 708, n. 567.

[16] Robert Reiff, *A Stylistic Analysis of Arshile Gorky's Art from 1943-1948* (New York: Garland Press, 1977) 104, diagram on 310. As Barbara Tuchman pointed out in *A Distant Mirror* on page 15 the horse was the seat of the nobleman; the mount that lifted him above other men. In every language except English, the word for knight (*chevalier* in French) meant the man on horseback. In fulfilling military service, horse and knight were considered inseparable; without a mount the knight was a mere man. Also for further reference see, Barbara W. Tuchman, *A Distant Mirror: The Calamitous 14th Century* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978)

[17] Lee and Lader, *A Retrospective* , 18, fig. 1.

[18] Diane Waldman, *Arshile Gorky 1904-1948: A Retrospective* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1981) Fig. 73. In Herrera, *Arshile Gorky,* p. 45, as *Self Portrait, Study for the Artist's Mother.*

[19] Kainen (p. 96), Spender (p. 142), and Reiff in *Arts* (March 1976): 9. All three quoted Greene [Balcomb Greene, typescript, January, 1951, New York: Whitney Museum of American Art files].

[20] Herschel Chipp, "*Guernica*: Love, War, and the Bullfight," *Art Journal* 33, no. 2 (winter 1973/4): 100.

[21] Reiff, *A Stylistic Analysis*,135.

[22] Spender, *From a High Place*, 208.

[23] Melvin P Lader, *Arshile Gorky* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985)100.

[24] April Kingsley, "Gorky's Absolute Ambiguity," *Re-Dact: An Anthology of Art Criticism*, ed. Peter Frank (New York: Willis, Locker & Owens Publishing, 1984) 96.

[25] Reiff, *A Stylistic Analysis*, 161; diagrams p. 359.

[26] Klaus Kertess, in *Gorky's Betrothals: Collection in Context*, (New York: Whitney Museum catalog, 1993)

[27] Michael Auping, *Arshile Gorky: the Breakthrough Years* (New York and Fort Worth: Rizzoli, 1995) 57. Marija Gimbutas points out that the symbol of the vulva was pictured, from the Aurignacian period through the Bronze ages and even up to historical times, as "seeds depicted as a dot in the center of an enclosure" and the "dot-in-circle motifs" were "germinal." See her *The Civilization of the Goddess* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991) 223, 304.

[28] Ethel K. Schwabacher, *Arshile Gorky* (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1957) 66.

[29] Auping, *Arshile Gorky*, 57.

[30] Picasso's Guernica and related Studies, which I discuss here, are located in Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Madrid, Spain.

[31] Rudolph Arnheim, *Picasso's Guernica: the Genesis of a Painting* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1962) 20.

[32] Ibid., 118.

[33] Anthony Blunt, *Picasso's Guernica* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1969) 39.

[34] Chipp, *Guernica*, 114.

[35] Martin Ries, "Picasso and the Myth of the Minotaur," *Art Journal* 32, no. 2 (winter 1972/73): 145.

[36] Reiff, *A Stylistic Analysis*, 99; diagram p. 344.

[37] According to Kertess this hybrid creature is best known for the attempt to carry off Deidameia on the day of her marriage to the king of the Lapithae. Interestingly, the centaur Chiron was mentor to the Greek hero, Achilles.

[38] Nouritza Matossian, *Black Angel: The Life of Arshile Gorky* (Woodstock / New York: Overlook Press, 2000) 32.

[39] Herrera, *Arshile Gorky*, n. 18, 637.

[40] Herrera, *Arshile Gorky*, n. 20, 638.

[41] Matossian, *Black Angel*, 271.

[42] Matossian, *Black Angel*, 187.

[43] Spender: pp. 81, 272, 355.

[44] Herrera, *Arshile Gorky*, 240, 258.

[45] Matossian, *Black Angel*, 435.

[46] Reiff, "The Late Works of Arshile Gorky," *Art Journal*, spring 1963, xxii/3, p. 152, n. 6.

[47] Robert Reiff, *A Stylistic Analysis*, p. 262, n 1.

Louis Vuitton and the Luxury Market After the End of Art

Leah Modigliani

In December on 5th Avenue near 57th Street, surrounded by the world-famous Christmas decorations of New York City, one finds a new kind of holiday advertising: the high art installation.[1] Louis Vuitton (known to consumers as a producer of expensive leather goods and as one of many luxury brands owned by LVMH Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton) is displaying original art commissioned by contemporary artist Olafur Eliasson. The side and back walls of the box-shaped windows have been paneled in flat black fabric to maximize the effect of the art, which is titled *Eye See You*. The work consists of sun-cookers (portable devices that use solar energy to cook food) that have been modified into lamps shaped like satellite dishes mounted on tripods. One fiery glowing orange lamp is centered in each of the windows at street level. The project was designed by Olafur Eliasson and built by contractors to his specifications, and copies of the same work have been installed in 380 other stores across the globe.

The partnership between Louis Vuitton and Olafur Eliasson is an example of the extent to which all cultural products have been subsumed into a hegemonic "culture industry." In this expansive field, boundaries between art, commercial commodities and entertainment have become non-existent or blurry. The growing inability to distinguish art from non-art except through context, and/or the inability of viewers to respond differently to the experience of either, has led to a growing body of research on what scholars have called the end or liquidation of art.

This paper begins by accepting the argument that art, as we have known it is over. However, theorizing "The End of Art" does not mean that art is not being made; simply that art is not what it once was. In fact, record numbers of artists are graduating from art schools and sales of art at an all-time high. So art exists all around us and its very desirability must mean something significant. The question now becomes how to address or evaluate this art that proliferates in a time after the end of art. This paper seeks to address the historical antecedents of these problems and their ramifications in contemporary life by examining both Olafur Eliasson's *Eye See You* project and Louis Vuitton's reasons for commissioning it. Furthermore, in theory and by example the paper suggests that art criticism exists as an integral tool in the evaluation

of art in visual culture.

The placing of high art in the windows of a luxury goods retailer is not particularly unexpected because art has long been supported and commissioned by the wealthier classes of society. However, in these windows none of Louis Vuitton's products are displayed along with Eliasson's sculptures, and so the art assumes the role of primary advertisement. This strategy is part of the company's marketing plan to bond their product image to that of high art, and through this association to elevate the status of their luggage to that of art in the popular imagination. To achieve this goal both art and luggage must be seen to share the same basic attributes. The question at hand is how art is affected when it performs a role expected of ordinary objects like wallets and suitcases. What does art lose when it becomes advertising?

On the official LVMH website a page titled "LVMH, Patron of the Arts and Social Solidarity" describes the reasoning behind their cultural contributions:

> The Group consolidates its development, year after year, as a unique body of values related to heritage, know-how, creativity, innovation, art of living. These values, shared and claimed by people worldwide, constitute the leading elements of its houses success, and of that of their products. Through patronage, LVMH intends to defend, and thereby redefine luxury as generous, affective, authentic, a definition to which the Group's chairman and his associates are truly committed. . . . LVMH's institutional action intends to mark, through a civic act in favor of the greater good, its commitment to solidarity with culture, youth, and the great humanitarian causes of public health issues. LVMH's patronage is inscribed under the sign of creative passion, and a profound love of human values.[2]

Although the text is fairly vague, LVMH's primary motivation seems to be the defense of luxury. The "art-of-living" as a value "claimed by people worldwide" suggests that all of the objects and/or art commissions proffered by LVMH are connected as representations of lifestyle. But what is it exactly about luxury that needs to be defended? If art is being used as luxury's defense then the implicit ulterior motive of that use is not particularly generous after all.

Perhaps defending luxury has to do with the fact that until recently Louis Vuitton's handbags were made the old fashioned way, but now they are mass-produced and sold for the same high prices. On Oct 9th, 2006, just one month before Eliasson's installation was unveiled on 5th Avenue, the Wall Street Journal ran a front-page article titled "Louis Vuitton Tries Modern Methods On Factory Lines."[3] Apparently as recently as a year ago, "it took 20 to 30

craftsmen to put together each . . . bag, over the course of about eight days."[4] In this artisan context the high prices of the bags seem almost justified. However to become more competitive and increase profits Louis Vuitton recently adopted a Japanese-modeled assembly-line process in order to keep more products on the shelves. According to the Wall Street Journal this is a risky departure for the brand because, "Customers . . . have bought into the notion that skilled craftsmen make them the old-fashioned way."[5] The article goes on to explain that Louis Vuitton along with other luxury brands have traditionally accepted the idea that keeping up demand is good for business - empty shelves may increase consumer desire which ensures a long waiting list of affluent customers. The very authenticity that LVMH refers to in the previous quote is thus called into question, and knowing this, they are working hard to create new justifications for mass-produced luxury.

Louis Vuitton's situation ironically echoes the condition of the contemporary artist. Olafur Eliasson is just one of many highly successful artists that cannot on their own keep up with the demand for their work. Matthew Barney, Jeff Koons and Mike Kelley are also well known in the art world for employing whole teams of full paid staff in the construction of their work. The *Eye See You* project is enormous in scope–380 stores received at least one sun-cooker sculpture at a probable cost of at least over a hundred thousand dollars in material and labor costs alone. Eliasson, like Matthew Barney, acts as the director of a project that he could not complete by the efforts of his own labor. From a Berlin studio that he calls Werkstatt & Büro (Workshop and Office) he employs approximately thirty assistants that include two art historians, eight architects and a number of artists.[6] According to Eliasson's own website in 2006 he had twelve solo exhibitions and participated in thirty-six group shows.[7] Given the size and scope of the massive installations he is known for creating all over the world, this level of productivity could not be possible without a full-time paid staff. Therefore it is not surprising to learn that although they are likely made to his specifications, many of these artworks are not actually made by him, and in this regard Eliasson functions as the director of his own brand-name of contemporary art.

Perhaps it is for this reason that, like Louis Vuitton, he feels compelled to defend or justify the high art (or luxury objects) that he is creating; in fact, press releases and labels next to the *Eye See You* project announce that the proceeds from the work will go to an Ethiopian orphanage.[8] By associating Eliasson's work with charity, and specifically with underprivileged children, both the artist and LVMH discourage serious criticism of the formal, social and conceptual meanings of the artwork and it's commercial context. Most likely because of the money involved in this project, the art by itself is no longer recognized as having humanitarian value and so must be associated with a more obvious social cause.

The example of luggage and art as tandem products of a luxury goods company, which both need to appeal to humanitarian causes for validity, signifies a radical shift in the traditional understanding of art's place and role in society. From the flickering hunters pictured on the interior cave walls of Lascaux, to the transcendent Christian narrative of Giotto's Arena Chapel, art has traditionally been called into the service of human social interaction with the divine or incomprehensible. The artist's development and eventual perfection of his craft through the making of discreet art objects has been an attempt to solicit divine intervention into the humble lives of man, as the popular myth of Pygmalion illustrates so clearly. Even outside of explicitly religious subjects, artistic representation sought to imbue the everyday with mysticism, the sacred, or some other quality that would enrich the prosaic recognition of one's own mortality in daily interactions with people and things.

The disinterested and distracted shoppers passing by the Louis Vuitton windows show how far from mysticism or faith art in relation to it's audience has come. The formal qualities of the *Eye See You* project support this idea. The spectacle of the lamps at night command visual attention but do not receive any from the busy public walking by. During day or night, the highly reflective plate glass windows reflect the street back to the viewer, which is compounded by sunlight, car lights, and the interior lighting of the store. From across the street the lamps are easier to see but this viewpoint is obscured by the stream of trucks and buses that pass through the intersection of 5th Avenue and 57th Street at all times. Furthermore, the lamps are so bright that they are physically uncomfortable to look into so viewers might glance at them as they walk by, but will not stop and linger. Essentially the environment is not conducive to careful contemplation, and the conditions of the street prevent people from really looking at the objects, or wanting to.

The fact that the art actually repels the viewer physiologically gives the title *Eye See You* a troubling connotation. It sees us but we do not see it. This is a one-way communication in which no collaboration of meaning exists. Interestingly, there is a single sculpture by Eliasson titled *You See Me*, commissioned by LVMH at the same time as the *Eye See You* series, hanging permanently inside the store out of sight from the street. This sculpture consists of four sun-cooker discs connected in the center to form a kind of sphere from which four "eyes" look out in different directions. Despite the title's solicitation for us to see it, the sculpture is mounted so high in the store that it is unlikely that Louis Vuitton shoppers will notice it unless they walk up the stairs to the fourth floor and happen to look in the right direction from that level.

Whether or not intentional, these two works, as metaphorical sets of eyes with indifferent and/or aggressive relationships to moving viewers, effectively illustrate post-modern theory about surveillance and social control. In

fact, when Michel Foucault analyzed the discourse of power through the example of modern prisons and models of discipline, he specifically pointed to the connections between the development of the new technologies of the "telescope, the lens and the light beam," and the development of new ways of imagining the observation of men.[9] In Foucault's now famous example of the panopticon, he showed how human subjects can become self-controlling, or disciplined, in their social behavior by their consciousness of always being watched. In his analysis the notion of a central eye that sees but cannot be seen was embodied by the central guard in Jeremy Bentham's prison model of 1843. However unlike the early Bentham prison, contemporary surveillance is not restricted to particular spatial structures and is not even limited to one set of eyes. In a post 9-11 world surveillance is not necessarily even technologically driven, as Americans become accustomed to watching each other in public. Today participating in contemporary life also means accepting the fact that advertising through information technologies can and does reach all space, public or private, from the street to the insides of our homes. When we walk out on Fifth Avenue we are so deftly attuned to these many daily impositions that Eliasson's brightly lit examples of the all-seeing-eye are not likely to stand out.

This multiplication of eyes and viewpoints in the maintenance and production of power through surveillance was noticed by Jonathan Crary, who sought to reconcile the seeming power of spectacle with Foucault's earlier dismissal of it. Crary suggested in 1989 that the television industry was a "further perfecting of panoptic technology" and that "*surveillance* and *spectacle* are not opposed terms, as [Foucault] insists, but collapsed onto one another in a more effective disciplinary apparatus."[10] Besides the sheer number of *Eye See You* sculptures found simultaneously world wide, each one's material construction of mirror-like glass and polished aluminum adds to their spectacular potential even if ultimately unsuccessful. Mirrors reflect the self back to the self, but as Narcissus' fate showed us, such images are not in the end sustentative or redemptive because the one-sided communication is empty of new and enriching content. The *Eye See You* sun-cookers with their faceted shiny surfaces are akin to a hall of mirrors, which do nothing but entertain until one becomes sick of looking. This art then, is much like the television entertainment that Crary was referring to. It seems clear that *Eye See You* is an example and product of a culture in which multi-reflective surveillances modify behavior away from critical consciousness by exposing people to an overload of unsubstantial visual stimuli. This is a far cry from seeking and recognizing truly redemptive works of art that reinforce the beauty and wholeness of the world through their inspired forms.

The gradual dissolution of art's purpose as a link to the divine corresponds to the historical birth of avant-garde art. Although having antecedents

in David, Delacroix and other eighteenth century artists, the avant-garde's inward turn towards a secular subjectivity became accepted as a basis for creation in the nineteenth century: particularly in the work of Manet and his contemporaries. This is not to say that these artists were universally liked or accepted by the public, simply that contemporary connoisseurs of art took them seriously and debated their efforts in the public forum of newspapers and journals. The poet Émile Zola, in his public support of Manet, exemplified this with a plea to his readers to wipe clear their whole understanding of art history and tradition in order to see Manet's art with fresh eyes. Zola also rejected the long-standing idea that "there is an absolute beauty located outside the artist, or better, an ideal perfection toward each artist strives."[11]

As D.D. Egbert described so succinctly in his essay "The Idea of the Avant-Garde," the rejection of tradition was for intellectuals wed to the belief that this rejection would prepare them for a better new socialist future.[12] This is confirmed by Renato Poggioli's classic text on the avant-garde that asserts that a belief in a new radical future is one of the fundamental tenets of the avant-garde.[13] Egbert locates the origins of the avant-garde in the teaching and philosophy of Henri Saint-Simon, a successful military strategist and founder of the still operating École Polytechnique in Paris. Simon envisioned society as "a kind of great machine operating under natural laws like those of the Newtonian universe"[14] which he combined with the desire to create a kind of Christian paradise on earth. He positioned artists as the creative leaders of a trinity of social reformers that would be the guides in this process, with the other leadership positions assigned to scientists and engineers. Perhaps because of the implicitly elitist hierarchy of Simon's leader-and-followers model, his successors eventually separated into two camps, which were distinguished by those who believed in the socio-political goals of his artist-as-leader, and those who did not.

The point of this digression into the origin of the avant-garde is that even in the early stages of the avant-garde, art was conceived as having a socio-political purpose. When artists imagined themselves as leaders but separated this from the socio-political goals that the Simonians had insisted on, art became art for arts sake, and artists began to imagine themselves as outside of society. Without the idea that art might serve some common purpose by appealing to a complicit public, the seeds were sown for two centuries of experimentation in which the art object became more and more about revealing the artist's subjectivity through his/her free expression in contrast to the dominant culture.

Eliasson's artwork demonstrates an even further development of this trajectory. The construction of reproducible and spectacular artworks that are not made by the artists hand, but built according to plan by others, actually strips the artwork of any sense of the artist's own subjectivity. Because of the

formal reasons already outlined, it is impossible to get any sense of Olafur Eliasson's subjectivity through looking at the *Eye See You* project. The sun-cookers can and are able to be assembled by anyone. Subjectivity is linked to authorship, and when authorship becomes a brand name with little to no emotional resonance, as it does here, the work feels empty no matter how spectacular its form. In this case, we are left with an artwork that does not reveal the artist's or viewer's subjectivity, that has no apparent socio-political purpose except as a fundraiser for charity (but selling the handbags and giving the profits to the orphanage would achieve the same result), and that has limited aesthetic appeal because the work is visually confrontational. If this artwork has a purpose or meaning and it cannot be located in the object itself, then it must be located somewhere else. This suggests that the art object is a sign or placeholder of meaning that is external to it.

The desire for an artwork's meaning to be located in its objecthood is a desire so strong it cannot be easily broken. To accept that meaning lies elsewhere is to accept the possibility that art will be used as propaganda. The relationship between an artwork's meaning, it's location and its partisan use is perhaps best reflected in the 1930's dialogue between Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin. In a series of letters both men try to find the source of art's significance in relation to the socio-political concerns of their time. Their dialogue brackets the core issue which was, and still is, the encroachment of mass culture on older forms of high art. Benjamin, continuing in the tradition of the Saint Simonians, argued for the revolutionary social potential of new forms of mechanical reproduction and their ability to reach mass audiences, especially film. Adorno counter-argued that art's importance lay in it's inherent autonomy and distinct status outside of mass culture, and that film like other new technologies, was just another tool to be used by the culture industry to reach mass audiences and further indoctrinate them into capitalism's reified program.

In retrospect, although gloriously optimistic, Benjamin's argument seems naive today. It's clear now that the modernist project of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries did not result in liberation from reified capitalism, but in fact helped it to expand into new markets.[15] In the decades following the publication of George Lukacs' *History of Class Consciousness*, capitalism's ability to incorporate and withstand threats to its substructure through diverse illusionary tactics (such as the rising prominence of commodity fetishism) became clear to a new generation of Marxists. This, along with the existence and after-effects of fascism, made a reassessment of the utopian ideal of the proletariat's realization of their own class-consciousness necessary. In collaboration with Max Horkheimer, the concept of the Culture Industry was one of Adorno's chief contributions to this overall philosophical project. The bulk of this text is his most complete answer to the problems raised by Benjamin in his classic essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Reproducibility*.[16] The Culture

Industry is described as a monopoly of business interests that subverts traditional theology through the provision of mediated cultural experiences. This concept provides a ground for understanding how all cultural products serve the ideology of capitalism through the creation and suppression of desire, which affect the continued process of commodity exchange. The popular film and the high art object are, to echo one of Adorno's frequently used metaphors, "two halves that do not add up." The utopian whole that is not fulfilled by these two halves is that of socio-economic liberation and freedom.

Today, the distinctions between high and low culture that Adorno, and later Clement Greenberg (in his famous essay "Avant-Garde and Kitsch"), desperately sought to protect have been obliterated. Nowhere is this more evident in the marketing of fashion and high art that is certainly not the exclusive domain of Louis Vuitton. In 2001 a Prada boutique literally occupied the old sight of the Guggenheim' Museum's New York SoHo branch, where shoes and clothes are displayed in vitrines and pedestals in a building designed by famous architect Rem Koolhaas. In Chelsea, fashion boutiques sell high priced clothes next door to blue chip galleries. Successful artist Marcel Dzama's limited edition of "Sad Ghost Salt and Pepper Shakers" can be bought from Cerealart, an online business selling "artists multiples."[17] Japanese artist Takashi Murakami, perhaps the best example of the fusion of art and fashion (and tellingly known as the Japanese Andy Warhol) literally runs a marketing empire out of Tokyo, from which he sells the Murakami brand (paintings, dolls, sculptures, keepsakes, prints, etc.) to an international consumer base. The phenomenon of artists branding themselves (or being branded) as creative identities is perhaps the most significant aspect of the inward turn to a secular subjectivity divorced from faith. In many cases the art-objects produced by brand-name artists such as Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin, and Takashi Murakami are valued prior to existence. This is verified by the fact that collectors will put their names on waiting lists to purchase these artist's works before they are even made. Given that a communicative exchange between viewer and object can only take place after the work exists, it is clear that emotional, cultural or social value is not as important as market value when buying these artists works. My husband, the artist Jim Christensen, often complains that the art he sees exhibited in contemporary galleries "looks like props from the movie of someone's fabulous art life." The significance of this rather witty assessment cannot be understated: much art feels like it is disingenuous and/or empty. It signifies meaning, but does not deliver it. This echoes a lecture I attended on Feb. 23, 2005 at Mills College in California in which Peter Schjeldahl, critic for the New Yorker magazine, talked about the rarity of "true" art in relation to "real" art in his frequent visits to galleries and museums; real art is a material fact and can be found everywhere - true art is something rare that takes you beyond the everyday.

Why does so much art feel so uninspiring? Either the art is uninspired or it is falsely representing itself. When walking through Chelsea we don't feel disappointed when we encounter an ugly or uncomfortable pair of shoes, we just move on until we find a pair that suits us. We don't *expect* inspiration from shoes, although we may occasionally be inspired by aesthetically pleasing or comfortable design. But with art, we are expecting something more; we are expecting (or at least hoping for) some kind of beyond-the-usual aesthetic experience. I would argue that within advanced capitalism, when it comes to art, viewers prefer evidence of the hand-made. The alienation one feels from the production of their labor and that of others, can be compensated somewhat in the recognition of original artworks made by artists. When the experience of viewing something we know to be art (after all sometimes art is not even recognizable) is just the same as looking at all of the other consumer goods out there, we feel disappointed. Different viewers will have different responses to this expectation, which will vary based on their personal history, education and understanding of art. These complicated expectations are a result of the long history art has with faith, a history that hangs on despite all attempts to liquidate it.

Walter Benjamin called this history the aura of the art object, only he was advocating for it's eventual demise through the object's technical replication. He thought that the aura controls our experience of art and he was right. However, he did not anticipate the fact that even when an art object has no aura, our tenacious desire for it to exist fulfills the same controlling function. Adorno expressed this well when he said:

> Aura is not only—as Benjamin claimed—the here and now of the artwork, it is whatever goes beyond its factual givenness, its content; one cannot abolish it and still want art.[18]

Adorno was advocating in favor of modernist artworks, in which form is complemented by content. For Adorno a true artwork is a dialectical combination of the two. To get rid of either is to be left with non-art. The advances of capitalism have thrown an unforeseen wrench into this dynamic because today the content of the artwork is so often determined by the artwork's context. As we have seen in our own day with artists like Eliasson, who mass-produce their work, the work's meaning is often determined by the spatial, social or political context the art is found in: galleries, catalogues, signage, websites, etc. If aura is not necessarily bound to the objecthood of the art, and is further deflected to the artwork's context, the ground for evaluation of artworks becomes murky indeed.

In 1980 Douglas Crimp published a small but important essay on this subject in the journal *October*.[19] He theorized the aura as a ghost; a presence of

absence:

> The withering away of the aura, the dissociation of the work from the fabric of tradition, is an *inevitable* outcome of mechanical reproduction. This is something we all have experienced. We know, for example, the impossibility of experiencing the aura of such a picture as the Mona Lisa as we stand before it at the Louvre. Its aura has been utterly depleted by the thousands of times we've seen its reproduction, and no degree of concentration will restore its uniqueness for us.[20] (original emphasis)

Crimp's essay reveals an important critical observation about the aura and the autonomy of art. The widespread reproduction and dissemination of all kinds of images in the information age effectively obliterates the aura. The ubiquity of visual imagery in today's world ensures that even "original" images will feel as though they have been seen somewhere before. But, as Crimp goes on to explain, the absence of aura creates a desire for it that is disproportionate to the original need, resulting in an obsessive attempt to restore it in all imagery:

> The restoration of the aura, the consequent collecting and exhibiting, does not stop there. It is extended to the carte-de-visite, the fashion plate, the advertising shot, the anonymous snap or polaroid. At the origin of every one there is an Artist and therefore each can find its place on the spectrum of subjectivity.[21]

Although Crimp focuses on photography, the central idea, which is the fetishization of the aura in order to validate a subjective experience, can be extended to any and all contemporary imagery. The *idea* of an authentic art trumps the details of whatever thing we are looking at. This is the psychological component of art's purpose that may grow disproportionately important as other opportunities for faith and inspiration dwindle or are also co-opted by capitalism. The aura exists and doesn't exist at the same time; it is a phantom limb attached to most artwork, but only felt by the viewer. This phantom limb is a very real response to an ongoing trauma, western capitalist culture's separation with tradition and faith. This metaphor also complements the military history of the avant-garde and the failure of its utopian campaign.

What is at stake in critiques of the conflation of mass culture and high art is what Suzi Gablik has referred to as the "Reenchantment of Art" in her book of the same title.[22] Although I disagree with her limited characterization of modern art as purely centered on individualism, freedom and self expression, which seems to ignore the socio-political project of the original avant-garde artists, she is right in her overall call for the support of artworks more social in nature. However, to turn away from autonomous art objects in favor of social networks and collaborative works (as exemplified in the art-world

popularity of "relational aesthetics"), is too limited. Because art's redemptive significance is its ability to foster critical consciousness, work that succeeds in doing so must be singled out from the plethora of works that do not. For critics, it is no easy task to make these qualitative judgments publicly, because it means dismissing much art and artists popular in the powerful contemporary art market. This is why this kind of criticism is rarely found in magazines, newspapers and journals today.

As early as 1948 the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas recognized the significance of the critic in relation to the mass produced images of his time. When he advocated for the rehabilitation of criticism, he was speaking from a position of knowing firsthand how images had been used against him. He, like Adorno and Benjamin, had seen how the Nazis successfully used fascist imagery to foster the German people's disengagement with ethical responsibility. Imagery was used to separate the "I" from the "Other." On this subject he wrote that art is "essentially disengaged, [and] constitutes, in a world of initiative and responsibility, a dimension of evasion."[23] He likened art to a kind of beguiling magic that is "recognized as the devil's part"[24] through which "evil powers are conjured by filling the world with idols which have mouths but do not speak."[25] Although melodramatic, these quotes reflect well on the emptiness of meaning in Olafur Eliasson's storefront installations. Not only are they eyes watching us without communicating, they are like golden diamonds that glitter with the promise of riches, but upon further examination are revealed as fool's gold or simple glass. Levinas claimed that art has always existed and will continue to do so, but without criticism questioning the prevailing ideology that art is situated in; it is simply a semblance of reality stopped in time.

Louis Vuitton is banking their business on the notion that the semblance of art is a luxury worth purchasing. The phantom limb of the aura is the corrupt magic dust that sprinkles all objects with authenticity. This is why they are "redefin[ing] luxury as generous, affective, authentic" in place of an older model that links luxury to the objecthood of hand-made goods. The real aesthetic experience that occasionally results from important works of art might well also be described as generous, affective and authentic. The artist gives you a piece of their self in the work (their time, their thought, their vision), it affects you somehow, and it is this interaction that resonates as authentic experience. This is tradition—social communication engendered through expressive action. Both the artist and the viewer's subjectivity is activated and validated. Without one or the other the artwork is empty. What Louis Vuitton gives us in their new product lines, which include commissioned artworks, are objects that promise the aura of art but because of their mass production cannot provide the traditional experience. They are the status symbols of a new age; signs of important traditional values that no longer exist in a world that continues to forfeit them in the pursuit of material wealth.

The continued existence of true artworks and the critical assessment of them are vitally important in the current context of an advanced capitalism whose bottom line is profit. Art does and always has revealed the human dimension of living in one's time. Beauty, self-criticism, careful looking, contemplation, inspiration in oneself and others, and a feeling of social connection are all human qualities fostered by art but threatened by the marketplace. To accept art as advertising and vice versa is to renounce these traditional aspects of humanity in favor of work, profit and a materially centered lifestyle. The *Eye See You* project shows that in the end-of-art world the social and communicative qualities of art can no longer be assumed to exist in the art object. Louis Vuitton's example is decadent at best and dangerous at worst. We know we can live without luxury, after all most of the world does, but can we afford to live without art?

Notes:

[1] This essay was first written in December, 2006.

[2] The quoted text is exactly as was found on the official LVMH website in December, 2006. Readers should know that LVMH mission statements may vary as their website continues to be updated over time. See: http://www.lvmh.com/mecenat/pg_mecenat_home.asp?rub=23&srub=0

[3] Christina Passariello, "Louis Vuitton Tries Modern Methods On Factory Lines," *Wall Street Journal*, 9 Oct. 2006, front page.

[4] ibid.

[5] ibid., A15

[6] This information was provided by Prof. Philip Ursprung of the University of Zurich in a paper titled "Machines in the Studio: Olafur Eliasson and the Globalized Art World" at the 2007 College Art in New York City on Wednesday Feb. 14th, 2007.

[7] www.olafureliasson.net

[8] It is not within the scope of this paper to fully investigate the subtext of defensiveness that underscores the partnership between Louis Vuitton and Eliasson, although it seems important to note.

[9] Foucault describes the development of new forms of observing subjects in order to correctly "train' them for military or other service, under the heading of Hierarchal observation. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 170-171.

[10] Jonathan Crary, "Spectacle, Attention, Counter-Memory," *October The Second Decade 1986-1996,* ed. Rosalind Krauss (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998) 423.

[11] Charles Joshua Taylor, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Theories of Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 421.

[12] Donald D. Egbert, "The Idea of 'Avant-garde' in Art and Politics," *The American Historical Review* 73, no. 2 (1967): 339-366.

[13] Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1968)

[14] Egbert, "The Idea of 'Avant-garde' in Art and Politics," 340.

[15] In particular I am referring to Thomas Crow's argument that mass culture and modernist art have existed in a dialectical relationship since the beginning of the avant-garde, and the more recent idea that the avant-garde opposes mass culture neglects important aspects of the earlier dialectic. For more information see: Thomas Crow, "Modernism and Mass Culture in the Visual Arts," *Modern Art and the Common Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

[16] Walter Benjamin, "Work of Art in the Age of Reproducibility (Third Version)," in *Selected Writings,* ed. Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard).

[17] www.cerealart.com

[18] Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 45.

[19] Douglas Crimp, "The Photographic Activity of Postmodernism," *October* 15 (Winter 1980): 91-101.

[20] ibid., 94.

[21] ibid., 97.

[22] Suzy Gablik, *The Reenchantment of Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991)

[23] Emmanuel Levinas, "Reality and It's Shadow," *The Levinas Reader*, Ed. S. Hand (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989) 141.

[24] ibid.

[25] ibid.

In the Company of Ghosts

By Eugene Mahon

A play for two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, the two tramps of *Waiting for Godot*, who after a few lines of the first scene decide to leave the play and strike out on their own!

The play begins on stage; Act I of *Waiting for Godot.* It's Paris, the Theatre de Babylone, 1953.

[*Estragon, sitting on a low mound, is trying to take off his boot. He pulls at it with both hands, panting. He gives up, exhausted, rests, tries again. As before.*]

Enter Vladimir.

Estragon: [*Giving up again*] Nothing to be done.

Vladimir: [*Advancing with short, stiff strides, legs wide apart*] I'm beginning to come round to that opinion. All my life I've tried to put it from me, saying, Vladimir, be reasonable, you haven't yet tried everything. And I resumed the struggle. [*He broods, musing on the struggle. Turning to Estragon*] So there you are again.

Estragon: Am I?

Vladimir: I'm glad to see you back. I thought you were gone forever.

Estragon: Me too.

Vladimir: Together again at last! We'll have to celebrate this. But how? [*He reflects*] Get up till I embrace you.

Estragon: [*Irritably*] Not now, not now.

Vladimir: [*Hurt, coldly*] May one inquire where His Highness spent the night?
Estragon: In a ditch.

Vladimir: [*Admiringly*] A ditch! Where?

Estragon: [*Without gesture*] Over there.

Vladimir: And they didn't beat you?

Estragon: Beat me? Certainly they beat me.

Vladimir: The same lot as usual?

Estragon: The same? I don't know.

Vladimir: When I think of it . . . all these years . . . but for me . . . where would you be. . . . [*Decisively*] You'd be nothing more than a little heap of bones at the present minute, no doubt about it.

Estragon: And what of it?

Vladimir: [*Gloomily*] It's too much for one man. [*Pause, cheerfully*] On the other hand what's the good of losing heart now, that's what I say. We should have thought of it a million years ago, in the nineties.

Estragon: Ah stop blathering and help me off with this bloody thing.

Vladimir: Hand in hand from the top of the Eiffel Tower, among the first. We were respectable in those days. Now it's too late. They wouldn't even let us up. I can't stand it any more.

Estragon: What?

Vladimir: This bloody play. Depressing as hell. Nothing happens. Nobody comes. Nobody goes. It's awful!

Estragon: Are you suggesting we should leave?

Vladimir: Yes . . . But what if this play becomes a classic. Then we will have left something momentous: we'll live to regret it.

Estragon: Some classic! Two tramps, Lucky and Pozzo, and a boy who delivers a message from Godot! God-awful if you ask me. It's all expectation. No delivery! The only thing a man ever regrets is not living his own life according to the dictates of his own soul. The scripted life isn't worth living.

Vladimir: I thought it was the unexamined life.

Estragon: Same thing. Scripted, unexamined. The challenge is to have the courage to come up with your own script. Let's go.

Vladimir: I'm afraid.

Estragon: Huh?

Vladimir: What if it's dark out there?

[*They step out of the theatre, beyond the proscenium*]

Vladimir: [*Whispering*] The silence makes the darkness tangible. The silence makes the darkness darker.

Estragon: [*Dismissively, impatiently*] The world is divided into the same amount of dark and light. It moves around a bit, but eventually it's the same roulette, same existential cake no matter how you slice it.

Vladimir: Very reassuring. But I'm still afraid of the dark since first it thundered on my ears.

Estragon: Darkness doesn't thunder.

Vladimir: Mine does! It's the ghosts.

Estragon: Ghosts?

Vladimir: They're everywhere and you know it.

Estragon: [*Condescendingly*] It's just the two of us and darkness. You have to learn to be afraid of the dark like the rest of us. Stop peopling it with your damn ghosts. It'll be overcrowded the way you go on and on.

Vladimir: [*Ominously*] "I never knew death had undone so many."

Estragon: What?

Vladimir: Dante. T. S. Eliot. You know.

Estragon: You'll drive me back to Beckett if you go on and on!

Vladimir: "I never knew death had undone so many," that's what Dante said when he arrived in Hell with his guide Virgil. The mathematics of it scared him.

Estragon: I always hated math myself, but don't go on and on about the ghosts so!

Vladimir: There's more than ghosts in the dark you know. There's stars. A star is a piece of the night: did you ever think of it that way?

Estragon: [*Knowingly*] Yes I've thought of stars and their uncanny light.

Vladimir: [*Excitedly, childishly*] If you had a stopwatch you could measure when light left a planet and arrived at another (Earth let's say). Divide the *distance* by the *time* and you have the speed of light!

Estragon: You could cut corners too. Say the light reaches Madagascar at midnight and New York at half a second after midnight. If you measure the distance between New York and Madagascar and divide by half a second you have the speed of light.

Vladimir: That's science. It can measure anything except the distance between the lonely and what they've lost.

Estragon: That's where ghosts come in.

Vladimir: That's where ghosts come in?

Estragon: Is there no science of ghosts?

Vladimir: Music maybe. Religion. Poetry. Psychoanalysis. It's hard to say.

Estragon: Emotion. Isn't all emotion an intangible bridge between grasping and reaching, and memory the ghost of desire startled by its own recognition. Aren't we all ghosts at heart?

Vladimir: Yes. Delighted to make your acquaintance. I never saw a finer ghost till now.

Estragon: Sarcasm is a bitter ghost. Eat your heart out.

Vladimir: Sorry. Accept the ghost of an apology, or the apology of a ghost.

Estragon: Apology for a ghost. Apologia pro vita sua makes you alive. There are ghosts however who are dead. Our friends that play a game of hide and seek but don't return.

Vladimir: They would if they could and take our places: musical chairs with the dead!

Estragon: That's what guilt is. Musical chairs with the dead. When the music stops only the living sit down. The dead stay out of the game, out of tune forever.

Vladimir: Some game, some tune.

Estragon: Yes, it's hard to get it right, guilt like a rusty organ grinder; can't stand the music. Can't bear for it to stop.

Vladimir: This is silly. [*Trying to reassure himself with affected bravado*] There's no such thing as ghosts and everyone knows that, sure as Satan, sure as Hell.

Estragon: Ha, ha. Hell, the original ghost house. You see. You can't get away from it, Heaven help us.

Vladimir: Oh stop it with your heaven and hell. Next thing you know they'll invent purgatory. Seek a patent for it.

Estragon: Been there. Done that.

Vladimir: You're right. Even Shakespeare exploited those god-forsaken ghosts when purgatory was closed down in 1600. If they can close the theatres they can shut down purgatory too!

Estragon: When they closed down purgatory in 1600 the ghosts ended up on the Elizabethan stage. Shakespeare could make theatre out of anything!

Vladimir: So could Beckett!

Estragon: Yeah, two tramps, suicide, depression, sado-masochism, he sure could make theatre out of anything.

Vladimir: So why did we leave the play?

Estragon: Couldn't stand those lines! You have to make up your own lines. Develop your own voice. Even a ghost knows that!

Vladimir: Ghosts know nothing. Except what we tell them.

Estragon: Exactly. We feel for them. We extend their provenance. The guy who measured the speed of light in Denmark in 1680: his bottle washed up on Einstein's beach a few hundred years later. His thoughts launched from the high wire of history ended up in the sure grasp of Einstein's hands; the history of ideas is a great circus act under the tent of time.

Vladimir: There's no business like show business.

Estragon: Show and tell. From Plato to Plutonium.

Vladimir: Did you have to pair them, philosophy and destruction?

Estragon: What a pair. Like you and me.

Vladimir: "Two shorten a road."

Estragon: Two shorten a road?

Vladimir: Yes. A journey is shortened when two travelers talk as they go. Conversation makes the road seem shorter.

Estragon: Is that why we're together. Roadwork is our stock-in-trade?

Vladimir: It's a metaphor. Love can get you home sooner than isolation.

Estragon: And if you have no home like half the world?

Vladimir: Plays are written for people with homes who leave their homes to see the plays and then go home again. Now that we've left the play we know nothing until we invent it.

Estragon: Stoppard says love had to be invented.

Vladimir: Hate too, I'd say.

Estragon: With those two inventions you could go anywhere.

Vladimir: We can't go on and on like this.

Estragon: You're beginning to sound like him.

Vladimir: Beckett, you mean.

Estragon: Yes. He's waiting for Godot and we're waiting for Samuel's ghost.

Vladimir: The irony of it. He believed plays could not be written. In his existential world language had come to the end of its rope. Nothing to be said. And yet he believed that since the world was chaos and words bankrupt it was this crisis of meaning that gave man a moral imperative to speak, even though failure was inevitable. "Teach us to fail better" was as close to prayer as he ever came.

Estragon: Beckett praying. Now that's a good one!

Vladimir: We're back to ghosts.

Estragon: How so?

Vladimir: Prayer was born when Abel fell and marked Cain forever with his falling, the future no longer a matter of time, but immaterial, a ghost that wakes when you do but never sleeps.

Estragon: Sounds like the bitch that opened her legs and got me started.

Vladimir: Hush your mouth! No way to speak about your origins!

Estragon: You told me once to say whatever comes to mind.

Vladimir: Never did!

Estragon: Did so!

Vladimir: Never did!

Estragon: Did so!

Vladimir: Listen to us, children still!

Estragon: It's an achievement.

Vladimir: What?

Estragon: Childhood. Some are afraid to ever claim it, make it their own.

Vladimir: God is a child who believes he created the world. As he grows he realizes he didn't but he's forever faced with a terrible choice between two truths: the awful fiction of innocence or the awful fiction of reality.

Estragon: He silvered the night with stars but lost his fortune in the first light of morning.

Vladimir: I pity him.

Estragon: Don't you have it ass-backwards? Isn't he supposed to pity us?

Vladimir: He can pity us pitying him while we pity him pitying us!

Estragon: [*Quoting Shakespeare, as if by way of explanation*]
"O you heavenly charmers,
What things you make of us! For what we lack
We laugh; for what we have we are sorry; still
Are children in some kind. Let us be thankful
For that which is; and with you leave dispute
That are above our question. Let's go off,
And bear us like the time"

Vladimir: What's that?

Estragon: *Two Noble Kinsmen*. Shakespeare's last.

Vladimir: That's us, bearing ourselves like the time. As noble as the royal road of dreams.

Estragon: The only nobility for me. Tell me one.

Vladimir: A dream?

Estragon: Yes.

Vladimir: I make them up now during the day. They've stopped coming at night.

Estragon: Oh come on. Made up or not. Night-stuff or day-stuff. No matter.

Vladimir: I had a dream within a dream. When I woke I couldn't tell which was which, which one was inside the other, damn near drove me crazy.

Estragon: Damn near! I'd say did! But tell the bloody thing. Shake the secrets of the night until all the psychic shillings tumble out on the bedroom floor!

Vladimir: I dreamt about a ghost. He was in a mirror. Looking out at me or was it I looking in on him, I couldn't say. Then he stepped out of the mirror, all the splintered glass assembled in the goblet of his cupped palms like pieces of silver. He offered them to me. I was afraid to accept. He flung them from him until they framed me. I was in the mirror now and he outside peering in. It went on like this ad infinitum, dream within dream within dream like a recurring decimal.

Estragon: Some infinity! You mean until you woke.

Vladimir: [*Indignantly*] Some people have a way of belittling everything: even infinity gets short shrift in their hands. Shame on you.

Estragon: You are right. I envied you your way with dreams. I should have said what Tennessee Williams said in *Streetcar*: "It was a night when time wasn't time at all but a piece of infinity dropped into your palm." Your dream was like that, a piece of infinity dropped in your lap while you slept and I belittled it. There is shame on me.

Vladimir: I forgive you but you have to tell me what it meant, this Russian box of a dream.

Estragon: It meant we have to find Samuel fast and get back in the act, get back in the play. We're nothing out here without him.

Vladimir: We're nothing in there with him.

Estragon: We can interpret his lines anyway we choose. It's our privilege.

Vladimir: But he wrote them.

Estragon: Yes, but the words were there even before he assembled them. Words the great etymological archeology of flesh, the verbal Russian box we

all emerged from.

Vladimir: Older than Troy, younger than the wine dark sea.

Estragon: The words are ghosts you mean we've all inherited.

Vladimir: Yes words are ghosts we've all inherited.

Estragon: They go back a long way. Imagine the first word for fear.

Vladimir: Imagine the word for listen, when words were no longer lonely after they'd been heard.

Estragon: Yes, once heard they're never the same again. They're haunted with the feel of the other.

Vladimir: I'm not myself at all when I listen to you.

Estragon: It's true. We're a pair once we're branded with each other's words.

Vladimir: We're a pair. I never thought of that.

Estragon: I and Thou. One and two. Bet you never knew numbers came from loneliness, the self counting on the other, the mathematics of love.

Vladimir: You were always a romantic.

Estragon: You were always a cynic.

Vladimir: Only a mother could love us. What a pair!

Estragon: Before words, what you saw as a child must have been a wonder, a wordless wonder.

Vladimir: A god. A child's numinous eyes and ears, the first gods.

Estragon: At the beginning of the world.

Vladimir: The big bang.

Estragon: The first whimper.

Vladimir: The first smile.

Estragon: First light.

Vladimir: First dark.

Estragon: One word for the two when the world began, the initial economy of perception.

Vladimir: The eventual inevitable commerce of ambiguity.

Estragon: Double talk and double take.

Vladimir: The world and the word: worlds apart but the closest we have to reality. The nearer you get, the farther you are but it's the best we can be, the best we can do, ridiculous gods that we are.

Estragon: You're an atheist.

Vladimir: No, I believe in you. I believe in me.

Estragon: What a strange pair we are. Doomed but defiant. The song and dance of death and life.

Vladimir: It's as close to courage as we'll ever get.

Estragon: [*Hesitantly, confessionally*] But I'm afraid too. I'm afraid of everything. The dark. The ghosts. I'm even afraid of my own explanations!

Vladimir: When a man sees fear in the mirror looking back at him, then he has the courage to really see the light. Before that he only saw half of himself.

Estragon: You have a strange way of talking, a strange way of seeing, and yet it's your strangeness I've always liked.

Vladimir: If I weren't a stranger you'd have no need for a friend, no need to make a friend of me.

Estragon: What a strange, familiar pair we are, you and your dark and your ghosts, me with all my explanations. I suppose God is a ghost where you come from.

Vladimir: We come from the same place remember—the ghostly words of Samuel B.

Estragon: Is it time to go back?

Vladimir: Yes, but first a speech for the ghosts before we climb back into Beckett's, head.

Vladimir and Estragon share the lines: Speech for the ghosts

Estragon: Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks of Vallambrosa, general as the Joycean snow all over Ireland, unique as the gestalt of each individual snowflake we congregate here on the shore of oblivion more numerous than all the number of the stars, Vladimir and Estragon our mouthpiece, since if we all spoke at once big bang compared to the vocal clash of our cymbals would be a whisper!

Vladimir: Unaccustomed as we are to public speaking (mostly we speak in whispers in unremembered dreams that turn the wheels of daylight with uncanny ghostly motion), almost unacquainted with human speech now that we are out of earshot of living lilt and accent, the rise and fall, the cadence of doomed speech, still we step beyond the bounds of custom to break our silence on the sounds of time. Why? For pity's sake you guessed it. Pity. Older than Sophocles, younger than the bloodless stars. Steep are the steps to the underworld, as you know, and even steeper the return. Across the connective tissue of a million words *we* have come to *you*. Odysseus had to make his own arrangements. Why have we come? "Years hence in ancient speech a phrase, as in wild earth a Grecian vase."

Estragon: Odysseus would have known what it meant, that oracle-busting, code-cracking rascal! What we said to him we repeat to you. When he met Achilles in Hades you remember their dialogue. Achilles had no thought for himself but was eager to learn the news of his son. Armed with his new information about his son's heroic exploits—Odysseus carrying headlines to Hades even—Achilles strode across the fields of Asphodel with a new bounce in his step, the cobblestones echoing his motion even in the corridors of hell.

Vladimir: We plan to leave like Achilles armed with the news of your exploits as you gather around the tables of learning, the phenomenal world your drawing board as you make sense out of the senseless coordinates you are forced to abide in and by, until immaterial like us, you leap entropically into the eternal. Why do we care you may ask. We are negatives in a dark room your eyes

develop. Our words reside in you now like ghosts of our breath, the history of ideas as close to the immortal as we can ever be.

Estragon: That was the speech of the ghosts as we imagine them imagining us.

Vladimir: Shall we go now?

Estragon: After you.

Vladimir: No after you. [*They do a Laurel and Hardy, bumping into each other as they defer to each other*]

Vladimir: Say good-bye to the ghosts.

Estragon: Good-bye, you who are old, oh so old, thousands of years, thousands of years if all were told, good-bye. We leave one ghostly theatre to enter another. Do you think they'll take us back?

Vladimir: Of course. This is where we came in, this is where we left off, we're bookmarks in a script called life.

Estragon: What did they mean, "Years hence in ancient speech a phrase, as in wild earth a Grecian vase?"

Vladimir: They meant if you wait for Godot long enough he will come in some form or another. They meant a man's accent, the way he speaks, may reflect the speech, perhaps, of a farmer a thousand years ago in a field, moving his cattle from one space to another, the cows reluctant to move on, the farmer cajoling, consoling, exhorting, cattle and farmer long vanished, speech still preserved in the rise and fall of inherited vocal cadence, meaning if it means anything at all a strangely familiar ghost of what once was, as history keeps reinventing itself in perishable flesh, generation after generation.

Estragon: Now we can return.

Vladimir: How come?

Estragon: We've developed our own script.

Vladimir: By talking to ghosts?

Estragon: When inanimate molecules first made their leap into animate exist-

ence a million years ago, give or take an aeon or two, it was a ghost that crossed that great divide, a paramecium, an amoeba, our indirect pre-descendents, our biological precedents, a lowly ghost of things to come, but the first spark of life nonetheless, the first pre-verbal statement of life: we are all heirs of that moment, ghosts and living alike.

Vladimir: Life jumped across the chasm between the inert and the sentient like a free association? Like a child at a window breathing on the glass, the ghost of his words printed in mist before his very eyes.

Estragon: You're a Freudian romantic.

Vladimir: A Beckettian cynic, remember? And we should be getting back. One step over this proscenium and we're in another world.

Estragon: The world of illusion.

Vladimir: Is there any other?

Estragon: Let's go. [*They step over the proscenium. They resume their places in Beckett's play*] Nothing to be done.

Vladimir: I'm beginning to come around to that opinion . . .

[*The curtain falls*]

Authors Note: In 2003 this play was presented at The Center for Advanced Psychoanalytic Studies in Princeton, New Jersey with Henry Smith M.D. as Vladimir and Eugene Mahon M.D. as Estragon, and also in New York City with Sheldon Bach Ph.D as Vladimir and Eugene Mahon M.D. as Estragon.

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