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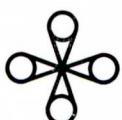
THE PARALLEL BETWEEN LITERATURE
AND THE VISUAL ARTS

BY MARIO PRAZ

THE A. W. MELLON LECTURES IN THE FINE ARTS · 1967

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A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

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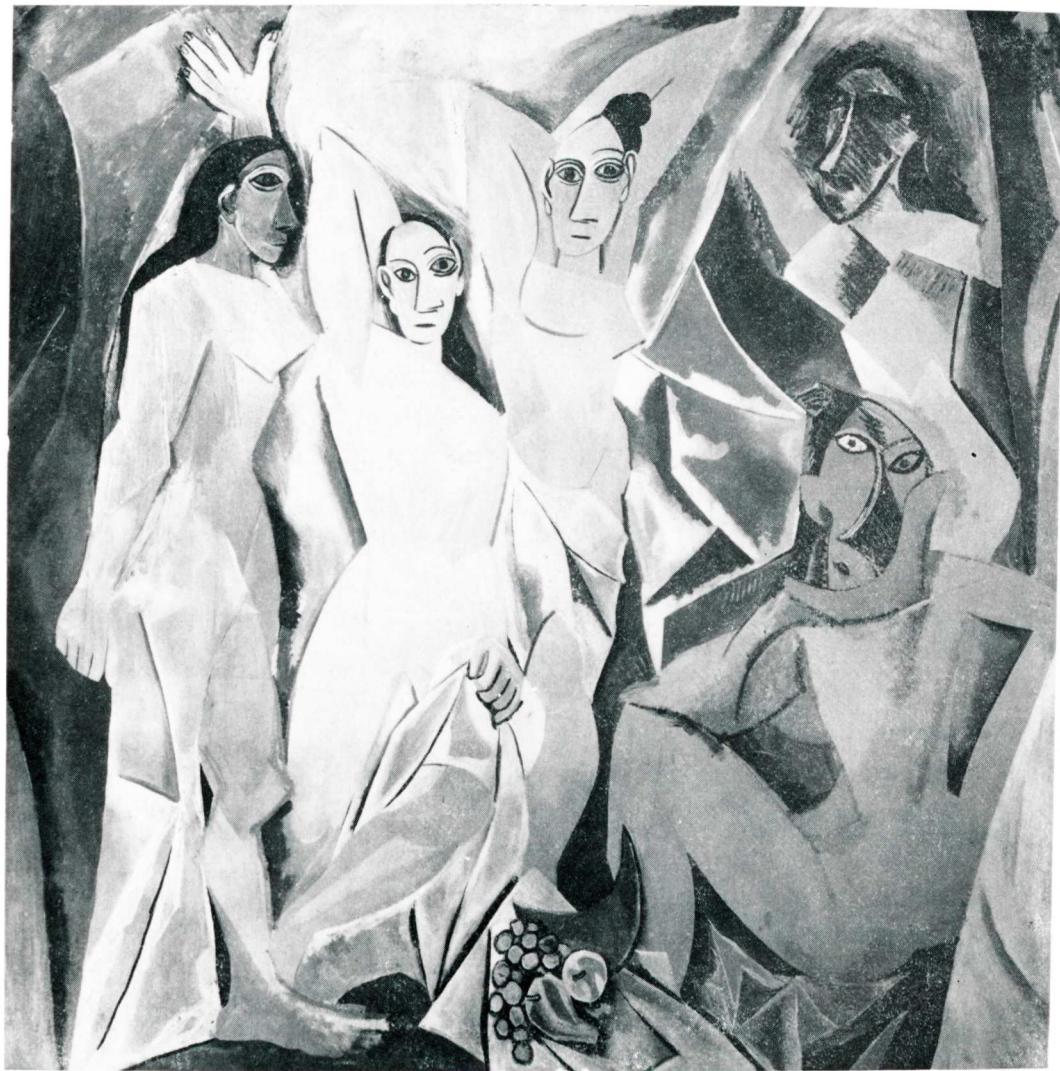
CHAPTER VII

Spatial and Temporal Interpenetration

THE general panorama offered by the first half of our century is one of such a variety of experiments that it would be easy to lose oneself among them. However, parallel lines of development can be observed in the various arts. There has been an anti-art with the Dada movement, an anti-architecture with Le Corbusier, an anti-novel in France with Robbe-Grillet and the *nouvelle vague*. The same problems face writers, sculptors, and architects. To give expression to the sense of nothingness, of the void, has been attempted—to quote only a few names—by Rothko in painting, Antonioni in the film, Kafka in the novel, Beckett on the stage.¹ Cézanne told Emile Bernard to “see in nature the cylinder, the sphere, the cone.” Picasso has represented a figure both *en face* and *en profil* in the same view; architects have spoken of a fourth dimension. Giedion (on whom Picasso’s paintings doubtless had an influence) sees the history of architecture as a progression from the bidimensional to the three-dimensional and so on, without knowing, of course, that a parody of pluridimensionality had already been written in the Victorian era by Edwin A. Abbott, in *Flatland*.

Interpenetration of planes in painting, sculpture, and architecture; interpenetration of words and meanings in the language of Joyce; an attempt, in Lawrence Durrell’s *The Alexandria Quartet*, at a “stereoscopic narrative” obtained by means of “passing a common axis through four stories”² (“to intercalate realities . . . is the only way to be faithful to Time, for at every moment in Time the possibilities are endless in their multiplicity”³). In the films of Alain Robbe-Grillet (*Last Year at Marienbad*

and *L'Immortelle*), as Bruce Morissette has remarked, "two or more characters appear twice in different parts of a panoramic camera movement, creating a strange effect of continuity between two moments of time and two spatial locations which on a realistic level could not be proximate . . . a willingness to accept, in fiction, some of the same formal liberties and absence of conventional justifications that prevail in modern pictorial style (from abstract to op) and musical compositional methods (from serial to chance)."⁴ Quotations which seem to float like alien bodies in the sentences of Ezra Pound's *Cantos* and Eliot's *The Waste Land*,⁵ collage in the paintings of Braque, Max Ernst, and others. "The noises of waves, revolvers, typewriters, sirens, or airplanes," explained Erik Satie, the musician contemporary with the Cubists, in commenting on his ballet *Parade*, subtitled *Ballet Réaliste*, "are in music of the same character as the bits of newspapers, painted wood grain, and other everyday objects that the Cubists frequently employ to localize objects and masses in Nature."⁶ Picasso's career could be put side by side with Joyce's, in the manner of Plutarch's *Parallel Lives of Greeks and Romans*. The painter also started with spirited imitations of traditional styles: he could be as civilized as Ingres,⁷ as primitive as an African sculptor, as solemn as an archaic Greek, as subtle in color effects as Goya. In both painter and writer we find the general contraction of the historical sense and that intoxication with the contemporaneity of all historical styles⁸ which can be compared to the experience of drowning, a giddy simultaneous rehearsal of one's whole life. Picasso's *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* [112] attempted, long before Joyce, the elaboration of a new language through the fusion of unreconcilable manners. The left-hand figure in that picture speaks the language of Gauguin, the central section is conceived according to the flattened planes of Iberian sculpture, the right-hand portion betrays the influence of African masks with their saw teeth and sharp spines; whereas Cézanne is responsible for the hatching filling the space between the figures. But this contamination of styles is by no means confined to Joyce and Picasso; Picasso is not alone among modern painters in his ability to be at the same time Raphael and Cimabue. Incidentally, a trait common to Joyce, Picasso, and another representative genius of our time, Stravinsky,⁹ is that while they have derived from many sources, nearly everybody since has derived



112 PABLO PICASSO: *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*. Canvas, spring 1907

from them. Ezra Pound could be both Chinese and Provençal, and T. S. Eliot could write sententious Elizabethan English as well as musical comedy songs, as he demonstrated in "Sweeney Agonistes." *The Waste Land* is an even more composite product than *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*. Viewed as pastiches, all these works of art take us back to the atmosphere of the circus and to the performances of the tightrope walker:¹⁰ there is a deliberate masquerading and prancing, with the constant danger of losing one's balance and falling from the flying trapeze into the void, or merely into the sawdust of the arena. There lurks behind all these experiments the suspicion that the artist is just "shoring fragments against his ruins."¹¹ There is no proper succession governing the episodes of *Ulysses* but rather simultaneity and juxtaposition, just as in cubist paintings the same form reappears, mixing with others, the same letter of the alphabet or the same profile popping up here and there in a perpetual rotation whose final result is immobility [113, 114, and 115]. All this helps to give the structure of the book the appearance of the spatial and temporal interpenetration aimed at by futurists and cubists.

However, the juxtaposition of different languages was for Joyce only a first step toward the creation of an ultrasonic language, a language that falls on deaf ears as far as common mortals are concerned. In *Finnegans Wake* Joyce, having completely freed himself from the tyranny of mimesis,¹² has made a Dublin publican, Earwicker, the recipient of the whole past history of mankind, and a universal linguist in his dream language as well, which on an incomparably larger scale repeats the experiment of Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky"¹³ "C'est"—remarks J.-J. Mayoux in "L'hérésie de James Joyce"—"une langue de *lapsus*, très exactement, c'est à dire de *glissements*."¹⁴ The demon of association, conjured up by Lewis Carroll for fun, has received from Joyce the chrism of psychoanalytical science; the artist has dived into the night of dream psychology, revealing a phantasmal world that might have been one of the discarded alternatives at the beginning of things. But this is exactly what Picasso has done with forms in his escape from the accepted patterns of beauty.¹⁵ Behind the world of forms as it exists, just as behind the world of words with which we are familiar, there is an infinity of unrealized possibilities that God or nature, or whatever you like to call the supreme vital principle, has rejected. By a



113 GEORGES BRAQUE: *Violin and Palette*.
Canvas, 1910



114 FERNAND LÉGER: *La Noce*. Canvas, 1911



115 UMBERTO BOCCIONI: *The Street Enters the House*. Canvas, 1911

perversion of the process described by Michelangelo in his famous sonnet "Non ha l'ottimo artista alcun concetto," Joyce and Picasso have searched in the marble block for all the unlikely and illegitimate forms hidden within its entrails; theirs has been an anti-creation in the same sense that the gospel preached by the Antichrist was an inverted gospel. No wonder Mayoux says of Joyce's work: "Le néant, l'esprit du néant pénètre tout," and calls him "fils spirituel du Mallarmé du *Coup des dés*; chercheur d'absolu, enchanter maléfique, puissant et stérile, engendreur de fantômes et d'incubes."

To take the relatively simple instance from *Finnegans Wake* that Edmund Wilson examines first: "Amengst menlike trees walking or trees like angels weeping nobirdy aviar soar anywing to eagle it!"; the last seven words represent the sentence "Nobody ever saw anything to equal it" telescoped into an ornithological simile. Picasso, repeating a process which can be traced to Giuseppe Arcimboldi, represents a lady's hat like a fish, giving an ichthyological turn to the hat, just as Joyce reads an ornithological content into a plain sentence. Salvador Dali sees a lady's hat like a shoe, and imagines Mae West's face utilized as a room, with her lips as a sofa and nose as a fireplace; he telescopes Velázquez' infanta into the summit of a Hindu temple, whose shape the infanta's farthingale has recalled. Picasso sees a stork with forks for legs, a shovel for wings, a nail for beak, and the blade-shaped head of a screw for a comb; out of an old weathered bicycle seat and a rusty handle bar he makes an impressive bull's head; a toy motor car becomes the muzzle of a monkey. No doubt Freud's influence has to be taken into account in these developments of suggestions which we find first in Rimbaud and Lautréamont and later in Raymond Roussel, the author of *Impressions d'Afrique* and *Locus Solus*.

In spite of its shortcomings, the chief of which is its monotony, *Finnegans Wake*, according to Wilson, has succeeded in one respect: "Joyce has caught the psychology of sleep as no one else has ever caught it, laying hold on states of mind which it is difficult for the waking intellect to re-create, and distinguishing with marvelous delicacy between the different levels of dormant consciousness."¹⁶

No such delicacy can be found in the fashionable offshoots of Dali's surrealism, which also purports to be based on dream psychology. In *The*

Secret Life of Salvador Dali we read of a masquerade at the Coq Rouge which had as its theme "A surrealist dream": at a certain moment a huge slaughtered ox was brought into the ballroom, its belly kept open with crutches and stuffed with a dozen gramophones, and Gala, Dali's wife, appeared in the role of *cadavre exquis*, carrying on her head a doll representing a real baby with its entrails eaten by ants and its brain clawed by a phosphorescent lobster. Most of Dali's compositions are actually such *cadavres exquis*, and what else but a *cadavre exquis*¹⁷ is Joyce's ornithological sentence we read a moment ago, and a thousand others? And Gertrude Stein's famous sentence "Toasted susie is my icecream" is similarly a *cadavre exquis* of the first magnitude.¹⁸

In his *The Dehumanization of Art* Ortega y Gasset observes a change of perspective in most modern artists: "From the standpoint of ordinary human life things appear in a natural order, a definite hierarchy. Some seem very important, some less so, and some altogether negligible. To satisfy the desire for dehumanization one need not alter the inherent nature of things. It is enough to upset the value pattern and to produce an art in which the small events of life appear in the foreground with monumental dimensions. Here we have the connecting link between two seemingly very different manners of modern art, the surrealism of metaphors and what may be called infrarealism. Both satisfy the urge to escape and elude reality. Instead of soaring to poetical heights, art may dive beneath the level marked by the natural perspective. How it is possible to overcome realism by merely putting too fine a point on it and discovering, lens in hand, the micro-structure of life can be observed in Proust, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Joyce. . . . The procedure simply consists in letting the outskirts of attention, that which ordinarily escapes notice, perform the main part in life's drama."¹⁹

The same mesmerized attention to magnified minutiae that we find in Salvador Dali we come across in many a modern writer as well. William Empson's critical method as expounded in *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), by exploring all possible meanings of the words and thus opening strange vistas through the pages of a classic, has imparted to these words a tension, a dramatic irony, not unlike a surrealist effect (as when, for instance, Dali combines two figures of women in seventeenth-century

Dutch costumes in such a way that they form together the head of Voltaire: a well-known optical trick of the end of the nineteenth century, frequently combined with erotic and macabre details, e.g., bodies of naked women forming a skull). Empson's love of misprints, which he finds illuminating because they suggest buried meanings, can also be paralleled with the deliberate surrealist cult for solecism in the forms of things (wet watches, limp cellos, telephone receivers used as grills, etc.). When Empson remarks that "the practice of looking for ambiguity rapidly leads to hallucinations," he seems to be formulating the very process of surrealist inspiration, as illustrated, for instance, in Raymond Roussel's *Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres*. Another aspect of this mesmerized attention to minutiae is offered by the hairsplitting analyses of structural criticism, an extreme and indeed preposterous instance of which is Roland Barthes' *Système de la Mode*,²⁰ where the analysis of clothes takes the form of a minute survey of the tailoring language. It is in fiction, however, that we are likely to find obvious parallels with surrealist technique. William Sansom's *The Body* offers a number of illustrations of experiments which are verbal counterparts of the techniques of Dali, Max Ernst, and Eugène Berman. Take, for instance, this scene, which is uncannily like a hallucination in the manner of Max Ernst: "But in that house there was a third figure—and this I saw suddenly through the French windows. I stopped, stooped rigid—searched for this figure which suddenly I knew was there, but could not exactly see. A second before I seemed to have seen it. Then again I caught it—in the detached glass windscreens of a car propped against the sundial there stood reflected, motionless, the figure of a man. Dark and glassy in the windscreens lay reflected blue of the sky and a picture of the façade of the house above—though mostly of the verandah rail just above that garden room itself. The figure was standing with its hands on its sides, right against the white curled iron and creepered rail; it wore a dressing gown; its face seemed to stare directly down into mine; it was Bradford."²¹

This second passage illustrates Sansom's attention to magnified minutiae: "In the fresh morning air, in the still room without fire or light, in that motionless new grey daylight I sat and stared at the blacklead. After a few minutes, long minutes, I remember my eyes moving nearer to my

boots. Nothing stirred—but in the stoneset solitude I suddenly grew conscious of my living body. Inside those black boots there were feet and toes and on the toes greyish-yellow hairs. There was a corn on one toe, a patch of hard skin along the side of the other foot. Inside the boot, inside the sock, there was life. And in this knowledge I understood clearly how all the time, motionless in a motionless room, my body was slowly, slowly falling to pieces. A gradual, infinitesimal disintegration was taking place. Nothing could stop it. Pores that once had been young were now drying up, hairs were loosening in their follicles, there was an acid crusting the backs of my teeth and my stomach. And what horrors persisted in the unseen entrails, among all those unbelievable inner organs? My fingernails were growing, phlegm accumulated itself on the membranes of my throat and nose—all the time steadily, relentlessly, a quiet change was taking place, the accelerating decadence of forty-five years."

From Henry Green (though, generally speaking, the counterpart of Green's writing is to be found rather in abstract art), we take this vision reminiscent of Dali; while the last portion seems to be in the manner of Meredith: "He looked down on a girl stretched out, whom he did not know to be Merode, whose red hair was streaked across a white face and matted by salt tears, who was in pyjamas and had one leg torn to the knee. A knee which, brilliantly polished over bone beneath, shone in this sort of pool she had made for herself in the fallen world of birds, burned there like a piece of tusk burnished by shifting sands, or else a wheel revolving at such speed that it had no edges and was white, thus communicating life to ivory, a heart to the still, and the sensation of a crash to this girl who lay quiet, reposed."²²

Desolate landscapes [116] of a kind which surrealist paintings have vulgarized are a salient feature of Eliot's *The Waste Land*:

*A rat crept softly through the vegetation
Dragging its slimy belly on the bank
While I was fishing in the dull canal
On a winter evening round behind the gashouse
Musing upon the king my brother's wreck
And on the king my father's death before him.*

*White bodies naked on the low damp ground
And bones cast in a little low dry garret,
Rattled by the rat's foot only, year to year.*

Another trait Eliot has in common with the surrealists, particularly Max Ernst with his fondness for collage, is the practice of quoting a classic in an apparently unrelated context; in the passage we have just read, we find a quotation from *The Tempest* and, in the lines that follow, a conglomeration of quotations from Marvell's "To his Coy Mistress," Day's *The Parliament of Bees*, a modern Australian ballad, and Verlaine. Picasso's quotations are more cryptic. In his *Girls by the Seine* the pattern of Courbet's famous painting of the same title can be dimly descried, like a wire contrivance supporting a firework. Georges Braque's quotation [117] of the portrait of Simonetta Vespucci by Piero di Cosimo [118] has partly reversed the color pattern, making the profile of the girl black against a white, moonlike face, whereas in the earlier painting the white profile is outlined against a black cloud. In Max Ernst's *Une Semaine de bonté* the sphinx appears at the window of a nineteenth-century train compartment, within which a lion-faced gentleman wearing a bowler is seated, and one sees the naked legs of a corpse. In one of Hans Erni's photomontages one of the Magi as painted by a fifteenth-century Swiss artist, Konrad Witz, appears against the background of a sanatorium, a modern corridor with a view on Swiss mountains.

In the fifth section of *The Waste Land* we come across another surrealist landscape:

*Who are those hooded hordes swarming
Over endless plains, stumbling in cracked earth
Ringed by the flat horizon only
What is the city over the mountains
Cracks and reforms and bursts in the violet air
Falling towers
Jerusalem Athens Alexandria
Vienna London
Unreal*



116 YVES TANGUY: *Peinture*. Canvas. 1928



117 GEORGES BRAQUE: *Face et Profil*. Canvas, 1942



118 PIERO DI COSIMO: *Simonetta Vespucci*. Wood, ca. 1480

Then there comes to the foreground a figure which reminds us of Dali's *Cauchemar de violoncelles mous* [119]:

*A woman drew her long black hair out tight
And fiddled whisper music on those strings.²³*

The chaotic landscape described in the next passage bears the mark of sterility and is peopled with nightmares, again a typical surrealist treatment:

*And bats with baby faces in the violet light
Whistled, and beat their wings*



119 SALVADOR DALÍ: *Cauchemar de violoncelles mous*. Canvas, 1940

And crawled head downward down a blackened wall
And upside down in air were towers
Tolling reminiscent bells, that kept the hours
And voices singing out of empty cisterns and exhausted wells.²⁴

The revolt against the traditional perspective that had prevailed in European painting since the Renaissance²⁵ produced the well-known intersections of time and space in cubism: Picasso's simultaneous presentation of the side and front view of a face. A parallel to this revolutionary change is to be found in the dislocation of the time sequence in fiction,²⁶ the most conspicuous example of which is William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*.²⁷ In 1939 Sartre hailed in Faulkner's novel the introduction of the fourth dimension into literature, and then himself produced, in *Le Sursis* (1945), a narrative based on the technique of the Americans Dos Passos and Faulkner. This technique has since been popularized, for instance by Anouilh in *L'Alouette*.

In few modern writers can the parallel with painting be followed so closely as in Gertrude Stein. Her tricks of repetition and childlike sentences belong to the same current of innovation which made Matisse discard the traditional syntax of painting in favor of a return to infantile vision, an extreme sequel to Wordsworth's address to the "best Philosopher . . . Eye among the blind." The close contact of Gertrude Stein with avant-garde painters, particularly Matisse and Picasso, is well known, as is Picasso's contact with Apollinaire and Max Jacob; at the time of *The Making of Americans* Gertrude Stein stated that she was doing in writing what Picasso was doing in painting. On the other hand, one of Matisse's nudes [120] might easily be a fit illustration for these lines from a poem by Gertrude Stein:

If you hear her snore
It is not before you love her
You love her so that to be her beau is very lovely
She is sweetly there and her curly hair is very lovely
She is sweetly here and I am very near and that is very lovely
She is my tender sweet and her little feet are stretched
out well which is a treat and very lovely.

Matisse's synthetic childlike simplicity is also present in this passage from *Ida*:

"Ida returned more and more to be Ida. She even said she was Ida.

"What, they said. Yes, she said. And they said why do you say yes. Well she said I say yes because I am Ida.

"It got quite exciting."²⁸

And just as the man in the street wonders whether Matisse can draw, so the press where Gertrude Stein had *Three Lives* printed sent to inquire whether she really knew English.

For Donald Sutherland, "it can be said that the difference between Gertrude Stein and Proust is the difference between Cézanne and the impressionists. The complexities of accident, light, and circumstance are reduced to a simple geometrical structure, a final existence addressed to the mind."

He continues: "Allowing certainly for his analytical gift and his splendors of construction, the presented continuity in Proust is a continuity of perception, of registration, like the surface of an impressionist painting; while in *The Making of Americans* the continuity is one of conception, of constant activity in terms of the mind and not the senses and emotions, like the surface of a cubist painting. . . .

"As the three-dimensional abstractions of Cézanne were flattened into the two dimensions of cubism, so the biographical dimension of *Madame Bovary* was flattened into the continuous present of *The Making of Americans*. As in straight narrative art the story functions as a plane, the continuous present of interior time was for Gertrude Stein a flat plane of reference, without concern for depth. Solids and depth concerned both Flaubert and Cézanne, but not at this time Gertrude Stein or Picasso. The change to plane geometry was an advance in simplicity and finality, to absolute elementalism. It contains some interesting motifs for future writing and painting, as for example the use of the letters of the alphabet, the simple juxtaposition of heterogeneous objects, the use of a concrete recognizable object in the midst of abstractions. But the main similarity between cubism and this period of Gertrude Stein's writing is the reduction

of outward reality to the last and simplest abstractions of the human mind. . . .

"‘A Curtain Raiser’ happens to correspond to the extremely simple and dry and tense cubist drawings done by Picasso at the same time (1913). . . . Gertrude Stein said much later that her middle writing was painting, and this is true even when no objects are mentioned [*Everybody’s Autobiography*, p. 180].

"She seriously created, in the midst of our world, which was falling



120 HENRI MATISSE: *The Pink Nude*. Canvas, 1935

away under habits and memories and mechanisms of words and ideas, a new reality. The elements of that reality were implicit in the life of the 20th century—the intense isolation of anyone and anything, the simple gratuity of existence, the fantastic inventiveness, and the all but total lack of memory—but it was Gertrude Stein who made that implicit reality most distinct and positive and completely real to the reading mind, as Picasso made it clear to the eye . . . Gertrude Stein and Picasso have isolated quality and movement, and made them articulate, she in words, and he in line and color. . . . They are . . . classical in their insistence on an absolute present free of progress and suggestion, and their use of the flat plane.”²⁹ Gertrude Stein herself, in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, has moreover acknowledged a similarity of aim with Juan Gris [121]:

“Gertrude Stein, in her work, has always been possessed by the intellectual passion for exactitude in the description of inner and outer reality. She has produced a simplification by this concentration, and as a result the destruction of associational emotion in poetry and prose. . . . Nor should emotion itself be the cause of poetry or prose. They should consist of an exact reproduction of either an outer or an inner reality.

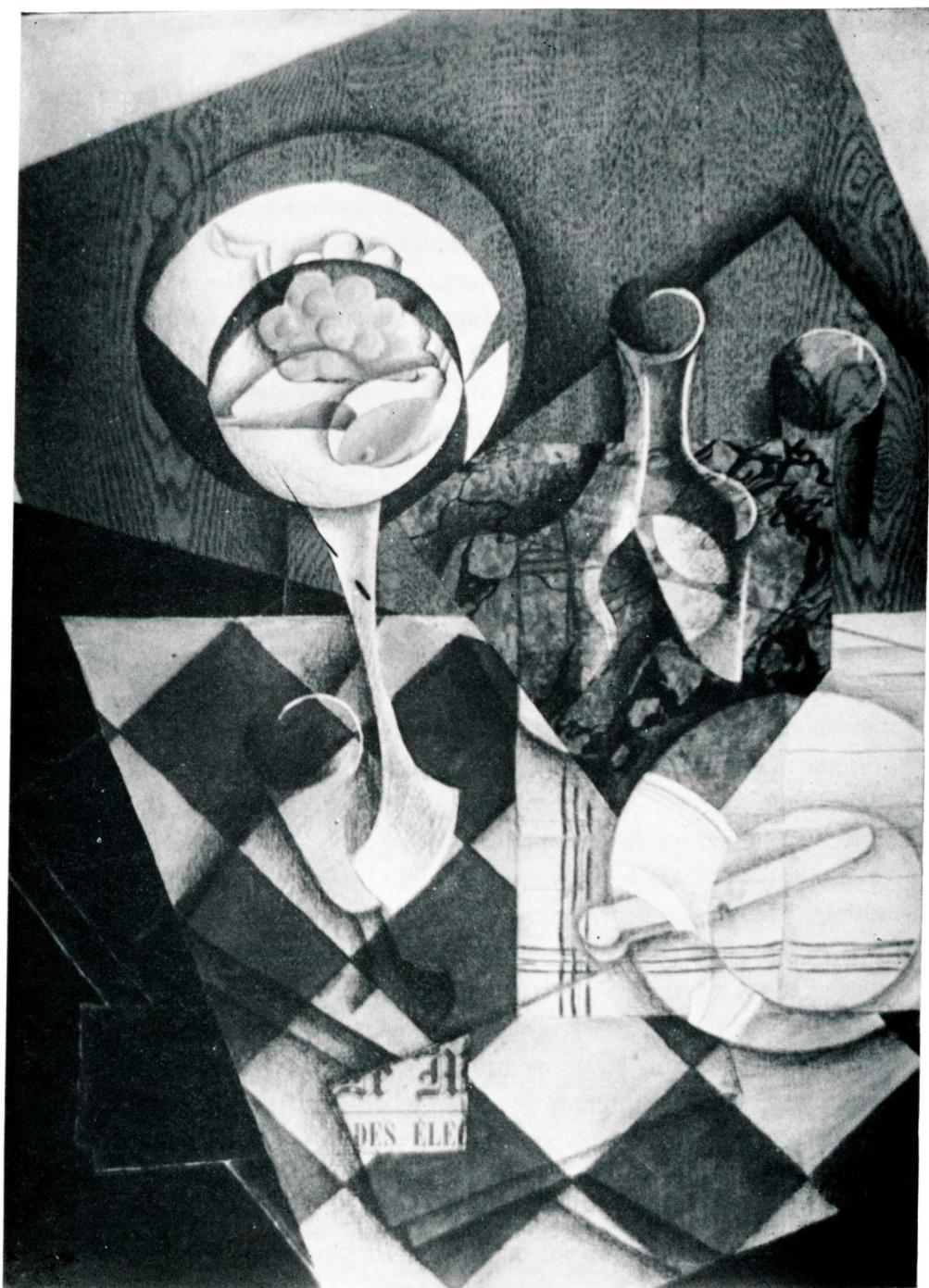
“It was this conception of exactitude that made the close understanding between Gertrude Stein and Juan Gris.

“Juan Gris also conceived exactitude but in him exactitude had a mystical basis. As a mystic it was necessary for him to be exact. In Gertrude Stein the necessity was intellectual, a pure passion for exactitude. It is because of this that her work has often been compared to that of mathematicians and by a certain French critic to the work of Bach.”³⁰

Next to the mannerism of repetition, which finds illustration in Gertrude Stein, comes the mannerism of telegraphic language, with suppression of parts of speech, elliptical constructions, and so on. Before Pound advocated economy of speech by the suppression of articles and pruning of adjectives, the Italian futurists had given abundant instances of this, and Marinetti in the 1912 *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* declared:

“Syntax was a kind of monotonous cicerone. We must suppress this intermediary, so that literature may directly become one thing with the universe. After free verse, here we have at last loose words. . . .

“Get yourself ready to hate the intellect, by reawakening in yourselves



121 JUAN GRIS: *Still Life with Fruit Dish*. Oil and papier collé on canvas, 1914

divine intuition, through which we shall overcome the apparently irreducible hostility which separates our human flesh from the metal of engines.”³¹

Another Italian who belonged for a time to the futurist movement, Ardengo Soffici, assuming in his *First Principles of Futurist Aesthetics* (1920) that the function of art consists in refining and sharpening the sensibility, concluded that the artistic language was tending to become a slang which needed only the slightest hints to be understood; therefore the modes of expression could grow more and more concise and synthetic, taking on a more intimate and abstract character to the point of becoming a conventional script or cipher. The artist and the public would find satisfaction no longer in working out a detailed representation of lyrical reality, but in the sign itself that stands for it. Therefore a few colors and lines in painting, a few forms and volumes in sculpture, a few words in poetry would be able to set in motion wide repercussions, infinite echoes. A meeting of two colors on a surface, a single word on a page would give an ineffable joy. He foresaw the ultimate destiny of art in the abolition of art itself through a supreme refinement of sensibility such as would render its manifestations useless. One need only look at Piet Mondrian’s compositions or listen to Webern’s music to see how well the Italian futurist movement coincided with the trend of abstract art. Apollinaire’s *Calligrammes* (1918) and Soffici’s *Chimismi lirici* (1915, second edition 1920) were already a form of abstract art, violent dissociations of the sentence from any subject matter, its reduction to a mere pattern for the eye and patter for the ear. Similar devices were used by Gertrude Stein: mysterious initials, mistakes and corrections in the midst of sentences, “cryptograms.” E. E. Cummings’ poems (in which Ezra Pound’s ideas about the appearance of the words on the printed page and William Carlos Williams’ theory that “the poem, like every other form of art, is an object” reach their extreme development)³² put one in mind of the achievements of Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Klee in painting: they elaborate a free technique in which the very signs take the place of imagery. Cummings’ *technopaignia* are indeed poetry and painting at the same time, a new application of the Alexandrian principle *ut pictura poesis*, as can be seen in the following instance, which I choose not because of its particular merits but for its brevity:

the
sky
was
can dy lu
minous
edible
spry
pinks shy
lemons
greens coo l choc
olate
s.

un der,
a lo
co
mo
tive s pout
ing
vi
o
lets³³

But the closest approach to Mondrian is represented by Gertrude Stein's set of statements abstracted from reality, by her celebrated poem "A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose," and by "Are there Six or Another Question":³⁴ she "developed a sense—past rhythm, past movement, past vibration—of sheer happening as an absolute."

The nearest the art of fiction comes to abstract art is in the novels of Henry Green.³⁵ He applies to prose an essentially poetic technique which has derived many hints from Hopkins and Auden: for instance, the concentration on a few significant features, the abolition of the article, the telegraphic language. The very titles of his novels are models of concision: *Living, Party Going, Nothing, Concluding*—single words in the middle of a page, almost taking on the function of a dot of color in an abstract painting. A passage from *Living* may remind one, on the other hand, of Chagall: "Here pigeon quickly turned rising in spirals, grey, when clock in the church tower struck the quarter and away, away the pigeon fell from

this noise in a diagonal from where church was built and that man who leant on his spade.”³⁶ The very atmosphere of Green’s novels, the substitution of a much subtler arabesque of conversations and inconclusive episodes (not without a certain resemblance to Ronald Firbank’s elegant distortions) for a plot in the current sense of the word, the flattening of personal traits in the characters, so that they may be molded upon the arabesque and become almost indistinguishable from the pattern itself, the placing of the story almost outside a definite time and space (as in *Concluding*), and in some cases (in *Nothing*, for instance) the nearly total absence of descriptive passages—all these features contribute to the impression of abstract art. Occasionally, as in the following passage from *Back*, a faint echo of Gertrude Stein mingles with a surrealist sense of the macabre: “But as it was he went in the gate, had his cheek brushed by a rose and began awkwardly to search for Rose, through roses, in what seemed to him should be the sunniest places on a fine day, the warmest when the sun came out at twelve o’clock for she had been so warm, and amongst the newest memorials in local stone because she had died in time of war, when, or so he imagined, James could never have found marble for her, of whom, at no time before this moment, had he ever thought as cold beneath a slab, food for worms, her great red hair, still growing, a sort of moist bower for worms.”³⁷

Henry Green’s novels seem to belong to the kind of *divertissements* “translating everything into subtlety and elegance”³⁸ which are typical of every mannerist phase in the history of literature and art.³⁹

On a lower artistic level, the same characteristic is to be found in Christopher Fry’s plays. The artist seems to give himself up to private juggling in a world whose sole significance is as a storehouse of possible patterns.⁴⁰ As an Italian follower of Laforgue, Aldo Palazzeschi, had put it as early as 1910 in the conclusion of a poem, “Lasciatemi Divertire (Canzonetta),” in which he indulged in verbal clowning:

*i tempi sono cambiati,
gli uomini non dimandano più nulla
dai poeti:
e lasciatemi divertire!*^{40a}

The purpose of art as stated by Green in *Pack My Bag*, quoted below, is very near that outlined by Soffici in his *First Principles of Futurist Aesthetics*: "Prose is not to be read aloud but to oneself alone at night, and it is not quick as poetry but rather a gathering web of insinuations which go further than names however shared can ever go. Prose should be a long intimacy between strangers with no direct appeal to what both may have known. It should slowly appeal to feelings unexpressed, it should in the end draw tears out of the stone."⁴¹

It is not difficult to see how closely this aiming at the greatest possible rarefaction of style coincides with the aim of abstract art. "A gathering web of insinuations," an intimacy able to "draw tears out of the stone": there are people who can be intensely moved by a geometric pattern of Malevich or Mondrian; Plato himself had acknowledged the spell of pure geometric figures. Schoenberg worked in the same direction in the musical field, and a parallel can be drawn, as Melchiori draws it, between Green's later novels (*Nothing* and *Doting*) and Schoenberg's final stage in the atonal method, the affirmation of an abstract classicism based on pure form, the perfect and perfectly empty musical construction of the hero of Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*. But such abstract reflections of the modern world—the remark is again Melchiori's—have a peculiar poignancy, due perhaps to despair: for these artists are tightrope walkers, and the surrounding void endows their juggling with an aura of tragedy.

Klee's abstract art indicated to Rainer Maria Rilke the solution of a problem with which he was absorbed: the relation between the senses and the spirit, the external and the internal. Herman Meyer, who has studied Rilke's affinity to Klee, both in attitude and in the means of expressing it in art, has drawn a parallel between Klee's abstract art and Rilke's symbolic language in the *Duino Elegies*.⁴² The symbol does not develop out of elements derived from reality, but is a message in cipher. Such are, for instance, in the tenth elegy, the figures of stars used as signs; here there is a close analogy with Klee's enigmatic language in cipher. Rilke has described this process of abstraction in a letter to the painter Sophy Giauque, in speaking of Japanese poetry: "Le visible est pris d'une main sûre, il est cueilli comme un fruit mûr, mais il ne pèse point, car à peine posé, il se voit forcé de signifier l'invisible."⁴³

I have refrained, except for a few hints, from drawing parallels between modern music and the other arts, partly because, as I have already had occasion to say, similarities between music and literature are often deceptive.⁴⁴ As Edmund Wilson aptly remarked apropos of the supposed musical character of *Finnegans Wake*: “Nor do I think it possible to defend the procedure of Joyce on the basis of an analogy with music.”⁴⁵ It is true that there is a good deal of the musician in Joyce: his phonograph record of *Anna Livia* is as beautiful as a fine tenor solo. But nobody would listen for half an hour to a composer of operas or symphonic poems who went on and on in one mood as monotonously as Joyce has done in parts of *Finnegans Wake*, who scrambled so many motifs in one passage, or who returned to pick up a theme a couple of hours after it had first been stated, when the listeners would inevitably have forgotten it.”⁴⁶

Parallels between the visual arts and literature, on the contrary, seem to me very appropriate: here the fields are closer, and this can be argued—as we have seen—from cases of painters who are also good writers and writers who can draw. But whereas, as I said at the beginning, parallels of this sort seem to be almost obvious in past ages, they are not so obvious in modern art, because the “énormité devenant norme” and the “sauts d’harmonie inouïs” are violently striking when expressed on a canvas or in metal and stone; on the printed page they are not so staggering. Even a page of *Finnegans Wake* is more accessible than most abstract painting; one can guess why that page was written, but the first reaction to most modern painting is precisely to wonder why it has been done at all.⁴⁷ The Victorians, as we know, could enjoy “Jabberwocky” but they would have packed Mondrian, Malevich, and Kandinsky off to the lunatic asylum, and would have seen no difference between Klee’s pictures and those made by mad criminals. I feel, however, that there is a close relationship between the development of art and literature also in the modern period, one may even say, chiefly in the modern period, when creation goes hand in hand with an overdeveloped critical activity debating problems which are common to all the arts.

Notes

outlines. In any case, Francastel admits that photography has freed painting from a whole series of compulsory allegiances and stimulated it towards an interpretation of the universe which is not so much subjective as psychological and analytical. As Walter Benjamin puts it, the discovery of photography destroyed the time-hallowed ritual of beauty; not, however, Francastel adds, in order to put reality in its place, but to open the way for the elaboration of new incantations. The discovery of photography assisted the painters in their aspiration towards a widening of the universe not through a renewal of the picturesque setting, but rather through a deepening of their acquaintance with its intimate structures. The greatest attraction lies no longer in the appearance, the spectacle, but in the way things are contrived ("les mécanismes"). The vision of the Renaissance was a distant one; the modern vision is bent on the discovery of a secret in the details. The great mysteries of nature have ceased to be wholesale visions and visions at a distance; painters are now concerned with the close-at-hand details, and are interested not so much in the objects of sensation as in the sensations themselves, the raw data of the organ of perception.

17. This is a pessimistic view of the same phenomenon which Francastel (*Peinture et Société*, p. 202) has described from a different angle: "Il est remarquable de constater que, tandis que la littérature insiste sur le côté tourmenté de l'époque, la peinture exprime davantage le côté conquérant du siècle. Y aurait-il une relation entre cette opposition et le caractère attardé des techniques littéraires, tout entières dominées encore par les poncifs?"

18. *An Outline of European Architecture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1953), pp. 273–74. The second passage appears in the 1960 Penguin edition, p. 661.

19. *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture, 1750–1850* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), p. 284.

20. See Reyner Banham, *Guide to Modern Architecture*, quoted by Collins, op.cit., p. 207.

21. See Chap. 23 in Collins, op.cit.: "The Influence of Painting and Sculpture on Architecture." Here, p. 284.

22. *An Outline of European Architecture* (1960), p. 700.

23. R. Schmutzler, *Art Nouveau* (New York: Abrams, 1962), p. 135.

24. See *ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

25. Jules Laforgue, *Moralités légendaires* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1964), p. 214.

26. "And two deep goblets of delicately tinkling glass you put near a bright bowl,
and poured a sweet foam / You poured, poured, poured, shook two scarlet glasses;
more white than a lily, more red than a ruby, you were white and ruby-colored."
From *The Flaming Circle*, Vol. VIII of Sologub's *Complete Works* (Moscow, 1908).

27. Princess Marsi Paribatra, *Le Romantisme contemporain; Essai sur l'inquiétude et l'évasion dans les lettres françaises de 1850 à 1950* (Paris: Les Éditions Polyglottes, 1954), pp. 81–82.

28. By Viola Hopkins, "Visual Art Devices and Parallelisms in the Fiction of Henry James," *PMLA*, LXXVI (December 1961), 561–74: "In his view of the interrelatedness of all experience, of consciousness not as fixed and stable but as ever in flux, and in his emphasis on the subjective aspects of experience, James had much in common with the Impressionist painter's response to reality" (p. 571).

29. "Perceptive Contemplation in the Work of Virginia Woolf," *English Studies*, XXXV:3 (June 1954), 97–116. Below, p. 114.

30. *The Waves* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1931), pp. 29, 109–10.

31. "To the Lighthouse": Music and Sympathy," in the *English Miscellany*, vol. 19 (1968), pp. 181–95.

VII. SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL INTERPENETRATION

1. See Lucien Goldmann, *Pour une sociologie du roman* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), pp. 33–34, where a parallel is drawn between the *anti-roman*, the *théâtre de l'absence* (Beckett, Ionesco, Adamov during a certain period of their careers) and certain aspects of abstract painting. The *anti-roman* had already been foreseen by Flaubert when he spoke of “writing a book about nothing.” See Nathalie Sarraute, “Flaubert” (quoted above), p. 207: “Books about nothing, almost devoid of subject, rid of characters, plots and all the old accessories, reduced to pure movement, which brings them into proximity with abstract art, are these not the goals toward which the modern novel tends? And this being so, can there be any doubt that Flaubert was its precursor?”

2. Durrell, *Clea* (London: Faber and Faber, 1960), pp. 135–36.

3. Durrell, *Balthasar* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), p. 226.

4. “The Evolution of Narrative Viewpoint in Robbe-Grillet,” *Novel, a Forum in Fiction*, I:1 (Fall 1967), 31, 33.

5. On the pictorial construction of the *Cantos*—the ideogrammatic method, the procedure of superimposition similar to montage—and on the importance given to the appearance of the “object” on the page, particularly by one of Pound’s disciples, E. E. Cummings, see K. L. Goodwin, *The Influence of Ezra Pound* (London: Oxford University Press, 1966).

6. Quoted by Harold Rosenberg, *The Anxious Object; Art Today and Its Audience* (New York: Horizon Press, 1964), p. 61. Rosenberg comments: “The transformation of things by displacing them into art and of art by embedding it in a setting of actuality is the specifically twentieth-century form of illusionism.” It is also one of the chief characteristics of *Kitsch*. See Gillo Dorfles, *Il “Kitsch,” antologia del cattivo gusto* (Milan: Gabriele Mazzotta Editore, 1968), p. 19: the displacing of a work of art from its normal context to an unsuitable setting is instanced by the use of Leonardo’s *Gioconda* for an advertisement.

7. See Phoebe Pool, “Picasso’s Neo-classicism—Second Period 1917–25,” *Apollo* (March 1967), pp. 198–207.

8. See Donald Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein: A Biography of Her Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951), p. 69.

9. See Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!; A Study of Music in Decline* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1934).

10. See Giorgio Melchiori, *The Tightrope Walkers; Studies of Mannerism in Modern English Literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956).

11. Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951), II, 935: “Picasso compromises the artistic means of expression by his indiscriminate use of the different artistic styles just as thoroughly and wilfully as do the surrealists by their renunciation of traditional forms.” Already in a cento of quotations like the one at the end of *The Waste Land* we have the first inkling of pop art. Instead of the *Kunstwollen*, there is a gesture which may be the expression of either an obsession or only a whim. It is as if man, oppressed by the machine age, were making a desperate sign, to affirm the existence of the individual and of the irrational in a world where everything is standardized and mechanized. Thus in a painting called *Cable* there are a few random black letters with a mysterious numeral. Parallel cases: a performance of *Hamlet* by an English company (In-Theatre) in which the speeches were put into the mouths of the wrong characters, e.g., Gertrude’s words were spoken by Hamlet; Queneau’s poems, where lines can be substituted for one another ad infinitum (Raymond Queneau, *100.000.000 de poèmes* [Paris: Gallimard, 1961])—a world of universal availability. In Queneau’s book every line is

printed on a strip of light cardboard, and there are many strips on top of each other, to allow innumerable combinations. Here the *technopaignion* of the modern poet joins up with that of the seventeenth-century Erycius Puteanus, who showed that the words of a line on the Virgin composed by the Jesuit Bernard Van Bauhuyzen ("Tot tibi sunt dotes, Virgo, quot sidera caelo") could be combined in 1022 different ways, as many as the number of the stars known at the time. See Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery*, p. 20. For another modern tendency, that of using poor, rough materials in art (Alberto Burri) and vulgar words and ungrammatical jargon in literature, there is a parallel in architecture. Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture*, p. 217, speaks of "Admirers of Le Corbusier nailing special coarse planking to the interior surfaces of their smooth plywood formwork in order to obtain this roughness artificially and at considerable expense" (apropos of the New Brutalists).

12. Revulsion from mimesis is also Picasso's main concern. In Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake's *Life with Picasso* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964, pp. 124-25) he is reported as saying: "When I make a tree, I don't choose the tree; I don't even look at one. The problem doesn't present itself on that basis for me. I have no pre-established aesthetic basis on which to make a choice. I have no pre-determined tree, either. My tree is one that doesn't exist, and I use my own psycho-physiological dynamism in my movement toward its branches. It's not really an aesthetic attitude at all."

13. Edmund Wilson, "The Dream of H. C. Earwicker," *The Wound and the Bow; Seven Studies in Literature* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941), p. 259. This language has been studied by Freud and his followers, from whom Joyce seems to have got the idea of its literary possibilities.

14. "L'hérésie de James Joyce," *English Miscellany*, vol. 2 (1951), 219, 222.

15. It may not be irrelevant that Picasso is a native of Spain, a country where, occasionally, one notices "a complete absence of the creative sense in nature about one" (Hilaire Belloc, "The Relic," *Selected Essays* [London: Methuen, 1948], p. 7).

16. *The Wound and the Bow*, p. 267.

17. Perhaps not everybody knows what a *cadavre exquis* is: it is a composite image, frequently a very surprising one, resulting from a party game in which each participant executes a portion of a drawing and then folds the paper over it, thus preventing the next from seeing anything of what he has executed except the two ends which mark the limits of the figure. The English term for this game is "picture consequences."

18. Cf. Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein*, pp. 90-91. The sentence is a metamorphosis of a popular enough phrase: "Sunburnt Susie is my dish." Sutherland remarks: "This metaphoric process, or rather this metamorphosis by words, is, with differences, a little like the distortions of Matisse in color and line or like the more complete conversions in the cubist paintings of Picasso. That is, as Matisse seeing a fairly rich curve or a pleasant spot of color in the subject matter would exaggerate these into a sumptuous curve or a gorgeous area of color on his canvas, and as Picasso would make any approximately flat or approximately angular surface in the subject matter into a very definite quadrangle on canvas, so Gertrude Stein, intensifying and converting the original qualities of the subject matter by isolation and metaphor, winds up with a result that exists in and for itself, as the paintings do." I think, however, that the *cadavre exquis* provides a closer simile.

19. *The Dehumanization of Art* (Princeton University Press, 1948), pp. 35-36. See also, in this connection, Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, II, 937-38: "The sewing machine and the umbrella on the dissecting table [Lautréamont], the donkey's corpse on the piano [Dali] or the naked woman's body which opens like a chest of drawers [Max Ernst], in brief, all the forms of juxtaposition and simultaneity into which the non-simultaneous and the incompatible are pressed, are only the expression of a desire to bring unity and coherence, certainly in a very paradoxical way, into the

atomized world in which we live. Art is seized by a real mania for totality. It seems possible to bring everything into relationship with everything else, everything seems to include within itself the law of the whole. The disparagement of man, the so-called 'dehumanization' of art, is connected above all with this feeling. In a world in which everything is significant or of equal significance, man loses his pre-eminence and psychology its authority."

Though apparently in contrast with this point of view, the following passage (from Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein*, pp. 193-94) oddly enough confirms the arbitrary character of things in the modern world (cf. Sutherland's remark, p. 85: "everything has been wildly disconnected and at the same time almost anything is made to connect with anything else"): "It is true that we are more comfortable in the composition of 19th century life and literature, in which an actual or a mentioned cup of tea was part of an hour which was part of a day which was part of a week, month, season, or year, which was part of say the annals of Britain, which were part of the general onward evolution of something that was part of a cosmic order. A sentence was part of a paragraph which was part of a chapter which was part of a book which was part of a shelf of books which was part of England or America or France and so on. Something belonged to everything automatically. But nothing now is really convincingly a part of anything else; anything stands by itself if at all and its connections are chance encounters.—Q: If it is true, it sounds scary. Do you mean to make it sound exhilarating?—A: Officially of course it is scary. But it is a godsend to an artist. It leaves everything open, and so many realities can still be made. Not dreamed, if you please, but made."

20. (Paris: Aux Éditions du Seuil, 1967).

21. *The Body* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1949), pp. 114, 128.

22. Green, *Concluding* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1948), p. 56.

23. Even the form of martyrdom chosen for Celia in *The Cocktail Party* may be due to a suggestion from Dali's frequent insistence on ants.

24. Eliot says in a note that the inspiration for this vision came to him from a passage of Hermann Hesse's *Blick in Chaos*, in which the eastern part of Europe is shown staggering towards chaos and singing a drunken song on the edge of a precipice; but there may be also besides a precise reminiscence of the popular thriller *Dracula*, and an unconscious recollection of the twenty-third section and second *canzone* of Dante's *La Vita Nuova*, in which the poet has a foreboding of Beatrice's death in a vision of "certain faces of women with their hair loosened" and "other terrible and unknown appearances," birds falling dead out of the sky, and great earthquakes. In Rossetti's translation of the *canzone* we read:

Then saw I many broken hinted sights

*Meseem'd to be I know not in what place,
Where ladies through the streets . . .
Ran with loose hair . . .
And birds dropp'd in mid-flight out of the sky;
And earth shook suddenly.*

25. Mannerism, as we have said, had already started the revolt. Cf. Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, I, 358: "Mannerism begins by breaking up the Renaissance structure of space and the scene to be represented into separate, not merely externally separate but also inwardly differently organized, parts. It allows different spatial values, different standards, different possibilities of movement to predominate in the different sections of the picture: in one the principle of economy, and in another that of extravagance in the treatment of space. . . . The final effect is of real figures moving in an unreal, arbitrarily constructed space, the combination of real details in

an imaginary framework, the free manipulation of the spatial coefficients purely according to the purpose of the moment. The nearest analogy to this world of mingled reality is the dream, in which real connections are abolished and things are brought into an abstract relationship to one another, but in which the individual objects themselves are described with the greatest exactitude and the keenest fidelity to nature. It is, at the same time, reminiscent of contemporary art, as expressed in the description of associations in surrealistic painting, in Franz Kafka's dream world, in the montage-technique of Joyce's novels and the autocratic treatment of space in the film. Without the experience of these recent trends, mannerism could hardly have acquired its present significance for us." And *ibid.*, II, 937: "Only mannerism had seen the contrast between the concrete and the abstract, the sensual and the spiritual, dreaming and waking in a similarly glaring light."

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 939–40: "The new concept of time, whose basic element is simultaneity and whose nature consists in the spatialization of the temporal element, is expressed in no other genre so impressively as in this youngest art [the film], which dates from the same period as Bergson's philosophy of time. The agreement between the technical methods of the film and the characteristics of the new concept of time is so complete that one has the feeling that the time categories of modern art altogether must have arisen from the spirit of cinematic form, and one is inclined to consider the film itself as the stylistically most representative, though qualitatively perhaps not the most fertile genre of contemporary art."

27. See Olga W. Vickery, "The Sound and the Fury; A Study in Perspective," *PMLA*, LXIX (December 1954), 1017–37.

28. Excerpt above from "A Valentine for Sherwood Anderson," *Portraits and Prayers* (New York: Random House, 1934), p. 155. *Ida* (New York: Random House, 1941), p. 146.

29. Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein*, pp. 12, 54–55, 59, 117, 200–201.

30. *Selected Writings of Gertrude Stein*, ed. Carl Van Vechten (New York: Random House, 1946), p. 174.

31. The chief contribution of the Italian futurists consists in their manifestoes, which were usually in French. This is the conclusion which Renato Poggiali arrives at in his *Teoria dell'arte d'avanguardia* ([Bologna: Il Mulino, 1962], p. 254), a historical, ideological, and social panorama of modern aesthetic currents, (*The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. G. Fitzgerald, Harvard University Press, 1968). On futurism, see Marianne W. Martin, *Futurist Art and Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

32. See K. L. Goodwin, *The Influence of Ezra Pound*, pp. 172–73.

33. *Poems: 1923–54* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1954), p. 133.

34. *Useful Knowledge* (London: Bodley Head, s.d.), p. 83. See Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein*, p. 116: "as absolute as Mondrian."

35. What follows is based on an essay by Giorgio Melchiori on "The Abstract Art of Henry Green" included in *The Tightrope Walkers*, pp. 188–212. For other instances of abstract tendencies in fiction see Julian Mitchell in *The London Magazine*, V (January 1966), 83–84.

36. *Living* (London and Toronto: Dent, 1931), p. 199.

37. *Back* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1946), pp. 7–8.

38. Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, I, 356–57, stresses the similarities between mannerism and the art of our time: "Only an age which had experienced the tension between form and content, between beauty and expression, as its own vital problem, could do justice to mannerism. . . ."

39. The abstract tendency, the dissolution of forms in an unreal, undefinable space, may be observed in El Greco's paintings, for instance in *The Visitation* (Dumbarton Oaks Collection), Washington.

40. Cf. Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein*, p. 193 (italics mine): "It amused Gertrude Stein to find that her early arrangements and abstractions, which had seemed to be *highly acrobatic and gratuitous* if refined formal exercises, were turning out to be literal transcriptions of the most evident realities, that is the same abstractions and arrangements on which life is more and more consciously conducted by people at large. (Cf. *Composition as Explanation*, p. 9.)" 40a. See below.

41. *Pack My Bag* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1946), p. 88.

42. Herman Meyer, "Die Verwandlung des Sichtbaren, Die Bedeutung der modernen Bildenden Kunst für Rilkes späte Dichtung," *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, XXXI:4 (1957), 465-505; later published in book form: *Zarte Empirie* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1963), pp. 287-336.

43. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Briefe*, II, 1924-26 (Weimar: Insel-Verlag, 1950), p. 490. Another analogy between Rilke and abstract art has been pointed out by H. Rosenberg, *The Anxious Object*, p. 158: "In turning to action, abstract art abandons its alliance with architecture, as painting had earlier broken with music and with the novel, and offers its hand to pantomime and dance. . . . 'Liebesbaum' [by Hans Hofmann, 1955], is a tree danced—in the scent of one of Rilke's nymphs: 'Dance the orange. The warmer landscape, fling it out of you, that the ripe one be radiant in homeland breezes!'"

44. Francesco Arcangeli, "Picasso 'voce recitante,'" *Paragone*, No. 47 (1953), p. 62, has touched on the relation between cubism and music. How deceptive musical parallels can be, may be judged, for instance, from the assertion of T. S. Eliot that while writing his *Four Quartets* he had in mind Béla Bartók's *Quartets*. It could be more convincingly argued that there is an affinity between Proust and Gustav Mahler, whose *Ninth Symphony* presents a variegated texture without a very pronounced structure, so that it sounds like a continuous stream full of nuances.

45. Cf. Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, p. 946.

46. Wilson, *The Wound and the Bow*, p. 265.

47. For Sutherland, *Gertrude Stein*, p. 178, the reverse would be true: "Gertrude Stein is more difficult than Picasso because one can more readily take what goes on in paint qualitatively than one can what goes on in words, words being more habitually involved than lines and colors are in conveying information about the situations of real action—semantically. One does not understand a Picasso after recognizing the stray nose or table top, the rest is the simple experience of quality so intense and dramatic in itself that it holds the attention and excites and satisfies without the confusion of understanding. But when Gertrude Stein uses words and even numbers qualitatively, as experiential finalities and things in themselves, our attention is likely to fail because what normally keeps it up in words is information."

A D D E N D A

Page 225, n. 15a. Translation of two passages from Ariosto on p. 88, based on Allan Gilbert's tr. of *Orlando Furioso* (New York: S. F. Vanni, 1954):

"The young virgin is like the rose that neither flock nor shepherd draws near to while it rests alone and secure in a beautiful garden on its native thorn. The soft breeze and the dewy dawn, the water, the earth bend to favor her; gracious youths and enamoured women love to have their breasts and foreheads decked with her.

"But no sooner is she taken from the maternal stalk and the green bush than she loses all favor, grace, and beauty, however much, that she had from men and from heaven. The virgin who lets anyone pluck that flower for which she ought to be more solicitous than for her beautiful eyes and for her life, loses the worth she had before in the hearts of all her other lovers."

Page 239, n. 40a. Translation of verses from Palazzeschi on p. 214 (by M. P.):

"times have changed a lot,
men don't ask anything now
from the poets:
let me then frolic as I like."