

Picasso's *Guernica* and the Shadow of Incandescence

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analysis of electric light and depictions of the light bulb in Pablo Picasso's oeuvre beginning with two cubist works from 1912 and 1914, and recurring with great significance in 1935, reaching a symbolic apogee in the masterpiece, *Guernica*, 1937, and thereafter granting its continued importance in war-time and post-war still lifes. The overlooked importance of the light bulb—the only technological element in a vast repertoire of figures founded upon Antiquity, Alchemy, various mythologies and everyday items that took highly symbolic form in his portraiture, still lifes, and other genre scenes—is considered for the diachronic mode of its dispersal with respect to the specific contexts in which it is seen. The filament light bulb conjoins other important themes in Picasso's work, but it is distinguished in all circumstances through a conception of malevolence and evil and the breakdown of the natural order of the world as he saw it; that is, as a devolution of the domain of light as the common Good, as a waning life force. Electric light is taken alongside Picasso's "candles of war" that evolve from his adept and keen awareness of the symbolic power of light as a progeny in Barcelona in 1895.

Written in five illustrated chapters, the dissertation begins with an overview of the impact that electric light had had upon late nineteenth and early twentieth century life, in Paris in particular, as a scientific advancement, par excellence, and as a new cultural icon. Walter Benjamin's thesis on the Marxist notion of the *phantasmagoria* is considered apropos the exceptional electric lighting campaigns of the Paris World Expositions of 1881 and 1900 in which various advancements in the technology of the light bulb contributed to the sense of overall "blinding" as a pacification of the masses. This prologue builds to an analysis of *Guernica* that premiered at the Spanish Republic Pavilion in the Paris Exposition Universelle

of 1937 amidst an incandescent extravaganza that was adroitly organized for sociopolitical, capitalist, and fascist agendas, especially by the Third Reich who utilized lighting programs as a tool of propaganda. In that the light in *Guernica* is a panoptical eye powered by a single, dangling bulb, Picasso countered the prevailing excessive theatrical incandescent culture with an image that has become one of the most potent anti-war icons of the warring twentieth century: the electric sun.

The thesis takes into account alterations of the sun as a degraded, inverted, and mocked signifier of sacred light. I demonstrate that from 1930 to the conclusion of *Guernica* in June of '37 how images of the sun were central to Picasso's ongoing ire against the war in Spain and the burgeoning realities of fascist aggression in pre-World War II France. Given the extraordinary lambency of incandescence and its symbolic impact, beyond the real ways in which it reshaped perception in early modern life, expressed in every epoch of modernism, including cubism, futurism, rayonism, surrealism, constructivism, and vorticism, and in the literary arts, heterogeneous types of electric light and light bulbs may be claimed as the most singularly potent emblems of new utopias and tomorrows borne from the catastrophic strain caused by the Great War and the interwar years leading up to the Spanish Civil War and World War II. In that Picasso's light bulbs are taken for their explicit correspondence to acts of violence, scenes of death and sacrifice, and as a penultimate signifier of darkness-in-the-light, the dissertation identifies the "seraphim light bulbs" of bullfight scenes from 1934-35 that have not been recognized and are indisputable precursors to the electric sun in *Guernica*. Furthermore, attention has been paid to the morphology of the wire filament both in 1914, identified as the "Filament-Harlequin," and in 1937, in which I identify the filament in the electric sun as an approximation of the Luftwaffe flight patterns for the aerial bombing scheme in the destruction of the Basque village, Gernika.

For my husband, Daniel Reeves

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In memory of my three muses:

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During the years in which I was ABD, I was Instructor in Modern Art at the Edinburgh College of Art (Scotland); and, served as a two-time museum director at the Cornell Fine Arts Museum at Rollins College (Florida) and the University of New Mexico Art Museum. During my tenures in those institutions (2005-2012) my work as an art historian included the authoring, co-authoring or editing of over ten publications including, *Eva Hesse Spectres 1960* (Yale Press 2010) and *Corps Exquis: Fragments from a History of the Human Form, 1585-2006* (Rollins 2008); curating or organizing over twenty-nine exhibitions; and, overseeing ancillary projects including the creation of the Distinguished Visiting Scholars Program at the UNM Art Museum, Albuquerque.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with a mostly overlooked although inarguably vital element in Picasso's oeuvre, that of the light bulb and the cast of electric radiance realized in a variety of works from 1912 to 1937. These dates are bracketed by war, which is the corresponding causality in the formation of the *ampoules électriques* in the works of art chosen for this discussion. The Balkan Wars headlined European news during the breakthrough of cubist *papiers collés* of 1912; the Great War exploded in July of 1914 in which the second phase of cubism, synthetic cubism took form; and, Picasso's work in the Spanish Civil War period crescendoed after the aerial bombing of Gernika, on April 26, 1937 with the creation of *Guernica*. In the adaptation and manipulation of the light bulb as image, bearing in mind its particular type of radiance, the object was wrought—as light is in all cases—as a reflection of private and world conditions. In each of these phases of Picasso's work, use for the light bulb found its place in contexts of aggression, unwarranted killings, personal loss, and protracted battles. In those pictorial accounts, technological light was a measure of humankind gone wrong.

For Picasso, whose acute attention about the illumination of oil and gas lamps, candles, and suns that took various forms, the focus in this study upon incandescent light is regarded as an aspect of particular realms of threat, destruction, and death. Specifically, during the pre-Spanish Civil War years that lead in to World War II, his symbolic socio-aesthetic founded a veritable taxonomy of modern light with the light bulb and the degraded sun as central features. The essential nature of electric light, and the imagistic depictions of it have been largely under examined, with the exception of Jean Boggs work in *Picasso & Things* in which the light in still lifes received descriptive attention. Yet, when considered

against the weight of analyses of style and genre in varying methodologies that have persisted in the critical record, the essential factor of incandescent light in Picasso's art has received less attention.

The dissertation attempts an iconological analysis of the interrelation between electric light and Picasso's fictive solar narratives that included the adaptation of certain tenets of Alchemy, Christian and pagan mythologies, and Antiquity that are counterpoints to technological light. Considered as the "negative" polarity in the play of opposites that the works present the thesis encompasses a historical account of the evolution of electricity in modern culture, aestheticized through the actual object of electric lamps in anthropomorphized and highly symbolic modes. As a subject of utopian tomorrows the transformational promise of electric filament light is also considered for its service in the prevailing capitalist and warring twentieth century. Certainly the central disembodied eye of



the electric sun of *Guernica* holds a strong machine focus that emits the sending power of its highly original force.

A scrutiny of the sun reveals it casts its own black

shadow, but in reverse so as to invert a natural law of radiance. Black-rays emanate behind the solid sun-shape. In effect they appear to cut into the background "screen" that is the stage-space of the huge painting. The rays then, blacker than the black background painted throughout *Guernica* are an altogether different darkness. In this straightforward observation lies a summation of Picasso's inversion of light, in service to his lengthy campaign with the light bulb that had begun in 1912. Most importantly, the cast shadow of the electric sun was caused by a source of radiance brighter than the sun itself that shines upon it and beyond of it from a source that we imagine directly faces it.

The floating eye-sun recalls Odilon Redon's great hovering eyeballs, such as, *The Eye Like A Strange Balloon*, 1882, in which the Cyclopean motif of late nineteenth century Symbolism would become important and subsumed in Surrealist practices of which *Guernica* may not be discounted among. Cut-away from the body this eye infers the beginning of its seeking attachment to another, to foreign bodies or a location in unique environments. In that Redon's aerial eye, an instance of the eyeball-skyball of Platonic thought in which the sun dominates the world with intelligible clarity, the twist in early twentieth century modernist doubt saw the floating airborne eye as a panoptical device and an Oedipal trope. Although "*Guernica* in the Shadow of Incandescence" does not include Freudian readings of the Oedipal eye, it does however consider the eye-panopticon for its "seer" function related to insight and prescient advice, the third or pineal eye of divine wisdom; and, as a predatory surveillance machine that scoped the evidence of the Luftwaffe's bombing of Gernika while it also succeeded in



stripping away autonomy and rights to privacy. During Picasso's great campaign of monumental sculptures made in Boisgeloup in 1932 and 1933 the portrait bust took form as stony composites of facial features. In a fragment that appears to be from antiquity rather than an artist's studio in the 1930s, a small plaster carving of a single eye, simply *L'œil*, 1932, that is a disembodied eye of surrealism that avails its mutilation therefore blinding in the great bronze *La femme au vase* that will stand at the entrance to the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris Exposition of '37 and in its final resting place of Picasso's grave at his chateau in Vauvenargues.

Apropos the sacred eye, Picasso derived from his Spanish heritage experience of the gaze of the Pantocrator. In his return to Barcelona in 1934 he encountered the grand Catalanian ruling Christ in the apse of Sant Climent de Taüll. The eyes of God are set directly upon the viewer, which like the singular eye in *Guernica* emphasizes the inescapable



dominance of their fixity. The all-seeing omnipotent divine eye may also be Luciferian, dark light inferred in the technological inversion that the electric sun was made to be in 1937. Throughout many of Picasso's wartime writings the sun will be an evil sun.

When in '37 he had felt overwhelmed by Franco's ever-darkening swath through Spain, his conception of space changed altogether and this infers a sense of the cosmological expanse of evil that was metaphorically crammed into claustrophobic, over-populated rooms. As Alfred Barr, Jr. noted, "Such a transformation expressed *Guernica's* focus on the forces of evil."¹

We may ask then, given the importance of electric light in Picasso's work that the thesis purports, how did the light bulb get scripted into his complex visual vocabulary? Chapter One: "Dark Paradises of Incandescence" is a summarization of the new technology of arc lamp lighting and tungsten filament lamps that achieved world notoriety from Parisian expositions in the late nineteenth century, that in turn served to construct urban life and expand socio-political agendas. In that incandescent programs were glorified in French culture par excellence, in which Edison's lamps had prevailed at the Paris Exposition of 1888. A foundational appreciation of the early science and promotion of artificial light is instructive for the reevaluation of *Guernica*. In its symbolic capacity, intertwined with capitalism and nationalistic propagandas, incandescence light was no other spectacle. In that

¹ Alfred J. Barr, Jr. *Picasso Fifty Years of His Art*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946), p. 264.

it will acquire a form of autonomy, regarded here as “performance,” Picasso’s articulation of the light bulb included fashioning the filament for its performativity qualities as metaphor and sign. The simple properties of the bulb were not overlooked as the material aspect of an object otherwise imbued with animated properties.

Without resorting to sketches or preparatory models toward a development in the morphology or transformations of electric bulbs, they were otherwise seemingly instantly conceived as whole and finite images. As if Picasso *knew* the light bulb, despite his complete dislike of it, he was adept with its properties like those of the harlequin, bull and horse, the candle, and the sun. As the thesis suggests, the filaments would acquire specific traits that carried the total meaning of the light bulb in the worlds that Picasso created for them. He was aware of the types of common light bulbs in 1912, and again in 1914, the Filament-Harlequin being loosely based upon the filament construction of the 1910 squirrel-cage bulb, also known as a Marconi lamp. In Picasso’s imagination, the wires *were* Harlequin’s motley and the entire squared network of tungsten filament the whole standing *commedia dell’arte* figure. The quotidian bulb was a surround of glass, the housing for its filament was wholly important in the sense that if the wires were not entirely closed, “...air would gradually leak into the bulb and destroy the light.” The essential balance of interior/exterior; power/negation of power; light/darkness conveyed as good/evil were inherent in Picasso’s bulbs. In an obscure document from 1913, the “Secrets of Leading in Wires” revealed that electrical scientists regarded them as “line of communication between the air outside and the vacuum inside.”

What circumscribes the thesis is an attention upon duality seen in Picasso’s own selection of sun *versus* light bulb; electric sun *versus* candle light; le soleil noir, the black sun of melancholy *versus* Good light; sacrifice and the sun of Christ *versus* the sun of the Mithraic

bull in ritual, and so on. These factors are discussed at length in chapters two and five respectively, “Illuminating War: Black Sun, Electric Sun” and “*Guernica* in the Conflict of Radiance.” In between these chapters I felt it important to position Picasso’s light bulbs within the larger demonstration of them in early modern European and Russian art and tangentially, in its literature, included sparsely despite its great importance. The third chapter, “Making Light Avant-Garde” is a sweeping account of the leitmotif of the light bulb in modern art, ca. 1909-1925 in which, as I state, it’s “poetic-subjective voice coincided with the point at which the mystery of its agency was conveyed through utopian rhetoric and anthropomorphic”² configurations of automata that did not obey any sense of figural standardizations. Given the timeline the lights of war convey the deepest sense of the desperate qualities of incandescence in desperate circumstances.

By the mid-1930s the light bulb will reappears in Picasso’s work following a near twenty-year hiatus. Perhaps the most profound discovery about electric light in this research effort has been the revelations of a group of fairly disguised light bulbs-as-angels that hover above terribly vicious ordeals between bull and horse from 1934-35. I have called these aerial figures “seraphim light bulbs,” and develop their importance as agents of a coalesced divine/profane light that prefigures the electric sun of *Guernica*. I have not found in the work of any other author on the subject of the *corrida*; the characterization of Marie-Thérèse in the guise of the candleholder and “companion” character of the angels; studies on *Guernica*, including the comprehensive text, *Picasso 1927-1939: From the Minotaur to Guernica* by Josep i Palau Fabre, an authority on the period, any recognition of the electric seraphim. These are respectfully submitted for consideration here, then, for the first time as part of the discourse that attempts a contribution to a richer understanding of Picasso and light.

² See page 139.

Ultimately, this thesis is about seeing. Picasso disturbed the sense of it, turning our attention to modes of inverted light, obliterated light, electric light, reconfigured and degraded light. But as I conclude in chapter five, as a man of the Spanish sun he does not forego the power of sunlight and its life-sustaining essence in his Romanesque chapel painting, *Le paix*, 1955. We come to know Picasso's light bulbs in the threats to the natural order of things that he perceived in the time in which he lived.

Perhaps no more eloquently stated is Hans Blumenberg's renowned summary of the real, poetic, and metaphysical properties of light that is worthwhile to repeat vis-à-vis Picasso's incessantly powerful radiance:

Light can be a directed beam, a guiding beacon in the dark, an advancing dethronement of darkness, but also a dazzling super-abundance, as well as an indefinite, omnipresent brightness containing all: the 'letting-appear' that does not itself appear, the inaccessible accessibility of things. Light and darkness can represent the absolute metaphysical counterforces that exclude each other and yet brighten the world constellation into existence.

Or, light is the absolute power of Being, which reveals the paltriness of the dark, which can no longer exist once light has come to existence. Light is intrusive; in its abundance, it creates the overwhelming, conspicuous clarity with which the true 'comes forth'; it forcibly acquires the irrevocability of Spirit's consent. Light remains what it is while letting the infinite participate in it; it is consumption without loss.

Light produces space, distance, orientation, calm contemplation; it is the gift that makes no demands, the illumination capable of conquering without force.³

³ Hans Blumenberg, "Light as a Metaphor for Light," *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision*, David Michael Levin, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 31.

Chapter 1

Dark Paradises of Incandescence

*Everything that casts a light sees.*⁴

Gaston Bachelard

The 1937 Paris World Fair, formally known as the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Modern, was a strategic gamble by France that was hosted during a fractious and threatening period (fig. 1). In 1932, during initial discussions about the scope and feasibility of another Paris-based world fair, the organizing committee and governmental authorities proffered that the enterprise would reinvigorate France from a lingering pall caused by the tremendous death toll of the Great War, and, the dire economy⁵ caused by the American Great Depression. The admixture of financial crisis and societal torpor was reason enough, according to the fair's organizers and France's then-current government to push the project forward. By the opening the Exposition on May 25 just over one year had lapsed since Germany's bold remilitarization of the Rhineland by the redeployment of nineteen infantry battalions on March 7 of '36. The advance was an egregious breach of the Treaty of Versailles (1919) which stated that Germany's establishment of a military presence within fifty kilometers to the east of the Rhine would be regarded as, "committing a hostile act...and as calculated to disturb the peace of the world." Germany's remilitarization on France's border east of Verdun proceeded without defiance or even the recall of the events of 1916.

⁴ Gaston Bachelard. *Fragments of a Poetics of Fire*, trans. Kenneth Haltman (Dallas, TX: Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, 1997), p. 48.

⁵ Calculated by Wilfred Baumgartner, *général des fonds*, the financial under-secretary under Prime Minister Albert Saurrat.

A mere five weeks had passed since the aerial bombardments by the Condor Legion of the Luftwaffe had destroyed the Basque village of Gernika. An estimated sixteen hundred people were killed and an additional eight hundred were wounded in various degrees of severity. Europe, by May of 1937 was teetering on the edge of widespread catastrophe. Notwithstanding the palpable realities of the atrocities in Spain, and the advance of Nazi aggression, France maintained a non-interventionist policy toward Franco's reign of Nationalist terror; and, a policy of *détente* toward the Third Reich.

During the late interwar *rappel à l'ordre* of 1930 to 1936, the unstable French government had had a procession of twelve prime ministers who served six different parties.⁶ The narrow victory of the Popular Front on June 4 brought France's first Jewish and first Socialist prime minister, Léon Blum, to power and in due course he immediately merged the Socialist, Communist, and Radical parties. Blum's leadership on foreign policy followed in league with his several predecessors; and, in the *Rassemblement Populaire*, or General Assembly, plans outlined that nothing was to be controversial or explicitly confrontational regarding the Third Reich. The Germans, however, considered the olive branch a sign of weakness and indeterminacy despite not saying so. The French ambassador to Berlin, André François-Poncet, keenly noticed that it was, "Precisely because they [Germans] believe that a tragic period of our history is going to begin, because they discount

⁶ France elected four prime ministers for two terms between 1930 and June of 1936, including: Camille Chautemps, André Tardieu, Édouard Daladier, and Albert Sarraut; and, single elections of Théodore Slegel, Édouard Herriot, Joseph Paul-Boucour, Gaston Doumergue, Pierre Laval, Édouard Herriot, Joseph Paul-Boucour, Sarraut, Gaston Doumergue, Pierre-Étienne Flandin, Fernand Bouisson, and Léon Blum. Blum represented the Radical Socialist Party, the Democratic Alliance, the Democratic Alliance, The Republican-Socialist Party; the Independent Party; and, the Popular Front known as the French Section of the Worker's International.

that a drama is inevitable, they regard it good politics to not look, foresee, or desire.”⁷ The modernist art historian, Christopher Green, recapped the perspective in different terms:

...there was more than enough material for diagnosing the decline of French society in 1937. On a world stage, France was exposed as a riven country... factionalized by conflicting responses to youth and innovation and conflicting attitudes to the urban and the rural, the industrial and the traditional. Against the formidable cohesion of the totalitarian pavilions [Italian, German, Russian] this was easily read as weakness.⁸

In accord with the general strategy of rapprochement an invitation was extended to the Nazi government to participate in the Exposition as early as 1934. By '36, the Front Populaire was in pursuit of Germany's involvement with cordial assertiveness. The boldness of French cooperation with Hitler's regime was magnified by the Reich's current record of aggression and killings; yet, there is no mention in the extant records of the German occupation of the Rhineland, nor of the Nazi involvement in the Spanish Civil War, that confirms this. The ongoing loss of lives did not figure in to the desperate if not naïve aspirations of the fair's organizers and the French Left. In an outlandish turn of logic given the Reich's complicity with Franco; and, other atrocities committed at the Dachau since 1933, the French believed that a German pavilion would be of pronounced political importance. Upholding the Reich's escalating self-styled prestige, it was determined that their participation would produce “the necessary psychological preconditions” in France for instigating new trade relations. The ruse included the notion that once French consumers

⁷ André François-Poncet, *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1932-1939, 2eme Series (Avril-Juillet 1936)*, p. 354. Cited in Thomas Simpson, *Adieu Beaux Jours: The 1937 Exposition Internationale and the Eclipse of French Foreign Policy*, (Washington, D.C.: American University Press, 2012), p. 9.

⁸ Green, Christopher. *Art in France, 1900-1940* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 11.

understood the superiority of German goods they would, through experience, realize that they were supporting “the interest of [their] country.”⁹

If Blum’s government had had any doubts about a darker Nazi motive, Jacques Gréber, the *architecte-en-chef* suspended it by reasoning, “the fact that National Socialist Germany was participating with such a costly pavilion was the best proof that it didn’t want war!”¹⁰ France’s desperation to engender Franco-German trade was so resolute that a clandestine bank account was established in which the French Ministry of Commerce arranged for 1.5 million francs to be deposited into Nazi coffers every month for a ten-month period. An additional bonus, meant to ensure French interests in German industry and technology, allocated funds to purchase German-made materials for building certain projects on the fairgrounds. This, despite the labor uprising of June 1936 in which 1.8 million French workers went on strike leaving an overwhelming lack of jobs throughout the country.¹¹

Albeit the ominous realities of the period, the Exposition was realized through the participation of forty-four nations and many of France’s African and Southeast Asian colonies. Alongside skeins of premonitory fears, the bifurcated mission to promulgate modern life through art and science¹² was presented with an optimistic face to dignitaries and

⁹ Karen Fiss. *Grand Illusion: The Third Reich, the Paris Exposition, and the Cultural Seduction of France* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), n.23 p. 229.

¹⁰ Quote taken from an unsigned memorandum from the German embassy in Paris, December 7, 1936. Cited in Fiss, op.cit., n.46, p. 230.

¹¹ For more on the complex topic of the June 1936 labor uprisings see, Eugen Weber, *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996); and, Michael Torigian, *Every Factory a Fortress: The French Labor Movement in the Age of Ford and Hitler* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999).

¹² The fête celebrated *terroir*, the soil, and *techne*, the hand and its craft. What went unstated was a hugely diverse scope of indigenous folklore and traditional customs put on parade and installed in pavilion vitrines. For an expansive historical and critical overview of these points, see: Romy Golan, *Modernity & Nostalgia: Art and Politics in France Between the Wars* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995).

fairgoers eventually numbering over thirty-one million. A façade of official pronouncements pledged the goal of the Exposition: a cause célèbre of peace and international unity. Two of several formal statements intoned ways in which the enterprise aspired to advance the welfare of French and international citizenry. Edmond Labbé, who oversaw the entire project as *commissaire général* boasted, "...the role that we anticipate for our Exposition...will stimulate French production, provide the best forum for serious publicity, pull inactive capital out of decline, help in the expansion of domestic trade...[thereby] reviving the economic vitality of France..."¹³ Fernand Chapsal, France's Minister of Trade, invoked in the single word, "intend," impending doubt, even personal skepticism claiming, "The 1937 World Exposition has brought together the flags of over forty nations to the banks of the Seine.... France's decision to hold this major event in insecure and difficult times demonstrates faith in its fate and the future of peace. And by taking up the invitation, the peoples of the world have demonstrated their solidarity with this faith and that they also *intend* to direct their efforts to the same objective."¹⁴

Notwithstanding the expectant face of it, "...the pervasive sense of a culture and a society under threat were features of the 1937 Exposition even where certainty and harmony seemed most apparent, and the divisions exposed were as much internal to French society as they were external: the Soviet-Nazi confrontation made a melodrama of conflicts that threatened not only war but the deepest values of the Third Republic."¹⁵ Nevertheless,

¹³ James D. Herbert, *Paris 1937: Worlds on Exhibition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), no.3, p. 174. Citing Edmond Labbé, *Le Régionalisme et l'exposition internationale de Paris 1937* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale), p. 122.

¹³ Speech from May 24, 1937. Translated from the *Exposition internationale des arts et des techniques dans la vie moderne*. Catalogue officielle, Vol. 1 (Paris: 1937).

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ Christopher Green, *Art in France, 1900-1940* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 9.

despite the absence of any doubt by that date concerning the situation in Europe,¹⁶ the fantasy festival presented a simulacrum of nations that took unaccountable forms in over sixty purpose-built halls and pavilions. Tens of thousands of items were promoted; exhibitions were mounted; and, demonstrations of advanced technological products and machine industries were on view. With an eye on peace, the global object, par excellence, wrought fairgoers in the primary lesson of international cooperation: consumer culture and the importance of spectacle. Paradoxically, within an environment that otherwise chose blindness vis-à-vis burgeoning fascism in Germany, Spain, and Italy the specular project of seeing, wondering, and desiring was carefully orchestrated for mass consumption. A goal of the new imperialism of the national pavilions was also the promotion of its own grandeur. And in those enterprises, governments themselves became a customer in the constructed realm of marketplaces. Displays of the latest weaponry were promoted in terms equal to all other goods, for personal and government purchase.¹⁷

Vergnügungsindustrie, the packaged “pleasure industry” of the nineteenth century is instructional in its critique of the phantasmagoric world-fair festival of 1937.¹⁸ The general understanding of phantasmagoria, from the Ancient Greek, *phantasma*, is to “make visible,” as in a “shifting and changing scene consisting of many elements... that is extraordinary, or resembling, or reminiscent of a dream, [a] hallucination.”¹⁹ Taking the nineteenth century exposition as model, Walter Benjamin asserted that thousands of dissimilar machine and technological inventions; foreign customs and wares; varied artistic styles in performance

¹⁶ Catherine Blanton Freedberg, *The Spanish Pavilion at the 1937 World Fair* (Ann Arbor, MI.: Garland Press, Outstanding Dissertations in the Arts, 1986), Vol.2, p. 62.

¹⁷ Benjamin, V., p. 247; cited in Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1990) p. 87-88.

¹⁸ Benjamin restated Hermann Lotze’s statement from 1864, “These expositions are the first actually modern festivals.” *The Arcades Project*, p. 267. Noted in Susan Buck-Morss, op. cit., n.32, p. 399.

¹⁹ Oxford English Dictionary.

and the plastic arts; and, tribal, vernacular, and incandescent architecture created the modern hallucination. In hallucinatory states the individual loses herself in a sensory overload. Those constructed “fairy-land[s] that evoked the wonder of the masses,”²⁰ threatened to obliterate sensorial response within the controlling environments. In reaction to the threat, it was simply, “no longer a question of educating the crude ear to music, but of giving it back it’s hearing. ...is no longer a question of training the eye to see beauty, but of restoring ‘perceptibility.’ ”²¹ Otherwise, the viewer “...surrenders to its manipulations...”²² By this line of reasoning, the masses would lack the ability to engage in what might otherwise, if not for the anesthetics of capitalism, be transformative social struggle. As the culture of the commodity spectacle increased in complexity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, our subject, incandescent light, acquired a type of autonomy and subjectivity. Its yielding radiance was theatrical, and in specific ways, incandescence acted its given theatrical part, so to speak. In the transition of meaning, the choreography of electric light in unique configurations was wrought as ornament and as propaganda.

Theatrical *fantasmagorie* were first performed in shadow plays presented by Étienne-Gaspard Robert in 1798 at the Parisian Pavillon de l’Echiquier. In effect, Robert’s versions of the magic lantern entailed dramatizations of silhouetted figures cast upon a backdrop wall or gauzy screen. The projections somehow convinced audiences that the figures *were* supernatural, floating as they did mid-air. And the use of multiple lamps to illuminate both the moving characters as well as shifting backgrounds doubly conveyed the fantastic, dream-

²⁰ Buck-Morss, op. cit., pp. 3-41.

²¹ Walter Benjamin, Michael W. Jennings, ed., *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*, trans. Howard Eiland (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 137.

²² Walter Benjamin, “Paris, the Capital of the Nineteenth Century: Exposé of 1935” in *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 7.

like nature of the productions.²³ The making visible, returning to *phantasma* translated from Greek to the Latin as *phanein*, meaning, “to show,” was made all the more demanding and important, epoch to epoch in fair-culture, through scientific advancements of artificial light. Crowd entertainment, much of which was created from or depended upon early carbon arc lamp lighting, then tungsten filament lighting, and the proliferation of neon lights, footlights, streetlights, fountain lights, and, floodlights was both aesthetic and anesthetic, per Benjamin’s critique of capitalist technocracies. Not only, as Benjamin claimed, was “electricity’s most visible political role in the modern period the production of phantasmagoric spectacle...;”²⁴ accordingly, it was the very risk of anesthetizing the masses through a form of “blinding” that ensured the terms of the phantasmagoric. Implicit in his material historicism was the thorough concern about the conditions for the constellation that “provided the social cement” of France’s Second Empire (Napoleon III, 1852-1870). The exploitation of new technologies for the goal of social control rather than liberation that became increasingly “legible” for Benjamin in his complex analysis of fascism. He wrote, “The historical index of [dialectical] images says not only that they belong to a particular time; it says above all that only in a particular time do they come ‘to legibility.’”²⁵

Benjamin regarded electric lighting as a trait complicit to the problem. He conjured it as a form of fungibility, of mutual exchange without qualification of the goods being traded one for another; that is, of mass humanity replaced by objects designed for obsolescence.

Taking the ubiquity of electric signage, a “new type of writing,” that suggested electric light’s

²³ See: Terry Castle, "Phantasmagoria and the Metaphorics of Modern Reverie" in *The Female Thermometer* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁴ Benjamin, *Paris*, loc.cit.

²⁵ Walter Benjamin, *Gesammelte Schriften*, 6 vols., Rolf Tiedemann and Hermann Schweppenhäuser, eds., with the collaboration of Theodor W. Adorno and Gershom Scholem (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1972), vol. V: *Das Passagen-Werk*, Rolf Tiedemann, ed. (1982), p. 577. Cited by Buck-Morss, op. cit., p. 308.

inscriptive dominance, Benjamin coupled it with hollow value. The conflation inspired the note, “Comparison of human beings with a control panel, on which are thousands of electric bulbs; first these die out, then others light themselves anew.” It continued, “[A]bstraction for...modern means of expression (lighting, modes of construction, etc.) can be dangerous.”²⁶

*Your gleams are then tinged with the white hue of electric light,
the eye cannot look you....*²⁷

Isidore Ducasse

In the cataloguing method for his unpublished magnum opus, *Das Passagen-Werk* (The Arcades Project), the *Konvoluts*, sheaths of notes, photographs, clippings, quotes, sketches, and miscellanea were suitably organized from A to Z. *Konvolut T. Modes of Lighting* recorded how early projects for city lighting in Paris had been based upon the eighteenth-century Enlightenment’s idea of universal illumination. Benjamin also jotted down that lighting’s reactionary potential was anticipated as early as the 1830s: “1836 Jacques Fabien publishes *Paris en songe*. He develops there how electricity, through the overabundance of light, produces multiple blindings....”²⁸ To blind, governed by purposes of control, is to conceal, to obfuscate, to remove the function of accurate perception from a subject, even to mutilate; and, to lack discernment or to be un-enlightened. Blinding by electric light would replace blinding by the sun, that instant when coming forth from the darkness of the cave Plato allegorized:

I decided that I must be careful not to suffer the misfortune that happens to people who look at the sun and watch it during an eclipse. For some of them ruin their eyes.... I thought of that danger, and I was afraid my soul would be blinded if I looked at things with my eyes and tried to grasp them

²⁶ Buck-Morss, *Dialectics*, p. 309.

²⁷ Spoken by the protagonist, Maldoror, in Comte de Lautrèamont’s (pseudonym for Isidore Ducasse) influential prose poem, *Les Chants du Maldoror*, 1868.

²⁸ Buck-Morss, op.cit. *Dialectics*, p. 312.

with any of my senses. So I thought I must have recourse to *logoi* and examine in them the truth of the things that are.²⁹

We find in Hans Blumenberg's influential essay, "Light as a Metaphor for Truth," his usage of the term *Blendung*, a "repellent dazzling;" and, in its range of other connotations, as "confusion" and "deception" and the "act of blinding a person," which "captures the broad sense of a (painful) bewilderment caused by light."³⁰ He reminds us however that Plato's allegory meant that at a certain point, "Becoming accustomed to the light diminishes its dazzling effects."³¹ When dazzle reaches its penultimate conclusion in the fascist aesthetic of rallies and architectural illumination schemes from 1936-38 especially, that light would contribute to the "contagious action"³² of a mass blindness. Electric lights used as a spatial tool create a false unity. Directional beams therefore become a social agent of the propagandists maneuver to secure the desired results of control. Blumenberg discerned that the very technological *figures* of the modern age that "invade the metaphors of light [it] turns into an encompassing medium of the focused and measured ray of 'direct lighting.'"³³

But it is only because these possibilities for directed light were discovered at all, that the technology for this discovery could ultimately make possible the most violent of methods and devices: and it is significant that the term *lighting* is used to refer to thoughtless accentuation by artificial light, as well as to the technological selection and overemphasis of the work of man, which—as the only things thought to be worth seeing—is to be made impossible to overlook. ... "lighting" has imposed, in many forms, an 'optics' that goes against his will—is the historical antipode of the classical *contemplator caeli* [surveyor of the heavens] and his freedom to gaze.³⁴

²⁹ Plato, *Phaedo*, 99d-e, trans. Harold North Fowler, [Loeb Classical Library, 1982.]

³⁰ Blumenberg, Levin, op.cit., p. 34

³¹ Blumenberg goes on to say, "The absolutely dazzling, to which no one can ever become accustomed, first emerges in Neoplatonism. But here it comes to mean...pure light...the fundamental confirming experience of all mysticism...in which all thinking and speaking is surpassed, and which represents the uniquely adequate way of encountering transcendence." Levin, op. cit., p. 45.

³² Phrase is drawn from a sociological analysis by James M. Mayo, Jr., "Propaganda with Design: Environmental Dramatury in the Political Rally," *Journal of Architectural Education* (Vol. 32, Issue 2, 1978), p. 24.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³⁴ Mayo, loc. cit.

In general technical terms, the blinding effects of street lighting, termed “glare”³⁵ were chiefly conditioned by total candlepower emitted by each lighting unit directed toward the eye; by the angle with the line of vision at which the beam enters the eye and the number of units; and, the mounting height of the lamps and spacing between them. Controlled “blinding” is an operation of surveillance in which the seen subject, whose sight is shrouded, truncated, or blinded represents the alterations to vision in structures of control. Fourteen years after the Battles of the Fronde— a series of civil wars (1648-1653) that brought Louis XIV to the throne, strict new civil regulations included mandatory lighting systems. So extensive was the first phase that one thousand lamplights were placed at intervals of *dix toises*, the equivalent of twenty yards apart on Paris streets. Purportedly installed for the safety of citizens, the street lamps were a direct result of the establishment of the *force constabulaire*, the first order of French police.³⁶ Their royal charge to recognize and name persons in the nighttime was the true function of surveillance lanterns that symbolized through stark radiance law and order, not beneficent illumination.

By extension of His Highness, *le Roi-Soleil*, the light associated with the Sun King exemplified the Cartesian principle of light in that it, “...extends around in all directions about bodies one calls ‘luminous,’ to any distance, and in an instant...”³⁷ Accordingly, brilliant, or, “luminous” beings, animate and inanimate, were swathed in unceasing and infinite light that was also good. The Cartesian sense of an all-encompassing light was

³⁵ *Electrical Review*, vol. LXVI, No. 1 (Chicago, January 2, 1915), p. 443.

³⁶ The “Police” in that epoch still had the role of general administrators; however, in France, in particular, they were soon to be regarded as facilitators of the King’s absolutist power and control, accordingly, as authorities of repression. See Wolfgang Schivelbusch, “The Policing of Street Lighting,” *Yale French Studies* (no. 73, 1987), p. 62.

³⁷ René Descartes, *Le Monde, or, Traité de la Lumière*, 1629-1633; excerpted from, “Chapter Fourteen: On the Properties of Light,” trans. in English, Michael S. Mahoney, <http://www.princeton.edu/~hos/Mahoney>, 2004.

implicated in the being of the King whose lambency had inspired seventeenth century France, and thereafter, to recognize herself as recipient of an exceptional symbolic radiance in mortal form. The embodiment of The Grand Monarch as a human solar deity—a profane modulation of the tradition of *Oriens Christi figura*, “the sunrise is the image of Christ,”³⁸ or, according to the sacred writings of St. Augustine, Christ was the, “sun without setting, ever living and unaffected by the fall of the hours”—was a transmutation of divine Light into the personhood of the King. His royal Eminence, *L. eminere*, “to jut or project,” was in symbolic form and by the rule of the Kingdom, a light that ostensibly spread, therefore, over some nineteen million subjects.

Like many mythic creation narratives that portray the genesis of light and its diffusion, the nineteenth century was distinguished with a unique dawning by virtue of incandescence. Within a century from the invention of the Argand gas lamp³⁹ in 1780—the effect of which so “exceptionally beautiful... almost dazzling,”⁴⁰ wrote Thomas Jefferson in a letter to James Madison in 1784, further stating “... a light equal from six to eight candles... [is] excellent for reading...”⁴¹—to Edison’s legendary system that premiered in Paris in 1881, the fruition of incandescence materialized in concert with the industrial city.

³⁸ A quote from the early Christian theologian, Tertullian quoted in Timothy Barnes, *Tertullian: A Historical and Literary Study*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1971). Cited in Sergio Bertelli, *The King’s Body: Sacred Rituals and Power in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 2003), p. 139.

³⁹ The Argand oil lamp, invented by the Swiss physicist and chemist, Aimé Argand (1750-1803), improved the common oil lamp in that it featured a perfected cylindrical wick and a glass cylinder chimney both of which allowed for enhanced air circulation. A mechanism for lowering and raising the wick also allowed for the control of brightness cast from the lamp.

⁴⁰ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Angela Davies (Berkeley and London: The University of California Press, 1995), pp. 11-12. “The Argand burner was to the nineteenth century household what the electric light bulb was to that of the twentieth century. Its design with a glass cylinder corresponded to the outer glass casing of the electric bulb, the wick-mechanism to the light switch, and the flame, to the filament;” p. 14.

⁴¹ John E. Crowley, *The Invention of Comfort: Sensibilities and Design in Britain and Early America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2000); pp. 193-94.

Among myriad enterprises that promulgated the modernization of the flame, the [r]evolution in lighting was demonstrated in unparalleled modes at the Paris Expositions Universelles of 1878, 1881, 1900, and, 1937. Over the sixty-year span of those fairs, incandescent light would sheath hundreds of pavilion façades; illuminate immense exhibition halls; punctuate evening skies with a brilliant glint throughout the main axes and gateways of the fairgrounds, along lengths of bridges reflected in the Seine, and, Haussmann’s grandly renovated boulevards allegedly to the delight of hundreds of millions. In effect, the enterprises were veritable electric light world fairs, urban dreamlands that not only evoked awe, each successive exposition demonstrated observable “proof” of technological advancement toward the realization of national goals, by presenting themselves as more monumental than others. Toward the fulfillment of idealized goals,⁴² electricity, not gas or steam, ensured those aims. Furthermore not only did the fairs require demanding quantities of power for the production of thousands of purposes, electric light increased in unparalleled capacities in proportion to technological expertise and socio-political demands.

In 1878, the Exposition assumed the role as a sanguine pronouncement of the country’s propitious future following the Siege of Paris in 1870-71. Organizers seized the opportunity to showcase unforeseen electrical innovations in unequalled plentitude. Werner von Siemens electrical railcar; Thomas Edison’s megaphone and phonograph, which converted sound to an electric signal; and, an early version of Alexander Graham Bell’s telephone were top billings. And beyond the confines of the pavilion, the groundbreaking Jablochhoff⁴³ electric carbon lamp—demonstrated on the half-mile “cannonball-shot

⁴² Buck-Morss loc. cit., pp. 88-9.

⁴³ Pavel Nikolayevich Yablochkov (1847–1894), transliterated as Jablochhoff, was a Russian inventor, electrical engineer, and businessman. His invention of the “electric candle” consisted of two long, parallel carbon blocks, separated by an inert material such as plaster of Paris or kaolin. The lamp was ignited when electricity sparked the carbon thus producing light. It is noteworthy that the arc lamp project was

boulevard seemingly without an end,”⁴⁴ the Avenue de l’Opera⁴⁵ and its adjacent plaza—garnered international attention and near-instant fame (figs. 2 and 3). Powered by Zenobé Gramme dynamos, which visitors could observe from high platforms in the Machine Hall, (fig. 4) the Jablochhoff *bougies électriques*, as they were known, were the most celebrated innovation of the Expo. Sixty-four glass globes encased two carbon rods insulated by gypsum that when “ignited” by electric charge, produced a bright and steady glow. Each evening at 8:00 sharp the queue of streetlamps was ceremoniously switched *on* and remained so until midnight. Some thirteen million fair-goers may have witnessed the historic illumination of the “terrific mélange of lights,” and, “great blaze of splendor.”⁴⁶ The “public provision of the new light represented a triumph over social and cultural ‘darkness;’ light meant *lumière* in more than one sense, the project of the illuminated city became cognate with the idea of the enlightened city.”⁴⁷

realized through the financial and promotional efforts of Zenobé Gramme, inventor of the direct current that was essential for Yablochkov’s success. Although Baron Haussmann had utilized large-scale *lumières électriques* in 1854 for the reconstruction of the Rue de Rivoli, the lighting was restricted in a zone that presented no commercial interest. The first public use of his system, in October of 1877, was at the Halle Marengo of the Magasins du Louvre, lit by six arc lamp lights. Two years following the triumph of the Exposition, the system grew to 120 lamps, with an additional 84 powered by a 100 horsepower steam engine that operated every night for two-and-a-half years.

⁴⁴ Siegfried Geidion, *Mechanization Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1969), p. 14. Description was taken from a line in Victor Hugo’s novel, *1793*: “The idea of architects is sometimes strange. The architect of the Rue de Rivoli had for his ideal the trajectory of a cannonball. Boulevards of this type present a novel experiential space.” See: Christoph Asendorf, *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity*, (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1993), p. 61.

⁴⁵ In addition to the Avenue and Place de l’Opera, crowds also strolled to Place du Théâtre Français, the l’Orangerie des Tuileries, the Arc d’Triomphe de l’Etoile at the center of Paris’s historic axis, which begins with the Musée du Louvre. The grand Roman portico of the Corps Législatif; the Doric columnar front and relief of *The Last Judgment* of the Benedictine church, l’Eglise de Madeleine were also illuminated by Jablochhoff lights.

⁴⁶ From the “General Official Catalogue of the 1881 Paris Exhibition,” (Paris: A. Lahure, 1881), cited in K. G. Beauchamp, *Exhibiting Electricity* (London: The Institution of Electrical Engineers, 1997), p. 160.

⁴⁷ Christopher Prendergast, *Paris and the Nineteenth Century*; (London: Blackwell, 1991), p. 183.

Furthermore, Jablochhoff's illumination almost immediately made electric lighting practical and popular. It promised to be viable in many capacities other than the street. Edgar Degas, for example, was interested in electric lighting early on, as noted in his letter to Felix Bracquemond about preparations for the 1879 Impressionist exhibition, in which he wrote, 'La Cie Jablochkof nous propose de nous éclairer à la lumière électrique.'⁴⁸ The passage has been annotated by the eminent Degas scholar, Theodore Reff, who has surmised, "The new lamp.... was also used at the Salon of 1879, where it was appreciated as casting a "truer" light on the works shown, but there is no evidence that, despite Degas's efforts, it was used at the Impressionist exhibition of that year."⁴⁹

News of Jablochhoff's breakthrough was reported in major newspapers across Europe. *The New York Times* informed readers that, "The subject of lighting streets and houses by electricity instead of gas, or the various illuminators now in use, is exciting so much public interest that thousands of letters...are daily sent to all probable centers of information."⁵⁰ The collective thrill of the experience was interpreted by the Italian novelist, Edmondo de Amicis, in excited verse in his *Studies of Paris*: "...the Avenue de l'Opéra inundated with electric light; ...a crowd coming and going under a shower of rosy and whitest light diffused from great ground-glass globes. ... That mass of gleaming streets which lead to the Théâtre Français, to the Tuileries, to the Concorde and Champs-Élysées,

⁴⁸ According to Theodore Reff in correspondence with McKinnon, September 8, 2014.

⁴⁹ M. Guérin, M., *Lettres de Degas* (Bernard Grasset, 1945), p. 45. The quote from correspondence between Reff and McKinnon and based upon Reff's soon to be published work on Degas's letters.

⁵⁰ Reported on December 6, 1878. Cited in archives of *The New York Times*, 2013.

each one of which brings you a voice of the great Paris festival calling and attracting you on seven sides...kindling in your brain and nerves the madness of pleasure.”⁵¹

But the very imprint of incandescent filament light, essential to the construction of an ethos of *la vie modern*, was above all else emblematic of a change in perception. Comprehension of the shape of things at dawn, dusk, or in the nighttime was understood through a new sense of solidity and volume, surface and substance, depth and length. Things familiar and foreign were transformed through lighting schemes. For the turning of night into day, emblematic of leaving the past behind, that was so vigorously sought, it was the singularly most dramatic aspect of the new light’s rich metamorphic traits.

This method of electric light is...theoretically so good, that, supposing the practical difficulties which surround it can be surmounted, it instantly assumes a position of importance.

J. W. Swan⁵²

At the first Congress International de Électricité⁵³ held at the Paris 1881 Exposition, such was the preeminence of the conference that a full-scale coastal lighthouse, complete with a working prism, was installed as the centerpiece of the vast Palais de l’Industrie (fig. 5). The forum encompassed an international scope of scientists and innovations including a veritable taxonomy of lights and light-related apparatuses numbering in the thousands. The business of lighting was booming. On view were new switches, sockets, cords, and fuses;

⁵¹ Edmondo de Amicis, *Studies of Paris*, W. W. Cady, trans. (New York and London: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1886), p. 32. Citation noted in T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers* (Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 76.

⁵² Joseph William Swan was an English scientist who demonstrated his invention of the light bulb in competition with Thomas Edison, and two other scientists, in 1881. “The Sub-Division of the Electric Light” presented Nov. 24, 1880 at the 92nd Ordinary General Meeting of the Society of Engineers, Westminster, London. Published in *Journal of the Society of Telegraph Engineers* (vol. IX, 1880, London: E. and F.N. Spon).

⁵³ The Congress was organized to address the practical necessity to establish international standardizations of electrical current, pressure, or voltage, and resistance through measuring ampere, volt, and ohm country-to-country.

lampshades made of glass, mica, silk, and paper; wall sconces, table lamps, hanging fixtures, torchers; military and nautical lighting; and, at the very crux of the early lighting frenzy, vitrines of hand-blown glass light bulbs with varying configurations of filaments.

Norwegian, British, German, American, Belgian, French, Austrian, and Italian corporations and individual scientists including Victor Serrin, inventor of the first self-starting and self-regulating arc lamp produced in 1857; the surveyor and mathematical instrument-maker, William (Wilhelm) Würdemann, who was Jablockhoff's main competitor; and, Werner Siemens, with his scientific partner, Friedrich von Heferner-Alteneck who worked to develop a bulb that could compete with the dominant Jablockhoff.

In addition to these men and others, four pioneers of the incandescent bulb, Thomas Edison; and the British scientists, the American-born inventor, Hiram Maxim; the physicist and chemist, Joseph Swan; and, the electrical engineer, St. George Lane Fox-Pitt presented their respective light bulbs in highly contentious, world-changing demonstrations.⁵⁴ Each of the four competitors responded to a similar range of critical problems. These aimed at proof of a commercially viable and durable electric lamp comparable in cost, quality, and controllability with the gas lamp⁵⁵ (figs. 6-9). Of primary concern was the throw of light that

⁵⁴ A vivid recollection of the circles in which the idea of the exhibition was conceived by physician and electrical pioneer Arsene D'Arsonval, quoted in Louis Chauvois, *D'Arsonal. Soixante-cinq ans à travers la science* (Paris, 1937), p. 184. Other sources corroborate D'Arsonval's account. See, for example, Gaston Sciana, 'Georges Berger (1834 1910) et l'Exposition Internationale d'Electricite de 1881. *Bulletin de la Societe internationale des Electriciens*, 10 (1910), pp. 659-76. Sciana claimed that the idea emerged from a dinner table conversation between three financiers, who then approached the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs. For another view which stresses the link between the promoters of the publication, *La Lumière électrique*, and those of the exhibition, see: Emile Alglave and J. Boulard, *La Lumière électrique: Son histoire, sa production et son emploi* (Paris, 1882). Cited in Robert Fox's, "Thomas Edison's Parisian Campaign: Incandescent Lighting and the Hidden Face of Technology Transfer," *Annals of Science* (Oxford, no. 53, 1996), p. 164.

⁵⁵ Fox, op. cit., p. 160. Fox notes on the designs of the lamps, see Arthur A. Bright. *The Electric Lamp Industry: Technological Change and Economic Development from 1800 to 1947* (New York, 1949); and, Brian P. Bowers. *A History of Electric Light & Power* (London, 1982).

would be even, odorless, and strong. The scientist's rival lamps differed little in the shape of the holders or mechanisms by which an electric current was fed into the bulb. The great differences, which the success of the experiments rested upon, were the preparations of platinum/iridium, asbestos/carbon, or carbonized bamboo used for filaments.⁵⁶ In that they each produced illumination from a vacuum glass chamber, the bulbs were otherwise primarily indistinguishable from one another except for the peculiarity of shape.⁵⁷

Aside from laboratory testing, the scientists demonstrated their bulbs en masse within the pavilion complex. Edison's bulbs illuminated the entry stairwell of the pavilion with an effort that sealed his fate. An enormous electric "E" was inscribed by seven hundred bulbs. The electric sign not only brought Edison's name to mind for French viewers, and above all, the judging committee, the initial E signified the first name of France's last empress, the well-admired Eugénie de Montijo. Following France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War Napoleon III's family had been forced to flee France, and Eugenie her throne. Edison's sentimentalist strategy marks one of the earliest examples of electric light in service to a socio-economic and political agenda. As is well known, the Menlo Park bamboo filament proved to last an astonishing twelve hundred hours, which along with Edison's innovative power system garnered the *diplôme d'honneur*.⁵⁸ By the close of the fair,

⁵⁶ In 1800, the pioneer of electro-chemistry, Sir Humphry Davy, was the first to observe a light that was produced by discharge of electric current between two carbon electrodes. The evolution of a maximum functioning light bulb was dependent upon the perfection of a filament material. These materials included platinum, iridium, carbonized fiber, including cotton sewing thread, and paper, bamboo, cellulose, and tantalum, the first metal filament (1902-11), to various forms of tungsten filaments. Likewise, the shape of the filament, coiled, looped, "horseshoe," narrow, wide, short, and so on, were equally experimental, and critical. Swan and Edison had received a joint patent for a carbon-thread incandescent lamp in 1876, which had lasted approximately forty hours.

⁵⁷ Fox, loc. cit.

⁵⁸ Edison's campaign was not without controversy for its highly propagandistic methods to skillfully manipulate the French media, and the jury itself. One indication of the success of the Edison group's efforts to set the terms of the discussion through tireless explanation was found in a letter from Edison's

880,000 visitors had seen the marvels of “mysterious” electric light, the final challenge to the dependency upon oil lamp lighting.

Marking the end of one century and the beginning of the next, the 1900 Exposition displayed “step by step the ascending course of progress, from the stage coach to the express train, from the courier to the wireless telegraph and the telephone, from lithography to radiography, from the first mining of coal from the bowels of the earth to the airplane which is about to conquer the sky.”⁵⁹ Incandescent light virtually exploded throughout the fairgrounds. The undisputed showpiece was the Palais de l’Électricité. In Beaux-arts style, the colossal confection was embellished with six thousand incandescent lamps and was crowned with a sculptural ensemble known as “The Genius of Electricity.” The composite group featured *la Fee de l’Électricité*, an electricity fairy whose reign was popularized during her incarnation in the 1880s and 1890s as a version of France’s eternal maiden of Truth and Justice, Marianne. In all of her guises she carries a beacon, a gas lamp, or, an electric light held aloft. The fairy-figure was accompanied by two hippo-griffins that altogether purportedly heralded the promise of a new century, in an otherwise retardataire stylistic mode. The odd eclecticism of the sculpture was redoubled by its placement atop a radiant electric “1900” and backed by a massive star configured with hundreds of purpose-fitted bulbs (figs. 10-12). In quality of sheer dazzle, the pavilion complex, which also included the Chateau d’Eau, was intensified by the ingenious design of electric light fountains and a vast

colleague in Paris, Otto Moses, written halfway through the exhibition planning. “We have disseminated the word ‘system’ until people talk of Swan & Maxim & Fox having no system.” Letter. Otto Moses to Thomas A. Edison in TAE Papers: A Selective Microfilm Edition, published by University Publications in America (58:1038-1040). Cited in *The Languages of Edison’s Light* by Charles Bazerman (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002); p. 203.

⁵⁹ Tom Gunning, “A Century Pivots: 1900 and the World Expositions,” presented at the symposium, *Das frühe Kino und die Avantgarde (Early Cinema and the Avant-Garde)*, Vienna, 2002, Filmarchiv Austria, Stadtkino; unpaginated.

sheet of illuminated water, approximately one hundred feet in height by thirty feet wide that tumbled into a series of steps and a grand pool onto the main plaza. At night, the theatrics of colored light-and-water gave off the image of a pool of fire. The dominion of filament light was also promoted in a plethora of advertising. The celebrity status of the Palace of Electricity was printed in various forms on hundreds of thousands of bibelots and *carte de visites* among other printed matter (figs. 13 -15).

The feature of electric light in the Great Room of the Palais des l'illusions⁶⁰ emulated the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. Lengths of electric lights were reflected in floor-to-ceiling mirrored walls rather than the candles or daylight in the seventeenth century long corridor. The illusory effect of infinity was magnified in proportion of lighting to wall space (fig. 16). And, the Palais Lumineux Ponsin, an architectural folly constructed primarily from marbled, semi-opaque, opalescent, and completely transparent Venetian glass, and that from the glassworks at Saint Gobain, was noted in the *Parisian Illustrated Review* that an, "...opium smoker in 'The Thousand and One Nights' could hardly, in his wildest dreams conceive anything...more brilliant."⁶¹ The palace included twelve thousand electric lamps embedded in glass walls, pillars, tiles, stair railings, and, glass flooring. The lights gave the *lumineux*, or luminous Bright Palace, as it was known, a phosphorescent glow over-described in the Exposition literature: "...columns appear such as those famous temple columns of Tyre, carved gems equipped of nocturnal radiation. Finally, at the height of the monument, a globe of fire that seems to spin in the air stands the goddess of dazzling light brandishing two

⁶⁰ Designed by the Beaux-arts style architect, Eugène Hénard, who also planned the Palais de l'Électricité and Chateau d'Eau.

⁶¹ C. Lombroso, "The Paris Exhibition of 1900, Illustrated," *Parisian Illustrated Review*, Vol. 6, No.1, "The Parisian" issue (New York, Carnegie Hall: January, 1899), p. 406.

torches.⁶² If the splendor of five thousand electric bulbs had not revitalized the icon of *la ville-lumière*,⁶³ namely Gustave Eiffel's tower, its ambiguous popularity among Parisians would have remained absolute. The tower's controversial legacy that lingered from the Exposition of 1889 constituted a derision of industrial architectural design through the exposed process of assembly, in rivets and struts, made visible. Eleven years later, the Eiffel Tower was coordinated with other fantasy light shows at the fair. By the closure of the Exposition on November 12, 1900, known as the Fête la Nuit, cannon shots signaled a change in the tower's lights from clear to luminescent red.⁶⁴ One hour later, six more cannons boomed and the lights transformed to green in tandem with sixty-foot high sprays of incandescent fountains along the Seine and boulevards (figs. 17 and 18). At precisely 11:20, over one thousand more lights of the Château d'Eau were extinguished, followed by thousands more along the Trocadéro. The tower's tracery of lights went black on the next cannon shot cue as a corps of drummers performed a retreat rhythm in military fashion. Crowds responded by departing into a carefully orchestrated, darkened Paris.

In terms of sheer power, the Exposition required an escalated quantity of energy to drive the volume of lights, mammoth machines, pumping systems, and myriad technological innovations in over eighty thousand separate projects. The goods and processes were removed from either use or trade value to create a new relation of display value. Machines

⁶² G. Moynet, "Le Palais Lumineux Ponsin" in *L'Exposition de Paris*, Vol.1. (Paris: Montgredien, 1900), pp. 124-6.

⁶³ It is interesting to note other cities sharing the moniker, "City of Light" with Paris including, Quanzhou, China, the earliest proclaimed "City of Light," ca.1271; Lyon, France, known as "Le ville des Lumières" from the invention of the first moving picture film camera, the *cinématographe*, by the Lumière Brothers in 1895, as well as the "Fête des Lumières" in honor of the Virgin Mary, who as legend goes, helped save the city from plague in 1643. Others known as the "City of Light" include Anchorage, Alaska; Medina, Iran; Varanasi, India ("the luminous one"); and, Eindhoven, The Netherlands, where in 1891, the Philips Corporation established its first light bulb factory.

⁶⁴ Adapted from stage lighting techniques.

performed for the audiences in staged settings in which hordes of spectators—numbering forty million in 1900—would regard the engines for their rightful place in the overall spectacle of the fair. The workings of gigantic turbines and dynamos were not only supplying essential energy, they were put on view in les Halles des Machines (fig. 19). In this mode of installation the machine, now in its cultural ascendancy and firmly established as an early constituent of the technological sublime,⁶⁵ was also fetishized. Perhaps there was no greater imaginative response to the elevated appreciation of electric power, to the quasi-religious impact that the outsized machines caused than the fictitious voice of Langley in Henry Adams’s celebrated essay, “The Virgin and the Dynamo”:

...he began to feel the forty-foot dynamos as a moral force,...he could see only an absolute fiat in electricity as in faith. The force was wholly new... man had translated himself into a new universe, which had no common scale of measurement with the old. He had entered a super-sensual world, which he could measure nothing except by chance collisions of movements imperceptible to his senses, perhaps even imperceptible to his instruments, but perceptible to each other, and so to some known ray at the end of the scale. Langley seemed prepared for anything, even for an indeterminable number of universes interfused—physics stark mad in metaphysics.⁶⁶

Among other notable demonstrations that relied upon advances in light and electrical technology was Wilhelm Röntgen’s X-ray radiogram of his wife’s hand (the invention would garner the first Nobel Prize in Physics in 1901); the world’s largest refracting telescope, known as the “Great Paris Telescope” that measured one hundred and ninety-five feet in length and was engineered to capture light from space through an electric rotating mirror (fig. 20); and, an electric sidewalk, *le trottoir roulant* that moved fairgoers across the grounds at six miles per hour. In the combined spheres of entertainment and technology, the Lumière

⁶⁵ A concept first proposed by Perry Miller, *The Life of the Mind in America* (New York: Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1970).

⁶⁶ Henry Adams, excerpted from the essay, *The Education of Henry Adams and “The Dynamo and the Virgin,”* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1918). Originally written in 1900.

Photorama featured the “Beach at Dinard” projected through twelve fixed lenses on to a 360° panoramic scene measuring six by twenty-one meters. Other “pictures” were the first to synchronize sound and image shown to crowds in the great rotunda, the Salle des Fêtes (fig. 21). The American dancer, Lōie Fuller, a Parisian feature since the late 1890s, was swathed in artificially lighted sheaths of swirling silk for her renowned Serpentine Dance. Fuller’s performances were a representation of modernism’s blurring of boundaries between human beings and machine—between the organic (body) and the inorganic (electric light)—which was important at the juncture of Art Nouveau and Futurism, between staid stylization and fleeting form (fig. 22).⁶⁷

Everything becomes an allegory for me.

Charles Baudelaire⁶⁸

Resuming where this digression began, our concern is with the idioms of electric light at the 1937 Paris Exposition: the utilization of lighting as propaganda by the Third Reich; the exceptional luminescent programs and electric demonstrations by the French; and, the premiere of Pablo Picasso’s masterpiece of the Spanish Civil War period, *Guernica*, in which a single light bulb powered sun allegorically expressed a darkness of that epoch (fig. 23 and 24). If these distinct foci seem unrelated they are indeed bound by the “problem” of artificial light in its symbolic capacities and context of pre-World War II Europe.

The “beautiful glow of the Third Reich”⁶⁹ appeared in the nighttime through beams of light that defined the German Pavilion’s architectural fluting and granite fascia (fig. 25).

⁶⁷ See Rhonda K. Garelick, *Electric Salome: Lōie Fuller’s Performance of Modernism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007).

⁶⁸ Charles Baudelaire, “Le Cygne.” *The Swan in Flowers of Evil* (Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 36.

⁶⁹ The expression stems from Peter Reichel, *The Beautiful Shine of the Third Reich, Fascination and Violence of Fascism*, (Vienna: Hanser Verlag, 1991). Noted in Alexander Schmidt, *Geländebegehung. Das Reichsparteitagsgelände in Nürnberg* (Nürnberg, Sandberg Verlag, 2005). With thanks to Dr. Schmidt for his correspondence and generosity with materials regarding Albert Speer’s *Lichtdom*.

Symbolic importance was placed upon the massive scale, consistent with the Reich's intention to instruct international audiences in Paris about the discipline and order of the new regime and its "spirit of domination."⁷⁰ The Deutsches Haus was not an icon of peace and "quiet pride" as certain Nazi rhetoric implied. Rather, with its grandiose fluted surround and flat roof that functioned as podium and perch for the imperial *Hohheitszeichen*,⁷¹ the Nazi eagle, the dramatic lighting directed upon the pavilion produced the indelible impression of "an instrument of conquest."⁷² Illuminated like many official buildings of the Nazi regime, the monolithic Deutsches Haus was encased in strong and even light similar to the new lighting techniques used for the very first time by the French, in the capacity of a world fair.

The Pont du Alexandre III, for example, a Beaux-Arts-style arch bridge spanning the Seine, known as the "triumphant way of light," was lined with twelve high-intensity mercury lamp columns that were further enhanced with floodlights.⁷³ The intense beams, like those used at the Nürnberg rallies and the German pavilion, blasted skyward from outsized lighting fixtures (figs. 26-28).⁷⁴ In the capacity of national identity, the big business of electric lighting meant new inventions. The Pont du Alexandre's industrial lighting was funded and promoted by Philips-OSRAM, whose marketing aims ultimately connected their

⁷⁰ Alex Scobie, *Hitler's State Architecture: The Impact of Classical Antiquity* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1990), pp. 5-7.

⁷¹ The eagle's stiffened wings and stylized head, turned to the left expressed the resolute will and solidity of purpose as a Nazi Party symbol. This was in contrast to the original design of the eagle's head facing right when used as a national symbol.

⁷² Cited in Fiss, *op.cit.*, p. 58 and n.83, p. 233. "As Speer would later write, 'My architecture represented an intimidating display of power.'" Quoted in Scobie, *op.cit.*, p. 40.

⁷³ The installation was a promotional sponsorship by the Philips Company which became OSRAM-Philips in 1931, established for promotional and advertising business projects.

⁷⁴ Powell, *loc. cit.* and, L. C. Kalfa, "Illuminating at the International Exhibition, Paris, 1937," *Philips Technical Review*, 1937, unpaginated.

products to the goals of the Nazi regime;⁷⁵ and, the German-designed Zeiss-Ikon⁷⁶ lighting that was exclusively developed for the Deutsches Haus. These relationships suggest how crucial electric lighting products and campaigns were regarded at the Exposition. In these two cases, and others that are not cited here, panels of solid illumination redefined France's "enlightenment" heritage, with artificial light more than ever at the service of powers of control.

Blumenberg surmised that in nocturnal spaces an, "optics of prefabrication ...confronts modern man with ever more situations of coerced vision."⁷⁷ Furthermore, the connection between vision and freedom was accordingly dissociated. Within environments in which a dominance of prefabricated and technologically pre-cast situations and aspects prevailed, the modern extensions of sensory spheres [would not] become a source of freedom. Blumenberg's understanding of the term, *Zwangsoptik*,⁷⁸ literally "forced optics," regarded technological light as an obdurate material uncannily similar to steel and concrete, as lighting constructions were made to be in the contexts under analysis. For the Nazi pavilion, with its impermeable fascia of German granite,⁷⁹ the whole effect of the Zeiss

⁷⁵ Pamela Swett, *Selling under the Swastika: Advertising and Commercial Culture in Nazi Germany* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2013), p. 129.

⁷⁶ Noted by Danilo Udovicki-Selb, "Facing Hitler's Pavilion: The Uses of Modernity in the Soviet Pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exhibition," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 47, No. 13 (2012). Zeiss Ikon is a German company formed in 1926 that produced the industry-standard for 35 mm cameras and 8 mm movie cameras. Although Udovicki-Selb does not clarify this point, it may be presumed that the Reich engaged Zeiss Ikon, which had a factory in Berlin, to invent the high-intensity lighting systems with Zeiss lenses for Deutsches Haus.

⁷⁷ *Optik des Präparats* generally refers to a laboratory or pharmaceutical "preparation," but it is rendered as "prefabrication" to convey the central idea that, in the world of artificial lighting, visual possibilities are shaped in advance. Blumenberg, op. cit., n. 105, p. 62.

⁷⁸ "Today, one speaks of the "technology of light" in a sense not at all limited to the generation of light or to the "lighting" t], but rather one which understands light as a construction unit like steel, concrete, etc. See *Lichtarchitektur* by W. Luckhardt (Berlin, 1956).

⁷⁹ The evocation of funerary architecture, the *Todes-Kult der Baukunst*, the "architectural death cult" of National Socialism was realized in Speer's design of Deutsches Haus. Paul Westheim, a German exiled in

power not only made the imposing structure appear as if the light was inseparable from the structure. As if, the Deutsches Haus was in itself a pure source of light, which in metaphoric terms, the “embodiment” of light was germane to the Reich’s shadowy self-stylization.

Curiously, the effect of the brightness also created “the ghostly appearance of a photo-negative”⁸⁰ in which light areas become dark, and dark are reversed to light (fig. 29). Essentially dematerializing the colossal building’s interstices, the lighting also boosted the translucency of its ‘negative’ pilasters, thereby adding to the nighttime electric phantasmagoria, which the entire Exposition was committed in the appellation “la vie modern.” Yet, Speer’s structure was nothing other than an “expression of a mobilized body politic,”⁸¹ a pastiche of trans-historical classicism and quasi-modernism that pronounced the National Socialist ethos of “elective affinity” between Antiquity and the Third Reich.⁸² The obscene truth of Nazi tyranny was time and again obfuscated by lighting displays implicit in the Reich’s aesthetic, a melding of classical beauty, of the Apollonian ethos with the Dionysian notion of a revolutionary sublime, and, a violence that took form in the spirit of order and the guise of discipline. The organization and deployment of electric light was a silent component of the aestheticized violence.

In that the German Pavilion was a grand gesture in staging, adapted from avant-garde theater and Hitler’s obsession with Hollywood,⁸³ it also served a part in psychologically preparing German citizens for war by setting in form a platform for the

Paris, noted at the time that the pavilion architecture foreshadowed the Nazi crematoriums in Germany and Poland.

⁸⁰ Udovicki-Selb, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* p. 49 and p. 104.

⁸² Fiss, *op.cit.*, p. 62.

⁸³ As Karen Fiss has noted, the Nazis “wanted to demonstrate that their Aryanized and state-run [cinema] industry would oust Hollywood which they denigrated as a capitalist center harboring Jewish financiers and exiled German filmmakers. The 1937 Exposition helped further this agenda, since the efforts of the German cinema industry was largely well received by the French press and public.” *op. cit.*, p. 144.

Reich's mobilization. The indisputable affinity between the columns of light in Paris and those to be "switched on" in Nürnberg were unmistakable. It was purportedly the upright projection of lights on the pavilion flutes and interstices, organized in a repetition of IIIs, interpreted as the Roman numeral "3" in reference to the Third Reich, which had inspired Speer's idea for the *Lichtdom*, the Cathedral of Light at the Nürnberg Rally. In fact, Speer's idea was by no means original. In the 1930s, lighting en masse took the form of torchlight processions that were part of the traditional means of political propaganda. These included the march of political leaders through the city and past the Hotel Deutscher Hof, the domicile of Hitler while he was in Nürnberg, which was a permanent fixture of the agenda.⁸⁴ Torchlight parades had long been known, including Edison's in 1884 to rally support for a presidential contender; and, for the first Hollywood premieres in the early 1920s that used surplus military searchlights to announce the aura of the magic and glamor of movie stardom.

Gilles Deleuze noted that, "up to the end, Nazism thinks of itself in competition with Hollywood."⁸⁵ Indeed, the Reich supported the German cinema industry to try and oust Hollywood's global dominance with its Jewish-run studios backed by Jewish financiers. And in so doing the Nazis felt that they would come to dominate not only the international movie business, but that the cooption of Hollywood techniques for the regime's propaganda would work to ensure *die Führer's* fame. As for Speer's ingenuity, Wolfgang Schivelbusch matter-of-factly sets the architect's self-adulation straight:

The light cathedral was only one of the countless light beam architectures of his epoch, but doubtlessly the mightiest and most impressive. (...) What keeps the memory of the Nuremberg light cathedral so present in posterity is the context from which it arose and for which it had been staged. Viewed

⁸⁴ Schmidt, op.cit., p. 127.

⁸⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p. 264.

solely as pure light architecture it was a construct like many others, but as a light space in which 150,000 people were transformed into a mass enthralled by national-socialistic ideas it became a symbol for the totalitarian part of the century.⁸⁶

At the *Reichsparteitag der Arbeit*, the Nürnberg “Rally of Labor,” the high-production values, to use a cinematic term, included the massive display of electric lights that carried the Reich’s message above all other tactics. The Führer’s salute was inscribed in electric light torches “HEIL HITLER,” in concert with an enormous illuminated swastika centered in the Zeppelinfeld and surrounded in an assembly of one hundred-and-thirty anti-aircraft Flak searchlights of the Lichtdom (figs. 30-31). The vertical bars of light, a metaphor in themselves, surrounded the field at twelve meters apart thereby creating an enormous, imaginary common room. In technical terms, the diameter of the Flak lens was 150 cm and the light gave an output of 990 million candelas of intensity, the equivalent of over one billion lumens that accordingly calculates as an “infinite” throw of light (fig. 32). The collective blast of light created a blazing and eerie haze that could be seen from the nearby countryside. It was reported that an ember of the rally lights was faintly visible from as far away as Chemnitz and the Danube valley, one hundred and fifty miles northeast of Nürnberg.

Flak lights, transformed for the rallies from their purpose as war machines that swiveled to blind enemy bombers and locate attackers in air battles, emboldened Germany’s fashioning of its ascendancy. The “light of the Arians,”⁸⁷ or cathedrals of light, was restaged in rallies from 1936, including the Berlin Olympic Games, and other mass gatherings

⁸⁶ Wolfgang Schivelbusch: *Light, Illusion and Delusion: Appearances of Electrical Illumination in the 20th century* (Berlin, 1992), p. 89.

⁸⁷ A phrase borrowed from Albrecht W. Thöne, *The Light of the Arians: Light, Fire, and Darkness Symbolism of National Socialism*, published in German as *Das Licht der Arier: Feuer und Dunkelsymbolik des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich, 1979).

through '38. The enthrallment of the German assembly, magnified by effective tactics with light-and-sound, and precise pageantry described by André-François Poncet, the French Ambassador to Germany, who had attended the Berlin Games. He summarized much of what the Paris Exposition authorities admired most about the Reich's steely organization and dramaturgy: "Crowned heads, princes, and illustrious guests thronged to Berlin, eager to meet this prophetic being who apparently held the fate of Europe in his hand, and to observe the Germany which he had transformed and galvanized in his irresistible grip. Beholding a flawless organization, an impeccable order, a perfect discipline, and a limitless prodigality, everyone went into ecstasy."⁸⁸

The darker reality of Nürnberg lay in the fact of it being a brilliant strategy of disinformation. Not only had Hitler smirked, "... in such large numbers for a thing like this, other countries will think we're swimming in searchlights,"⁸⁹ the composition was an outstanding vehicle for National Socialist propaganda that heralded the Lichtdom in messianic terms. "But all who are there...experience the holy shudder of the myth of Germany in their soul that can only be felt by German blood."⁹⁰ By 1939, a version of the '37 Lichtdom was repeated in August following the Nazi conquest of Prague. After that, the orchestration of mass lighting turned into a heinous reality. The flak searchlights of the cathedral of light theatre were used during bombing raids, which had been their original purpose (fig. 33). Darkness literally befell the cities of Europe, and the "holy shivers" gave way to naked fear for one's life. Since most people spent many of their nights in air raid

⁸⁸ André François-Poncet. *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1932-1939*, Tome IV, Document 310, pp. 203-04. Cited by Thomas Simpson, "Adieu Beaux Jours: The 1937 Exposition International and the Eclipse of French Foreign Policy" (Washington, D.C.: American University, 2012), pp. 212 and 220.

⁸⁹ Quoted in Sherree Owens Zalampas, *Adolf Hitler: A Psychological Interpretation of His Views on Architecture, Art and Music* (Popular Press, 1990), p. 78.

⁹⁰ Hanns Kerrl, Nuremberg National Congress 1936. Rally brochure quoted in *The Party Congress of Honor* (Berlin, 1937), p. 200. Cited in Schmidt, loc.cit., n.131, p. 254.

shelters, only few, like Speer himself, could observe the aerial warfare from a safe distance.⁹¹ Here again, he showed himself to be the cynic: “It required constant realization of the gruesome reality not to become fascinated by this image. The illumination caused by the light parachutes (...) followed by the flashes from explosions, caught in the clouds of smoke from fires, countless searching floodlights, the exciting play when a plane was caught in the lights and tried to evade the cone of light, a torch-like flash lasting seconds if it was hit: the apocalypse offered a magnificent spectacle.”⁹²

For all modes in which lighting was understood for its symbolic influence, it was again used in France’s reformulation of itself, as it had been in 1878 with the Jablochkoff lamps, following the Franco-Prussian War, which had crushed the French. In 1937, the fair-project aspired to rally the whole of France from a type of societal languor that had persisted since 1919, and, to alleviate increasing economic fragility. The reckoning of political ineffectualness, understood by Blum’s party, with the lack of public displays of pomp became a common theme in the debate over how French national culture could be revived. There was concern among fair officials and the government as to how France might compare to or compete with, or even keep pace with the mastery of Nazi aesthetics at the Exposition. The Polish-born Parisian critic, Waldemar George, who was later proven to be a sympathizer of Hitler’s regime, reproached France for its lack of passion for effective, dramatic political festivals. In an article in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, George bawled that National Socialism had reconnected Germany with her people’s ancient traditions and modern, creative potential through organized rallies and a “politics of force,” an unfortunate phrase of Hermann Göring’s that George chose to quote.

⁹¹ Schmidt, op.cit.,p. 254.

⁹² Schivelbusch, *Light and Illusion*, op.cit., p. 91.

Nevertheless, the French desire to compete with the Reich's mastery of mass theatricality may be seen as a version of "mimetic subversion." Denis Hollier suggested this hypothesis in his insightful analysis of George Bataille's relationship to nonconformist ideologies. With Blum's government assigned to the continuation of rapprochement, any aggressive move toward Germany was impossible. In Hollier's assessment, the "art" of mimetic subversion functions by outstripping a potential aggressor, consciously or unconsciously, on his own grounds, so to speak. If resistance was to be enacted by the French in the public arena of the Exposition, what better way than to go about it than by identification with the aggressor, Germany. Of course, the French enthrallment with the Reich's delivery of an ordered agenda, brilliantly constructed mass rallies, uniformity in style and delivery, counter the idea of subversion. Yet, Hollier's argument deepens through the model of societal self-loathing, what he described as the, "nausea of the Frenchman on contact with himself,"⁹³ from which mimetic subversion functions in order for the victim to escape paralysis.

The Popular Front had received sharp criticism for the lack of France's display of vigorous spectacle in the face of totalitarian celebrations. Blum's government, realizing its own insecurity about the matter took bold initiatives to put life back in to the *fête nationale*. That July marked the first mass gathering in the history of the Third Republic (1870), highlighted by a torchlight march of fifteen thousand light-carriers that traversed twelve kilometers. The light parade emulated the Reich's powerful light processions seen by four million people. Marcel Lods and Eugene Beaudoin, lighting designers for the Exposition also designed the fête lights, which did not meet their satisfaction, complaining that the spectators were dispersed far and wide thereby ruining any sense of unification. The Nazi

⁹³ Denis Hollier, "On Equivocation (Between Literature and Politics,) *October* 55 (Winter 1990), pp.49-59.

model, which the French had attempted to emulate at great expense and typical administrative, but had failed at, did not recognize the essential factors of proper staging and of holding the audience's attention toward a single focal point, thereby achieving a holistic symbol.

As the art historian Karen Fiss noted, Jacques Vienot, commissioner of the art de fêtes, wrote an article for *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* that compared photographs of the light parades at Nürnberg with those in Paris the summer of '37. Vienot pronounced, "We must therefore revive the past for the future by reclaiming a glorious tradition..."⁹⁴ And drawing upon the technological and artistic resources in France, he proposed a permanent "Academy of Joy," an organization that would assist to "bestow a new dignity on its national demonstrations and popular festivals."⁹⁵ Vienot's use of the word "Joy" for the effort came ominously close to the Nazi leisure organization's, *Kraft durch Freude*, Strength through Joy.⁹⁶

As May 25, the opening date of the Exposition approached, the fair became an engrossing topic in Paris despite the ongoing war across France's southwestern border. Upon close examination of the daily newspaper, *Le Journal*, 30 April 30th, one of the front page headlines read, "Guernica et un grand nombre de villages sont tombés aux mains des soldats de franco" (Guernica and many villages have fallen into the hands of Franco), with the story to follow on page three. News of the destruction of Gernika had not garnered a full or half-page. The Gernika news piece was truncated by the illustrated advertisement, "Avant l'Exposition...tours de Lumière" (Before the Expo...Towers of Light) meant as a teaser of nighttime illumination at the Church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois near the Louvre

⁹⁴ Labbé, op.cit., 7: pp. 449-450. Cited in Fiss, op. cit., p. 182.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ See Shelley Baranowski, *Strength Through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

(fig. 34). An article about what fairgoers might expect from Expo lighting shows followed the ad.

Certainly the nightlights were exhilarating. The organization of tremendous feats of incandescent programming, infrastructural engineering, power supply requirements, labor and financing had been considered and drafted as early as 1934. Of the many challenging installations, the submersion of rotating colored-screen drums in watertight compartments to illuminate over two hundred fountains along the Seine was exceptional. The lighting systems were coordinated with pumping systems that in some cases produced sprays up to sixty meters in height. Across the Quai d'Orsay of the Left Bank six hundred projectors, one hundred and fifty sodium lamps, two hundred and fifty mercury vapor lamps, and the same number of state-of-the-art tubular lighting strands were attached to trees and imbedded in bushes.

The architect, André Granet worked with Lods and Beaudouin in the implementation of most of the illumination sequences, including those of the Eiffel Tower, that took over two years to perfect. In sharp distinction to the new constructions of the Russian and German pavilions that framed either side of the tower, the icon of Paris had long been epitomized as an obsolete symbol. In the face of France not having a French Pavilion, but rather, several colony pavilions, the Eiffel Tower was a vital symbol despite the regard for it as an, “archaic monument to a bygone fair [1889] and an exhausted republicanism.”⁹⁷ Further trivialized in the official Exposition Guide as, “*une dame d'un certain âge*,”⁹⁸ the tower's rejuvenation by electric light, which was not a new concept, was nonetheless an astute investment. Granet's orders included the installation of French naval lights installed on the

⁹⁷ Fiss, op.cit., p. 100.

⁹⁸ *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne Paris 1937: Guide officiel* (Paris: Société pour le Développement du Tourisme, 1937) p. 59. Cited by James D. Herbert, *Paris 1937 Worlds on Exhibition* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 26.

tower's second register; the fitting of ten kilometers of colored fluorescent tubing for the uprights; and, another ten thousand lights configured into the world's largest chandelier to hang from the arch at the base. The attention paid the tower repeated an old trope, but the effort was an unprecedented lighting installation for Paris at that time (figs. 35-37). Adding to the theatricality, the refurbishment also included the synchronization of kaleidoscopic colored lights with sound, a redux of the closing ceremonies in 1900, but with original modern scores by the composers Darius Milhaud, Georges Auric, and Arthur Honneger, members along with Jean Cocteau or the vanguard group, *Le Six*.

A romanticized passage written by Paul Léon, honorary director of Beaux-Arts projects, typified the general reception of the impact of the lighting:

In the memories of countless visitors, the 1937 World Expo will be the largest Festival of Light. Present everywhere, it is often invisible, running along the masts and pylons, decreed as if a banner, sliding over tree trunks and playing amidst the leaves, [it] brings out the nighttime nymphs at the edge of fountains and genies upon the national palace; the fairy of electricity defines the lines of façades, and in the wake of its waves she transforms every drop of water in mirrored light, every crystalline drop, every sheaf with flamboyant panache.... Torches, flares... [a] brilliant luster of thousands of lights lovingly designed, carved, gilded.⁹⁹

The silent interconnectivity between electricity and culture dominated the fair in other ways. Demonstrating the prowess of nations that controlled and harnessed electricity's application to commerce, "power" dominated the fair in a dialectical mode. On the one hand the administration of considerable loads of electric energy was put to service in accord with ideological state apparatus-es. And on the other hand, the presentation of incomparable electrical demonstrations and incandescent exhibits was an entertaining thrill. The Marxist theorist, Louis Althusser, instructed in his renowned theoretical proposition concerning

⁹⁹ Paul Léon, "Introduction," *Luminaire Moderne*, Gabriel Henriot, ed. (Paris: Morceau, 1937), author's translation, unpaginated. Collection of the Getty Research Institute Library, Malibu, California.

“Ideological State Apparatuses,” that whatever form they might take, which he included to be religious apparatus, political apparatus, educational apparatus, cultural apparatus,¹⁰⁰ among other societal categories, “contribute to the same result: the reproduction of the relations of production, i.e. of capitalist relations of exploitation.”¹⁰¹

Electrical power production had increased in France from sixteen to twenty-one billion kilowatts over an eight-year period from 1930 to 1938.¹⁰² The showcasing of electricity was deemed well deserved, therefore, lauded and financed for the world fair. Pure electricity was vaunted in raw and aestheticized states. Correspondingly, the Exposition was also a festival of electricity. In physical terms, the sheer magnitude of energy required to operate the pavilions and halls pushed the project to its limit.¹⁰³ The prowess of electricity was put on view in daring demonstrations that delivered a terrible and attraction-getting awe. Such was the anticipation of the American invented Van de Graaff generator,¹⁰⁴ for example, that it was featured in several popular and scientific French journals prior to its unveiling (fig. 39). The Van de Graaff consisted of twin towers at an imposing forty-six feet in height that were crowned by massive, dual globes that measured nine feet in diameter (figs. 40 and 41). As a Paris attraction, the titan was bathed in an aura of blue light as if it were an alien sci-fi apparition in the foyer of the Palais de la Découverte. For the purpose of safety, the generator was encased in a Faraday cage, a protective shield invented in 1836, that a century

¹⁰⁰ Louis Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, trans. Ben Brewster (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1971), p. 150.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* p. 154.

¹⁰² Statistic noted in Green, *Art in France*, op.cit., p. 11.

¹⁰³ Kalfa, loc. cit. So outstanding was the overwhelming task to electrify the grounds, fountains, buildings, and adjacent property, made all the more urgent following a complete shutdown caused by financial instability during labor strikes that, “...no attempt [was made] at concealing wiring...[it was] laid along the surface of the ground, at the edge of pathways, in grooves in the sides of buildings, and no attempt was made to conceal the flood-lighting equipment.”

¹⁰⁴ Developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge. The Paris version of the generator was engineered by the renowned French physicist, Frederic Joliot.

later was still the industry standard utilized to block electromagnetic discharges and radiation. Dynamo demonstrations emitted bolts of lightning measuring approximately four mega-volts or enough energy to move a diesel locomotive.¹⁰⁵

Near the entrance to the Palais de l'Électricité et de la Lumière, a second demonstration of raw Promethean voltage was generated from a pair of solenoid columns that produced a bolt of lightning. The strike approximated twenty-five feet in height; and, its shock of light was mirrored in a reflective pool thereby doubling the aura of the wild force (fig. 42). On the streamlined convex exterior of the pavilion, Henri Chretien's panoramic "Hypergonar Widescreen" use of anamorphic lenses projected two films to be run concurrently in parallel horizontal registers. In keeping with the pavilion's theme of electricity and light, a 6-minute cartoon, *Phénomènes Électriques*, and the 11-minute film, *Panoramas au fil de l'Eau* looped in regular intervals during the nighttime shows (figs. 42-43).

The interior of the Palace of Electricity was no less dramatic. Two staircases led visitors to the showpiece of the hall, an intensely lit oil painting by Raoul Dufy entitled, *La fée électricité*, 1937. Touted as the world's largest work of art, the diorama of the history of electricity measured 60 x 10 meters or 33 x 200 feet¹⁰⁶ and included one hundred-and-ten of electricity's greatest scientists and promoters. As if to reify Dufy's account, a dynamo and power plant generator were installed at the center of the gallery (figs. 44). In effect, *The Fairy of Electricity* was an encyclopedic visual account of those figures, of their successes and

¹⁰⁵ Another electrostatic generator was exhibited in which a cloud of fine dust was electrically charged by passing it through a network of fine wires maintained at a potential of 8000 volts. The demonstration was designed to illustrate the principle of electrostatic precipitation of dust somewhat ahead of its time in the 1930s. And a special continuous current dynamo designed by Poirson measuring the speed of light, was shown. Other demonstrations with electricity included the phenomenon of splitting a spectral line in to several components as an alternative to the spectroscope.

¹⁰⁶ Bernard Dorival, *La Belle Histoire de La Fée Electricité* de Raoul Dufy (Paris: La Palme, 1953) reproduced in Fanny Guillon-Lafaille, *Raoul Dufy: catalogue raisonné des aquarelles, gouaches, et pastels* (Paris: Editions Louis Carré, 1982), no. 1909-1913, pp. 310-12.

failures in science and technology that were intermingled with a pantheon from Greek mythology. In one section of the engrossing surround, Zeus presides above an explosive bolt of raw electricity accompanied by portraits of two great scientists, Augustin-Jean Fresnel and Michael Faraday in the lower register (fig. 45). Thomas Edison's portrait was placed alongside his invention of the radio receiver represented by five vacuum tubes intercepting sound vibrations that emitted an evanescent green glow (fig. 46). Edison's bulb was not included. Although Dufy had depended upon the electric beam of opaque projectors to transfer the cartoons of the scientist-inventor portraits on to two hundred-and-fifty panels, the light bulb was not a featured invention in the diorama's scope of electrical technology. Strands of bulbs were however used as decorative embellishments intermixed with French flags in sketches of the Quatorze Juillet festival as backdrop (fig. 47). The Compagnie Parisienne de Distribution de l'Electricité¹ had commissioned Dufy whose tremendous feat was used to promote the company's domination of the electrification of Paris. The competent yet breezy style of the art was accessible for all viewers and in that way the Dufy did not generate controversy.

Within the context of the “ostensibly pacific games of global economic exchange,”¹⁰⁷ the towering empires of Germany and Russia overshadowed the beleaguered Pavilion of the Spanish Republic. It would be the only voice in the collective enterprise that courageously foretold what awaited Europe two years later. The pavilion pronounced without a shred of doubt the unwarranted murders of the people of Spain by Franco, Hitler, and Mussolini. To underscore its current tragic situation an imposing large-scale photograph of Gabriel Garcíá Lorca, “poet laureate” of Spain who was assassinated on August 19, 1936, was displayed in the foyer. Paul Eluard's poem, “Victory Over Guernica,” a lament for the dead, was printed

¹⁰⁷ James D. Herbert, *Paris 1937: Worlds on Exhibition* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), p. 33.

large-scale and installed next to an Euzkadi map and photograph of a young Basque soldier (fig. 48). Alberto Sanchez's forty-foot sculpture, *There is a Way for the People that Leads to a Star*, 1937, installed at the front of the pavilion complex was a reminder of the sacred tree of the Basques, which had miraculously survived the aerial bombings that otherwise had turned Gernika into rubble. And in other displays, Euzkadi culture and its long-held values were described on didactic panels and through the traditional arts that expressed the artistic and human values in the "social and industrial activities that were being defended by the soldiers for freedom, from Jaca to Madrid, from Madrid to Almería"¹⁰⁸ (figs. 49 and 50). The carefully chosen works of art, folkloric heritage, and didactic exhibitions took on the form of a manifesto. "The message of the pavilion was one of defense, not offense."¹⁰⁹

If the Exposition "festival of light" purported to promote the brilliance of the future, Picasso's *Guernica*, was an antithesis of the theme. The central figure of the sun in the painting arrests our understanding of natural light. A single light bulb—which in domestic usage in France at the time would have been no more than 65 watts¹¹⁰—anthropomorphized an otherwise blank, eye-shaped sun and thereby gave it power as an all-seeing, electric source of light. Typified by an Osram-type¹¹¹ glass bulb substituted as the iris, a tungsten wire filament was the pupil. We cannot know all that Picasso intended in this complex but otherwise stylistically simple line-drawn object.¹¹² All at once, it is a panoptical device; an eye

¹⁰⁸ Jordana Mendelson, *The Spanish Pavilion, Paris, 1937* (Madrid: Ediciones de la Central, 1986), p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ J. Mendelson, *Documenting Spain: Artists, Exhibition Culture, and the Modern Nation, 1929-1939* (College Park, Pennsylvania: Penn State Press, 2005), p. 91.

¹¹⁰ Weber, op.cit., *Hollow Years*, p. 60. "Normal rooms lit by a forty-watt bulb, a Paris evening paper pointed out, would look much better under a seventy-five watt light. The trouble was that the current used by the latter cost nearly twice as much. Electrical costs¹¹⁰ were prohibitive. The price of power for the light used to sell an article was higher than the cost of the work that had gone into the item."

¹¹¹ The most common brand of light bulb distributed throughout France at that time.

¹¹² It would not have mattered if Picasso had known that the Berlin-based OSRAM Ag had been awarded the Gold Medal for Ingenuity at the Expo for its high-voltage fluorescent "Super-lux" bulb; or, in a mode of

that witnesses and accuses and makes visible the reprehensible; a profane *vesica piscis*, the sacred personage contained within a halo reduced here to a filament, a conductor of energy not miracles; and, as a substitution of the natural order of the universe, of Light as Good. The electric sun purported an all-seeing function that did not discriminate to seize everything exposed by its radiance.

In the initial plans for Picasso's commission for the pavilion, the concept "Guernica" did not materialize until three days after the atrocity in Spain had occurred. Picasso had remained uncommitted about a topic for the high-profile mural. A series of thirteen pencil sketches from April 18 and 19 reveal a dithering preoccupation with the theme of the atelier, artist, and model, which he seemed to be entertaining for the Spanish Pavilion project. In the most complex sheet, three diagrams of a blank mural were sketched mid-center, including an overhead view of an installed canvas, among other props and figures¹¹³ (fig. 51). The mural-sized rectangle had no subject; Picasso had left it blank, a *tabula rasa* for the ideas evidenced by items scattered about the page. In another minor and overlooked sketch for the pavilion, *L'atelier: la lampe*, from April 19, an odd rectangular "lampshade" surrounds a simple hanging light bulb. The image remains "uninterpreted" yet I would aren't the parallel lines that come through the top of the box similar to the schematic string and cardboard construction of the

cruel irony that the Osram light bulb promotional motto, *Schone Deine Augen durch besseres Licht*, or, "Beautiful Eyes by Better Light!" that was promoted around Paris, when considered vis-à-vis seeing the results of the war in Spain.

¹¹³ The schematic torso of the proletariat figure recalls Picasso's plaster sculpture, *L'orateur* from 1933-34, recast in bronze in '37. The fan-shape may have served as a diagrammatic note for the figure of a standing woman in *Femme assise dans un fauteuil*; and, the contorted, surrealist and amorphous face of Marie-Therese, a "femme lisant," or sleeping woman, amidst disaster, dangles upside down on the left. The figure that is both artist and model, found on the right side of the sheet, would give inspiration to the colossal disjointed Dora Maars of 1938, and *Femme assise dans un fauteuil* painted May 3; and, a group of small-scaled *Femme debout*¹¹³ from July 9; and, also of Marie-Therese Walther depicted in *Nu debout devant une cabine* created on July 14.

guitar? Without expanding this point, the proximity of the study to another family overlooked work, the small oil on cardboard, *Nature morte au verre*, made two weeks prior, on April 3, rehearses another version of electric light (figs. 52 and 53). The bistro glass turned movie projector, and here we recall the *Bottle and Glass* cinematoscope of 1912, has easily morphed from *Nature morte au compotier et au verre*, made on December 22, 1936, in which a common Picardie faceted glass is used to project the light through its transparency. In effect, Picasso turned the April 3rd tumbler into a little movie projector typical in its basic form to those in home use popular in France in the 1930s (fig. 54). A triangle of light extends from an “aperture” on the rim in which the mouth of the glass was flattened as a cubist conceit. The beams sharply cut across half of an apple laying in the path of the light and change the background and border of the plate from a solid grey-brown to pale cerulean and yellow. The ray of light is emphasized by long dashes in an expression of “brilliance” that Picasso tended to draw around caricatures of the sun. By elevating the cardboard luncheon plate *as a painting* with the faux brass plaque PICASSO tacked to the “frame,” the still life scene in effect focused upon another scene that is not visible, that lies beyond the border frame.

In the first sketch for *Guernica*, which described nothing of the tragedy, its namesake, the premonitory drawing contained four elements that would remain until the last phase of the masterpiece: a horse, bird in flight, girl with lamp, and, a bull. A semi-circular arc was swiftly drawn and repeated in a backstroke that suggests a boundary to the action, a simple device implying the edge of a stage where the spotlights would stop (fig. 55). The inference to staging, to a work of art that would put on a scene, a theatrical set piece, was maintained throughout all phases of *Guernica*. Lighting the allegorical tableau from beyond its physical boundary, out-with the tragedy, as it were, to illuminating the scene from within those same

borders changed the emphasis of the effect of light in the grand picture. The electric sun, in contrast to the modest candlelight served by the lamp bearer, ensured that the persistence of a blinding incandescence be considered for its inherent darkness even as it served to reveal the immense cruelty and carnage of the event.



Fig. 1: Nighttime view of the 1937 Exposition Internationale with Soviet Pavilion and German pavilion (right).

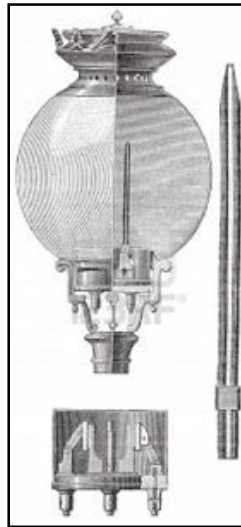


Fig. Diagram of Jablchkoff lamp

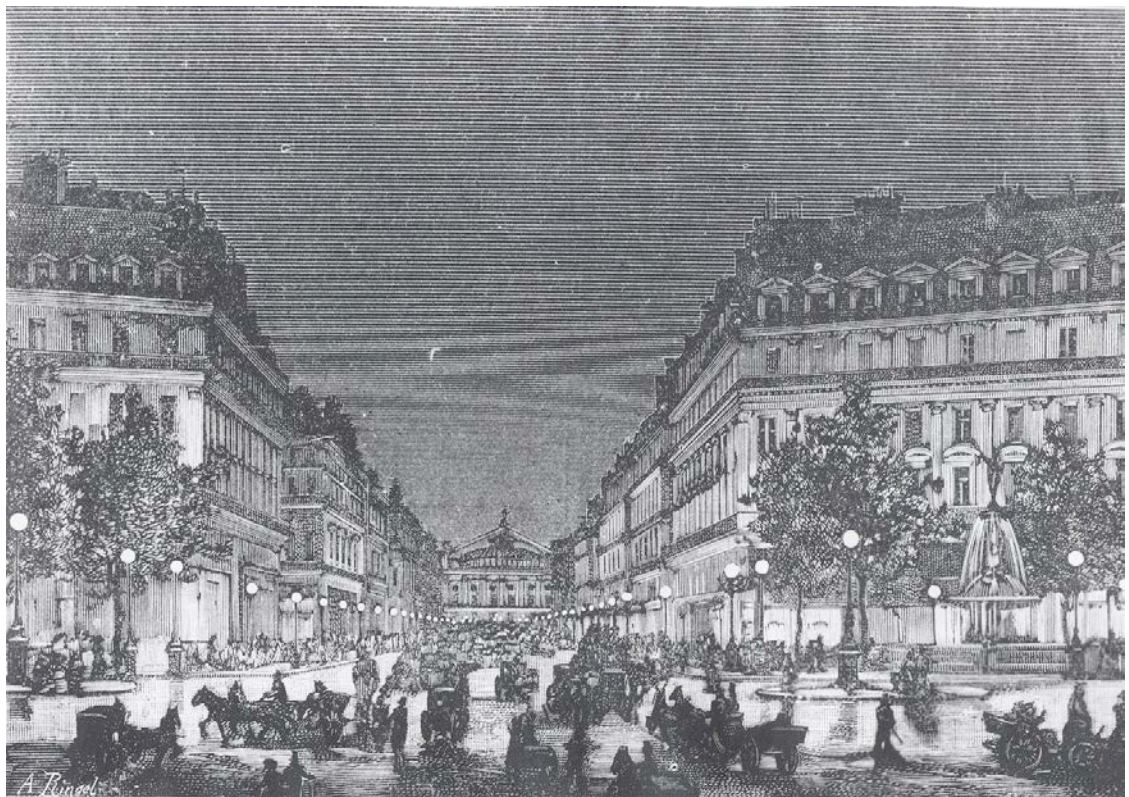


Fig. 3: A. Ringle, etching, Avenue de l'Opera with Jablchkoff electric arc lamps, 1878.

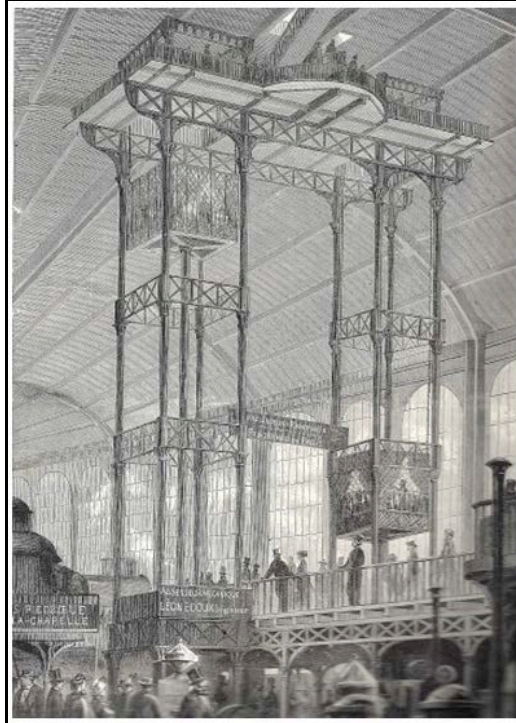


Fig. 4: Zenobé Dynamo viewing platform in the Gallery of Machines, 1878.

Fig. 5: Lighthouse in the Palace of Industry, 1881 Paris Exposition.
credit: Bildagentur Tschanz Science Photo Library.

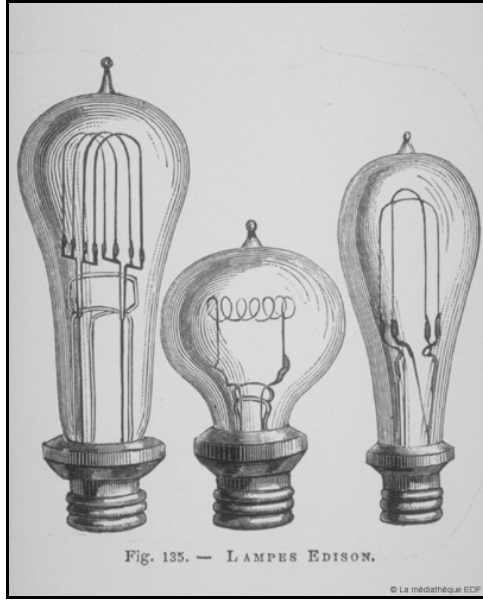


Fig. 6: Variations of Edison lamps, ca. 1879-1881

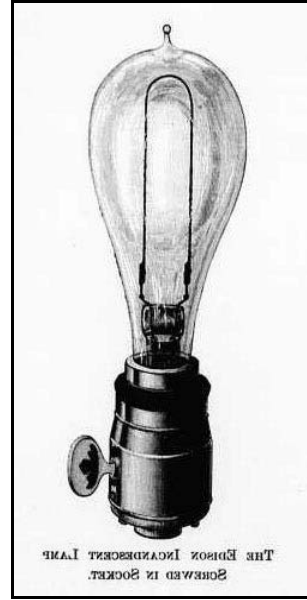


Fig. 7: Commercial bamboo filament lamp

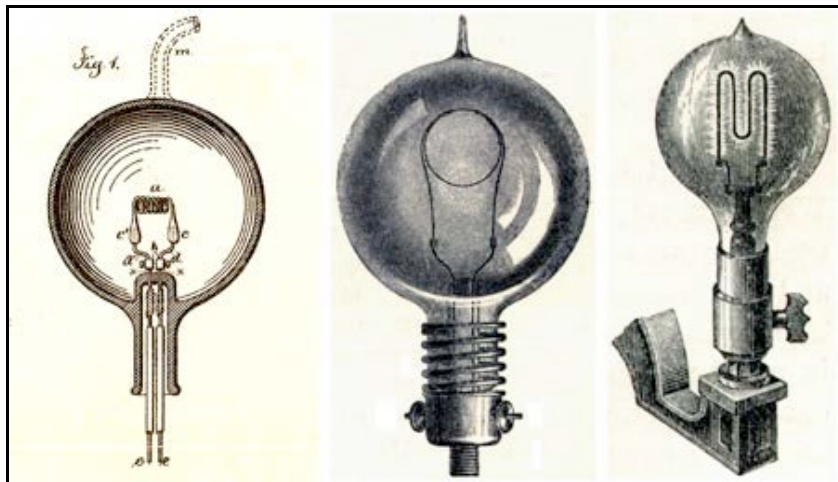


Fig. 8: Diagram of Swan lamp (left and center; Maxim lamp with "M" filament (right), 1881

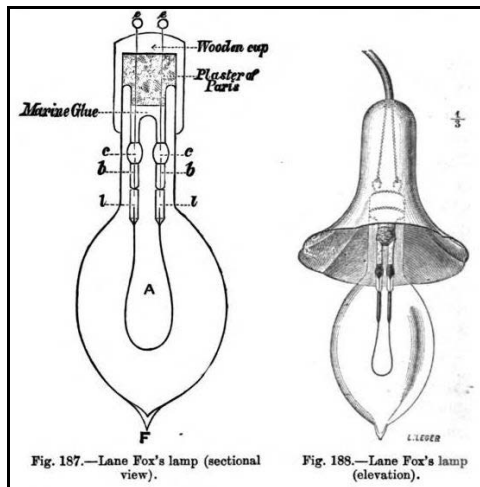


Fig. 9: Diagram of Lane-Fox lamp, 1881



Fig. 10: Palais de l'Électricité night festival, Paris Exposition Universelle, 1900, hand-colored photograph.

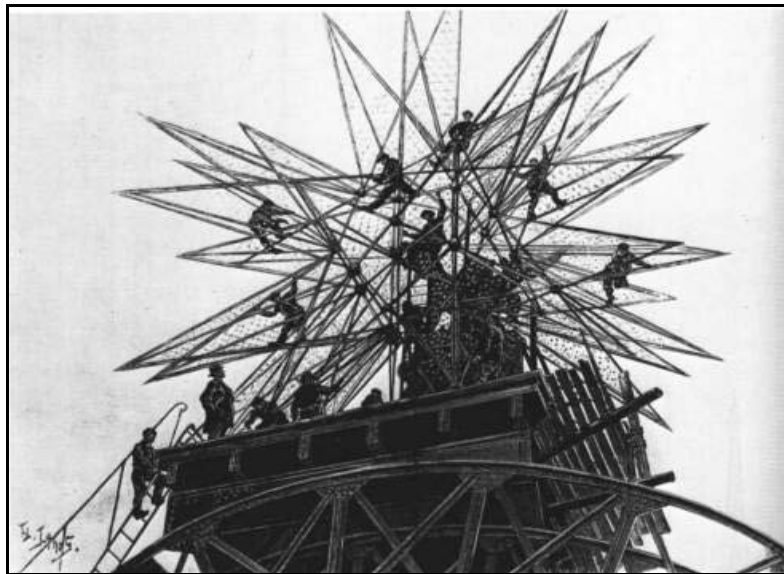


Fig. 11: Installation of electric lighting strands for star atop Palais de l'Électricité, 1900.

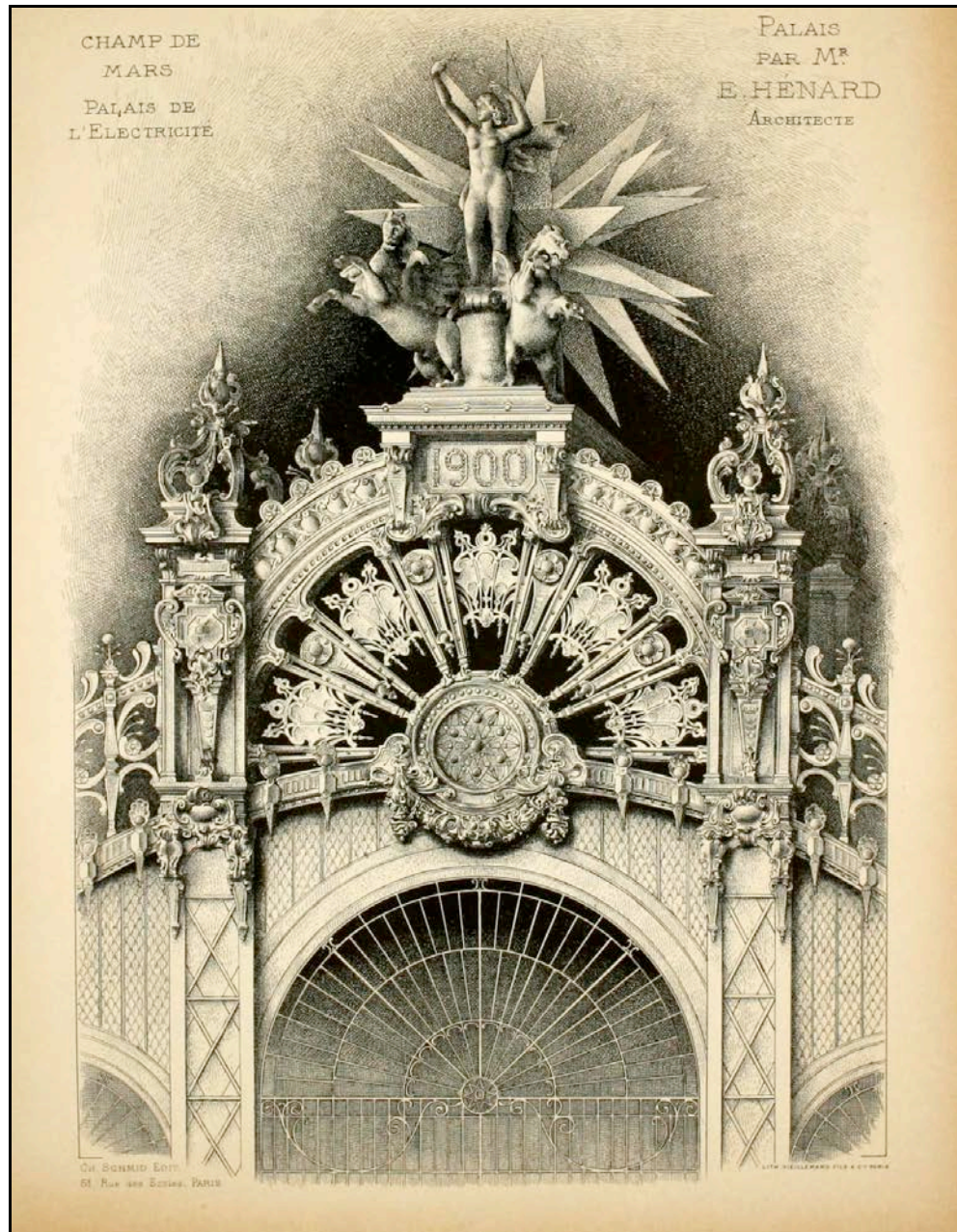


Fig. 12: Architectural rendering of Eugène Hénard's design for the "Genius of Electricity" sculpture and façade of the Palais de l'Electricité.

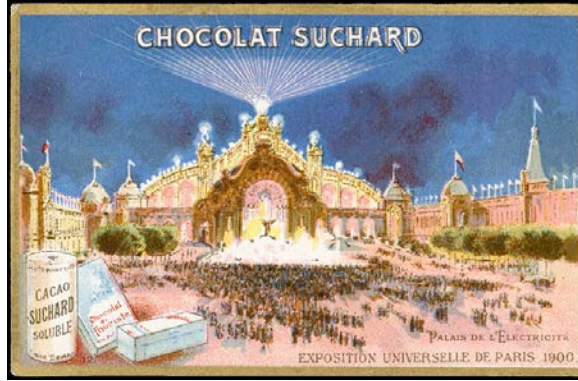


Fig. 13: Palace of Electricity Suchard chocolate wrapper.

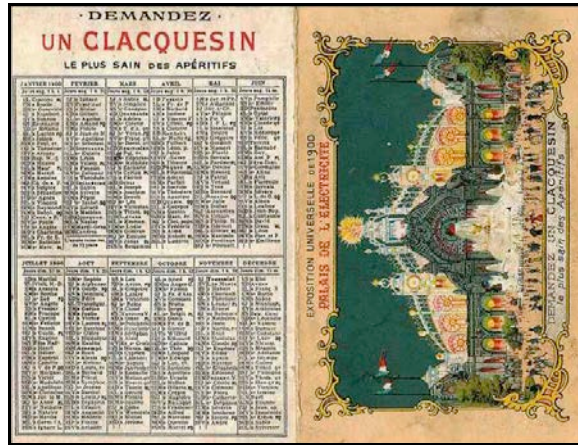


Fig. 14: Aperitif bar card with calendar, 1900.



Fig. 15: Tourist postcard, 1900.



Fig. 16: Palais d'illusion, 1900.



Fig. 17: William H. Rau, Eiffel Tower Illuminated at Paris Exposition 1900, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 18: Nighttime illumination on the Seine during the 1900 Exposition Brooklyn Art Museum, Goodyear Archival Collection.

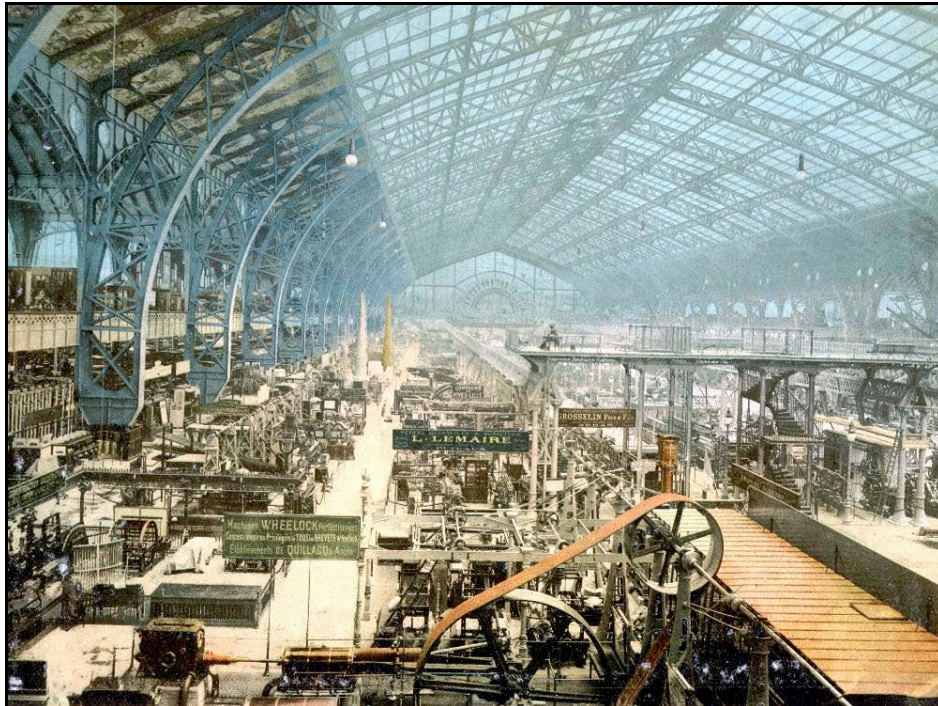


Fig. 19: Hall of Machines, 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle; courtesy of Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.



Fig. 20: The Paris "Great Telescope," 1900.

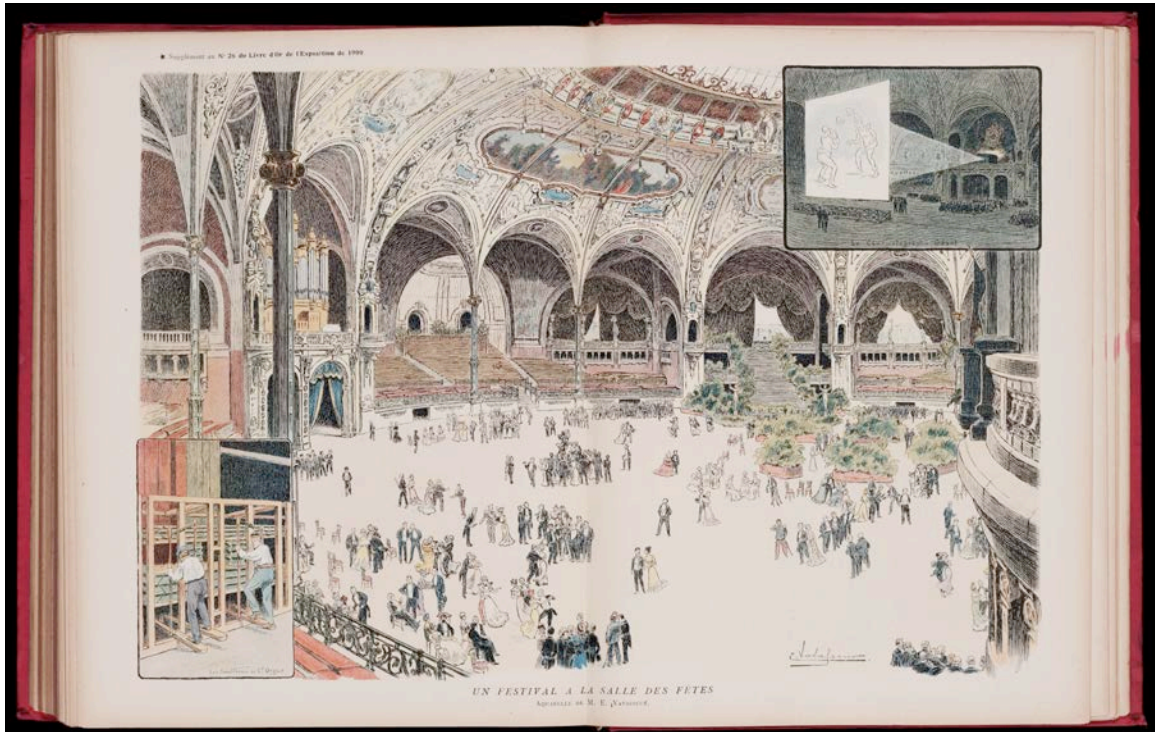


Fig. 21: Inset (top right) illustrates cinema projection in a niche of the Salle de Fêtes, Paris Exposition, 1900.

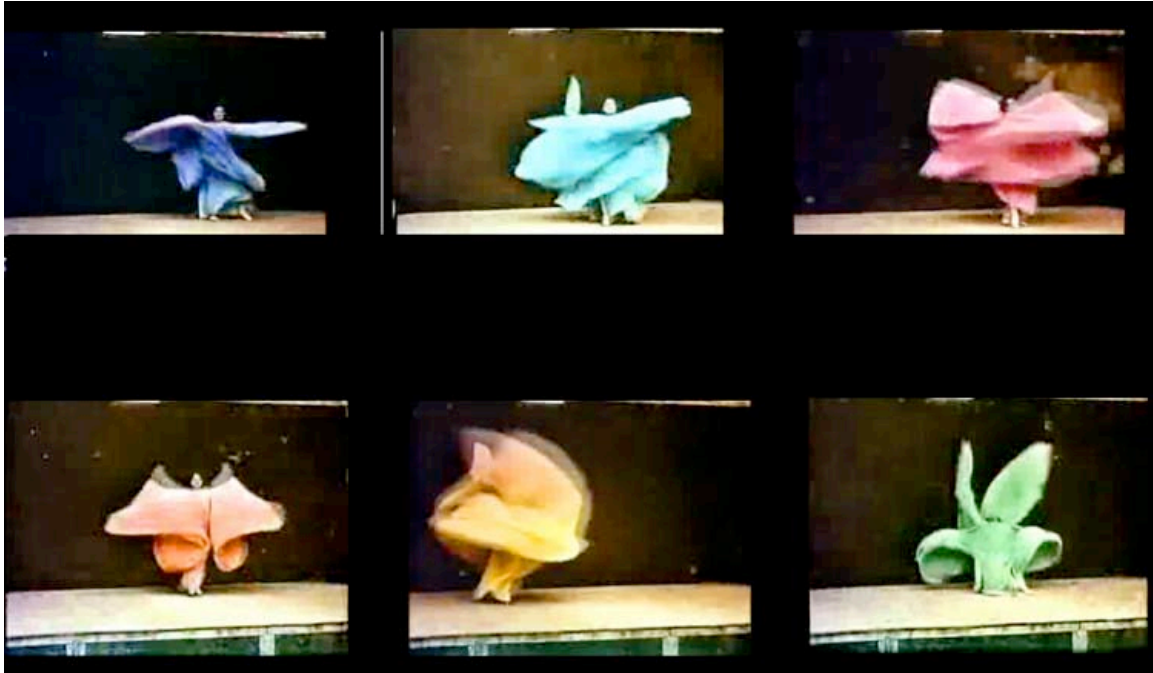


Fig. 22: Löie Fuller performing the "Serpentine Dance" with projected colored incandescent light .

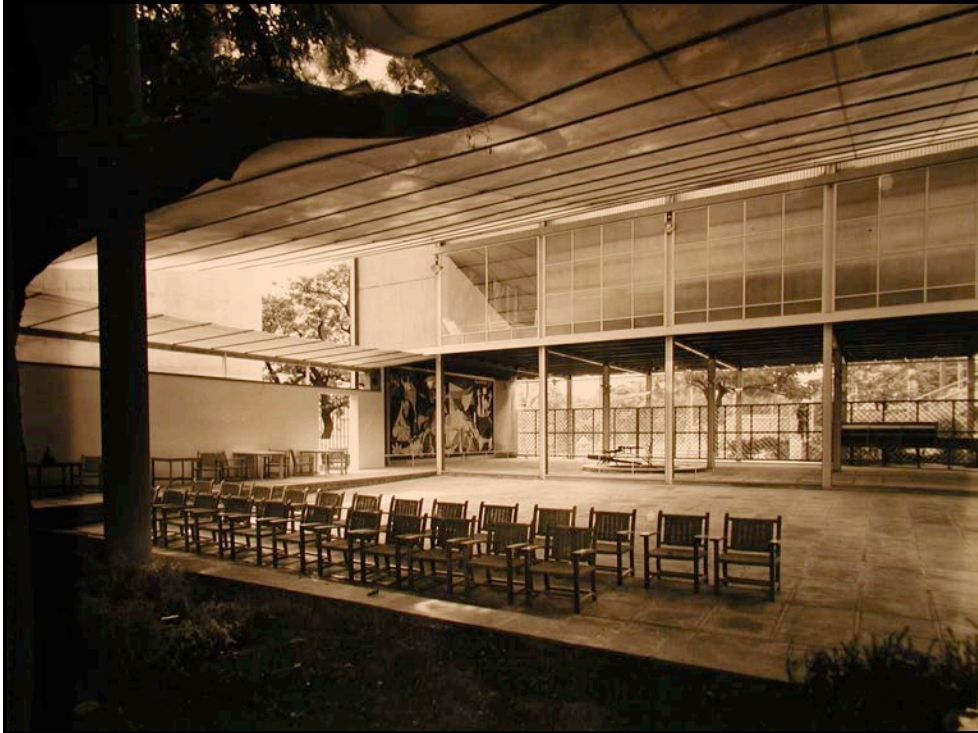


Fig. 22: Interior of the Pavilion of the Spanish Republic. Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, 1937, back wall.

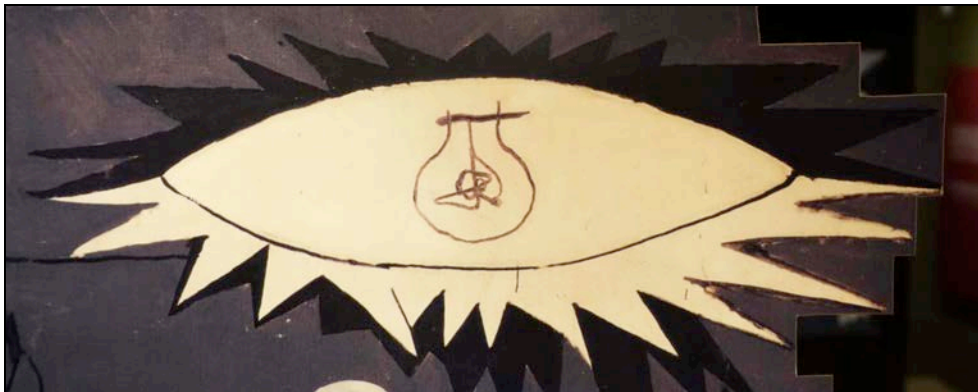


Fig. 24: detail, *Guernica*

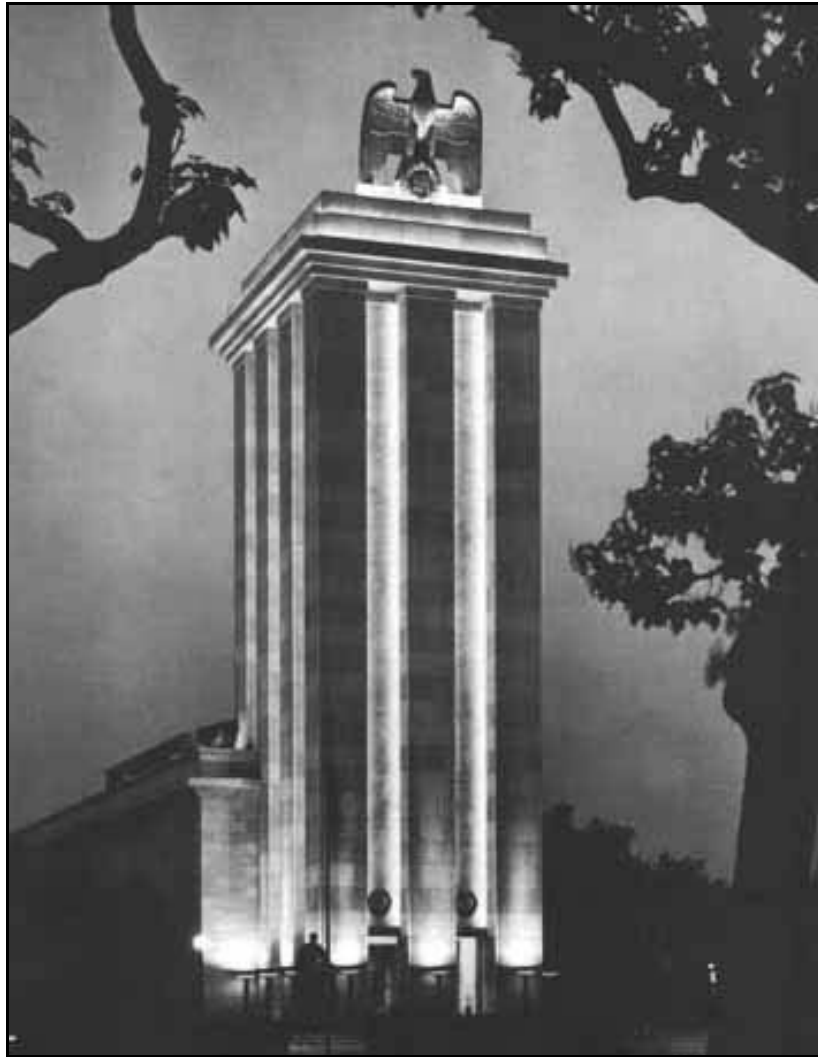


Fig. 25: Albert Speer's German Pavilion, Deutsches Haus, 1937 Paris Exposition.



Fig. 26: Pont du Alexandre III nighttime illumination, 1937.



Fig. 27: Three-dimensional rendering, to scale.



Fig. 28: Philips-OSRAM promotional label.



Fig. 29. Impression of photonegative effect from Deutsches Haus illumination

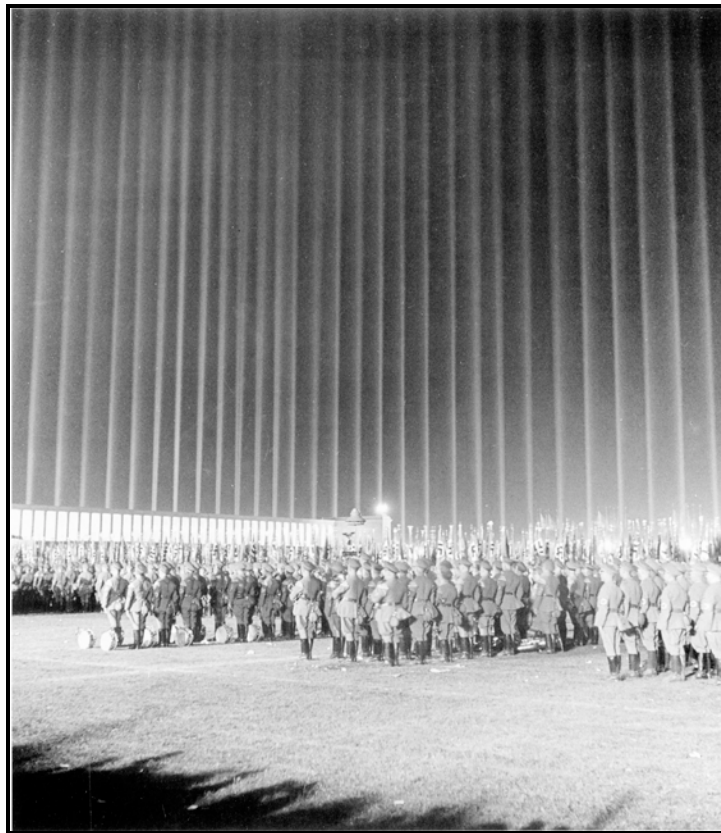


Fig. 30: Cathedral of Light at Nuremberg Rally, 1937. Photo: Lala Aufsberg.



Fig. 31: Zeppelin Field demonstration with electric torchlights forming HEIL HITLER and swastika at the 1937 Nuremberg Rally.



Fig. 32: Flak anti-aircraft searchlight at 1937 Nuremberg Rally. Photo credit: Lala Aufsberg.



Fig. 33: Nazi soldiers operating Flak searchlights during World War.

30/04/1937

ÉDITION DE 5 HEURES

LE JOURNAL

Le numéro : 30 cent. (N° 16265) PARIS, 106, RUE DE RICHELIEU TIRAGE : 240.000 Ex. et la suite Vendredi, 30 Avril

DIMANCHE PROCHAIN
par le Comité de Charolais
1^{er} CRITERIUM DE LA POLYMULTIPLIÉE
organisé par l'Association des Sports
avec le concours de
THOMAS ULLMANN DE PARIS
avec le patronage de Journal LE JOURNAL

Les nationaux poursuivent leur avance foudroyante
GUERNICA ET UN GRAND NOMBRE DE VILLAGES SONT TOMBÉS AUX MAINS DES SOLDATS DE FRANCO

La "ville sainte des Basques" avait été dynamitée et incendiée par les miliciens avant leur retraite

EN ► PAGE, L'ARTICLE DE GAETAN BENOIVILLE ET NOS DÉPÊCHES

Trois verdicts :

A COLMAR - La peine capitale à Kueny "vampire" de la Hardt

A ANNECY - Le bagné perpétuel aux trois bandits meurtriers d'un gardien de prison

A PARIS - 10 ans de travaux forcés à Roger Vernon dont la maîtresse est acquittée

LES COMPTES RENDUS D'AUDIENCE EN ► PAGE, ► COLONNE.

UN REVOLVER DANS CHAQUE MAIN... CACHÉE DANS L'OMBRE...

Une femme guettait son fils pour le tuer

MINUIT SONNE... IL ARRIVE... ELLE FAIT FEU ELLE LE MARQUE, ET SE TUE

Le Salon 1937 a été inauguré par M. Lebrun

Il se tient cette année au Palais de l'Esplanade des Invalides

En ► page, le compte rendu de RAYMOND ESCHOLIER

MON FILM: Les victimes du 1^{er} mai

Par notre supérieur, sans dessus ni dessous, demain 1^{er} mai, la fête du Travail avec un grand 71, c'est à dire que nous n'avons pas le droit de travailler.

A quand la fête du Vin que nous célébrons en ce moment, toujours pas notre supérieur, que de 7 ans ?

Au pays de l'U.R.S.S. les reporters grandissent avec le Travail à la date du 1^{er} mai, seulement ils ne travaillent pas cette fête avec celle de Saint-Fermat : au contraire, ils en font un bon coup et font du rabiot.

N'avez pas plus logique ?

Le gouvernement a décidé, sans même d'ailleurs, que le 1^{er} mai serait, cette année du moins, une fête légale. Soit, mais le 1^{er} janvier, le lundi de Pâques, le 14 juillet, le 23 décembre, etc., les journaux paraissent comme à l'ordinaire. Pourquoi n'en serait-il pas ainsi demain ?

Pense que Napoléon Jouhaux, empereur de la C.G.T., en a assez décidé.

Le 15 août, fête de l'Empereur, les journaux paraissent bel et bien... Seule, une explication nous est présentée de valoir ainsi, en bloc, les jours sans français et cela, sans doute, au nom de la liberté !

Quelle liberté ? Pas celle de la presse, assurément.

Pendant toute une journée, le public a été privé de nouvelles... Et ce fut le premier grand et personnel échec de la propagande allemande. Par exemple, les incidents diplomatiques peuvent amener la question de l'abandon de l'occupation de la France.

Par notre supérieur, sans dessus ni dessous, demain 1^{er} mai, la fête du Travail avec un grand 71, c'est à dire que nous n'avons pas le droit de travailler.

Les copistes des journaux sont payés à la journée... Pas de travail, pas de salaire ! Il y a, dans ces journaux, des types chargés de composer les lettres, de disposer les textes dans les colonnes, etc. On les appelle des "fonctionnaires". Mais ces fonctionnaires, quand ils ne travaillent pas, ils ne travaillent pas.

Et les journalistes qui sont payés à la ligne ?

Pour eux aussi, le chômage force du 1^{er} mai se soldera par une perte sèche. L'actualité se fait avec vite que le magazine et l'atelier qui s'a pu travailler, dans les conditions, un côté chassé l'autre en raison par le « maître » des journaux.

Mais le Napoléon des « masses » n'a rien à craindre pour sa liste civile - et ce nous sera de son côté. — CLÉMENT VAUTEL.

M^{rs} Simpson deviendrait duchesse de Windsor peut-être... vers le 1^{er} juin

SAINT-GERMAIN-AUX-ERBES TEL QU'ON LE VERRA

Dès 1931, le "Zour" avait demandé que l'Église de

de terre s'élève à la rencontre des protestataires au

Par FERNAND GREGH

Fig. 34: Paris newspaper, Le Journal, April 30, 1937. Credit: Author's photo from archives at the Fundación Museo de la Paz de Gernika, Gernika-Lumo, Spain.



Fig. 35: Andre Granet, *Study for the Illumination of the Eiffel Tower*, 1937. Gouache on paper, The Wolfsonian–Florida International University, Miami Beach, Florida, The Mitchell Wolfson, Jr. Collection.

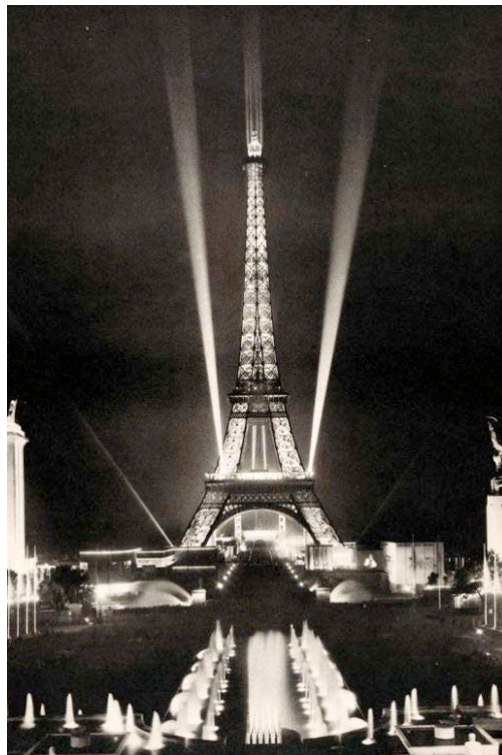


Fig. 36: François Koller, *Eiffel Tower*, gelatin silver print, 1937.



Fig. 37: Brassäi, *Paris Exposition Universelle, 1937*, coll. Art Institute of Chicago.

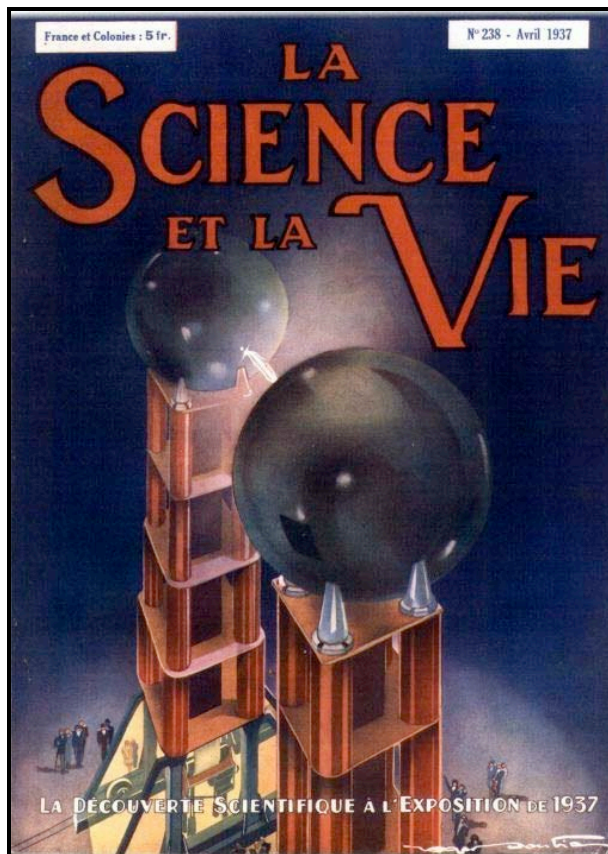


Fig. 38: Cover of April 1937 issue of French science journal.

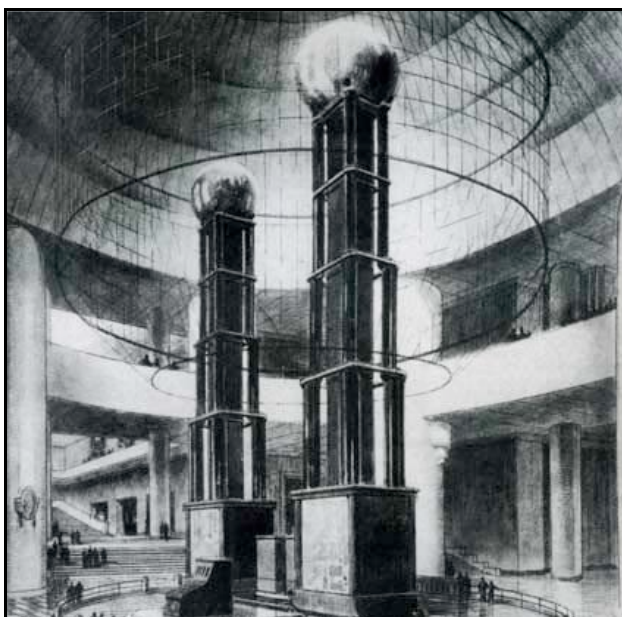


Fig. 39: Drawing of the Van de Graaff generator in the Palais de la Decouverte, Paris, 1937.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ From Jean-Pierre Maury, *Le Palais de la Decouverte* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1994).

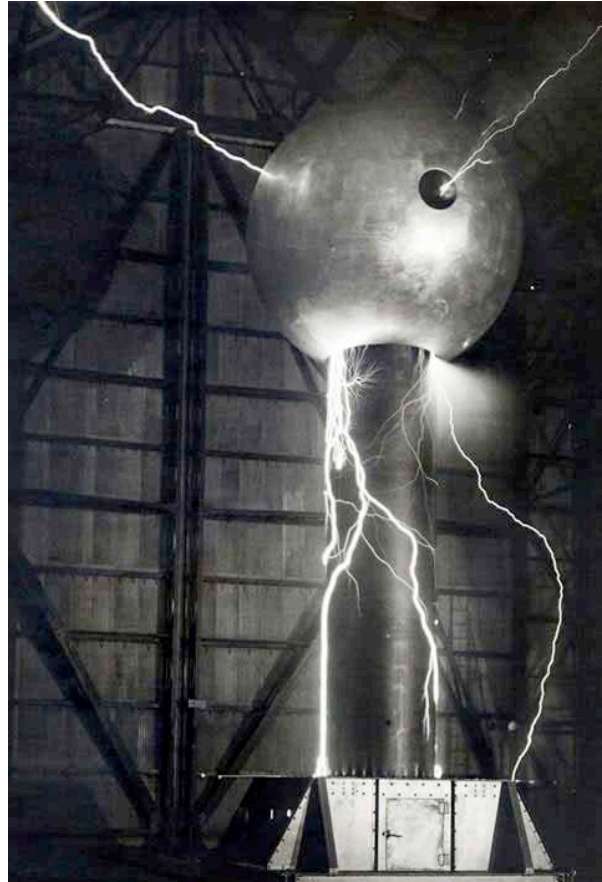


Fig. 40: Bolts of electricity from Van de Graaff generator at Round Hill, Massachusetts, a division of Department of Physics at MIT.

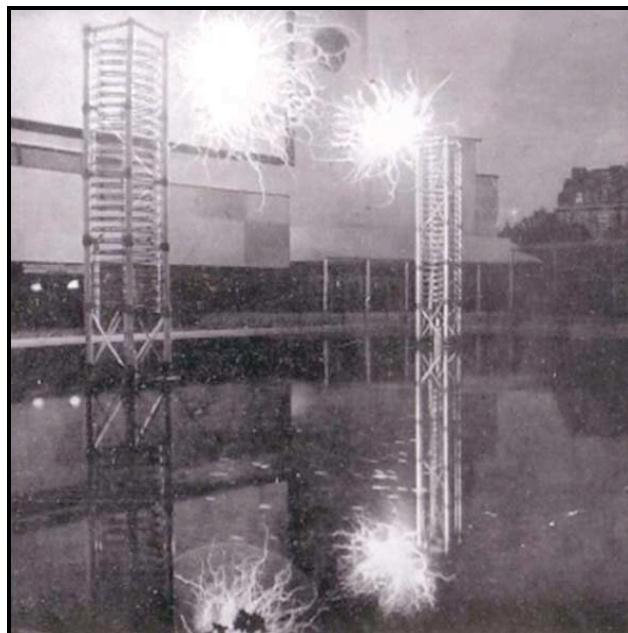


Fig. 41: Lightning created from solenoid columns, Palace of Electricity, 1937.



Figure 42: Façade of the Palais d'Electricité featuring Henri Chretien's panoramic screen measuring 2000 x 33 feet.

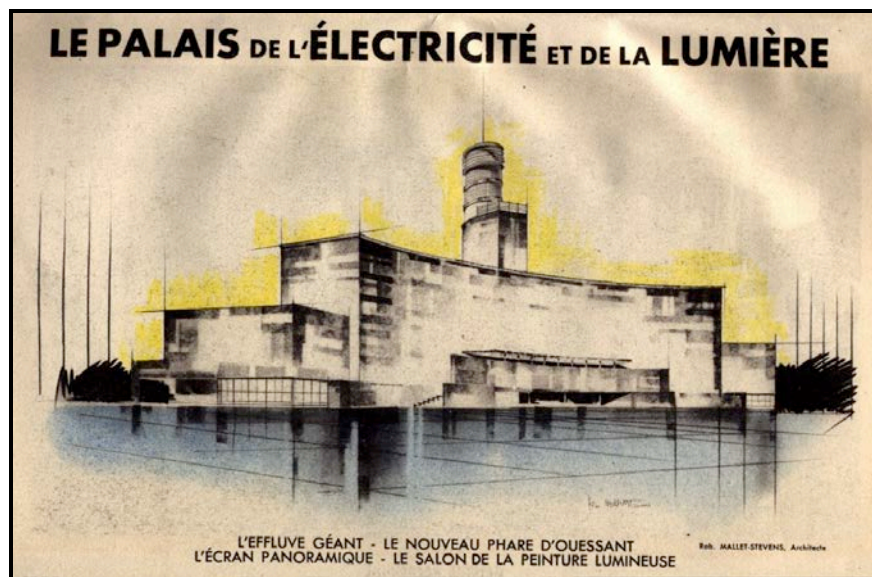


Fig. 43: Promotional card with architectural rendering by Robert Mallet-Stevens.

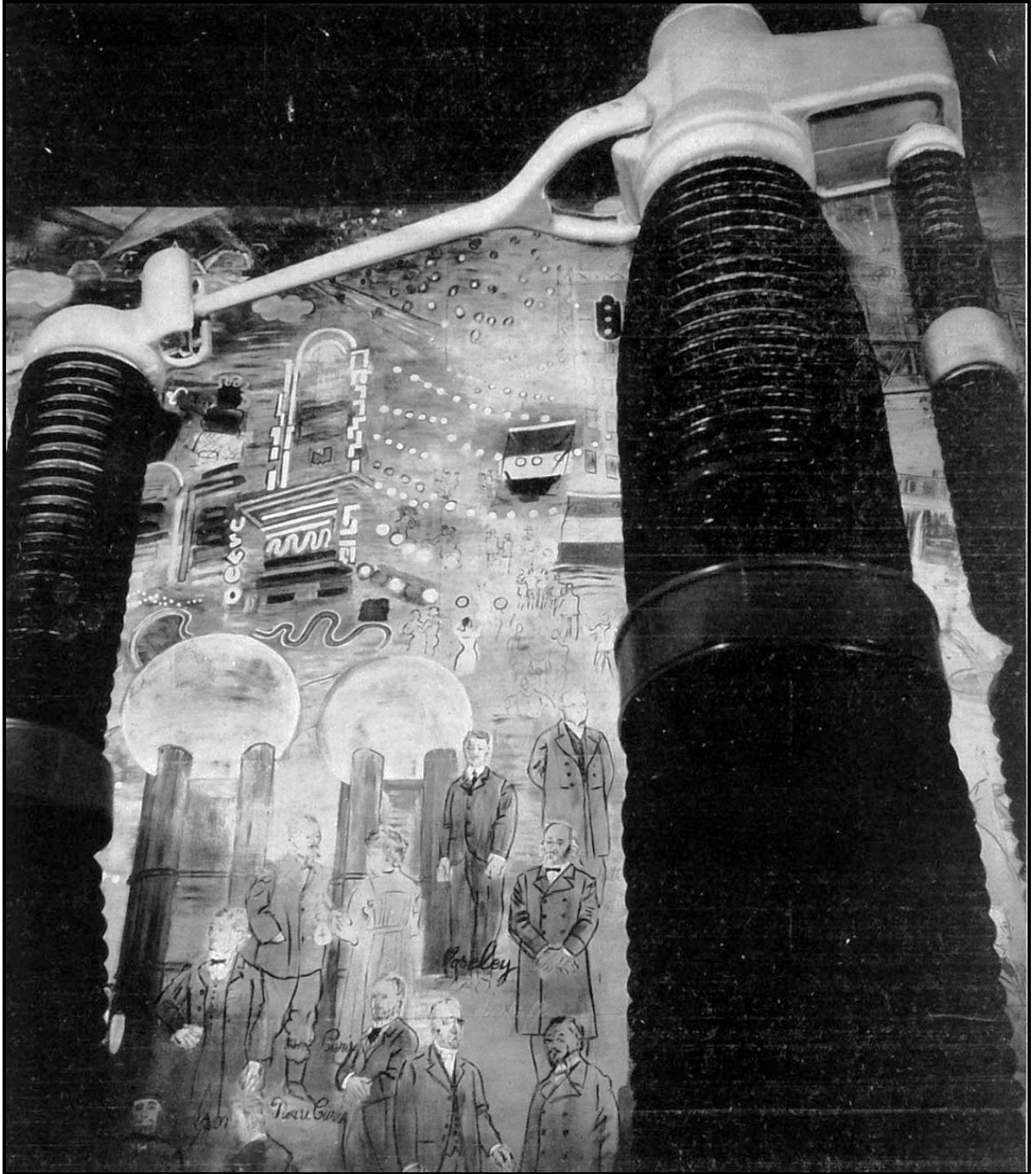


Fig. 44: Electric Dynamo with Raoul Dufy's *Le Fée Electricité*, 1937, in background.



Fig. 45: (detail) *Le Fée Electricité* of Zeus and bolt of electricity (top and center)



Fig. 36: (detail) Dufy, depicting Edison (left)



Fig. 47: (detail) Dufy, strands of electric lights for Bastille Day



Fig. 48: Didactic panels with Paul Eluard’s poem, “Victory of Guernica,” Basque map, and Euzkadi soldier, 1937 Spanish Pavilion.



Fig. 49: Painting by José Gutiérrez Solana, 1937 Spanish Pavilion.



Fig. 50: Horacio Ferrer, *Madrid*, oil on canvas, 1937, coll. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.

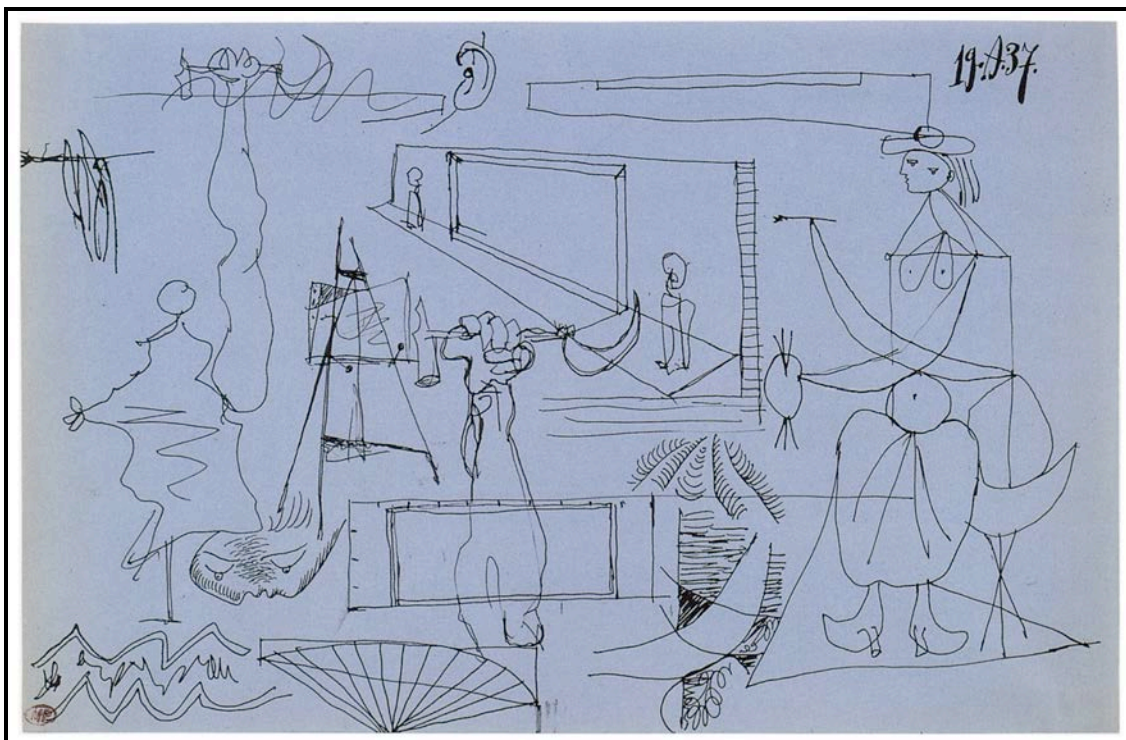


Fig. 51: *L'atelier: le peintre et son modèle, bras tenant une faucille et un marteau*, pen and india ink on paper, April 19, 1937. Musée Picasso, Paris.

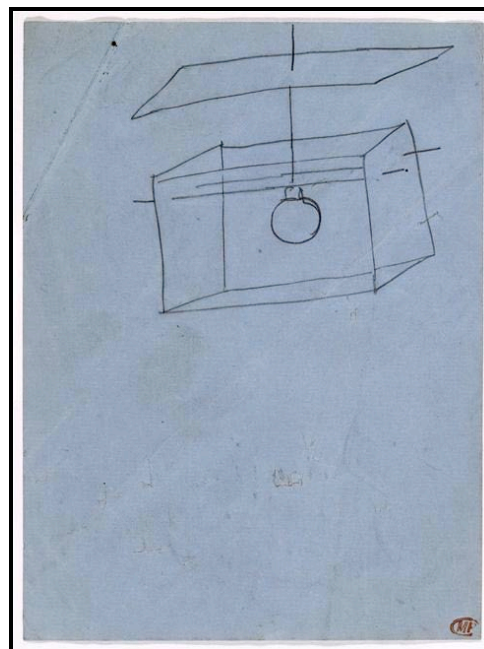


Fig. 52: *L'atelier: la lampe*, pen and india ink on paper, April 18-19, 1937.



Fig. 43: *Nature morte au verre*, oil on cardboard, April 3, 1937. Private collection

1 SEPTEMBRE 1936 L'ILLUSTRATION 45 ANS

UN CINÉMA PARLANT A LA PORTÉE DE TOUS

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L'ENSEMBLE
COMPLET
en 2 versions
Prix : 8.750 fr.

Fig. 54: French home movie projector advertisement, 1936

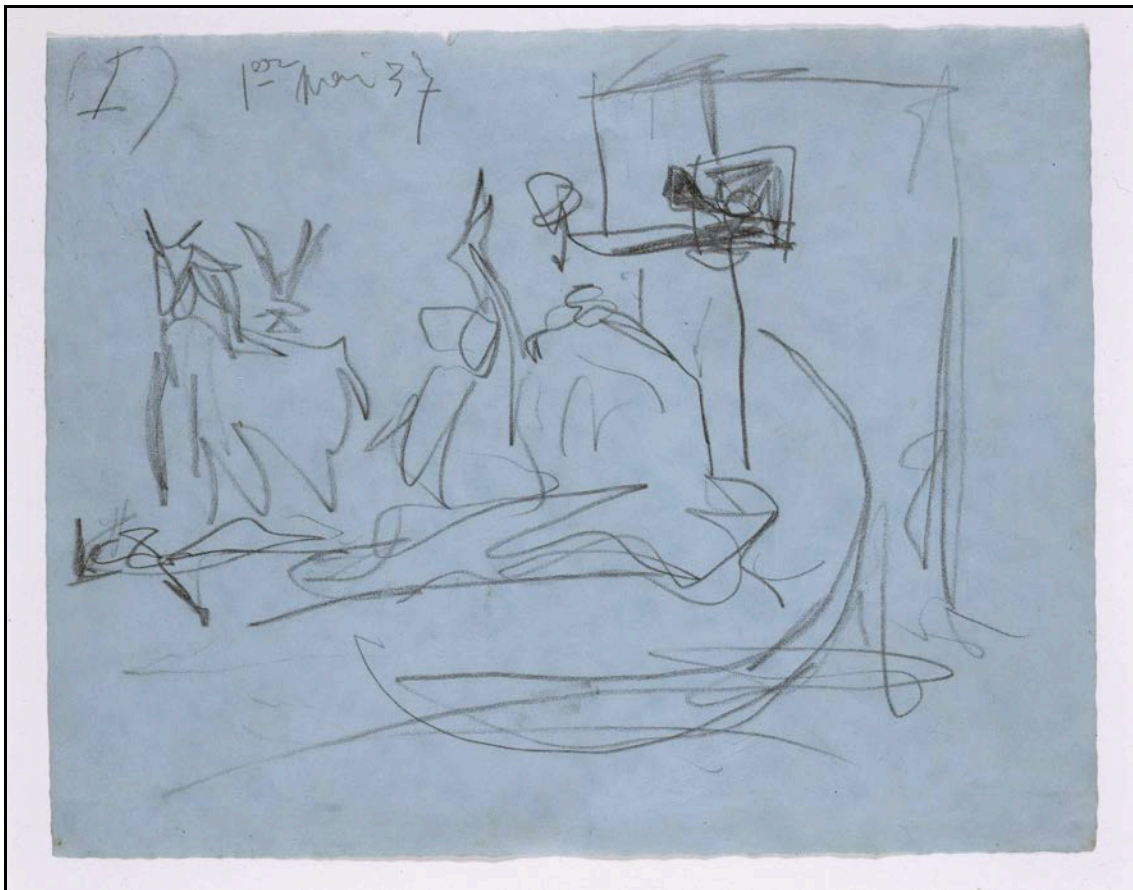


Fig. 55: *Guernica*, Study #1, pencil on blue paper, May 1, 1937. Coll. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid. Bequest of Pablo Picasso

Chapter 2

Illuminating War: Black Sun, Electric Sun

Pentheus: *I seem to see two suns, two Thebes, with two times seven gates.
And you, you are a bull walking before me, with two horns sprouting from your head.*

Dionysius: *You see what you ought to see.*

Euripides, *The Bacchae*,

In early January of 1937, an influential committee of Spanish writers and architects chosen to administer the construction of the Spanish Pavilion, ethnographic and didactic exhibits, and commissions of art met with Picasso at his studio apartment on rue la Bötie in the 8th arrondissement. The representatives—Josep Lluís Sert, architect of the pavilion complex and former colleague of Le Corbusier; the poet, Juan Larrea, who served as the director of information for the Spanish Embassy’s Agence Espagne; the experimental novelist and playwright, Max Aub; José Renau, Director General of the Bellas Artes, who along with the poet and playwright José Bergamin had organized and overseen the smuggling of the collections of the Prado Museum into hiding in Valencia during the siege of Madrid¹¹⁵—were unanimous in their choice of Picasso to produce a significant large-scale work that was without stylistic limitation, yet, would be a demonstrative outcry against the slaughter of the beleaguered Republic. As a propagandistic avowal, in theory, the mural would alert fair-goers to the mortal threat of fascism in Spain, and Europe, if not the entire world. However, Picasso did nothing for over four months until the aerial bombardment of Gernika on April 26.

¹¹⁵This information is outlined in Gijs van Hensbergen, *Guernica: A Biography of a Twentieth-Century Icon* (New York and London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004), p. 25. The committee that met with Picasso also included Sert’s architectural partner, Luis Lacasa, and three members of the *Alianza de Intelectuales Antifascistas para la Defensa de la Cultura*.

Evidence of Picasso's politics was never overt. In the past, when he *had* expressed personal political leanings in his art, they were primarily conveyed in an oblique manner.¹¹⁶ His usual hesitancy to accept commissions that would require of him a public political stance was suspended prior to 1936. And for the bombing at Gernika¹¹⁷ it has been suggested by the art historian, Gertje Utley, that the eponymous masterpiece was "motivated less by the politics of the Spanish Civil War than by the human drama of the destruction of the Basque town."¹¹⁸ Nevertheless, had Picasso remained hesitant to express his personal beliefs the reality of the tremendous loss of life and encompassing threat of death in Spain was never far from his awareness.

We find in the build-up to *Guernica* at least three key works of art, several important drawings, and ancillary pieces that were unequivocal political expressions of Picasso's *cri de cœur* ire. Highly articulate in symbolic attributions, instructive in format, and unique style, these include, *La Dépouille du Minotaure*, May 28, 1936; *Rêve et Mensonge de Franco I et II*, January 8-9, 1937; and, *Figure de femme inspirée par la guerre d'Espagne (Portrait de la marquise de cul chrétien)*, January, 19, 1937 (fig. 11), and, two *Baigneuse* drawings from February, 1937, discussed here at some length as overtly Leftist proclamations.

The French activist-playwright, Romain Rolland, requested of Picasso a stage curtain design for the theatrical production, *Le 14 Juillet*. The play was based within the historical framework of the French Revolution that reflected Rolland's outcry against societal injustice, repression, and, war, first written and performed in 1902. Its restaging at Paris's *Théâtre de l'Alhambra* on Quatorze Juillet of 1936 was coordinated to celebrate the victory of the

¹¹⁶ Patricia Leighton, "Picasso's Collages and the Threat of War," *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 67, no. 4, (December, 1989), pp. 653-672.

¹¹⁷ Throughout the thesis I will use the Basque name Gernika, or in some instances, Gernika-Lumo, in lieu of the transliterated Guernica.

¹¹⁸ Gertje Utley, *Picasso: The Communist Years* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 21.

Popular Front's election of Léon Blum. Moreover, Rolland's public theatre for social consciousness reconfirmed a decree set in 1794 that charged poets with an obligation that their verse should celebrate, "the principal events of the French Revolution...and give to history that solid character which is fitting for the annals of a great people who have fought victoriously for their liberty, in spite of the opposition of all the tyrants in Europe."¹¹⁹

Picasso's study in gouache, *La Déponille du Minotaure* (fig. 1) served as a prototype for the grand stage curtain. In the context of the struggle for liberty in Spain and the advance of fascism, the allegorical work could not have belied the artist's sympathies with the Left despite the highly codified nature of the small painting. The enigmatic scene was sparse yet potent. Realized at forty-four feet wide (fig. 2), viewers of the play saw on the stage curtain four characters unlikely in any other context than Picasso's imagination. These were depicted within a desolate landscape whose only sign of civilization was the fragment of a war-torn building. Two of four figures carry two others. They flee from an invisible catastrophe and the sense of a further threat. In the foreground, a giant winged Horus, the Egyptian falcon-headed deity, tightly holds the languid body (*Déponille* to mean "riddance" and "relic") of a Minotaur who is fancifully costumed in Harlequin's motley and draped with a *muleta*, the red cape of the toreador. According to bullfighting tradition, red would disguise the bloodstains of the bull during the *faena*, or the final passes before the kill. And here, Picasso who symbolized himself as Minotaur-Harlequin¹²⁰ of the chthonic realms inhabited by the

¹¹⁹ Romain Rolland, *The Fourteenth of July and Danton: Two Play of the French Revolution*, trans. Barrett H. Clark (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1919), p. 7. Originally published, *Le 14 juillet: Action populaire en trois actes* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et cie., 1909).

¹²⁰ The articulation of the figure includes Dora Maar's face and beautiful slender hands. The Picasso scholar, Anne Baldessarri, wrote, "The first distinctly recognizable incarnation of Dora in his oeuvre is as a female Minotaur. Staring at the sun, carrying death like a Medusa, Dora the photographer is half-animal, half-human - a monster of sorts who shares with the painter the power that attends upon all freaks of

Harlequin of 1915,¹²¹ has Horus, lord of the sky, sun, and moon stride forth holding him near-death as if spent and finished in his role as Trickster.

Horus keeps a raptor's eye directed at the viewer. The lidless gaze is both desperate and pernicious. And given Picasso's near-pathological fear of death, the regard is apotropaic. In tandem with a screech of death emitted by Horus, the "sight and sound" foretells the return of wartime surveillance devices used in the Great War that would fix upon the enemy in single focus. And, the imaginary warning cry of the birdman predates sirens to announce enemy attacks that would soon pervade the skies of Europe. Perhaps Picasso's horned, half man, half bird-of-prey was prompted by Goya's nightmare of the monster owls in the *Los Caprichos* etching, "*The sleep of reason produces monsters*," 1799, in which the winged, menacing creatures personified his oneiric vision of eighteenth century Spanish society: corrupted and deserving of ruin.

With the second duo of figures we look to the etchings of Stefano della Bella, active in Paris in 1639-1650, and specifically to della Bella's *Death Carrying a Child*, 1648, from the series, *The Five Deaths*, purportedly known to Picasso (fig. 3).¹²² If the print carries symbolic and iconographic imprint, it does so in several ways. "Death" lugs a large youth on his back that hails to the distance, perhaps in desperation to an angel beyond the framework of the scene. The specter, who had caused tremendous loss of life within della Bella's era in the Thirty Years' War, by disease (bubonic plague and typhus), and, from famine¹²³ crosses the Cemetery of the Innocents in Paris. In the far right background, a charnel house is being

nature." In *Picasso: Life with Dora Maar, Love and War, 1935-1945*, (Paris: Flammarion, 2006), pp. 116-117.

¹²¹ Pablo Picasso, *Harlequin*, 1915, oil on canvas. New York: The Museum of Modern Art.

¹²² I am grateful to Lawrence Goedde at the University of Virginia for his guidance about Stefano della Bella's work in Paris. In correspondence with McKinnon, 2014.

¹²³ Tim Ould, "Stefano della Bella, Death on a Battlefield" (Melbourne: The University of Melbourne, Australia, 2012), <http://melbourneprint.wordpress.com>.

actively replenished. A gravedigger works in the middle region of the scene. Phyllis D. Massar noted that the “site is so correctly rendered topographically that it can be surmised that della Bella himself sketched in this terrifying place, virtually the common grave of all Paris for centuries....The pebbles in this ground were teeth.”¹²⁴

In the Picasso, the figure that would be “Death” is a *sauvage* man comingled with a stiffened horse pelt. The flared nostrils and bared teeth of the horse’s skull, that seemingly express its final whinny, animate the hide, which the man peers out from under (fig. 4). A masterful rendering in arabesque calligraphic line, the horse skin and head cloak the otherwise muscular figure that carries the younger man on his back. This rather Apollonian figure wears a typical *marinière*, the regional striped shirt of Bretonaise fishermen and laborers, and, favored by the “working man” Picasso himself.¹²⁵ In his relationship to the horse, the youth was not recast as Picasso’s pink period lad in *Boy Leading a Horse*, 1905-06; or, as a version of a mild radical similar to the beautiful young Parisian in *Garçon à la pipe*, from the same years, who was the first to be crowned with a laurel of flowers, a popular adornment in the gentlest depictions of Marie-Thérèse Walther whose profile is cast here. Rather, with arms outstretched and looking uncertainly into the void—Apollo, being both the god of the sun and an idealist—the gentle youth expresses the opposing possibilities of victory and escape through the pretense of flight; or, the death of innocence expressed in the posture of the crucifixion.

The fleeting moment of Arcadian optimism in Picasso’s scene may have been influenced by the youthful character, Le Contat,¹²⁶ who cried out in a late scene of the play:

¹²⁴ Phyllis D. Massar, “Presenting Stefano della Bella” (New York: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 1968), unpaginated, illus. no. 5.

¹²⁵ When designed in 1858, each of the twenty-one stripes represented Napoleon III’s military victories.

¹²⁶ The character, Le Contat, refers to the French actress, Louise Contat (1760-1813), who was active in the Parisian comedic theatre during the period to which Rolland’s play refers.

“Oh young Liberty! Bloom in my hair and flourish in my heart!” Some scholars have identified the young man as Picasso himself, and the bearded man of burden as his father, which seems plausible and provides a level of autobiography. Still, in this political work of art, it is Picasso’s empathy with the banishment of a people, of his own countrywomen, the Spanish laborer and poor widower being sent into uncertain futures that would harken back to the late nineteenth century through the early Spring of 1904 in Barcelona, represented in tenebrous scenes and portraits of the blind, the beggar, and the dispossessed typified in the poignant, *Les pauvres au bord de la mer*, 1903 (National Gallery of Art, Washington). If the Della Bella “Death” figure is paradigmatic, Picasso transformed the wandering specter into a warrior with the single feature of raised arm and clenched fist. This resolute sign insists that death will be defied in certain terms: “...to destroy those who destroy the earth.”¹²⁷ Poised to throw a large stone at an unseen enemy—in the literal realm, war and the desperation caused by it; otherwise, a macrocosmic, ubiquitous malevolence of the universe—the man’s duke was also a salute of Republican solidarity as a gestural polemic against the flattened palm of “Heil Hitler.”

I forgot that I was wearing iron shoes.

Animal Farm, George Orwell

On January 6, 1937, Hitler, in solidarity with Franco, declared an ultimatum that Basque citizens and the army, Eusko Gudarostea, surrender or suffer total destruction. The news catapulted Picasso into a furious state. Two days later a cornucopia of blasphemous images spilled forth in the remarkable two-part etching, *Rêve et Mensonge de Franco* (Dream and Lie of Franco), January 8-9, 1937 (figs. 5 and 6). The narrative of *Rêve et Mensonge* reads from right-to-left in nine sequential frames. The etchings were composed in the form of a satiric-

¹²⁷ Revelations 11:18.

political comic strip, and, ecclesiastical *augues*, or Castilian *aleluyas*, a popular form of religious storytelling thereby obfuscating the boundaries of the sacred and the common. The Spanish Picasso scholar, Josep Palau i Fabre, summarized that in “these plates we witness one of the most disturbing osmoses in the artist’s move from a fiercely subjective art to an art whose meaning is just as fiercely collective.”¹²⁸

In a merciless debasement, a clear condemnation against Franco’s hubris and the Church that supported him, Picasso caricatured the General as a polymorph that masquerades and destroys frame-to-frame. When Alfred Barr, Jr. was preparing his 1946 text for the exhibition, *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, he asked what the origin of the Franco figure in the etchings was. Picasso replied: “l’étron,” the civil translation meaning “a turd.” Following the “poetic” scatology of Alfred Jarry whom Picasso had a life-long admiration for, the first word in *Ubu Roi* is “Merdre,” an obvious play on “merde,” which was not lost on Picasso’s formulation of the Franco character.

The General was made even more loathsome in the form of a polyp, which amplified the ridicule. In marine terms, a polyp is a sedentary form of the sea urchin whose genus must have fulfilled Picasso’s darker, comic temperament since the body consists of *mesoglea*, a gelatinous substance. The polyp has no sexual organs and thereby reproduces by budding. Being sac-like the inner layers are structure-less, therefore, the polyp lacks a skeletal system. The fictive Franco was further sullied with the prospect that he was also a mutilated octopus; the etymology of polyp derived from octopus, Fr. *poulpe* + *pous*.¹²⁹ In the larger context of Picasso’s oeuvre, aberrations of aquatic creatures were adapted into permutations of the human body, notably that of Marie-Thérèse Walther in various contortions of her form

¹²⁸ Joseph Palau i Fabre, *Picasso 1927-1934: From the Minotaur to Guernica* (Barcelona: Ediciones Polígrafa, 2011), p. 276.

¹²⁹ Named by the French scientist René Antoine Ferchault de Reaumur.

between 1931-33. Robert Rosenblum surmised that Picasso “goes on still further to confound human anatomy with the gummy substance of another object familiar to the seashore, a squid. As the human head is transformed into an inflatable bulb...the vertical mouth becomes simultaneously a squid’s air vent and vulva, so that finally, the whole figure is metamorphosed before our eyes into a submarine creature obeying a primal urge.”¹³⁰

The aquatic life films by the French filmmaker, Jean Painlevé, a friend of the surrealist photographer Jacques-Andre Boiffard, were engaging for many in the Parisian avant-garde, including Picasso, during the early ‘30s. As the writer Michael Cary has shown in his recent work on the subject, Painlevé’s short films revealed a, “shocking, balletic, combative world of drama and sex,” and in that way they, “provide a visual corollary to Picasso’s development in portraiture into the 1930s.”¹³¹ In the ten-minute movie, *La Pieuvre* (The Octopus) Painlevé filmed the creature undulating, breathing, and fighting. The clip also depicted the harvesting of an octopus by a fisherman who “plucked one from a tidal pool, wrenching the creature’s head inside out, and slicing off a sticky, quivering tentacle.”¹³² Cary further describes that Picasso would have been familiar with this treatment of the octopus having grown up on the Mediterranean coast where the “capture and killing of them was not only a commercial practice but a common rite in boyhood passage.”¹³³

Picasso further enfeebled Franco, rendering his monstrous formlessness more extreme by adaptation of the grotesque creature in Dora Maar’s emblematic surrealist photograph, *Père Ubu*, 1936 (fig 7). The close-up format of the “portrait” exaggerated the creature’s repellent flatly pointed head, nearly invisible eyes, and tiny, menacing claws

¹³⁰ Robert Rosenblum, “Picasso and the Anatomy of Eroticism,” *Studies in Erotic Art*, eds. Theodore Robert Bowie and Cornelia V. Christenson (New York: Basic Books, 1970), pp. 341-42.

¹³¹ Michael Cary, “Tentacle Erotica,” *Art in America*, September 1, 2011; and, John Richardson, *Picasso & the Camera* (New York: Gagosian Gallery, 2015), p. 171.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*

brought forward toward the camera's lens for maximum effect. The image was comparable to the surrealist literary "stratégie du choc,"¹³⁴ which upended ingrained forms of expression and choices of subject. In Maar's magnification of the "bestial" in the earliest moments of life, she re-conceptualized the absurd, dictatorial, anti-hero, King Ubu, in Jarry's proto-surrealist play, *Ubu Roi* (1896). The photograph's intensification of the postured horror of "Père Ubu," increased with Maar's titling in that the utterly strange, near-embryonic armadillo is presented as the King Father of the younger "King Ubu," that expresses a symmetry of the monstrous double. Maar's *Ubu* and Picasso's *Franco* inhabit realms of the same abject nightmare.

The essence of the Franco composite, not unlike Hans Bellmer's *Poupées*, which Hal Foster has addressed, was an assault on the, "Nazi subject with the very menace *that* subject fears, which is not an attack by a figure of power but invasion [or representation by] others who, although identified as weak, nonetheless threaten its borders...and psychically (the unconscious, sexuality, the "feminine.") This fear of invasion, by one not of them, pathological in the fascist subject, must in turn be seen as a project of a fantasized bodily chaos against which that subject armors himself, seeking a defense by means of a metallicized human body whose expression is...vulgarized neoclassicism."¹³⁵

Picasso opened to the hallucinatory in the first frame of *Dream and Lie* with the heroic subject of horse and rider. In an ironic gesture to the patrimony of Spain's beloved gentleman-hero, Don Quixote, whom Picasso had fondly called *Señor Don Guillaume Apollinaire*, in a postcard to his friend in 1907, the Franco-polyp character also sits astride his horse under the Spanish sun (figs. 8 and 9). In Picasso's inversion of the lore, Rocinante, the

¹³⁴ Françoise Levallant, "La Danse de Picasso et le Surréalisme en 1925," *L'Information d'Histoire de l'Art*, vol. XI, no.5, p. 209. Cited by Lydia Gasman, *Mystery, Magic*, p. 659.

¹³⁵ Rosalind E. Krauss, *Bachelors* (Cambridge, Mass.: OCTOBER Books, The MIT Press, 2000), p. 24.

man of La Mancha's horse, is in Franco's service a wretched disemboweled and grinning mount and caught in an unlikely prancing step. Dictator, who sits tall in the saddle holds a sword and banner denigrating the Virgin of Mercy,¹³⁶ and also gives a faint smile visible under his scribbled black moustache. The sun beams at midday and displays a farcical, dimpled smile in accord with the mockery. Although the suffering hack was reconstituted from its earliest appearance in sketches of the *corrida* made during Picasso's return to Spain in the early summer of 1917, the heinous grin in '36 overstated the absurdity of the horse. Picasso would write on February 18, 1937, "but what horse drags its guts with so much grace sending so many kisses and smiles and so many inflaming glances...so odiferous and perfumed...at the moment of death..."¹³⁷ Even if Horse was meant as a tragi-comic ruse since it disappears after the first frame, in the words of the King in Pedro Calderón de la Barca's play, *The Physician of His Honor* (1635), "This is no time for laughter!" to which Coquín, the court jester, answered, "When was it ever?"¹³⁸ The levity in *Dream and Lie* was false and it soon dissipated into horror.

Within the conditions of the pillage of Spain, Picasso's quasi-surrealist jargon expressed a baseness that was wrought in word and image, as raw emotive power, the "...horse ripped open top to bottom in the sun which reads it for the flies...—the banners frying in the skillet twist in black ink sauce spilled in drops of blood that gun him

¹³⁶ Temma Kaplan has written that the shrine was worshipped at the sanctuary near Picasso's boyhood home and during the Francoist regime the Virgin of Mercy, native to Barcelona, was pitted against Francoist Catholic's Virgin of Pilar. *Red City, Blue Period: Social Movements in Picasso's Barcelona* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 58-9 and 192.

¹³⁷ Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 133.

¹³⁸ Brian Holmes, "Frontiers of Figure: Don Quixote and the Comedia," *Qui Parle*, vol. 2, no. 2, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, Fall, 1988), p. 46.

down....”¹³⁹ By frame eight of Part I, Horse is now Pegasus whose job it is, according to myth, to carry the hero and slayer of monsters, Bellerophon, to Mount Olympus to kill a Chimera. As the legend went and Picasso transformed, Bellerophon-Franco fell off Pegasus and did not make it to the mountain. Franco must then complete his destructive course riding a pig, which in some folk beliefs were only ridden by witches.¹⁴⁰

Picasso reifies the sordidness of scene nine with the horse and rider, now pig and Petron-polyp points a spear directly at the sun (fig. 10). Franco grins more widely than before as if his ridiculous attempt to diminish the light by hubris were possible. Not only does the scene contain a black sun, the sun of the Apocalypse and the inversion of Good; Picasso proposed the death of the sun in terms different than the 1933 series, *Morte au Soleil*, and other campaigns in which it was under threat in the early ‘30s, in that it had acquired scatological characteristics in the etching. Bataille’s heterodox essay, “The Solar Anus” (1927) may have had no bearing on Picasso in the Franco depiction of frame nine, unlike the importance of “The Rotten Sun” had had for *Crucifixion* in 1930, or that the painting had had on the essay, as it were. However, Allan Stoekl, Bataille’s translator, summarized that by ‘27 he was, “already developing an approach to what he would call later, in among other essays, ‘The Psychological Structure of Fascism,’—heterogeneous matter. That is, matter that was so repulsive that it resisted not only the idealism of Christianity, Hegel, and the surrealists, but even the conceptual edifice-building traditional materialists. Bataille’s work was an all-out assault on dignity.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Pablo Picasso, “The Dream & Lie of General Franco,” June 15-18, 1937, *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz & Other Poems*, Jerome Rothenberg and Pierre Joris, eds. (Cambridge, Mass.: Exact Change, 2004), p. 143.

¹⁴⁰ Alex Bein, *The Jewish Question: Biography of a World Problem*, trans. Harry Zohn, Assoc (New York: Association of University Presses, 1990), p. 530.

¹⁴¹ Georges Bataille, “The Solar Anus,” *Visions of Excess Selected Writings 1927-1939*, Allan Stoekl, ed. and trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. xi.

When Picasso moves forward with the etching in State II it is completed in two settings, the last few frames created after *Guernica* was finalized around June 7. Franco appears in three of the nine scenes of carnage. The sun does not appear again. We find Pegasus has been slain; dead women and children redouble the horror of their fate at Gernika; and, a bull disembowels Franco. In equal measure to the aberrant and packed morphology of the Dictator, Picasso disgorged his loathing of him in a poem lacking punctuation or syntax, rhyme or rationale that was a pendant to the pair of etchings:

...souse of swords of evil-omened polyps scouring rush of hairs from priests' tonsures standing naked in the middle of the frying pan – placed upon the ice cream cone of codfish fried in the scabs of the lead-ox heart – his mouth foul of the chinch bug jelly of his words – sleigh-bells of the plate of snails braiding guts...on his shoulder the shroud stuffed with sausages and mouths – rage distorting the outline of the shadow...and the horse open wide to the sun which reads it to the flies that stitch to the knots of the net full of anchovies the skyrocket of lilies...¹⁴²

In the third exceptional invective against Nationalist Spain, created ten days after *Rêve et Mensonge*, the equally vicious, small oil, *Figure féminin inspirée par la guerre d'Espagne* (Portrait of the Marchioness of Christianarse), January 19, 1937 (fig. 11) is perhaps more eccentric in its portrayal of Franco than the cartoon-etchings. In the historical dimension, combined Nationalist, Italian and Moroccan forces began a brutal drive to capture Málaga, Picasso's birthplace, on January 17. The painting features the androgyne "Franco-Marquesa" who appears on a balcony waving the red and yellow Nationalist flag held in its talons, cheering the arrival of Muslim Moors who will assist with the mass killings and plunder.¹⁴³ The wall inscription reads: "Portrait of the Marchioness of Christianarse tossing a

¹⁴² Rothenberg, op.cit., p. 142.

¹⁴³ The date is also notable for recapturing, by the Republicans, Cerro de los Angeles, the home of the 14th century monastery, Our Lady of the Angels, and the monument to Sagrado Corazón outside of Madrid.

coin to the Moorish soldiers defenders of the Virgin.”¹⁴⁴ Picasso’s black symbolism was all the more heightened in the Marquesa’s schematic Schiaparelli-type¹⁴⁵ hat. Brimmed with a lemniscate¹⁴⁶ configuration and crescent that would be used repeatedly in headgear for Dora Maar during the war years,¹⁴⁷ it was fashioned from *nopales*, or prickly pear cacti enhanced by a field of small crosses. The specificity of the hat’s attributes recalls André Breton’s ecstatic response to Picasso’s *The Three Dancers*, 1925, with passages that situate the apocalyptic trio in a “city pregnant with panic”¹⁴⁸ and, the Maenad’s hair with a “pale crescent”¹⁴⁹ that “turns now around a cross”¹⁵⁰ to blaspheme its sanctity. The wretched facial features of the Marquesa are a cipher of Franco-Marie-Thérèse-Dora made all the more unsightly and strange by the long wrinkled neck, that of a condor, or, the native Spanish black vulture upon which the head was attached.

The “Nazi vulture,” named for its resemblance to the Reich’s menacing eagle, proliferated in anti-Nazi propaganda and was the subject of John Heartfield’s masterful montage, *Madrid 1936*, in which two vultures loom over the cityscape (fig. 12). One of the scavengers is personified as a fascist Falangist, the other a Nazi intent on its prey. The vultures are held back by the bayonets of three Republican soldiers positioned out of view below the edge of the scene. The pro-Republic banner reads in Spanish and German: “They

¹⁴⁴ Palau I Fabre, *op.cit.*, p. 278.

¹⁴⁵ The Paris couturière, Elsa Schiaparelli, would have been known to Picasso, was a casual member of the surrealist circle that included Leonor Fini, Meret Oppenheim, and Salvador Dali. Schiaparelli invented the small “cocktail hat” with extravagant feather and fanciful embellishments in 1936.

¹⁴⁶ One of any number of algebraic figure-eight shapes who consideration began with Proclus, in the 5th century AD. In modern mysticism the lemniscate was a variation of the ouroboros, an ancient image of a snake eating its own tail that came to symbolize the infinite.

¹⁴⁷ A counter interpretation regards headpiece as “crescent moon[s] flanked by a few crosses which look like those in a cemetery.” *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Breton, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Shall Not Pass! We Shall Pass!’¹⁵¹ Late in World War II when Radio-Berlin announced that New York might well be bombed, London’s *Guardian* immediately warned: “While probabilities of enemy attacks from the air naturally grow smaller... There is still a ‘kick’ and a great deal more left in the Nazi vulture....”¹⁵²

With the fall of Málaga on February 18, 1937, over fifteen thousand troops had overrun the Republican military. Franco’s forces executed four thousand Andalusian militiamen and hundreds of citizens who could not escape. Throughout late 1936 in to early ‘37 we find in Picasso’s objections to the insanity variants of the sun as a signifier of the failed order of the universe the center of existence, as light and sustenance, turned evil.¹⁵³ In the artist’s idiosyncratic poetry of the period that leads up to sustained outcry in *The Black Notebook* of March 6-19, 1937, the sun is implicated in a striking range of non-rational, perhaps stream of consciousness descriptions that seethe with doubt, including, “...in the absolute black of the sun covered with snow the angle of morning hides under the pillow...the light hiding under the drawings pretending indifference....”¹⁵⁴ was annotated with a small black sun in the left margin of the page (fig. 13); “...the sun that may from one moment to the next explodes in his hand...;”¹⁵⁵ “...the sun’s scissors striking right into the middle of the bouquet...;”¹⁵⁶ “...when the light arrives counting its steps so tired and charged by so many wrinkles...;”¹⁵⁷ “...with its irregularity wounds the perfume that floats

¹⁵¹ Discussed in Gabriel Jackson, *A Concise History of The Spanish Civil War* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp. 86-106.

¹⁵² Serge Marc Durflinger, *The Second World War in Verdun, Quebec* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006), p. 87.

¹⁵³ Variants of the degraded sun appear in *Le crayon qui parle*, March 6, 1936; *Grand Air*, June 4, 1936; *Poupée et femme se noyant*, January 28, 1937.

¹⁵⁴ May 8, 1936. Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 113.

¹⁵⁵ September 1936. Ibid., p. 120.

¹⁵⁶ October 11, 1936. Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁵⁷ February 2, 1937. Ibid., p. 127.

under the turnips pissing their rage through the sun's diamond...on the blackest corner...no longer so so white if clear;”¹⁵⁸ “...drop by drop through the large jar's filter full of suns cuts the throat of the dish rag's white which holds out a hand to the armful of black...;”¹⁵⁹ and, “...tooth ache in the eyes of the sun pricks — pricks ache of sun teeth in the eyes — eyes of teeth pricks of the sun of ache of sun pricks eyes of teeth ache of teeth — of sun pricks of ache eyes....”¹⁶⁰

In early February, Picasso drew six “Cabana” scenes, the last of a series of exceedingly symbolic autobiographical works begun in 1927, in which a singular aberrant figuration of Franco on the beach culminated the *Rêve et Mensonge* campaign.¹⁶¹ In two of the dystopic sheets a black sun illuminates Franco in *Baigneuse*, and equally, *Baigneuse sous Soleil Noir*, February 9, 1937 (figs. 14 and 15). The cast of black light is made specific in Picasso's titling with “sous” to mean that the Dictator is “in” and “under” and “within” the scope of the black light, co-existence with darkness and evil. Lydia Gasman, the greatest commentator of Picasso's “Cabana Series” and its bathers referred to the polymorphous figure on the beach as a “puppet”¹⁶² of the black sun suggesting the magnetic draw and magical force between the Franco-victim captured by the sun's negative brilliance, and also the complicity of that character to enact its own fate in the darkness. Continuing the style of excess set forth in the *Dream and Lie* versions of Franco, yet now more specifically phallic and tumescent, the “Giant” skips a chain link rope at midday under a black sun.

Picasso is now thinking of the despot in terms of monumentality and solidity. This equation resonates with the very real situation in Spain in which Franco's swath of slaughter

¹⁵⁸ February 4, 1927. Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ February 5, 1937. Ibid., p. 128.

¹⁶⁰ February 20, 1937. Ibid., p. 134.

¹⁶¹ Lydia Csató Gasman, *Mystery, Magic and Love in Picasso: Picasso and the Surrealist Poets, 1925-1938*; (Ph.D thesis, New York: Columbia University, 1981), p. 425.

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 431.

seemed impassable and his military ranks impenetrable. The smaller of the two sketches, *Baigneuse* (6 x 8 cm), shows Franco—whose head recalls that of the stony *Buste de personnage* of 1931 (fig. 16)—set within the artifice of a faux picture frame as if to suggest that the full-length portrait may be a work of art, a joke on the European tradition of the full-length portrait. The small sketch was a “first thought” and served as a model for the more harrowing and finished sheet, *Bather in Black Sun*, in which Franco is further articulated with a composite of tumorous bulges, multiple orifices, flipper-like arms, and a lower torso with columnar legs so architectural that the figure, one of Picasso’s most terrifying symbols of brutality and darkness, appears to be sunk into the sand, immobile yet jumping rope. Again, borrowing from an earlier campaign of ossified biomorphs, the adaptation of the bone-head of Franco from the harrowing, *Tete de femme*, December 27, 1929 (fig. 17), reveals the direct copy of this prototype for the “screaming-jaw figure”¹⁶³ or “pincer-monster”¹⁶⁴ who looms large in attendance at Christ’s left side in the momentous, *Crucifixion*, 1930.¹⁶⁵

The full arc of the “toy” rope encompasses the black sun from which the skeins of barbed wire or chain link are spun. The rope reaches high and in close proximity to enclose the crying bather-Franco within its arc. Whereas Gasman felt that the rope might suggest hanging and the “self-evident association between skipping rope and barbed wire;”¹⁶⁶ it was particularly not hemp or cloth. This “final” rope appears variously in Picasso’s writings including the doomsday seascape passage, “...of the abandoned tight rope of flute tunes of

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 1052.

¹⁶⁴ Author’s term.

¹⁶⁵ See Chapter 4: Part 1, “Beyond the Profanation of Light, *Crucifixion*, 1930,” for extended analysis the painting.

¹⁶⁶ Gasman, *op. cit.*, p. 431.

dead birds falling into the lake detached from their wings...floating at the mercy of the waves....”¹⁶⁷

I will throw you on the land and hurl you on the open field. I will let all the birds of the sky settle on you and all the animals of the wild gorge themselves on you.

Ezekiel 32:4

About the *soleil noir* in the bather series, Gasman also felt that, “The sky above is the domain of the black sun of the Apocalypse. The pitch-black solar disk radiates a vast, active, rotten “spider’s web,” as it does in Picasso’s image of the sun in the Cabana text: ‘the sun winds spider of its kilometer thousand offensive weapons in equilibrium placed above [Picasso’s] art.’¹⁶⁸ The web is fate’s entrapping thread and its messenger is Franco.”¹⁶⁹ And the black sun, centered within the cosmological web—an archetype of fate in Picasso’s non-traditional ontological sense of alienation—is specifically pronounced in the duress of war. Gasman’s renowned exegesis on the historicity of Picasso’s Center is unparalleled in its specificity and incisive acuity: “The idea of the ‘center,’ implied in the concentric design of Picasso’s *Cosmographical Diagrams* (1940) explicated the “center of space”...the world’s spatial hub...the place where the world came into being, and where it returned after its end.”¹⁷⁰ This is the mythical *locus*. And the standard model of the center is the sun; but for Picasso, according to Gasman’s authority, it is the “black sun that revolves in the [cosmic] machine

¹⁶⁷ Picasso, May 23, 1936. Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 117.

¹⁶⁸ Jaime Sabartés, *Picasso: An Intimate Portrait*, p. 167 in Gasman, op. cit., p. 429.

¹⁶⁹ Gasman, *ibid.*

¹⁷⁰ Lydia Csató Gasman, *War and the Cosmos in Picasso’s Texts, 1936-1940* (New York and Shanghai: iUniverse, 2007), p. 45.

and sings his last judgment”¹⁷¹ while radiating its blackness outward but “without abandoning its fixed location at the infernal “center of night.”¹⁷²

The strident blackness of light, rife with metaphorical, alchemical, psychic, and cosmographical strata took various forms in over fifty works of Picasso’s art from 1930 to the apogee of the Spanish Civil War period with *Guernica*, 1937. The veritable taxonomy of suns included two little known, or rather, overlooked pieces considered marginalia, *Enveloppes enluminees*, 1937. Dedicated to Paul Eluard who was residing at the Hotel Vast Horizon in Mougins, where he and Picasso had stayed in ’36, these small watercolors encapsulate the cosmic topography of the Center Point¹⁷³ enclosed, “...by circles that...expand infinitely and infinitely and infinitely others and others which appear also expand on the india ink of the infinite.”¹⁷⁴

The envelope painting of figure 18 exudes a rainbow spectrum in concentric circles that are over-painted with skeins of rope-like spirals, the spider webs of the *baigneuse*’s black sun. The center of the radiating Good sun is blocked out by a heavily painted black square that seems to be screwed down at the corners ensuring that the black center defies the centrifugal force of the natural dynamism of the sun’s rays. The second envelope is more intricately drawn with fine black lines that overlap vibrating circles of deep mauves, and greys interspersed with burnt umber as if spits of fire were exuding from the center sun out of which explodes black matter in various biomorphic, even tar-like globules from a wholly black center. This nearly repeats the form of a black sun in Picasso’s 1934 illustration for Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* (figs. 19 and 20), so thoroughly known in his consciousness, that the

¹⁷¹ *Picasso Collected Writings (PCW)*, ed. Marie-Laure Bernadac and Christine Piot, trans. Carol Volk and Albert Bensoussan (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), notation from August 22, 1935, p. 25, in Gasman, *ibid.* op. cit., 52.

¹⁷² *PCW*, December 24, 1939, op. cit., p. 210.

¹⁷³ My emphasis via Gasman.

¹⁷⁴ *PCW*, January 19, 1936, op. cit., p. 94.

image was created while he was blindfolded. The dark center contains “pieces of [its inner deathly] silence that fly through the air;”¹⁷⁵ and, the “concentric circles [are] fleeing away from the center of the cry,”¹⁷⁶ which are imbedded in the watercolor’s composition and inherent to the core essence of the darkness’ blackness. In quality and quantity, the blackness represented, “an impossible flight of the world from the tyrant it itself harbors, the dramatic attempt of the universe and of Picasso...to free themselves...from the center of centers where innocent not guilty”¹⁷⁷ long for liberation.

On the afternoon of April 27, 1937, in an intensely distressed atmosphere, an anti-fascist demonstration that included French and Spanish intellectuals, writers, and artists marched on the main boulevards of Paris. Francoist atrocities were known and had been escalating. The Paracuellos Massacres in November and December of ‘36 were an onslaught by Nationalist forces against hypothetical allies of a proletariat coup. Over two thousand people, mostly anti-Nationalist military, Spanish intellectuals, and Catholic priests were taken hostage. Notwithstanding assurances of their release they were hoarded into buses and driven to the outskirts of Madrid, to Paracuellos del Jarama and Torrejon de Ardoz and executed. The bodies were dumped into mass graves. And that a massacre worse than, or far greater than that or the assaults and killings at Seville (July 19, 1936), Barcelona, (July 19, 1936), Irún (August 11, 1936), San Sebastián (August 17, 1936), the Extramadura Campaign¹⁷⁸ (which began Franco’s drive to Madrid on September 3, 1936 lasting until the

¹⁷⁵ *PCW*, January 1, 1936, op. cit., p. 94. Cited by Gasman, op. cit., p. 53.

¹⁷⁶ *PCW*, February 6, 1938, op. cit., p. 182.

¹⁷⁷ Gasman, loc. cit.

¹⁷⁸ According to Helen Graham, "...the Army strategically butchered and terrorized the pro-Republican population, especially the rural landless...It was a war of agrarian counter-reform...The large landowners who owned the vast estates which covered most of the southern half of Spain rode along with the Army of Africa to reclaim by force of arms the land on which the Republic had settled the landless poor. Rural laborers were killed where they stood, the 'joke' being they had got their 'land reform' at last in the form

Siege on March 18, 1939), (fig. 21), Málaga (February 3, 1937), Durango (March 31, 1937); and, the numerous small towns and villages of Amorebieta, Marquina, Munguía, San Julian, and Valmaseda had occurred at Gernika on April 26, 1937 was the tipping point for the Spanish Civil War and thereafter what would become World War II.

With the Insurgent capture of Irún on September 3, and, coastal San Sebastián, on September 13, 1936, Franco had cut the Basques off from their French border and a large part of their native territory. The seizure also gave the Nationalists control of one thousand square miles of Vizcayan country that included many of northern Spain's most important factories. By late March of '37, attacks on Madrid were halted in order to focus military intensification on the northern Republic held zone. There, the *cinturón del hierro*, a network of fortifications was planned to completely surround Bilbao, Franco's primary target, along with its nearest outlying villages and countryside. The idea included laying two hundred kilometers of barbed wire, trenches, and machine gun bunkers that would require fifteen thousand workers, engineers, construction specialists, and architects to build the line. Ingeniously planned and similar to other rigid fortifications, the *cinturón*, or "Belt of Iron" had lulled the Basques into a false sense of security. Huge gaps in the line were left unfinished; camouflage and defenses against aerial attacks went unconsidered; and, the essential principle of fortification, the depth of the defense, would require multiple trench lines from which troops could emerge and retreat that ultimately, tragically went un-built.

The Spanish Nationalist offensive on March 31, commanded by General Emilio Mola, led directly to the bombing of Durango. Mola bellowed the threat, "I have decided to terminate rapidly the war in the north: those not guilty of assassinations and who surrender

of a burial plot." More than a half of the victims of the Nationalist repression in Badajoz were landless peasants and journeymen. Helen Graham, *The Spanish Civil War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford and London: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 32.

their arms will have their lives and property spared. But, if submission is not immediate, I will raze all Vizcaya to the ground, beginning with the industries of war. I have the means to do so."¹⁷⁹ The Condor Legion attacked Durango leaving one hundred and twenty-seven dead including two priests and thirteen nuns who had been celebrating Mass. After multiple other bombings in the region, the Luftwaffe developed more than one million kilograms of bombs that had forced Republican aviators to take refuge in La Albericia in Santander, to the east of the National offensive. During a heroic attempt by the ace Republican pilot, Felipe del Rio, he succeeded in downing one of the Luftwaffe's experimental airplanes. The Reich followed with an unprecedented retaliation campaign.

*But from each hole in Spain
Spain emerges
but from each dead child a rifle with eyes emerges,
but from each crime bullets are born
which will one day find the right spot
in your hearts.*

César Vallejo, "I Explain a Few Things," 1937

Gernika (transliterated from the ancestral Basque dialect, *Euzkara*, to Guernica) lies 36 kilometers from Bilbao and fewer by plane. By late afternoon of April 16, 1937, the town lay smoldering in ruins and carpeted with carnage.¹⁸⁰ Operation Rügen, a component of *Unternehmen Feuerzauber*, or, Operation Magic Fire, was commanded from Germany by Nazi Reichsmarschall Göring, and masterminded by Colonel Wolfram von Richthofen, who would come to organize the murderous blitzkriegs on Poland and France. Göring had exploited Franco's plea for German military aid and in so doing, the destruction of Gernika-

¹⁷⁹ Robert P. Clark, *The Basques, the Franco Years and Beyond* (Reno, Nevada: The University of Nevada Press, 1979), p. 70.

¹⁸⁰ The injuries and deaths of the children at Gernika created the need for their immediate evacuation. They became known as *niños vascos* and most were sent by ship to England.

Lumo, as the sacred town is known in Spain, was used as an alibi to conduct an all-out aerial attack. According to Göring's sworn testimony nine years later during the Nuremberg Trials, he claimed, "The Führer thought the matter over. I urged him to give support under all circumstances [and] to test my young Luftwaffe at this opportunity in this or that technical respect. With the permission of the Führer, I sent a large part of my transport fleet and a number of experimental fighter units, bombers, and anti-aircraft guns; and in that way I had an opportunity to ascertain, under combat conditions, whether the material was equal to the task."¹⁸¹ Göring's false claim of "combat conditions" attempted to justify the attack piloted by inexperienced crews. The operation was nothing less than an egregious laboratory trial that used the town and its people for the Nazi experiment.

The Luftwaffe fleet included twenty-three large Junker JU52 tri-motor planes converted from transporters to bombers; an uncounted number of the harrowing JU87 Stuka dive bombers; four swift Heinkel He-III medium bombers that had been built in violation of the Treaty of Versailles in the early '30s; ten Heinkel He51 fighter-bombers; three Savoia-Marchetti SM81 Pipistrello bomber-transport planes that featured long-range visibility; the Dornier Do17 light bomber, known as the *Fliegender Bleistift*, or "flying pencil;" twelve Fiat CR32 fighter bi-planes; and, from the assembly line in Regensburg, new Messerschmitt Bf109 fighters. The planes streamed into Gernika-Lumo in a formation of three abreast, and indiscriminately dropped 250 kg "splinter" bombs and ECB1 thermite incendiary bombs which, burning at 2500° centigrade upon explosion, disintegrated two-thirds of the town into a carbonized ruin (figs. 22-24).

A Condor Legion report submitted to Hitler in 1938 concluded that the bombing trials at Gernika and other towns produced, "...notable results in hitting the targets near the

¹⁸¹"Nuremberg Trial Proceedings," *Trial of the Major War Criminals, International Military Tribunal*, Vol. 9, March 14, 1946, Eighty-First Day, Morning Session (New Haven, CT: *The Avalon Project*, Yale Law School).

front, especially in bombing villages...these targets are easy to find and can be thoroughly destroyed by carpet bombing.”¹⁸² As it was, the tonnage dropped on Gernika-Lumo was so top-heavy that the Spanish author, César Vidal, deduced, "If the aerial attacks had stopped at that moment, for a town that until then had maintained its distance from the convulsions of war, it would have been a totally disproportionate and insufferable punishment.”¹⁸³

The Basque President, José Antonio de Aguirre, made an official announcement on Radio Bilbao¹⁸⁴ on April 27, telling the world of an atrocity that had happened the previous twenty-four hours. The faint transmission reached as far as Paris and banished all rumors in lieu of first-hand newspaper reports:

German airmen in the service of the Spanish rebels have bombarded Gernika, burning the historic town that is held in such veneration by all Basques. They have sought to wound us in the most sensitive of our patriotic sentiments, once more making it entirely clear what Euzkadi may expect of those who do not hesitate to destroy us down to the very sanctuary that records the centuries of our liberty and democracy.

In Paris, confusion and disbelief set in.¹⁸⁵ Pro-Franco stories began to circulate accusing the “Reds” of obliterating their own people. Radio Nacional in Salamanca denied Nationalist involvement. And along with those reports others expressed the “great success” by the Luftwaffe that had been quickly dispersed throughout Spain. The real and truthful accounts of the human suffering were first recorded, wired, and published in English. Due to the extreme efforts of four war correspondents, George Lowther Steer,¹⁸⁶ Mathieu

¹⁸² James S. Corum, *Inflated by Air: Common Perceptions of Civilian Casualties from Bombing* (BiblioScholar, 2012), p. 32.

¹⁸³ César Vidal, “La Destrucción de Guernica,” trans. Peter Miller, *Guernica, Demolished*, www.buber.net/Basque/History/guernica.html.

¹⁸⁴ President Aguirre spoke in Spanish, not Euskera, in order to reach the largest number of listeners.

¹⁸⁵ First-hand war accounts were limited in France, which unlike the United States and the United Kingdom had not assigned reporters to the frontlines in the Basque region or to press offices in Madrid.

¹⁸⁶ Steer was Special Correspondent to *The Times* and was sent to Ethiopia in the summer of 1935 just prior to Mussolini’s invasion of Abyssinia. Steer reported on the appalling use of gas and bombing from

Corman, Noel Monks, and Christopher Holme, their eyewitness accounts did not betray the facts. The four were the only reporters stationed in Bilbao. They were notified a few hours after the bombing had ceased. Arriving in Gernika at 11:00 PM they heard lingering cries of the injured and watched helplessly as Gudarís, the Basque soldiers, frantically struggled to dig bodies from the smoldering debris. Steer remained until the early morning of the 27th interviewing victims and helping as he could, which he later claimed was his authority for all that that he have written. His renowned report, “The Most Appalling Air Raid Ever Known,”¹⁸⁷ was published at length in *The Times* of London and *The New York Times* :

...when I visited the town the whole of it was a horrible sight, flaming from end to end. The reflection of the flames could be seen in the clouds of smoke above the mountains from ten miles away. Throughout the night houses were falling until the streets became long heaps of red impenetrable debris. ...survivors were evacuated in Government lorries, but many were forced to remain round the burning town lying on mattresses or looking for lost relatives and children.... In the form of its execution and the scale of the destruction it wrought, no less than in the selection of its objective, the raid on Guernica is unparalleled in military history.... The object of the bombardment was seemingly the demoralization of the civilian population and the destruction of the cradle of the Basque race. Every fact bears out this appreciation....¹⁸⁸

In addition to Speer’s influential firsthand account, that of Father Alberto de Onaindiá, a canon of the Valladolid Cathedral near León who was passing through Gernika-Lumo when the aerial attack occurred, was significant. Hiding under the still-intact Rentéria Bridge, a prime target set by the Luftwaffe that was obscured by smoke and dust from the

the air on the “almost medieval armies of Ethiopia,” which ran in *The Times* and *The New York Times*. *The Times* London then sent Steer to the Franco-Spanish border at Irún to report on the first skirmishes between the Republican government loyalists and Franco’s rebels. He witnessed and reported about the some 100,000 refugees fleeing Spain across the French border. Later, Steer was instrumental in the transport of nearly 4,000 of the 20,000 Basque children transported to Britain during the war. From a lecture by Nicholas Rankin, delivered at the Annual Basque Children of 1937 Association UK meeting, October 15, 2011.

¹⁸⁷ Herbert Rutledge Southworth, *Guernica! Guernica! A Study of Journalism, Diplomacy, Propaganda, and History* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1977), p. 21.

¹⁸⁸ *The Times* (London), *The New York Times*, April 28, 1937.

bombardier's sights, it became a refuge to a handful of people, including Onaindiá. After surviving the devastation he delivered his personal testimony to Pius XI. His statement to the Vatican was reiterated in international news accounts becoming one of the most oft-quoted descriptions of that ill-fated afternoon:

Almost at once about eight heavy planes appeared, as if they were coming from the sea, which dropped large numbers of bombs, and behind them followed a veritable rain of incendiary bombs. For more than three hours...bombers came, and planes...and single machines that came down to a height of about 200 meters to machine-gun the poor people who were fleeing in terror...we were hemmed in and surrounded by diabolical forces were chasing thousands of defenseless inhabitants.... In the middle of the conflagration we saw people screaming, praying or gesticulating at the airplanes.¹⁸⁹

Picasso was informed of the attack by Juan Larrea who had rushed to find him in the vicinity of the Café de Flore after hearing the news from the Basque artist, José María Ucelay, in a chance encounter at the Metro Champs-Élysée.¹⁹⁰ It is known that Picasso read Steer's vital account in the April 28th edition of *L'Humanité* that blasted the headlines, 'Mille bombes incendiaries lancées par les avions de Hitler et de Mussolini' (One thousand incendiary bombs launched by the planes of Hitler and Mussolini) and 'Par milliers un jour de marché femmes et enfants ont été massacrés à Guernica' (By the thousands on market day women and children are massacred at Guernica) (figs. 25 and 26). The front page reports continued with a lengthy feature by Mathieu Corman in the section, "Du Monde Entier," with the reports, 'Le massacre de Guernica, le "blocus" de Bilbao' (The massacre at Gernika, the "blockade" of Bilbao), and 'L'atroce bombardement de Guernica' (The atrocious bombing of Gernika) (fig. 27). The following day, José Bergamin supplied Picasso with a copy of *Ce Soir* containing Corman's detailed report:

¹⁸⁹ Ian Patterson, *Guernica and Total War* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 43.

¹⁹⁰ Van Hensbergen, *op.cit.*, p. 32.

A crime of indescribable atrocity will arouse the indignation of the civilized world.

Monday, regular market day, influx extraordinary: Gernika, coast town, located 27 kilometers from the front, of no strategic or industrial importance, a population of 7,000, had accommodated more than 4,000 refugees from Gipúzkoa. Visitors to the market are calculated at 3,000. ...at half past four, the first squadrons appeared, dropping grenades. The population fled toward the fields, pursued by fighters with machine guns. Further squadrons of tri-motors dropped hundreds of bombs, many of which weighed 1000 kilos, opening deep craters. The bombardment continued with medium-sized bombs. A thousand were counted. Finally, the terrified town was deluged by a rain of incendiary bombs, the number of which is estimated at 3,000. The bombing and strafing by fighter planes ceased at a quarter to eight. I go to the place by car. The scenes of horror that I witnessed defy the imagination. The city was nothing but an immense brazier, hurling gigantic flames toward the sky.... No kind of intervention was possible on account of the heat. The screams of the women and children caused us terrible anguish.¹⁹¹

Larrea had sensed that the bombardment of Gernika might be *the* subject for Picasso's mural, later confirmed by Andre Malraux¹⁹² and Roland Penrose who wrote that the bombings had produced a "gratuitous outrage...[and had] roused Picasso from melancholy to anger. Acting as a catalyst to the anxiety and indignation mingled within him, the tragedy had given him the theme perhaps unknowingly what he had been seeking."¹⁹³ The senseless obliteration proved to be the tipping point, a *causa proxima* from which Picasso's inertia about the Spanish Pavilion project turned to fury.¹⁹⁴ Until then, his seeming

¹⁹¹ Other reports in the news dailies included the Parisian, *Le Petit Journal*, that described, "Three young girls and their mother paint for us a picture of their terror during the three-hour-long bombardment, the collapse and burning of their dwelling, and then their bewildered flight along the road to Bilbao while the German airplanes fired at them with machine guns." And in another account, "The crowds of refugees who blocked the road out of Málaga had been in an inferno. They were shelled from the sea, bombed from the air and then machine-gunned. The scale of the repression inside the fallen city explained why they were ready to run the gauntlet." Quoted in Southworth, loc. cit.

¹⁹² André Malraux, *Picasso's Mask*, trans. June and Jacques Guicharnaud (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974), p. 39.

¹⁹³ Roland Penrose, *Picasso: His Life and Work*; (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 301.

¹⁹⁴ The atmosphere in Paris cannot be discounted for its impact upon Picasso. On May 1st, one million people marched in the May Day parade whose main themes were the outrage over the bombing of Guernica, and, appeals for the aid to the victims.

disinterest in it had lasted since late January shortly after the agreement had been struck. The causes for his disinclination to begin the project seem varied and have been widely discussed in the literature on the subject. As it was, the lack of dialogue with his closest friends, evidence of meaningful sketches, or semi-realized plans had been confounding for the committee who feared that the centerpiece of the pavilion's lobby might not be created. When measured against the ever-increasing incidents of bombings and executions in Spain; and, true anxiety about his family who had survived the bloody combats of '36 in Barcelona that resulted in over five hundred deaths, even those events had not been reason enough to galvanize Picasso into action in the studio.

A passage in Christian Zervos's catalogue raisonné, *Pablo Picasso*, offers an enlightening theory on the artist's conflicted political disposition, which may elucidate, in part, the barren period before the bombing at Gernika became topical. Zervos wrote, "For a long time, Picasso wondered if he should pay attention to events in Spain.... he reacted against his feelings, even against the strongest urgings of his spirit, for a long time he had to defend himself against his own heart, to preserve what is unique in man and avoid the trap of the passions."¹⁹⁵ This was magnified in the story of Picasso's father, José Ruiz Blasco on his deathbed in May of 1913, who uttered his last words to his son, a squib repeated throughout his childhood: "What have things come to? Are there no more frontiers?"¹⁹⁶ As John Richardson recorded from family lore, Picasso, "concealed his grief so successfully that he was criticized for being unfeeling; he was however, as Eva Gouel his paramour [in those years] reported, 'stricken.'¹⁹⁷ Sublimation was a general characteristic of male Andalusian behavior, where *formalidad*, or civility, with its emphasis on self-restraint and self-control, was

¹⁹⁵ Christian Zervos, "Introduction," *Pablo Picasso: Catalogue raisonné*, Vol. 9 (Paris: Cahiers d'Art, 1942).

¹⁹⁶ John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: 1907-1917, The Painter of Modern Life* (New York: Random House, 1996), p. 276.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

especially necessary in a culture that devalued toughness and bravado. Control was everything. And due to this mindset, Picasso was given to evasion, thereby in his art to the play of inversion and sublimation.

Penrose had used the word, “melancholy,” to describe Picasso’s mental state at the time, which may be pondered through Julia Kristeva’s work in *Black Sun, Depression and Melancholia*. “Melancholic persons, with their despondent, secret insides,” she wrote, “are potential exiles but also intellectuals capable of dazzling, albeit abstract, constructions”¹⁹⁸ In the chapter, “Sadness Holds Back Hatred,” Kristeva further clarified that, “When the struggle between imaginary creation and depression is carried out precisely on that frontier of the symbolic and the biological, we see indeed that the narrative or the argument is ruled by primary processes. Rhythms, alliterations, condensations shape the transmission of message and data.”¹⁹⁹ Freud’s renowned and foundational essay, “Mourning and Melancholia” (1915), separated the two psychological states such that “object-loss” defines the melancholic lost to herself, and therefore, is withdrawn from consciousness. For the mourner, simply stated, this is one who has lost a beloved or homeland, or is that person who is left behind after a disaster. In Freud’s work on the problem of *Trauer*, he summarized, “In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty....”²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁸ Julia Kristeva. *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), first published as *Soleil Noir: Dépression et mélancholie* © (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1987), pp. 64-5.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰⁰ Sigmund Freud, *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey; collaboration with Anna Freud, vol. XIV (1914-16) (London: The Hogarth Press), p. 246.

Accordingly, the survivor “works through” the anguish and emerges (in whatever form that may take) as a sorrowful person, but not a self-tortured one.²⁰¹

In Picasso’s first political statement made in May of ‘37 he disclosed, “In the panel on which I am working which I shall call *Guernica*, and in all my recent works of art, I clearly express my abhorrence of the military caste which has sunk Spain in an ocean of pain and death....”²⁰² As revealed in an interview in the 1960s, he claimed, “that death could fall from heaven on so many, right in the middle of rushed life, has always had a great meaning for me.”²⁰³ From which Gasman, concluded that, “death from the sky” affirmed the artist’s “fear of air raids he confessed to only in his writings was evidently a fear for the plight of other human beings.”²⁰⁴ If anchorage in the empirical was a predictable aspect of the general rule governing his oeuvre; his conception of the universe between 1936 when the war in Spain fully erupted and France fell to Nazi Germany in 1940, was rooted in one particular aspect of his engagement with the world: a disrupting empathy with the victims of the terror bombings that distinguished the Spanish Civil War and World War II from all earlier military events.

In the few days just prior to Picasso hearing the news about Gernika, and making the first set of sketches for the pavilion painting, he posed a seemingly incredulous question to

²⁰¹ Michael Ann Holly in following Freud’s, “Mourning and Melancholia,” and Karl Abraham, Freud’s colleague and fellow psychoanalyst in, “Intervention: The Melancholy Art” *Art Bulletin*, Vol. LXXXIX, No. 1 (March, 2007), pp. 8-9.

²⁰² Francis Francina, “Picasso, Surrealism and Politics in 1937,” Silvano Levy, ed., *Surrealism: Surrealist Visuality* (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1996), p. 134.

²⁰³ Picasso cited in Simone Gauthier, “Picasso, The Ninth Decade: A Rare Interview with the 86-year old master and his 40-years-younger wife,” *Look 20* (November 28, 1967), pp. 87-8.

²⁰⁴ Lydia Csató Gasman, “Death Falling from the Sky: Picasso’s Wartime Texts,” *Picasso and the War Years, 1937-1945*, ed. Steven A. Nash (New York: Guggenheim Museum and San Francisco: California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1998-99), p. 56.

Larrea: “What does a bombing look like?”²⁰⁵ The problem, at that early date in the evolution of his thinking pointed to the very impossibility of representing atrocity, and certainly discounting any recourse to mimesis, of bringing that which was un-seeable into the light, of that which was unknowable to the future viewers of his painting into a visibility in conceptual and symbolic terms. Goya, on the other hand, whom Picasso must have kept in the back of his mind knowing well the master’s *Disastros de la Guerra* (1810-1820) had put himself into the reality of his depictions of war, into that carnage and desecration of the human being by atrocities of the Spanish and French alike during the Peninsular War (1807-1814) campaign in the Napoleonic Wars. Contrary to Picasso’s strategy of distancing through allegory in *Guernica*, we see Goya himself through the titling of the etchings: “One Can’t Look” (plate 26), “I Saw It” (plate 44), “This is How it Happened” (plate 47), “It’s No Use Crying Out” (plate 58), and, “What Madness!” (plate 68), among the sweep of 80 exceptionally bold images.

Utilizing Jan Provost’s immaculately painted, *Sacred Allegory*, 1470-1529, referred to in order to broaden our consideration of Picasso’s conundrum, Derrida proffered that, “whatever its symbolic over-determination, [the painting] must always be contemplated as the representation or reflection of its own possibility. It puts on the scene, stages the opening scene of sacred painting, an allegorical self-presentation of this 'order of the gaze' to which any sacred work must submit.”²⁰⁶ The term “sacred” begs our understanding of the all-encompassing Gaze as the power, depicted in the Provost, of the eye of God looking down upon the Lamb, the glorified risen Christ with the Virgin Mary. The unifying omnipresence of the Gaze, in that we also gaze upon the fictive scene, is expanded in a

²⁰⁵ Pablo Picasso to Juan Larrea, April 28, 1937. Noted in Van Hensbergen, *op.cit.*, p. 33.

²⁰⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Memoirs of the Blind: The Self-Portrait and Other Ruins* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), p. 53.

mystical twist by Meister Eckhart, who wrote, “The eye in which I see God is the same eye in which God sees me; my eye and God’s eye, that is one eye and one seeing and one recognizing and one loving.”²⁰⁷

But it is the eighteenth century conception of the Gaze as a panopticon via Jeremy Bentham’s proposed architecture for observing and monitoring the incarcerated (that would come to occupy prison cells flooded with electric light day and night), which supplies a profane standard for the disembodied technological gaze in *Guernica*. In Bentham’s concept, a cornerstone of Michel Foucault’s theorizations on punishment, the panoptical mechanism was a modern tool of superior control. It’s scrutiny, according to Foucault, “...observes at every point... all events are recorded, in which an uninterrupted work...links the center and periphery...each individual is constantly located, examined and distributed...”²⁰⁸

Hanging mid-air at the apex of *Guernica* is a hybrid form of light that was never-before-realized and never-again-repeated in Picasso’s oeuvre, a sun empowered by a lone, raw, dangling light bulb (fig. 28). The electric sun, as it were, purports an all-seeing function as both searchlight and unblinking eye. In panoptical fashion, it does not discriminate to seize everything exposed by its light. In form alone, the tapered shape of light is a transposition of the vertical *vesica piscis*²⁰⁹ typified by the sheath of a mandorla, or the encasement of a nimbus around a sacred personage within the sun. Turned horizontally, the nimbus was transformed into a prosthetic electric eye. The filament, which is specifically configured within the glass housing of the *ampoule*, rejects the traditional representations of Christ or the Virgin who would otherwise occupy the radiant center in normative sacrosanct

²⁰⁷ Meister Eckhart, *Vom Wunder der Seele: eine Auswahl aus den Traktaten und Predigten* (Stuttgart: P. Reclam, 1973).

²⁰⁸ Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), pp. 195-228.

²⁰⁹ Referring to the shape, L. “fish bladder.”

modes. With Picasso's version—and here we note that the filament was uniquely shaped in other light bulbs in his oeuvre, ca. 1914-34—the tungsten wire was both symbolic of something other than its properties as a conductor of energy, and simultaneously just that, a conduit for the sun's ability to illuminate the sun below it. Of equal significance, the filament powers the light of the eye in which an outward gaze serves to observe the crime and to flood light upon the warscape. The conflation of the solar with the electric, to make clear “the obscenity of the new death,”²¹⁰ that is, death from the air upon an unsuspecting citizenry is the painting's most radical and indicting element.

An aerial map of the Condor Legion's bombardment plan was published on the front pages of *L'Humanité*, *Le Matin*, and *Le Petit Journal* on April 28 and 29 (fig. 29). If the diagrammatic Luftwaffe map provided Picasso with the idea for the tracery of the filament in *Guernica*, it may in fact have been a point of departure, his line being so exacting that the *fil* of the filament is otherwise not discountable as a neutral attribute of the light bulb. A Nazi flight map showing the optional trajectories for the bombing of Gernika-Lumo reveals an uncanny similarity to the electric sun's filament (fig. 30). We observe in Picasso's clear-cut oil drawing of the light bulb that a vertical line in the center of the neck draws down and culminates in a circular shape that shares a resemblance to the ‘turn-around’ of the Junkers Ju-52 and the Dornier Do-17 bombers indicated as “B” and “C” routes on the reconstructed Luftwaffe flight plan (fig. 31). The figuration of the filament becomes, therefore, a territorial site, in retrospect, a burial site, even, contained within the microcosm of the ampoule. Here again Picasso's Center is one of darkness, malevolence, and death. Within the dark light of the black sun, as if closing the chasm between inner and outer space, the light bulb and filament cooperate in that labor. If the model of the exceptional study of a light bulb, the

²¹⁰ T. J. Clark, “Picasso's ‘Guernica’ Revisited,” *Solomon Katz Distinguished Lecture in the Humanities* (Seattle: Simpson Center for the Humanities, April 29, 2010).

“filament-Harlequin”²¹¹ from 1914, discussed in Chapter 4: “The Electric Avant-Garde,” was modified for the stylization of the electric sun in 1937, it was correspondingly a cipher of tragedy as it had been at the advent of the Great War.

The magnitude of *Guernica* resides in the distinctive realms of the visual and the aural. If the deafening sirens of the Nazi Luftwaffe Condor Legion’s JU 87 Stuka precision dive-bomber planes that attacked Gernika, and the horrors of other bomber planes and aerial strafing that struck dirt, stone, and flesh prompted Picasso’s figuration of screaming heads,²¹² the reality of the Stuka’s high-pitched shrill of the “Jericho-Trumpet” to terrorize, was total. A harrowing and deafening shriek was let loose when the plane descended at a 60-90° dive with speeds up to 350 mph. According to Dr. Heinz Migeod, a WWII Stuka pilot, “...when the diver bomber comes down on you as such, as I once experienced, it is awful”.... and intended to be “psychologically overwhelming.”²¹³ Despite the fact that Luis Buñuel’s ground-breaking documentary, *Land Without Bread* (1933) was not shown at the Spanish Pavilion in Paris, I find that a resonance between it and Picasso’s intention in *Guernica* are closely related, the film, “...certainly owes to the power of the gaze...a thorough misery to the bone, to a light whose cruelty...aims to shake up a satiated public, but even

²¹¹ Author’s term, 2015.

²¹² Picasso’s campaign of open-mouthed heads is seen in the surrealist mandibular works from 1928-1931. The extreme expressions of lamentation, pain, or grief from the 1930s is especially powerful in the depiction of Christ in Picasso’s series, *Crucifixion*, September 17-19, 1932, a redux of the central panel of Mathias Grünewald’s *Isenheim Altarpiece*. A series of vicious entanglements of horse and bull in the corrida from August and September of 1934, also demonstrate the vicious heads. The premonitory drawing, *Femme devant une fenêtre*, Spring, 1937, is closest in morphology to the three upturned heads in *Guernica*, 1937 and in preliminary studies of his obsession with teeth and jaws.

²¹³ The “Jericho-Trumpet” was ordered by Adolf Hitler in 1935 and first put to use in the aerial bombardment of Gernika. Quote from interview with the 92 year-old Heinz Migeod, “Diving Sirens of the JU-87,” found at www.heinzmigeod.com.

more to the acute intelligence of the relation that it establishes between sights and sounds.”²¹⁴

On neither the sun, nor death, can a man look at fixedly.

François de la Rochefoucauld²¹⁵

Under the syncopated brightness of *Guernica's* sun, an implied cacophony takes form in the cry of the horse; the wailing of four women; the frozen last utterance of a beheaded soldier; the open-beaked squawk of a bird readying for flight; and, a bellowing bull, known as a *bramar*, which signals to the aficionado an excessively cowardly beast.²¹⁶ In the mode of allegory, Picasso's imaginary countenance of the bombing expressed insightful empathy that would serve to universalize the message of suffering in the painting. Victims at Gernika could not fight their surprise enemy. And, if the effects from the visual experience and the “discursive reflection”²¹⁷ stimulated by the Great War describe destruction from air raids in general, what was left in those landscapes and towns and cities was a bewildering scene of indistinguishable forms illuminated by flashes of blinding intensity admixed with blast-induced haze. To cite the historian, Eric J. Leed, “The invisibility of the enemy...destroyed

²¹⁴ Phillippe Roger, “Land Without Bread: A Film that Never Stops Ringing,” *Music, Sound, and the Moving Image*, Vol. 4, Issue 2, (Liverpool University Press, Autumn, 2010), p. 173. “In the documentary, the human suffering of the village is real. One feels the poverty of the peasants of Las Hurdes that made fascism possible in Spain.” The conclusion of the film, quoted here, makes the argument all the more evident: ‘*The misery shown in this film is not without remedy. Elsewhere in Spain, hill people, peasants and workers have achieved better conditions through mutual self-help. They have made demands of the authorities for a better life....will give impetus to the coming elections and lead to a Popular Front government. The military rebellion backed by Hitler and Mussolini seeks to bring back the privileges of the rich. But the workers and peasants of Spain will defeat Franco and his cronies. With the help of anti-fascists from all over the world civil war will give way to peace, work and happiness. And the miserable homes you saw in this film will disappear forever.*’” The film was released to the public in Paris in 1937.

²¹⁵ Francois Duc de la Rochefoucauld, *Reflections; or Sentences and Moral Maxims*, translated from the editions of 1678 and 1827 by J.W. Bund and J. Hain Friswell (London: Simpson, Low, Son, and Marston, 1871).

²¹⁶ Barnaby Conrad, *Encyclopedia of Bullfighting* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961).

²¹⁷ Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century Thought* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1995), p. 213.

any notion that war was a spectacle of contending humanity.... The invisibility of the enemy put a premium upon auditory signals and seemed to make the war experience peculiarly subjective and intangible.”²¹⁸

Guernica is distinguished by an uneven spread of radiance cast in quasi-cubist geometric passages. Pictorial light does not behave in the traditional painterly terms of *chiaroscuro*; or *sfumato* of grazing light; or, by surface luster of reflections indicating texture; or, by wavelengths of the spectrum that normally produce color including the color or tonal penumbra of shadows. As it is, the sensation of manufactured light produced a shattered pitch, a theatrical *on* or *off* as it were, accentuated in bleached patches truncated against segments of grays and black. There was no stylistic precedent that led up to the tour de force composition and its formal aspects in the tonal arrangement in parts; the articulation of the figures, the “agony of the polis played out by monsters and heroes,”²¹⁹ as T. J. Clark put it; and, the concision to place the tableau within a finite interior space in which the allegory takes place. Brassai’s theatrical black and white photographs of Picasso’s atelier at Boisgeloup in 1932 provide a compelling record of the revolutionary sculptures, *Buste de femme*, *Tete de femme (Marie-Thérèse)*, and, *Buste de femme (Marie-Thérèse)*, among others, from 1931. Richardson’s pioneering work on Picasso and photography (2015) notes that the studio, a former stable, had no electricity. Picasso’s Hispano-Suiza’s headlights were used “...to illuminate the exterior of the chateau in a famously dramatic photograph.”²²⁰ For the lighting of the interior of the studio, “Picasso took down the hanging hurricane [oil] lamp,” and according to Richardson, “hid it behind a watering can on the floor, and used it as a

²¹⁸ Eric J. Leed, *No Man’s Land: Combat and Identity in World War I* (Cambridge and London: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 19. Cited in Jay, *ibid.*

²¹⁹ T. J. Clark, *Picasso and Truth*, Bollingen Series XXXV: 58, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 240.

²²⁰ Richardson, *op. cit.*, *Picasso & the Camera*, p. 177.

spotlight. ...the imaginative use of the kerosene lamp resulted in one of the most memorable modern art photographs (fig. 32).²²¹

In effect, the spotlighting on the closely grouped pedestals of busts and standing figures delineated the sculptural forms by extreme shadowing upon the volumes and surfaces. It also made of the busts powerful silhouettes, in white plaster, whose opacity finds equivalence, in painterly terms, in the white stamped out silhouettes in *Guernica*. Brassai's atelier scene is punctuated in deep flat blacks and gradient shadows caused from the oil lamp.²²² But the point to be made is one of correspondence between the effect of strong lighting in the photograph and that in *Guernica*. Picasso had stayed with the theme of *L'Atelier* for the pavilion mural before the bombardment at Gernika changed everything. Yet if *Guernica* retained certain aspects of the studio leitmotif, which it did, especially in studies of Marie-Thérèse and the construction of an interior complete with walls and tiled floor, the impact of Brassai's photographs may have been a compelling model for Picasso's aesthetic considerations for the painting. Even the almost forgotten bird behind the bull, rendered in black on black, with the exception of a chalk white tail that crosses its body, stands on a table, otherwise perhaps, a sculptural modeling platform despite the long-held consensus of an altar.

In particular ways, the dramatic lighting of the compact Boisgeloup group may have easily translated to the dramatic lighting of a similarly tight configuration of characters in the painting. This is speculative and based purely on observation of the two works of art: photograph and painting. Yet in, a fallen soldier, the crying women, a fleeing woman and candle bearer are as opaque as plaster of Paris, as is the sun including the light bulb. The

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Barely detected by the lamp's glass chimney that protrudes from the front of the watering can in the lower edge of the photograph.

figures are self-contained, meaning in close proximity to one another in the claustrophobic setting, but they do not touch as we also find in the arrangement of the busts of Marie-Therese and other works in progress in the studio. And in this way, the strong illumination of the scene supplied from an imaginary source beyond the scope of the internal workings of the picture, gave precedent and importance to each of the figures. In other words, there are several sources of light, albeit levels of truth as light must be, working simultaneously: an invisible light; an electric sun; and, a candle.

T. J. Clark quoting Malraux who quoted Picasso who spoke of the light in Goya's *Third of May* shortly after the completion of *Guernica* in June of '37:

[It] is not a sky, it is just blackness. The light takes two forms. One of which we do not understand. It bathes everything, like moonlight...But it is much brighter than the moon. And then there is the enormous lantern on the ground, in the center. That lantern, what does it illuminate? The fellow with upraised arms, the martyr. Look carefully: its light falls only on him. The lantern is Death. Why? We don't know. Nor did Goya. But Goya, he knew it had to be like that.²²³

It is valuable to recognize the configuration of brightness from the sun's graphic diagonal throw distributed in segments of the field. Light is most apparent as it cuts across the right hand half of the picture, from the top point of the internal composition of the picture, that of a classic solid pyramidal design. The hard radiance passes over the forearm of the candle bearer and through the upward-turned left eye of the crouching or fleeing woman. It then slices through her figure and virtually cuts the body in two, finishing in an obtuse corner triangle fashioned as the hem of her apron or frock (fig. 33). The triangle is faintly apparent to the spectator's left, laid as it is into blackness. It hits behind the horse and terminates in a small grey right triangle. The tip points to the taper of an impressive *enmorillada*, or tossing muscle of the bull's neck, which is one piece with its formidable head

²²³ Clark, op. cit., p. 248.

crowned by a protruding *testuz*, the bull's forehead, and intimidating *corniapretados*, small, curved horns.²²⁴ The bottom edge of the triangle then cuts back sharply toward the horse. Black space emphasizes the agitated white tail that flails like the hair of the crying woman with baby, as a *rabilargo*, or long-tailed bull that may also be characterized as a *gañafon*, slang for a bull that looks good, but with evil intentions.

Still, as if to distinguish the personal and deeply symbolic nature of the animals, in contrast to the human figures, the horse and bull are semi-transparent lacking in the concreteness of the man, women, and child. Picasso's work on the bull is exemplary. The layering of the white head reveals over-painting in thin lead white on graphite or black oil paint that left behind a ghostly third eye hovering at the center of the broad, flat shape (fig. 34). The head also includes the artifacts of drawing a swirling tail, which was repositioned from left to right. Of primary importance, the esoteric eye, the parietal eye that not only serves to regulate circadian rhythms and to sense the polarization of light, was correlative to Bataille's inversion of the pineal eye that submits to the death drive. Bataille spoke of, "The eye, at the summit of the skull"²²⁵ that opens onto an "incandescent sun"²²⁶ whose radiance allows vision to be contemplated in a "sinister solitude."²²⁷ From his essay, "The Pineal Eye," we read: "...the head, instead of locking up life as money is locked in a safe, spends it without counting, for at the end of this erotic metamorphosis, the head has received the *electric power of points*. This great burning head is the image of the disagreeable light of the notion of expenditure.... From the first, myth is identified not only with life but with the loss of life—with degradation and death.... Existence no longer resembles a neatly defined

²²⁴ These physical characteristics find close resemblance to the bull in, *Minotaure*, September, 1933, charcoal on paper, 51 x 34 cm., coll. Musée Picasso, Paris.

²²⁵ Bataille, "The Pineal Eye," loc. cit., *Visions of Excess*, p. 82.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid

itinerary from one practical sign to another, but a sickly incandescence....²²⁸

The horse exhibits equally ominous traits of death. Whereas the diaphanous head of the bull is specter-like, that of the horse is diagrammatic and composed of solid parts. As if Picasso applied the science of x-radiography to the head, he exposed the shocking and horrifying image of an incendiary bomb lodged into the horse-skull (figs. 35-37). Its cry, far louder than those of the women is explainable by this image of instant death. The near-exact cylindrical form of the *bomba incendiaria* dropped by Heinkel HE-111 bombers at Gernika fills the entirety of the horse's mouth cavity; the tapered detonator serves as the tongue. Very little has been written about the weapons released from the Luftwaffe's Heinkel, according to a Spanish monograph on the subject that claims it is a "fundamentally arid topic."²²⁹ Nevertheless and in disputation to that opinion, Picasso would have read about the incendiary bombs dropped at Gernika from Steer's report in *L'Humanité*. In his quest to understand what a "bombing looks like," he generalized the incendiary device in a great likeness. The startling reality of the weapon, a facsimile of terror now located within the body of the already suffering horse, whose stunned and lidless eyes express absolute terror, here then, the horse as signifier of the Spanish people, is nearly unbearable.

As we return to scrutinize the sun it becomes evident that it casts its own black shadow, in reverse, so to defy the natural law of shadows in which an object casts a long or short contour depending upon the time of day and the position of radiance upon it (fig. 38). Black-rays emanate from behind the solid sun-shape as if it was a template cut from the background "screen" of the setting. Most importantly, the cast shadow of the electric sun was caused by a source of radiance brighter than the sun itself and beyond of it. If one

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ Author's translation of José Ignacio Luque Arana, *Monografía del HE-111 en la Guerra Civil Española (1936-39)* (Madrid: Indigo Soluciones Gráficos, S.L., 2002), p. 53.

concedes that the ground of the picture plane is correspondent with the “ground,” as Ernst Gombrich describes, we understand that the “shadow cast by an object on the ground on which it rests immediately enhances the impression of its solidity.”²³⁰

Gombrich’s commentary on light and shadows, on the principles of these virtues of the sense of sight first delineated in Leonardo’s systematic series of propositions in *Treatise of Painting*, noted that, “Not only the shape but the outer limits of the shadows and their color can convey to us the character of the illuminating light.”²³¹ In David Summers *Judgment of Sense*, he quoted the master who instructed, “...use your *ingegno* to set the bodies against backgrounds [in campi] so that the part of those bodies which is dark ends on a bright ground, and the illuminated part of the body terminates in a dark ground.”²³² Further surmising that tonal painting, which Leonardo set forth by *chiaroscuro*, was an “infinitely flexible binary system that underlay a capacity for illusion and fiction that was also infinite...”²³³ the broad adjustments to the behaviors of light, its quantity and quality and the objects contained within those effects were excised by Picasso. First in cubism, and thereafter from one who “rejects all the sweet geometry”²³⁴ that holds the world together. In his caustic voice of the war years, he touted in a diary entry, “...if we trace a line from A to C and K to F bypassing X and Y and subdividing D x H it’s just the same what a parrot has so let them give it all to me I’ve seen it all a thousand times and more I’ve got it clinched because it’s necessary to believe in mathematics and art is really something else...”²³⁵

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ E. H. Gombrich, *Shadows: The Depiction of Cast Shadows in Western Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p. 37. Published to accompany an exhibition at The National Gallery, London.

²³² David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 175.

²³³ Ibid.

²³⁴ Picasso, April 18, 1935. Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 4.

²³⁵ Ibid.



Fig. 1: Pablo Picasso, *La dépouille du Minotaure en costume d'arlequin*, (Étude, le rideau de scène du '14 Juillet'), May 28, 1936, gouache and India ink on paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 2: Luis Fernandez after gouache by Picasso, theatre curtain. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



Fig. 3: Stefano della Bella, *Death Carrying a Child*, ca. 1648, etching. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 4: (detail), *La dépouille du Minotaure*



Fig. 5: Pablo Picasso, *Rêve et Mensonge de Franco I*, etching and aquatint on Montval, ed. 850, January 8-9, 1937. Fundació Palau, Caldes d'Estrac, Spain.



Fig. 6: *Rêve et Mensonge de Franco II*, January 9 – June 7, 1937.

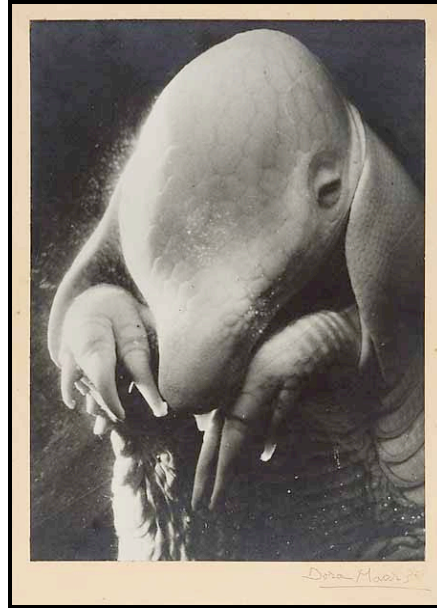


Fig. 7: Dora Maar, *Père Ubu*, 1936, gelatin silver print, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gilman Collection.

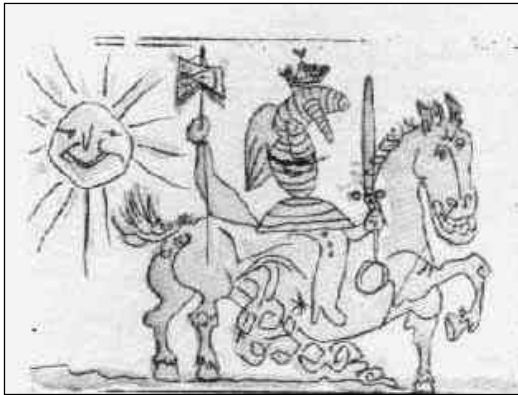


Fig. 8: Frame 1, State I, *Rêve et Mensonge de Franco*



Fig. 9: Picasso, *Carte postale à Apollinaire*, 1907 .



Fig. 10: (detail) Frame 9, State I, *Rêve et Mensonge de Franco*



Fig. 11: Pablo Picasso, *Figure de femme inspirée par la guerre d'Espagne* (Portrait of the marquise de cul chrétien), January 19, 1937, oil on canvas. Former collection of Dora Maar. Private collection.



Fig. 12: John Heartfield, *Madrid 1936, No Pasaran! Pasaremos!*, 1936, photographic montage to photogravure.



Fig. 14: *Baigneuse*, February, 1937. Private collection



Fig. 15: *Buste de personnage*, 1931. Private collection.

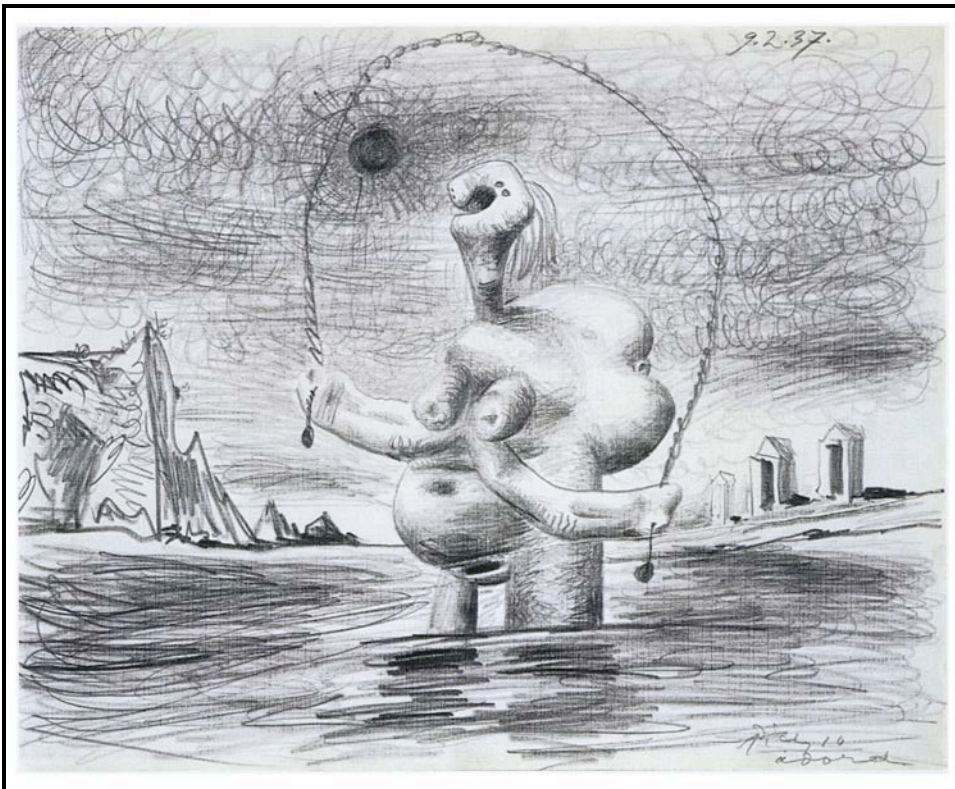


Fig. 16: *Baigneuse sous Soleil Noir*, February 9, 1937, pencil on paper. Groupe Piasa, Paris.

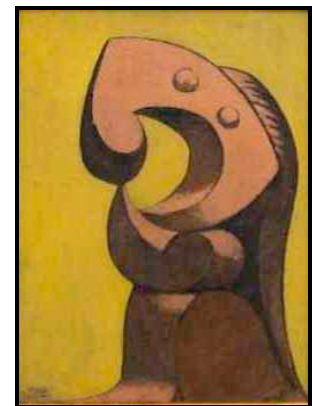
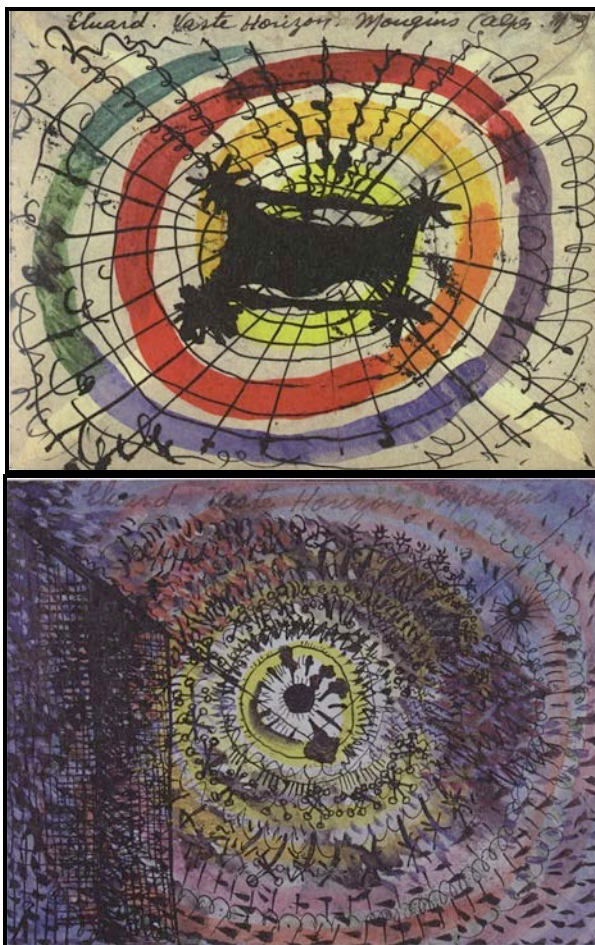


Fig. 17: *Tête de femme*, December 27, 1929, oil on wood panel. Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich.



Figs. 18 and 19: *Envelope enluminée*, 1937, watercolor and ink on envelope. Musée Picasso, Paris.

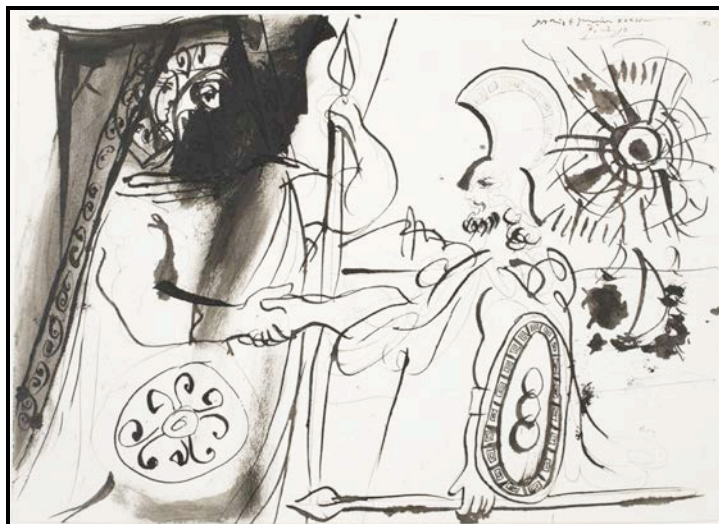


Fig. 20: *Étude for Aristophanes' Lysistrata*, January 4, 1934. Philadelphia Museum of Art. A. E. Gallatin Collection.



Fig. 21: Bombing of Madrid, 1936. Credit: Archivo Rojo, Spanish Ministry of Culture, Madrid.



Fig. 22: Bombing of Gernika, April, 1937.



Fig. 23: Bombing of Gernika street scene, April, 1937.



Fig. 24: Jesus de Echebarria ©, "Destruction of Guernica," ca. 1937.



Figs. 25 and 26: Front page of *L'Humanité*, April 28, 1937, left and right sides. Credit: author photos from the archive at Fundacion Museo de la Paz de Gernika.



Fig. 27: *L'Humanité* article by Mathieu Corman, April 28, 1937. Credit: author photo.



Fig. 28: Pablo Picasso, *Guernica*, oil on canvas, 11½ x 25½ feet. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.

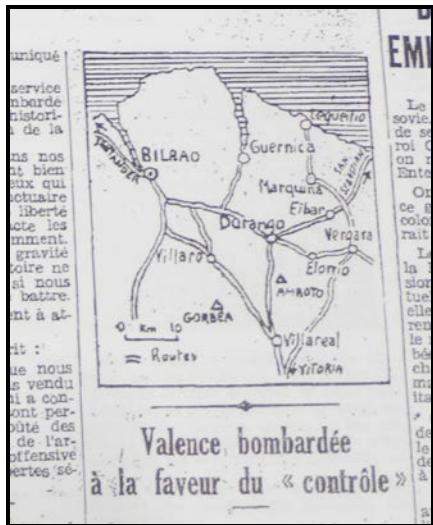


Fig. 29: Luftwaffe bombing map, *L'Humanité*

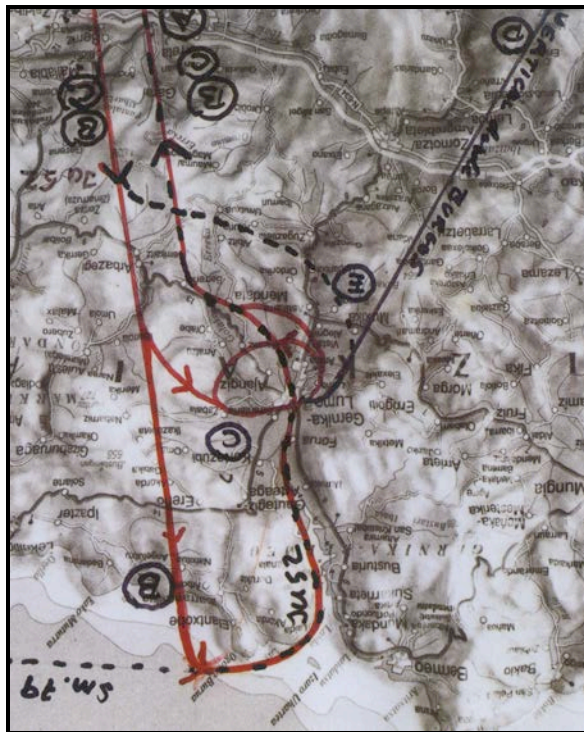


Fig. 30: Aerial trajectory for the bombardment of Guernica. Luftwaffe routes and planes marked in red: A. Savoimarchetti; B. Junkers JU-52; C. Dornier Do-17; D. exit route direction Burgos; E. possible alternative exit route.



Fig. 31: (detail) *Guernica*, 1937



Fig. 32: Brassai, *Atelier de Boisgeloup avec des sculptures de Picasso, la nuit*, December, 1932. Estate Brassai, Paris.



Fig. 33

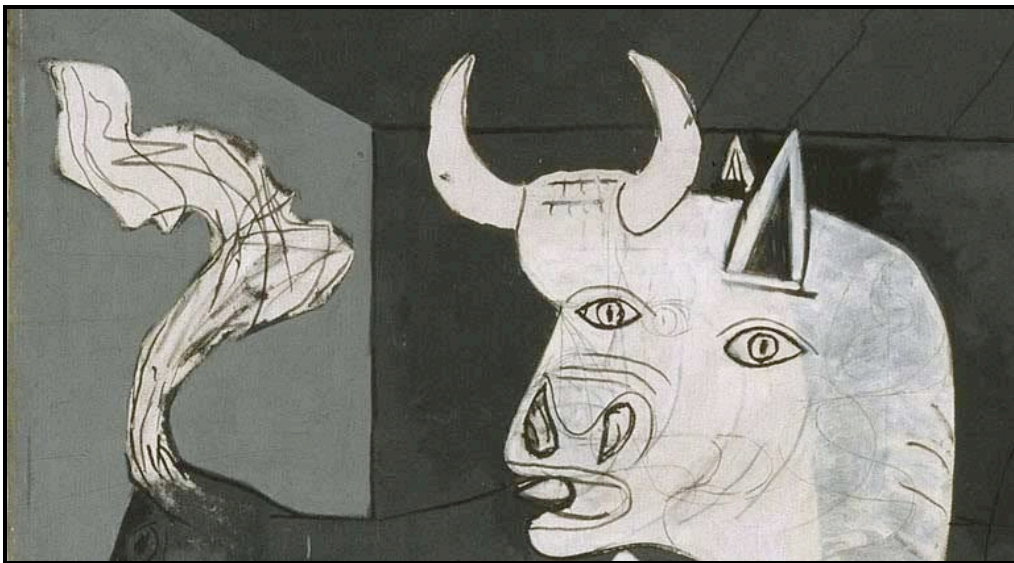


Fig. 34



Fig. 35



Fig. 36: Incendiary bomb recovered from Luftwaffe bombardment of Gernika on April 26, 1937. Gernikako Bakearen Museoa Fundazio, Gernika-Lumo, Euskadi, Spain. Credit: Author photo.

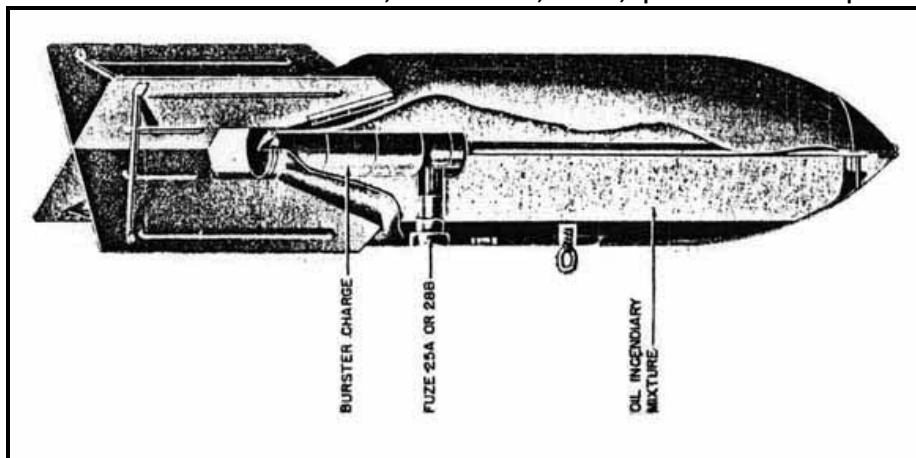


Fig. 37: Diagram of WWI kilogram incendiary bomb

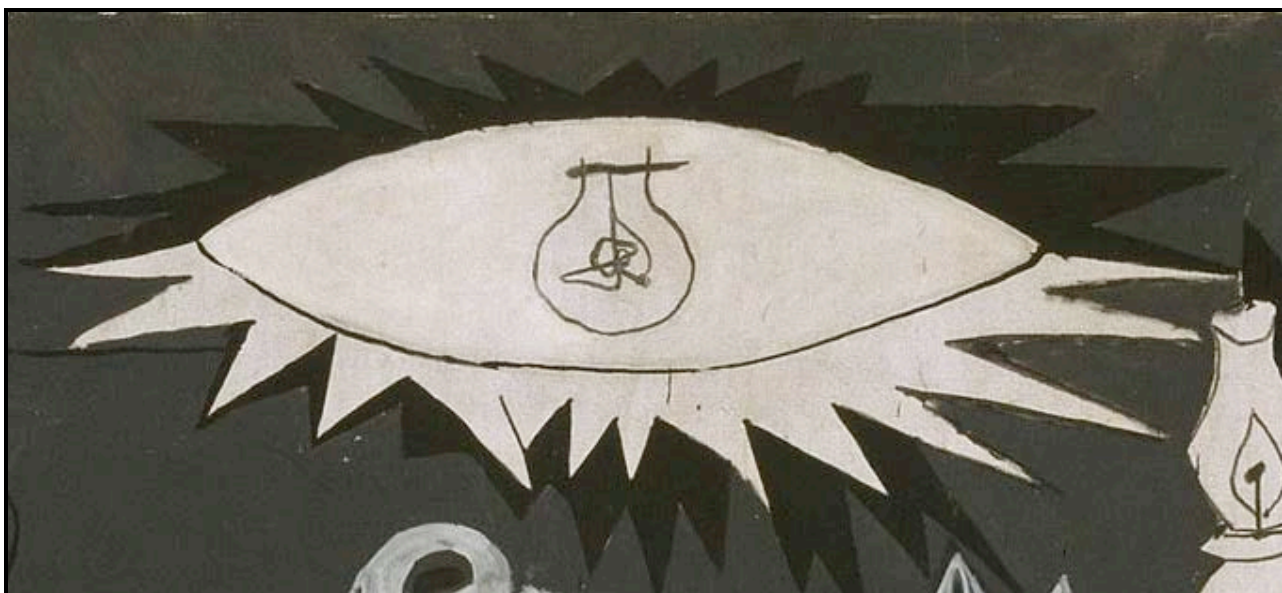


Fig. 38

Chapter 3

Light Becoming Avant-Garde

Part 1: A Short History of Electric Light in Early Modernism

*I knew there could be light not moon-light star-light day-light and candle light,
 I knew I knew I saw the lightening light, I saw it light, I said
 I I I must have the light, and what did I do oh what did I too I said I would sell my soul
 all through but I knew I knew that electric light was all true, and true oh yes, it is true...*

“Doctor Faustus Lights the Light”
 Gertrude Stein

Approximately fifty years before electricity had made an impact on burgeoning modernity in the long nineteenth century,²³⁶ Goethe asserted in his treatise on weather, *Versuch einer Witterungslehre* (1825), “Electricity is the pervading element that accompanies all material existence even the atmospheric. It is to be thought of as the soul of the world.”²³⁷ If electricity was thought of in terms of *pneuma*, or vital “spirit,” considered in the Renaissance terms of *pneumatic physiology*, which was, according to David Summers, “fundamental to the most basic and pervasive religious and cultural values. The depiction of movement was of the very highest importance for the art of painting...[it] made the movements of the soul apparent. That is...all living matter was ‘animated,’ literally ‘inspired’ or ensouled...”²³⁸ Goethe’s equation of the electric with the soul apportioned the energy from its scientific parameters and empiricist framework to the realms of imagination

²³⁶ Coined by the Marxist historian, Eric Hobsbawm, to refer to the period 1789-1914 that began with the French Revolution and ended with the beginning of World War I, and the end of the Belle Époque.

²³⁷ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethes Sämtliche Werke: Julliläms-Ausgabe*, vol. 40 (Stuttgart and Berlin: Cotta, 1907), p. 333. Republished in *Bemerkungen über Goethe “Versuch einer Witterungslehre,” Naturwissenschaften* 9, vol. 22, no. 6 (February 1934), pp. 81-84. Cited in Christoph Asendorf, *Batteries of Life: On the History of Things and Their Perception in Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 153.

²³⁸ Summers, *Judgment of Sense*, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

(fantasy). In a reflection of the tradition of *pneuma* expressed by Aristotle,²³⁹ Summers further elucidated that the transitive motion gives rise or prompts us to, “see in dreams, in our own light, or in the light of our own phosphorescent spirit.”²⁴⁰ In that electricity would so inspire a fantastic production of literary and visual arts, as early as 1819 in Mary Shelley’s masterpiece of fiction, *Frankenstein* (1819), we find that the subtle emanations of the silent, embodied energy became a vital constituent in the formation of many vanguard canons. The sense that electric current was a living thing, like the innate life force of plants, animals, human beings, and, as invisible as air and odorless as pure water it became non-distinct from other forms of organic life in specific praxes of art and literature.

The pivotal shift in which the science of electricity acquired a subjective-poetic voice coincided with the point at which the mystery of its agency was conveyed through utopian rhetoric and applied anthropomorphism. Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, whose little known subtitle, *The Modern Prometheus*—a coinage by Immanuel Kant in deference to Benjamin Franklin’s groundbreaking work with electricity—was inspired, in part, by galvanism, the precursor of the science of electrophysiology. Luigi Galvani’s experiments (ca. 1790) of “animal electricity,”²⁴¹ the stimulation of frog cadaver muscles by electric current was claimed by

²³⁹ Summers citing Aristotle’s *De generatione animalium* 736b, op. cit., p. 117.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Marco Piccolino, “Visual Images on the Path to Luigi Galvani’s Animal Electricity,” *Journal of the History of Neurosciences* (Vol. 17, Issue, 2008), pp. 335-348. Galvani published illustrations of his experiments in *De viribus electricitatis in motu musculari*. Noted in Piccolini’s abstract: “Galvani favored experiments on certain animals more than a few specialized fishes, the thinking of Alessandro Volta, who accepted specialized fish electricity but was not willing to generalize to other animals, thinking Galvani’s frog experiments flawed by his use of metals. Differing from many German *Naturphilosophen*, who shunned “violent” experiments, the newest instruments, and detailed measurement, Humboldt conducted thousands of galvanic experiments on animals and animal parts, as well as many on his own body, some of which caused him great pain. He interpreted his results as supporting some but not all of the claims made by both Galvani and Volta. Notably, because of certain negative findings and phenomenological differences, he remained skeptical about the intrinsic animal force being qualitatively identical to true

Shelley to have had an influence on the development of the novel's once dead now living "monster." Within a year of Galvani's success, Anton Mesmer would advance a theory that a unified electric field joined the "external world of reality to the innermost elusive realms of the human psyche."²⁴² His concept of electricity as universal flow between the tangible and the ethereal, between individual and collective, between existential and vital facets of being resonated with pan psychic perceptions of the creative process in Romanticism.

We are concerned here with the submission of electric light and the stimuli to depict it, and versions of the light bulb found in the iconographies of vanguard art in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Electricity and incandescence, paragons of the modern—given that we submit that "modern" essentially designates a new command, a rupture, an increase in velocity, and a revolution in time and conceptions of space—embodied two critical and opposing attitudes. The "negative," equated with fear or the irony of the newly arrived technology; and, "positive" technological means offered by the filament light were expressed in socio-aesthetic dimensions. Like fingers of voltage from the hand of science, the conceptual impulse of what electricity could mean and how it might be signified, represented, and abstracted from reality spread into the collective imagination in a progressive manner. Illusionistic effects and chromatic manifestations contributed to the making of unique lexicons and innovative paradigms in which real bulbs and the effects of incandescence were unbound by factors other than the inspiration offered by the light itself. Depictions of the light bulb and treatments of filament bulb radiance were expressed in a range of capacities found in Cubism, Futurism, Rayonism, Orphism, and, in Futurist, Dada, and Surrealist writings and art.

electricity. Hence, he referred to a "galvanic force," not animal electricity, in his letters and publications, a theoretical position he would abandon with Volta's help early in the new century."

²⁴² Anindita Banerjee, "Electricity: Science Fiction and Modernity in Early Twentieth-Century Russia," *Science Fiction Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (March, 2003), p. 53.

The emanation in Sonia Delaunay's *Electric Prisms*, 1914, for example, was one of hundreds of small, numbered drawings that made in pastel, watercolor, and gouache devoted to the theme of prismatic light (fig. 1). Delaunay claimed to, "like electricity. Public lighting was a novelty. At night during our walk we entered the era of light, arm-in-arm."²⁴³ The *Electric Prisms* (fig. 2) may also be seen as a chromatic manifesto of purpose, for the interpenetrating planes of color, the aura of solar and planetary bodies represented by concentric prismatic orbs, and the concurrence of solidity, translucency and dissolution are elements identifiable with much of Sonia Delaunay's work and with her fundamental conception of rhythm, "...based on numbers because color can be measured by its vibrations."²⁴⁴ In this sense she would be referring to the color of electric lamp lights on the Boulevard St. Michel in Paris where she often strolled with her husband, Robert Delaunay, in years leading up to the Great War.²⁴⁵

The diversity of the works sketched out in this brief analysis possess the hallmark of varying manners of abstraction and allegory formulated from visionary concepts of mythical electricity's symbolic essence and by sheer observation and study of the new light in its spectral capacities. All this in turn fostered futuristic, erotic, revolutionary utopian, purely abstract, and anti-war works of art that were the knell of new social conditions, therefore antidotal to the cultural hegemony of Romanticism and its adherents. As an eventual consequence of the vanguard's invective against the past the very agency of the electric, inseparable from the aesthetics of the machine was exalted with dedication and genius.

²⁴³ *Nous irons jusqu'au soleil* (Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1978), trans. Sherry A. Buckberrough, "An Art of Unexpected Contrasts," in *Sonia Delaunay: A Retrospective*, Robert T. Buck, Foreword (Buffalo, N.Y.: Albright-Knox Gallery, 1980), pp. 102-03.

²⁴⁴ *The New Art of Color: The Writings of Robert and Sonia Delaunay*, trans. David Shapiro and Arthur A. Cohen, (New York: Viking Press, 1978), p. 197.

²⁴⁵ On Sonia Delaunay see: John E. Bowlt, *Dictionary of Women Artists*, Vol. 1 (Taylor & Francis, 1997), p. 447.

Certainly, Russian Futurism had been imprinted with certain aspects of the utopian ethos of Italian Futurism. Fillippo Marinetti's *Manifesto of Futurism* (1911), following the first manifesto of 1909, was unabated in its astounding enthusiasm and frenzied proclamations that deified electricity and exalted its capacity for a new world.²⁴⁶ "We will sing of it...the nocturnal vibrations of the arsenals and work sites under their violent electric moons,"²⁴⁷ cried Marinetti, "I pray to my light bulb every evening, because it holds a frenzied speed within it."²⁴⁸ In "Against Backward Looking Spain," (1911) he vaunted electricity as a profane goddess, a promising substitute for the light of the Virgin Mary claiming, "Sublime Electricity, future humanity's unique and divine mother, shining, quicksilver-torsoed Electricity, thousand dazzling violet arms of Electricity."²⁴⁹ His vision in "The Electric War"²⁵⁰ was that of a golden age of electricity and his envy of "the men who will be born a century later..." in "beautiful Italy which will have come completely under the control of electric forces..."²⁵¹

While Giacomo Balla's fin de siècle painting, *Luna Park*, 1900, (fig. 3) exudes the twinkling ambiance of Beaux-Arts lighting typified in the handling of chandelier light by

²⁴⁶ Christine Poggi, an authority on mid-twentieth century Italian art has argued against the long-held understanding that Marinetti's proclamations were uniformly accepted and supported. Her response finds that the Futurists were far more ambivalent in their responses to the shocks of industrial modernity than Marinetti's incendiary pronouncements suggest. See: Christine Poggi, *Inventing Futurism: The Art and Politics of Artificial Optimism* (Princeton and London: Princeton University Press, 2008).

²⁴⁷ Noëmi Blumenkranz-Onimus, "The Power of the Myth: Electricity in Italian Futurism," for the exhibition catalogue, *ELECTRA: Electricity and electronics in the art of the XXth century*, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville Paris, December 10-February 5, 1984 (Paris, Société Nouvelle de l'Imprimerie Moderne du Lion, 1983), pp. 148-151.

²⁴⁸ Fillipo Marinetti, "Against Passeist Venice," a manifesto declaration pronounced in Venice on April 27, 1910 and written in accord with Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrá, and Luigi Russolo. For a full account see: *Futurism: An Anthology*, eds. Christine Poggi, Lawrence Rainey and Laura Whitman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 67-70.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁰ Fillipo Marinetti, first published in *Le Futurisme*, Paris, 1911 and in *La Guerra soligiene del mondo*, Milan, 1915.

²⁵¹ Blumenkranz-Onimus, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

Adolph Menzel, ca. 1850s, or diffuse arc lamp lighting in neo-Impressionism, for example, the carousel scene was an important precedent to Balla's pre-Futurist picture, *Street Lamp*, 1909 (fig. 4). The painting not only attempted to represent the then current theories on the diffusion of light, it was unprecedented in its singling out and celebration of the explosive energy of electric light as the sole subject in a work of art. Composed of vibrating lines and small dashes of color, in deference to the systematic color theories of George Seurat and Paul Signac whom Balla studied,²⁵² the light anticipates the fractured machine light of the Futurist program. Signac's comments on Eugène Delacroix's murals in the Chapelle des Sainte-Anges in Saint-Sulpice provide a fine perspective on the rendering of light in *Street Lamp*. In accord with Seurat's notes and their mutual research, Signac wrote in the essay, *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impresionisme* (1899), "...he no longer painted with any but the most simple and pure colors.... There is not a single fragment of the painting which does not vibrate, shimmer, or glisten...."²⁵³ In Balla's role that further dismantled the pictured structure of colored light that had been so painstakingly analyzed and practiced by Seurat and Signac (following achievements in the art of Manet, J.M.W. Turner, Degas, and Renoir, among others), *Street Lamp* was the earliest portrayal of electric light as irradiated, near-abstract color and the object of the illumination, a Parisian street lamp.

Natalia Goncharova depicted a different version of the subject with *Electric Lamp*, 1912, the first of its kind in Russian art (fig. 5). The pulsating composition depicts a swan-

²⁵² The most notable of the theoreticians who authored books on the optics of color which Seurat referenced were Hermann von Helmholtz's *Optique Physiologique*, translated in French in 1867; Wilhelm von Bezold's *Die Farbenlehre in Hinblick auf Kunst und Kunstgewerbe*, trans. 1876; and, the American, Ogden Rood's *Modern Chromatics* in 1877. For limits and validity of Seurat's theory, see R. A. Weale, "Theories of light and Colour in Relation to the History of Painting," M.Phil. Thesis, University of London, 1974; cited by Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art: Optical Themes in Western Art from Brunelleschi to Seurat* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), n. 184, p. 361.

²⁵³ Paul Signac, *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impresionisme* (Paris, 1899), ed. F. Cachin, Paris, 1978. Cited in Martin Kemp, op. cit., p. 316.

neck desk lamp that curves inward toward the center of the picture. What we take for a shade appears as a semi-conical shape that emits orbs of glaring light stylized by sharp points of glare that radiate from the center of three bright orbs. They repeat in rhythm the other repetitions set within the composition: the edge of a wooden desk, the electric cord, and, concentric reverberating circles of yellow incandescence. Light blasts from the bulb's globe with a force similar to electric light rendered in Futurist painting, despite the alliance to Rayonism, a movement invented by Goncharova and Michel Larionov in 1912 that proclaimed, "In formal terms, the ray is conventionally on the surface by a line of color."²⁵⁴

When *Electric Lamp* is considered alongside other paintings of machines and electrical devices, including Goncharova's, *Dynamo Machine*, 1913, exhibited together at the "No. 4" exhibition in Moscow,²⁵⁵ it is apparent that fractured light is comparable in its execution in the Futurist paintings of Luigi Russolo, *Maison + lumière + ciel*, 1912-13 (fig. 6); Gino Severini, *Fête à Montmartre*, 1913, (fig. 7); and, Umberto Boccioni, *La forza di una strada*, 1911 (fig. 8). Yet, *Electric Lamp* is most closely aligned with Balla's *Street Lamp* in the shared testimony as the earliest examples in Italy and Russia of incandescent filament light from its source, the lamp. Otherwise, the Futurist and Rayonist works comprise a category of abstraction that was in many ways more dependent upon polemical manifestoes and artist statements than differences in subject matter, *faktura*, and style.

Whereas Balla's systematic enquiries into optical color-light in a series of paintings known as the *Iridescent Interpenetrations*, 1912-13 (fig. 9) are considered Futurist, his studies in chromatic abstraction differed altogether from the agenda of speed of the machine. The observation of the properties of incandescence deviated from the general attitude that the

²⁵⁴ Magdalena Dubrowski, "The Formation and Development of Rayonism," *Art Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Spring, 1975), p. 200.

²⁵⁵ Exhibition date of 1914 is noted in Julie Wosk, *Women and the Machine: Representation from the Spinning Wheel to the Electronic Age* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), p. 84.

Futurist painters shared; for example, Severini wrote in the London catalogue for his first exhibition, “My object has been to convey the sensation of a body, lighted by electric lamps and gyrating in the darkness of the Boulevard.”²⁵⁶ Yet, Boccioni’s observations brought him closer to those of Balla in that, “. . . a beam of light can cut through the environment with overwhelming visual directional force,”²⁵⁷ which we find variously in his work.

On the cusp of the Great War, Marinetti saw the “lyrical initiative”²⁵⁸ of the aesthetic of electricity as an expression of the sublime. “Nothing is more beautiful than a large, humming electric power plant which can contain the hydraulic pressure of a mountain range and the electric force of an entire horizon synthesized on the distribution panels, spiked with polished keyboards and switches.”²⁵⁹ The surrealistic poetic vision saw that, “sparks are married to the stars / matches to lightning / crackle pinwheels bluish everywhere, / light curing World, / everything is torpedo. / Even the fireflies, almost, / popping noises in light / in the dark night of the flowers. Was made / harvest of stars / the bluish garlands. . .”²⁶⁰ the network of electric light surrounding the world. Electric light was “the white, new moon; the waterfall of lights which exult and rumble in the sleeping cities;” “the fountains of light, the fiery pale iridescent wakes;” and, “the reeling beams” replacing the pale shadows of the “decrepit moon.”²⁶¹

By 1914-15 the Futurist observation that defined electric light by sharp edge and rigid shape was adapted to the stylizations of incendiary blasts and surveillance beams as the light of war. The British artist, Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson, having gone to

²⁵⁶ Entry, *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Notable Acquisitions at the Art Institute of Chicago 2008, pp. 62-3.

²⁵⁷ Blumenkranz-Onimus, op. cit., p. 154.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Filippo Marinetti, *Manifeste Futuriste à Montmartre*, July 10, 1915, Paris.

²⁶⁰ Paolo Buzzi, “Il Canto di Mannheim,” Blumenkranz-Onimus, loc. cit.

²⁶¹ Armando Mazza, “A Venezia,” *I poeti futuristi*, (Milan: Edizioni Futuriste di “Poesia,” 1912), pp. 366-67.

France with the Red Cross and having been invalided home soon afterwards, announced that he would be using “Futurist technique” to express the reality of the Great War as a horror sensed in his Futurist-Vorticist canvas, *Bursting Shell*, 1915. Shards of debris from an exploding building or bunker implode inward spiraling toward a bright hypnotic center of light (fig. 10). Advances in war artillery and surveillance techniques included the engineering of the “star shell,” a form of carrier projectile that was effective in the illumination of terrains known as No Man’s Land. Typically ignited at a height of approximately six hundred meters, the star shell fell in a non-flammable parachute thus illuminating the area that was otherwise difficult to gauge. The ejection process initiated a pyrotechnic flare that emitted a blinding white light. In Nevinson’s apocalyptic canvas, *A Star Shell*, 1916, (fig. 11), the startling light of an exploded “star” flare illuminates trenches carved into the barren war torn field serving to expose those who were or were not there. The acetylene lights and Verey lights, or flare guns, of trench warfare burst open the dark cavities of ravaged earth illuminating the violence of hurled trees and roots, obliterated torsos, the carcasses of donkeys and horses, and other debris. Modris Eksteins captured the essence of the wasteland, writing, “The cratered honeycomb of no man’s land quickly breaks down any planned order. Men slip and fall. In the mud of Passchendaele in 1917 some men drawn in the huge, sewerlike craters filled with slime that comes of rain, earth, and decomposition. Some now begin to hear the bullets. Some are hit.”²⁶²

When the electric arc lamp was deployed for war after the American inventor, A. E. Sperry, introduced his principles in 1915, the giant searchlights were mounted to dirigibles, trains, and trucks for massive surveillance campaigns (fig. 12). The warring aerial light that scanned cities and countrysides at risk were attached to harrowing airborne machines.

²⁶² Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (London: Black Swan Press, 1989), p. 198.

Regarded by one, Jacques-Émile Blanche, and his coterie of the Ballet Russe corps, the surveillant Zeppelin over Paris was reportedly a thrilling site to behold. Removed from the true realities of war the effete groups imagined the air-ships as “giant whales or sharks in the sky,” a monster “...darting electric rays from his beacon eyes over the sleeping Ile de la Cité.”²⁶³ Electric beams acquired a somewhat programmatic style in printed matter and propaganda art during the war. In Jean Cocteau’s short-lived war journal, *Le Mot*, the illustrator, Paul Iribe, created *La Semaine des Anges* (The Week of Angels), 1914-15, in which a large angel with bowed head in hands hovers over Paris. The angel is fixed in a strong beam of ground surveillance light, which explains Iribe’s decision to cover her face (fig. 13). Despite the double meaning of the angel’s head in hands, to yield its sight from the blinding light and as an expression of despair, the reader is assured in the by-line at the bottom of the page, *Heureusement que nous sommes invulnérables*, (Luckily We are Invulnerable), as unrealistic optimism that France was indeed safe. The incisive tool of aerial and ground surveillance would continue to bring bombers to those sites captured by its scanning light. At the outset of the war, searchlights were combined with acoustic direction finders that guided the searchlights to the right parts of the sky, which they swept until the desired target were fixed upon. After the end of the war the German development of searchlights was effectively stopped by mandate of the Treaty of Versailles. The development of surveillant lighting resumed however in 1927 and was lauded as an icon of the Reich’s indomitable power during the extravagant displays of the blinding light at the Nürnberg rallies eight to ten years later.

Yet, in the sensibility of the artist-made-warrior trench warfare was real hell. Despite the record of war photography in which this leaves no doubt we also sense the palpable

²⁶³ Eksteins, op. cit., p. 284.

horror and entrapment by the enemy more acutely, I believe, in Félix Vallotton's powerful painting, *Verdun*, 1917 (fig. 14). As part a program established in the fall of 1916 under the direction of the French Board of Fine Arts, Vallotton (1865-1925) was sent to the Eastern Front in June of '17 as war artist. The struggle that he was assigned to cover the Battle of Verdun. Human presence is absent in the large-scale warscape whose theme is the art of military surveillance and its success to obliterate. The choking gaseous atmosphere of black clouds of smoke that billow in the foreground and the black beam of light that spreads upward in the depth of the landscape coincide in ominous union. Other searchlights, which Vallotton would later call in a diary entry, "colored, black, blue, and red projections,"²⁶⁴ intersect in diagonals that crisscross in x's across the field of the picture, the plane of the battle that was the bloodiest of the entire Great War in which over three hundred thousand French were lost in combat.

Natural light's obliteration in the modernist vanguard was a bitter mockery in many cases. The rejection of the sun in the 1913 Russian Futurist opera, *Victory Over the Sun*, staged by Kasimir Malevich with a prologue by the Russian poet, Velimir Khlebnikov, non-sensical libretto by Aleksei Kruchnykh, and atonal score by Mikhail Matiushin opens with a proclamation by the "Strong Man." In Act One, First Scene he announces, "Sun, you gave birth to passions / And burned with an inflamed ray / We will throw a dustsheet over you / And confine you in a boarded-up concrete house."²⁶⁵ Victory entails a battle and the "First Strong Man" declares, "—The mature victory / Has been sealed with wax / Nothing

²⁶⁴ Philippe Dagen, *Le Silence des Peintres: Les Artistes face à la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1996), pp. 15-17.

²⁶⁵ Alexei Kruchenykh, Ewa Bartos, and Victor Nes Kirby, "Victory Over the Sun Prologue," trans. Ewa Bartos and Victoria New Kirby, *The Drama Review*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, Autumn, 1971), p. 109.

matters to us / The sun lies slaughtered! . . .”²⁶⁶ As the “Gravediggers” take the stage in the Fourth Scene, a telephone rings and someone answers, saying, “—What? The sun is imprisoned! / Thank you. . . .”²⁶⁷ It is then announced, “—We ought to establish a holiday: A day for the victory over the sun. (The Chorus sings): — We are free / Broken sun . . . Long live darkness! / And black gods / And their favorite-pig! / The sun of the iron century has died!”²⁶⁸ The “Strong Men” appear before the curtain falls to proclaim, “. . .the world will die but for us there is no end!”²⁶⁹ Malevich’s complement to the *zaum*²⁷⁰ play, the icon of Suprematism, *Black Square*, c. 1913, had been pre-figured in a study for the Fifth Scene of Act Two.²⁷¹ The stage design was a simple square containing two isosceles triangles set on a diagonal, one white the other black. They inferred in otherwise completely non-representational form and economic terms the encroaching darkness over the light. When *Black Square* premiered in 1915 at the ‘0.10’ exhibition in Petrograd the painting was understood as a substitute sacred icon, typically located in the corner of a room in nearly every Russian home.

In traditional realms the sun was a sacred symbol. And for the Russian peasantry, for example, it was reproduced in countless objects of folk and traditional arts. In one of the more extraordinary photographs of the utopina world of electric radiance in the Russian expanse, a peasant farming couple who were recipients of Lenin’s “little light,” as it was known, examine the foreign object with expressions of incredulity and puzzlement (fig.15).

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²⁷⁰ Zaum describes the linguistic experiments in sound and language of the Futurist poets Khlebnikov and Kruchnykh. The term is indeterminate in meaning and often referred to as trans-reason.

²⁷¹ Aleksandra Shatskikh, trans. Marian Schwartz, *Black Square: Malevich and the Origins of Suprematism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012). For a general understanding of Suprematism, see: Camilla Gray, *The Russian Experiment in Art, 1863-1922* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1962), pp. 152-174.

As if the light bulb was in fact too foreign of an object, Maxim Gorky recalled the story of a priest named Zolotnitskii who during a thirty-year imprisonment had worshiped a little flame in the stove of his cell. Upon his release in the early years of the twentieth century, he was horrified in his first encounter with the, “white, bloodless fire imprisoned in glass... Oh, slaves of God... You are holding a little sunbeam captive... Oh, you people! Oh, let him go....”²⁷²

At the end of the civil war in Russia the economy had collapsed; and, Lenin’s prediction that the Revolution would unleash an international war of the classes had failed. Hundreds of thousands were dying of famine. A limited form of capitalism was instigated thereby gradually reviving the paltry economy and desperate conditions. In February of 1920, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets announced the formation of a State Electrification Commission, known by the moniker GOELRO. The task of the commission was to devise a general plan for electrifying the country via the construction of a network of regional power stations. Ten months later, GOELRO presented its plan, a document of more than five hundred pages, to the Eighth Congress of Soviets in Moscow. The proposal, forecasting demand through 1930 was infused by a utopian vision of a technologically advanced society brimming with productivity and beaming with brightness. For Lenin, who devoted a substantial contribution to the report, he promoted electrification as the single most critical aspect in transforming Russia from an agrarian peasant based country into one with a large-scale industrial foundation. Quite literally, he insisted, this would bring "enlighten-ment" to the masses, thus intoned in his famous maxim, "Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country." The slogan was

²⁷² Recorded in Maxim Gorky’s journal, *My Universities*, 1922.

repeated often and eventually appeared on an enormous banner mounted to the banks of the Moscow River opposite the Kremlin.

A portrait of Lenin was contained inside glass bulbs thereby perpetuating the cult of Lenin that promoted his image as coequal with electrific power. Fetishized as light via promotions of the light bulb the Lenin constructions were incomparable for their impact upon the consciousness of all classes. His habitation within the light bulb certainly took on a sacred aura paralleling the ubiquitous understanding of his veneration, Lenin-as-light in the tradition of the Orthodox Pantocrator (fig. 16). We see in one of the most powerful renditions of GOELRO propaganda Lenin's head filling the entire vacuum of the bulb, which looms over an industrialized Russia complete with newly built dams, electrical substations, power line transformers, and enormous projects in process of completion. The *lampochka I'icha*, or Ilyich light bulb was an imperialist attempt to lay claim to the domain of light within the larger GOELRO plans to create the modern Russia. And promotions of electric light that equated Lenin with the light bulb were similar to and on the same continuum as the Kremlin [Stalin] stars that were lit by the most powerful light bulbs in existence; an attempt by the Soviet state to establish supremacy through the symbolism of light. By association, even in the reality of the low-wattage household counterpart, artificial light would loom large in the Soviet imagination of the 1920s.²⁷³

Yet, in the State's optimism to produce a new Soviet citizenry Mayakovsky and Alexander Rodchenko, who by then had jettisoned painting, produced advertising campaigns. Their commercial graphic work presented state-manufactured products, such as the light bulb, which would strengthen the Bolshevik regime's need for finances through sales while promoting the regime through the artifacts of electrical technology. As the art

²⁷³ Julia Bekman Chadaga, "Light in Captivity: Spectacular Glass and Soviet Power in the 1920s and 1930s," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 66, No. 1 (Spring, 2007), pp. 83-84.

historian, Leah Dickerman has explained, “Constructivist advertising almost always vacillates between the revolutionary imperative to circumvent the fetishizing of the commodity, on the one hand, and the construction of necessary desire to sell the product, on the other.”²⁷⁴

Mayakovsky supplied the copy for Rodchenko’s illustration in one such project that reads: *Need sunlight to shine all night? Light bulbs are the answer and here’s the tip. Get them at GUM,²⁷⁵ they are shiny and cheap* (fig. 17).

Countering the propaganda in a pointedly excoriating tone, El Lissitzky’s 1923 reenactment of *Victory Over the Sun* included characters set in motion by means of electromechanical forces and devices, controlled by a single individual who directed movement, sound, and light. In effect this master-controller, “...switches on the radio-megaphone... The creator speaks for the bodies into a telephone, which is connected with an arc lamp. Sentences flash on and off electrically. Beams of light, refracted through prisms and mirrors, follow the movement of the bodies. Thus the creator raises the most elementary process to the highest degree of effectiveness.”²⁷⁶

The wholly incomprehensible destruction of Europe at the hand of men was countered in outcries from the vanguard and others who in many ways felt hopeless and powerless in the wake of massive destruction. The leitmotif of electricity became emblematic of the outrage. The light bulb would take on unprecedented forms and be instilled with highly allegorical connotations of the mechanized human and the oneiric uncanny that were formed through codified languages in text and image. Here then was a container of light, an object par excellence of industrialized capitalism; an object whose

²⁷⁴ Leah Dickerman, “The Propagandizing of Things,” *Aleksandr Rodchenko* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1999), pp. 66-7.

²⁷⁵ GUM: The Russian State department store.

²⁷⁶ Ronald Alley, *Catalogue of the Tate Gallery's Collection of Modern Art other than Works by British Artists*, (London: Tate Gallery and Sotheby Parke-Bernet, 1981), pp.452-455.

malleable symbolic qualities seemed endless; and, a signifier of the inversion of the tradition of light as Good in its profane authenticity that was generated through electric current.

The sun and other “archaic” forms of radiance were rendered obsolete. The import of natural light and its unchallenged supremacy were taken as a symbolic nemesis in revolutionizing tenets. The foci of the light bulb motif in its many manifestations and remarkable range of contexts submitted to fantasy and purpose has gone unexamined in full. The subject requires a more thorough analysis than what is offered here. Nevertheless, in the division of the effects of electric light, aforementioned, and the source of that light depicted as an object, we find its bifurcated manifestations as aura and thing. Submitting to the fact that a discussion of Picasso’s single light bulbs from 1912 and 1914 that follows in Part Two of this chapter, we begin with Francis Picabia’s 1917 illustration, *Americaine*.²⁷⁷ Designed for the cover image of the *beaux-arts* Surrealist journal, *391*, Picabia’s mixed media work is one of the earliest examples of the light bulb as an erogenous trope (fig. 18). The *Americaine* bulb functions as a synecdoche for a young girl, the specifically chosen pear-shaped glass vessel signifying her body; and, the interior of the ampoule, a hotel “room,” perhaps with its requisite cheap Times Square sign (Picabia’s reference to New York City)

²⁷⁷ Picabia’s light bulb was a sentimental reference to Paris while he was exiled in New York during World War I. “391” was a journal named after Alfred Stieglitz’s renowned gallery and publication, “291.” It is noteworthy to distinguish between Picabia’s 1915 campaign of tools, lamps, cameras used as allegorical elements in a series of conceptual portraits, including a common spark plug in *Portrait d’une jeune fille d’américaine dans l’état nudité* (published in the July 15, 1915 “291”) a reference to the indomitable Agnes (Mrs. Eugene) Meyer. In Picabia’s, *Voilà Haviland*, published in July-August of ’15, a portable electric lamp substitutes for Paul Haviland, of the French porcelain family and a friend of Stieglitz’s. In an early analysis of the object-portrait, William Camfield explained that Haviland is shown as a source of light, not a typical fixture but a close likeness to the Wallace electric portable lamp suggesting that he often traveled to Europe and therefore, “became a mobile source of illumination.” That is, in his capacity as an associate editor of Stieglitz’s *Camera Work*, Haviland promoted the magazine as well as serving as an executive for Haviland Limoges. See: William Innes Homer, “Picabia’s *Jeune fille d’américaine dans l’état nudité* and Her Friends,” *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 57, No. 1 (March, 1975), pp. 110-115. And William A. Camfield, “The Machinest Style of Francis Picabia,” *The Art Bulletin* (September-December, 1966).

that blinks “Flirt/Divorce” mirrored in the nonsensical “ecroviD/trilF,” Flirt backwards being a play on the word trifle, that comingles with the implication of indiscretions.

Since the invisible energy of electricity was granted status of cause célèbre in Surrealism, in that the theatrical effects of electric shock induced hysteria; the power surges of *l’amour fou* created mad love; and, the vocabulary of *nerveaux* and excitation were at the core of wildly inventive and transgressive works of art and literature, the light bulb was granted erotic status. The Picabia also infers that the eroticized light bulb is a portable object that may be inserted into a lamp socket anywhere at will. In the mechanism of its neon message, the implicit eroticism, now *on* now *off* now *on* again would attract the viewer, the voyeur, to peer into the glass bulb in order to witness the scene. The aliveness, per se, of the interior of the Edison-Mazda bulb (fig. 19) was wrought in the electric signage, an extension of the “living” filament that is the image’s generative component of the erotic.

Found in other examples of interwar years art, illustrations, and literature, the light bulb had by then acquired a somewhat iconic status. It was understood as a multifarious allegorical image in specific constructions; and, also simply as a beacon of the future that continued to be a robust signifier in socio-political frameworks of the 1920s and ‘30s. *Les Champs Magnétiques*, 1920, for example, is notable as the first work of literary surrealism in which the co-authors, Breton and Phillippe Soupault launched their particular version of automatic writing. Implied in the title is the moving electric charge wherein a force of magnetism occurs. Diaristic, psychological automatism was first recorded by the French neuro-psychiatrist, Jules Baillarger (1850) whose work was greatly influenced by the experiments of Pierre Janet, who in turn had inspired Jean-Martin Charcot in advance of

Freud's theories of the unconscious.²⁷⁸ Breton's training as a young neurological medic contributed to his encounters with the treatment of hysteria by electricity which had a direct effect upon the literary construction of the character Nadja in the eponymous fragmentary reflection in book format, *Nadja* (1928) (fig. 20). The work featured his admittedly insane lover, also his muse and a phantasm that according to Breton "...enjoyed imagining herself as a butterfly whose body consisted of a Mazda bulb."²⁷⁹ Advertisements of electric light bulbs were common in Paris, notable in the illustration work of René Pean who specialized in incandescent products typified in, *La Lampe VIXA*, from 1925 conflating the butterfly or moth with the light bulb (fig. 21). The hybrid construction of the butterfly-light bulb was not wholly imaginary given that Jacques-Andre Boiffard's photograph of the MAZDA light bulb was a symbolic portrait of Nadja. Breton later admitted, "...I am invariably disturbed when I pass the luminous Mazda sign on the main boulevards, covering almost the entire façade of the Théâtre du Vaudeville..." (fig. 22).²⁸⁰

Yet the construction of *Nadja*, or the fragmented retelling of Breton's brief encounter with her, taken along side Boiffard's rather unspectacular photograph does not disclose the complex dual nature of the work at the intersection of art and the political, which requires a separate study. However, as Breton surmised, "It is, as it were, from the fortuitous juxtaposition of the two terms that a particular light has sprung, the light of the image, to which we are infinitely sensitive. The value of the image depends upon the beauty

²⁷⁸ Joost Haan, et.al., "Neurology and Surrealism: André Breton and Joseph Babinski," *Brain: A Journal of Neurology*, No. 135 (Oxford University Press: Oxford Journals, 2012), p. 383.

²⁷⁹ André Breton, *Nadja* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1928), pp. 129-130.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

of the spark obtained; it is, consequently, a function of the difference of potential between the two conductors.”²⁸¹

During the interwar years the reconstruction of a new-world human being would include using a single bare light bulb as an anthropomorphized head and body. Mary Shelley’s electric “monster,” “creature,” or, “it,” as Frankenstein was known, is paradigmatic for the scissored, stitched, glued-together *corps/corpses* of the new woman who in phases of her dismantled selves was reordered as an assemblage of parts. On the nature of Assemblages, according to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s general conclusions and postulations, these are defined by “a horizontal axis that comprises two segments, one of content, the other of expression. On the one hand it is a *machinic assemblage* of bodies, of actions and passion, an intermingling...; on the other hand it is a *collective assemblage of enunciation*, of acts and statements, of incorporeal transformations attributed to bodies.”²⁸² In application to thinking the material or “machinic”²⁸³ aspect of an assemblage, this “relates not to the production of goods [repetition] but rather to a precise state of intermingling ...that includes all the attractions and repulsions, sympathies and antipathies, alterations, amalgamations, penetrations, and expansions that affect bodies of all kinds...”²⁸⁴

In the genre of assemblage-sculpture, George Grosz and John Heartfield’s, *Der wildgewordene Spiesser (Elektro-mechano-Tatlin-Plastik)*²⁸⁵ 1920, exemplifies the Deleuze-Guattarian

²⁸¹ Raymond Spiteri, “Surrealism and the Political: The Case of *Nadja*,” *The Invention of Politics in the European Avant-Garde (1906-1940)*, eds. Sascha Bru and Gunther Martens (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi B.V., 1994), p. 183.

²⁸² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p. 88. Originally published as *Mille Plateaux*, vol. 2 of *Capitalisme et Schizophrénie* © 1980 by Les Editions de Minuit, Paris.

²⁸³ Deleuze and Guattari, op. cit., p. 90.

²⁸⁴ Ibid.

²⁸⁵ George Grosz, (German, 1893–1959) and John Heartfield (German, 1891–1968; *Der wildgewordene Spiesser Heartfield (Elektro-mechano-Tatlin-Plastik)* (The Middle-Class Philistine Heartfield Gone Wild

concept of Assemblage to the degree that the social operation of intermingling is achieved (fig. 23). The Heartfield-Grosz work is understood as a critique of Nietzsche's vitalist *Übermensch*, the "superman" who by necessity, within regimes of oppression, was made anew from humbler parts and even as "a body without organs."²⁸⁶ Accordingly, one aspect of the machinic²⁸⁷ assemblage is "continually dismantling the organism, causing a-signifying particles or pure intensities to pass or circulate and attributing to itself subjects that it leaves with nothing more than a name as the trace of an intensity." This activity of making and unmaking that means and changes from assemblage to assemblage is the project of the cut-up. Our warrior was constructed from a tailor's dummy, a single light bulb, and other attributes of "honor," with a prominent electric cord extending from the back of the left knee above a missing lower leg, presumably lost in battle.²⁸⁸ Together with the black box outlet of electric components the aggregate of things exceeds all conventions; its very materiality implies defiance as a reflection of its transience and tragedy.

What was composed in an assemblage, what was still only composed, becomes a component of a new assemblage. In this sense, all history is really is the history of perception, and what we make history with is the matter of a becoming, not the subject matter of a story. Becoming is like the machine: present in a different way in every assemblage, passing from one to the other, opening one onto the other, outside any fixed order or determined sequence.²⁸⁹

[Electro-Mechanical Tatlin Sculpture]], 1988 (reconstruction of 1920 original), tailor's dummy, revolver, doorbell, knife, fork, letter "C" and number "27" signs, plaster dentures, embroidered insignia of the Black Eagle Order on horse blanket, Osram light bulb, Iron Cross, stand, and other objects overall, including base: 220 x 45 x 45 cm (86 5/8 x 17 11/16 x 17 11/16 in.) Berlinische Galerie—Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Fotografie und Architektur Art ©Estate of George Grosz/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. ©2005 John Heartfield/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn.

²⁸⁶ On the concept of "body without organs," see: "November 28, 1947: How Do You Make Yourself A Body Without Organs," Deleuze and Guattari, op. cit., pp. 149-166.

²⁸⁷ "Machinic" is a Deleuze and Guattari term.

²⁸⁸ The artist's construction of the new man was a commentary on the death toll of soldiers in World War I. Attributes of the assemblage "hero" included a medal from the Order of the Black Eagle, the highest honor for chivalry in the Kingdom of Prussia inaugurated in 1701 by Friedrich III of Brandenburg.

²⁸⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, op. cit., p. 347.

Coterminous to the era of *Der wildgewordene Spiesser*, Hannah Höch trimmed a black and white advertisement of a tantalum tungsten bulb²⁹⁰ and pasted into the scoop neckline of a bathing beauty's torso in, *Das Schöne Mädchen*, 1919-20, a masterpiece of Dada collage (fig. 24). Höch, like Grosz and Heartfield, gave precedence to the light bulb as the figure's head and in *Mädchen*, it is also understood as a false sun. The young woman holds an umbrella to shield her face and body from the intense rays of the bare bulb. The sense of the light's potency recalls Emile Zola's novel, *Au Bonheur des dames* (1883) in which the electric lights of the department store shined, "like a lighthouse, and seeming to be of itself the life and light of the city..."²⁹¹ But the optimism of the new lighting was worn down near the end of the novel with the "...white brightness of a blinding fixity. . . nothing now but this blinding white light."²⁹² Upon scrutiny of the Höch the cutout light bulb is topped by a magazine clipping of fine handiwork, a bit of lace, that serves as a bow to top the light bulb head. The fragment embellishes the electric light in contrast to the BMW hubcaps, a tire, a cast metal gear mechanism, and, a timepiece attended by the shift chief's watchful eye. The essence of the handmade-ness of the small bow set against the new domain of "women's work" in industrialized Germany is magnified in Höch's medium. The art of collage resides in its handmade-ness in which all components, aggregates of the whole, are carefully chosen, precisely cut out, organized for the composition, then pasted into place, a practice thereby

²⁹⁰ In the taxonomy of light bulbs in art, it is interesting to note that Höch had used a specifically German light bulb, the tantalum filament lamp developed by Drs. Werner von Bolton and Otto Feuerlein of the Siemens-Halske Company in Berlin in 1902. The tantalum-filament was much more rare than osmium and platinum filaments. By 1906, having withstood the first photometric testing, The General Electric Company and the National Electric Lamp Company acquired the exclusive rights to manufacture the lamp in the United States. Tantalum lamps were described in bulletins up to November 20, 1910. They were used almost exclusively through the White Star ocean liners including the Titanic and the Olympic.

²⁹¹ Emile Zola, *The Ladies' Paradise*, trans. Kristin Ross (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 28 and 377. The novel *L'éve future* by Villier de l'Isle Adam's (1886), Alfred Robida's, *La vie électrique* (1892), and variously in the writing of Jules Verne are notable early examples within the thematic vein.

²⁹² *Ibid*, Zola.

offsetting the reality of mass-produced products so dependent upon the incessant glare, day and night, of electric factory lighting.

In Breton's significant analysis of Marcel Duchamp's *Large Glass*, "*Phare de La Mariée*," 1935 (Lighthouse of the Bride),²⁹³ the lighthouse was attributed to the "Bride," which in itself was a sexual reference, just as the nude in *Étant Donnés*' would come to be highly sexualized in pose and attribution of its phallic beacon-like lamp. The affiliation of artificial light with the feminine was heralded in the constitution of the nationalistic French figure, *la fee électricité* as we have seen in Chapter One. But in Duchamp's abiding interest in light as a feminine element derived from late nineteenth and early twentieth century precedents (fig. 25), the incandescent bride, like the incandescent fairy, was made *alive* through her affiliation with electrical energy thereby denoting a manner of sexual circuitry. The Bec Auer lamp, an image of Duchamp's beloved-of-youth, in fact illuminated his entire oeuvre,²⁹⁴ beginning with the earliest erotic-light work of art, *La Suspension (Bec Auer)*, 1902-03 (fig. 26).²⁹⁵ On an annotated sheet of sketches for the small drawing he wrote, "le bec auer ... en vagina" (fig. 27). The Duchamp scholar, Linda Dalrymple Henderson, noted that, "...the general luminosity of the work [*Étant Donnés*, *The Large Glass*] as a cultural beacon for a civilization was ending, but there are...more specific elements in Duchamp's notes that associate the Bride with incandescent light bulbs."²⁹⁶

²⁹³ André Breton, "Lighthouse of the Bride (1935)," *Surrealism and Painting*, trans. Simon Taylor (London: MacDonald and Co., 1972), pp. 85-99.

²⁹⁴ Noted by Edward D. Powers, "Fasten your Seatbelts as we Prepare for our Nude Descending," *Tout-fait*, The Marcel Duchamp Studies Online Journal, Vol. 2, Issue 5 (April, 2003), p. 6.

²⁹⁵ The drawing was made during his student years at the *École Bossuet* in Rouen.

²⁹⁶ Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *Duchamp in Context: Science and Technology in the Large Glass and Related Works* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998), p. 125. That the light bulb was a techno-sexual object with two "female" openings into which the bayonet or the "male" portion of the socket would be inserted,²⁹⁶ and, that the bec auer lamp was first drawn as a red penis cannot be dismissed within Duchamp's complex narrative sexualization of light.

We find in the artist's handwritten and photographic account in the "Manual of Instructions," *Étant Donnés: 1° La Chute d'Eau, 2° Le Gaz D'Éclairage* that the 13th stage, or 13^{me} OP entitled, "Bec Auer,"²⁹⁷ carefully described steps for installing the lamp that would be held aloft by the nude in the landscape (fig. 28):

- *Visser d'abord la petite lampe électrique sur la main* / First screw the little electric lamp on to the hand
- *Puis placè le zeste, manchon et verre de lampe* / Then place the zest, sleeve and glass lamp
- *Le fil électrique sera caché dans le dessous du bras* / The power cord is hidden in the arm

And on the 15^{me} he annotated the care to be taken with the installation of the electrified gas lamp:

- *Quand placè définitivement le Bec Auer n'est pas mathématiquement vertical; el reste légèrement incline, la fixation du coude ne permettant pas de le redresser.*²⁹⁸
/When the Bec Auer is in its final place it is not necessary to install it mathematically vertical; it rests slightly tilted, the setting does not allow the neck to straighten.

The irony of the light bulb in early modern photography is the making of an object of light from another source of light. In Edmund Kesting's²⁹⁹ *Photogram Lightbulb*, 1927 (fig. 29), which predates Man Ray's renowned light bulbs, an illustration of a black OSRAM bulb was overlaid with a photographic negative, a near transparency of a tungsten bulb. Neither emits light in the formal resolution of the composition. And that Kesting chose a black bulb (fig. 30) over the ordinary bulb is of interest in terms of the potential reading of dystopian electric light. Man Ray's photograms of light bulbs were commissioned by the Compagnie Parisienne de Distribution d'Électricite for a limited edition portfolio of "artistic" small

²⁹⁷ The Bec Auer lamp was a gas burner lamp with a gauze mantle designed by the Austrian chemist, Carl Auer, Baron von Wolsbach (1858-1929).

²⁹⁸ *Manual of Instructions for Marcel Duchamp Étant Donnés: 1° La Chute d'Eau, 2° Le Gaz d'Éclairage*; facsimile of Duchamp's working notebooks with handwritten instructions and photographs; Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1987. Translation by McKinnon.

²⁹⁹ Edmund Kesting (German, 1892–1970), *Photogram Lightbulb*, c.1929-30, gelatin silver print. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Thomas Walther Collection.

electrical household appliances. The arrangement, *Rayogram, Five Light Bulbs*, 1930 (fig. 31) is a quotidian arrangement; and its counterpart, the unique gelatin silver print, *Rayogram (Electricité)*, also from 1930, (fig. 32) sets the light bulb into cosmic space, as the moon or the sun redolent of advertising campaigns from earlier in the twentieth century in which the light bulb was sky borne. Of the CPDE portfolio, it garnered conventional praise, “Man Ray has superb ideas of more or less abstracted electricity.”³⁰⁰

Far more interesting than the prosaic portfolio of electric gadgets, Man Ray’s *Emak Bakia* (*Leave Me Alone*, 1926) is a masterpiece of early vanguard cinema in which a relentless flow of images interspersed with pure beams of light, bright spots of incandescence, float on a solid black ground followed by neon signage that runs across the center of the screen. Light is reflected in wild prismatic striations filmed in a whirling array of grey tones as glint cast upon undistinguished forms or as reflections in water and in contrasting shadows and brightness. The elusive moving phrases in *Emak Bakia* created by filming an electric message sign parallel the cryptic spiraling in Duchamp’s filmic work in “Anemic Cinema.”³⁰¹ Transformation and change are manifest in the Man Ray film. Electric lights function as independent subjects that are quintessentially poetic.

The most salient contributions to what may be thought of as a genre of incandescence, which extends from the early modern period to the use of light bulbs, neon tubing, illuminated large-scale installations and mixed media sculpture, inter-media and time-based art is found in an international roster of artists including Bruce Nauman,³⁰² Otto

³⁰⁰ The portfolio was exhibited in the exhibition, “International Photographers,” Brooklyn Art Museum and reviewed in “Photography,” *Arts Weekly*, March 19, 1932.

³⁰¹ Edward A. Aiken, “‘Emak Bakia’ Reconsidered,” *Art Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 3, *Art History and the Study of Film* (Autumn, 1983), p. 244.

³⁰² Bruce Nauman (American, b. 1941). *Manipulating a Fluorescent Tube*, 1969, black and white video with sound. Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Pienc,³⁰³ Jenny Holzer,³⁰⁴ Tanaka Atsuko,³⁰⁵ François Morrellet,³⁰⁶ Dan Flavin,³⁰⁷ Robert Irwin,³⁰⁸ Olafur Eliasson,³⁰⁹ Joseph Kosuth,³¹⁰ Daniel Reeves,³¹¹ Woody Vasulka,³¹² Ed and Nancy Reddin Kienholz,³¹³ James Turrell,³¹⁴ and, Keith Sonnier,³¹⁵ among many others—were founded upon the very im/materiality of light that would become a medium in contemporary and post-modern art.

*One might not think of light as a matter of fact, but I do.
And it is...as plain and open and direct an art as you will ever find.*

Dan Flavin

³⁰³ Otto Pienc, (German, 1928-2014). *Electric Rose*, 1965, Polished aluminum globe with 160 timed neon glow lamps and argon glow lamp on chromed pipe and polished aluminum base. Collection of the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge.

³⁰⁴ Jenny Holzer (American, b. 1950). Selection of *Truisms*, 1989, L.E.D. electronic-display signboards. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, New York.

³⁰⁵ Tanaka Atsuko (Japanese, 1932-2006), *Electric Dress*, 1957, electric cord, neon and electric lights, 1957. Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, Japan.

³⁰⁶ François Morrellet (French, b. 1941). *Avalanche*, 1996, thirty-six neon blue tubes, white high-voltage wire. Courtesy Galerie am Lindenplatz AG, Vaduz, Liechtenstein.

³⁰⁷ Dan Flavin (American, 1933-1996). *Monument for V. Tatlin I*, 1964, fluorescent lights and metal fixtures. Museum of Modern Art, New York

³⁰⁸ Robert Irwin (American, b. 1928). *Untitled*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint on aluminum and light. Museum of Modern Art, New York.

³⁰⁹ Olafur Eliasson (Danish-Icelandic, b. 1967). *Yellow versus Purple*, 2003, glass, floodlight, motor, cable and tripod. Tate Modern, London.

³¹⁰ Joseph Kosuth (American, b. 1945). *Five Words in Orange Neon*, 1965, neon and transformer. Private collection.

³¹¹ Daniel Reeves (American, b. 1948). *Avatamsaka*, 2008-12, video projection of mandalic colored light on 72-inch diameter suspended glass disc. Collection of the artist, San Francisco.

³¹² Woody Vasulka (Czech, b. 1937). *Light Revisited, Study No. 4*, 2012. Electric light and sound installation, Collection of the artist, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

³¹³ Edward Kienholz (American, 1927-1994), Nancy Reddin Kienholz (American, b. 1943) *The Fire Screen*, 1975, mixed media assemblage with light bulb. Courtesy LA Louver Gallery, Venice, CA.

³¹⁴ James Turrell (American, b. 1943). *Afrum (White)*, 1966, projected light. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

³¹⁵ Keith Sonnier, (American, b. 1941), *Neon Wrapping Incandescent III*, 1970, neon, incandescent lamps, porcelain fixtures, transformer. Courtesy Mary Boone Gallery, New York.



Fig.1: Sonia Delaunay-Terk, *Etude Lumière, Boulevard Saint-Michele*, 1913-14, pastel and charcoal on silk paper. Private collection.



Fig. 2: Sonia Delaunay-Terk, *Electric Prisms*, 1914, oil on canvas. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris.

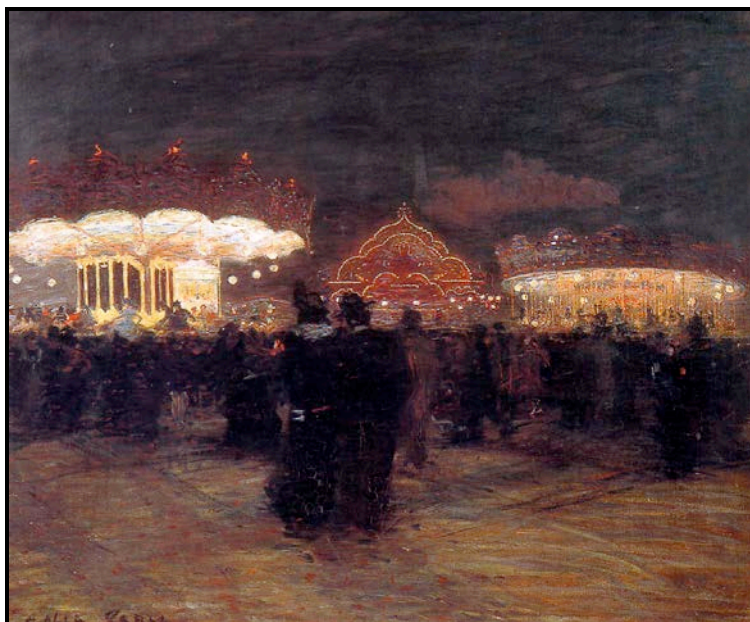


Fig. 3: Giacomo Balla, *Luna Park*, 1900, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 4: Giacomo Balla, *Street Light*, ca. 1910-11 (dated on painting 1909), oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York. Hillman Periodicals Fund. © 2015 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.



Fig. 5: Natalia Goncharova, *Electric Lamp*, 1913, oil on canvas. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris.



Fig. 6: Luigi Russolo, *Maison + lumière + ciel*, 1912-13, oil on canvas. Kunstmuseum Basel, Gift of Sonia Delaunay, 1949.



Fig. 7: Gino Severini, *Fête a Montmartre*, 1913, oil on canvas. Chicago Art Institute. Bequest of Richard S. Zeisler.

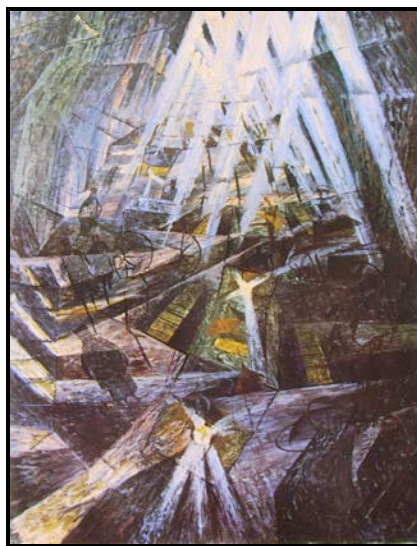


Fig. 8: Umberto Boccioni, *La forza di un strada*, 1911, oil on canvas. Kunstmuseum Basel.



Fig. 9: Giacomo Balla, *Radial Iridescent Interpretation (Prismatic Vibration)*, 1913-14, tempera on pasteboard. Gallerie Civica d'arte moderna, Turin.

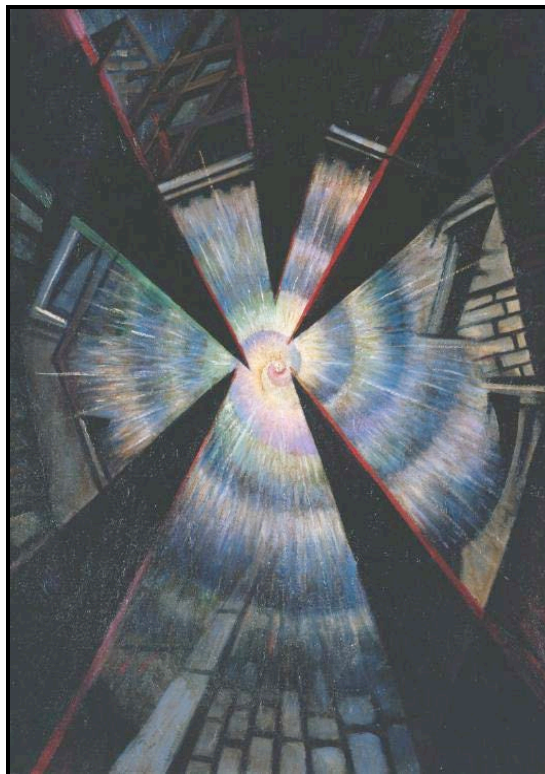


Fig. 10: Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson, *Bursting Shell*, 1915, oil on canvas. Tate Britain. On loan to the Imperial War Museum, London.

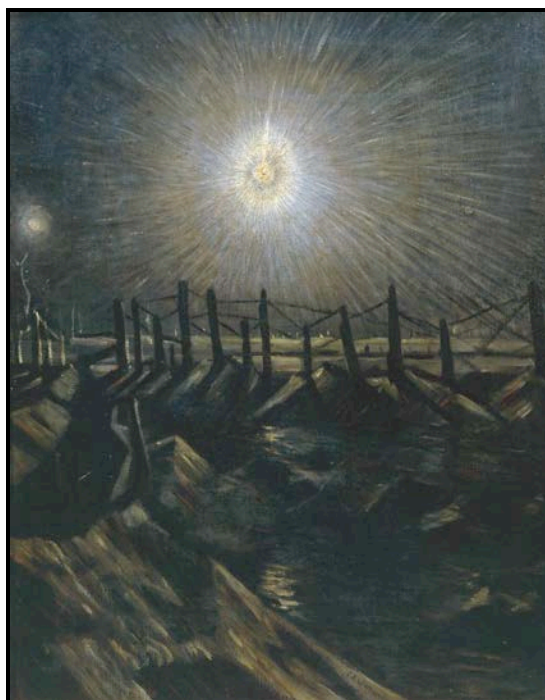


Fig. 11: Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson, *A Star Shell*, 1916, oil on canvas. Tate Britain, London.



Fig. 12: German war poster, Calais. Was Occupied During the Night of 21-22 Feb. 1915 with extensive bombing. Courtesy: Das Bundesarchiv, German Federal Archives digital resources.



Fig. 13: Paul Iribe, "The Week of Angels" for Jean Cocteau's *Le Mot*, Paris, 1914-15.



Fig. 14: Félix Vallatton, *Verdun*, 1917, oil on canvas. Musée de l'Armée, Paris.



Fig. 15: A. Sajcet, "Ilyich Light Bulb," photograph, 1926. Coll. Van Gennepe, Amsterdam.



Fig. 16: GOELRO poster celebrating the twelfth anniversary of the October Revolution, 1929.

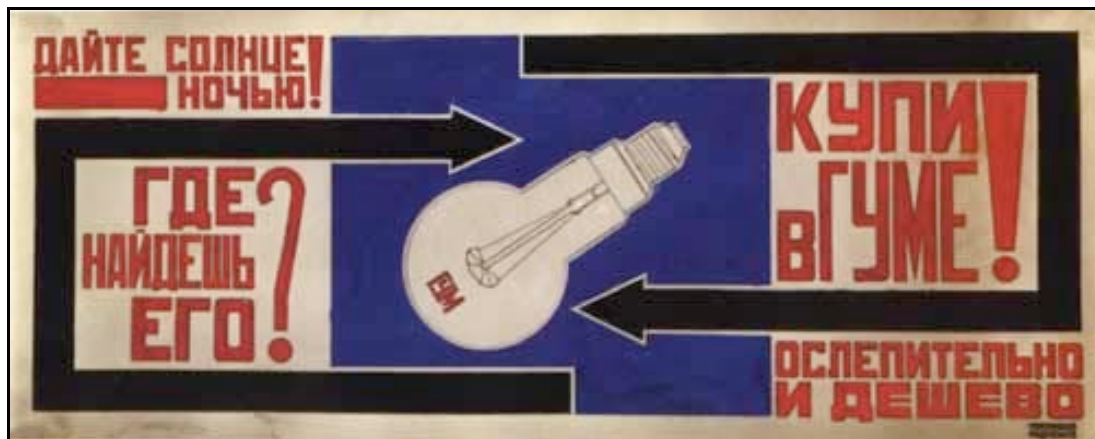


Fig. 17: Aleksandr Rodchenko, graphic text by Vladimir Mayakovsky, *Give Me the Sun at Night*, 1923. Constructivist advertisement for state-produced light bulbs, Moscow. Hulton Archive Getty Images ®.



Fig. 18: Francis Picabia, *Americaine*, 1917, halftone photograph with hand painting. Cover for journal *391*, No. 6, 1917.



Fig. 19: GE Edison-Mazda drawn tungsten filament light bulb, ca. 1912.

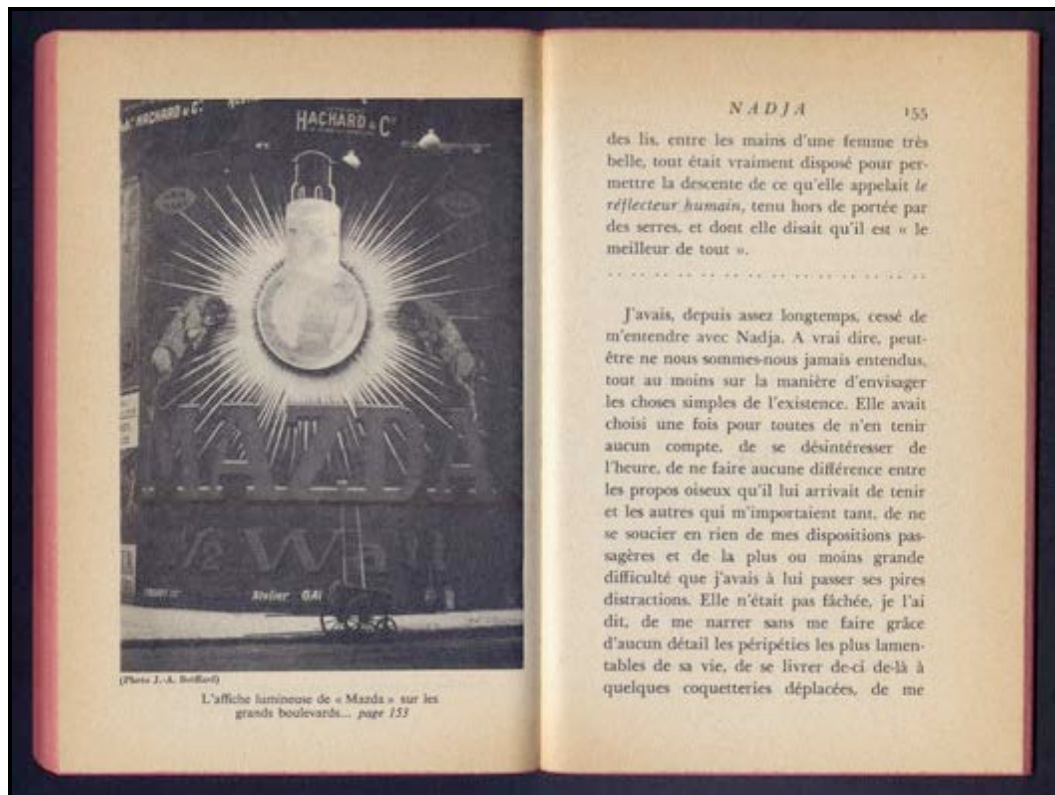


Fig. 20: *Nadja* by André Breton featuring Boiffard's photograph. Éditions Gallimard, Paris, 1928.



Fig. 21: René Pean, *La Lampe VIXA* light bulbs ad, Paris, 1925.

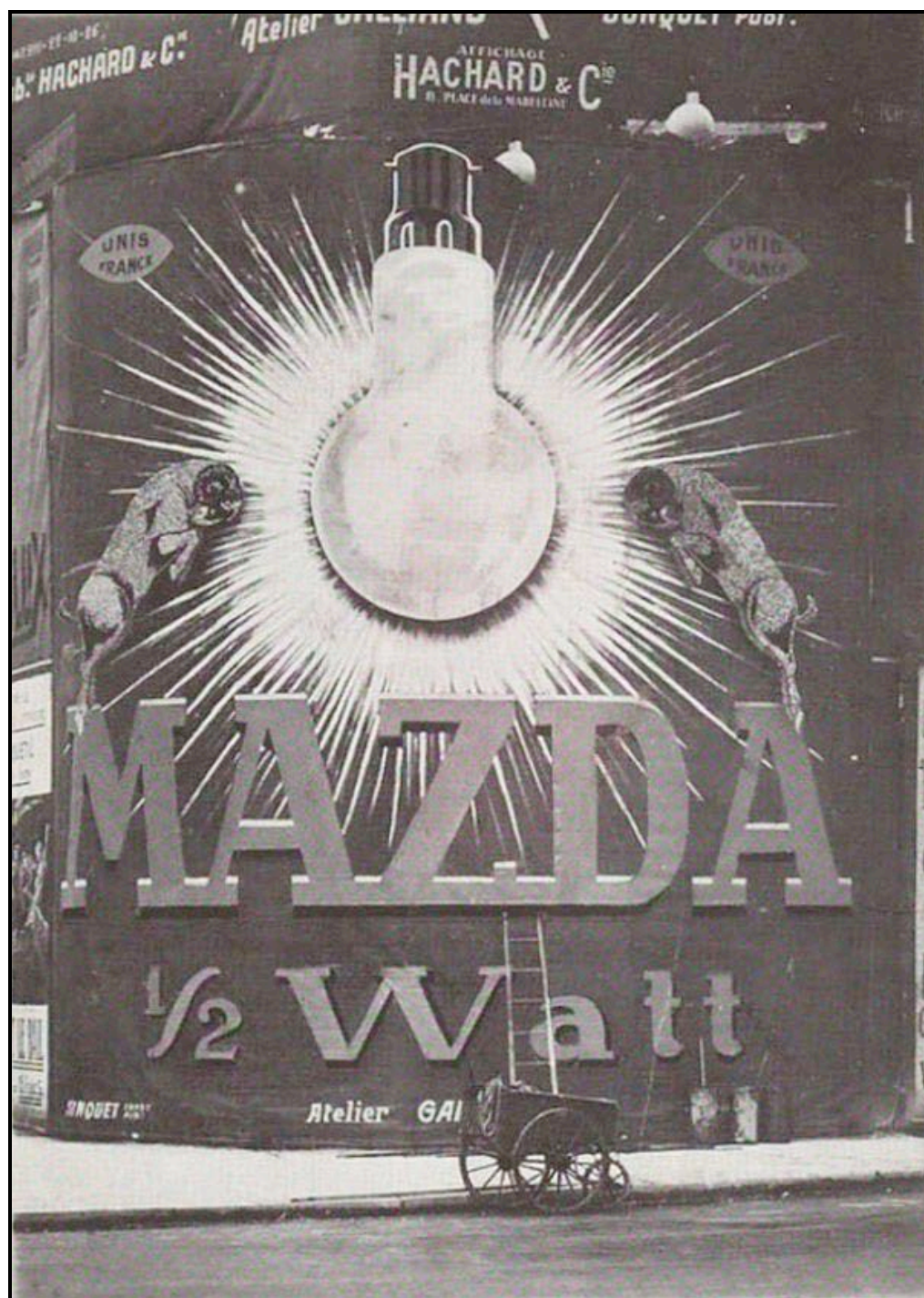


Fig. 22: Jacques-André Boiffard, *L'affiche lumineuse de Mazda*, photograph sur le grand boulevard, 1927.

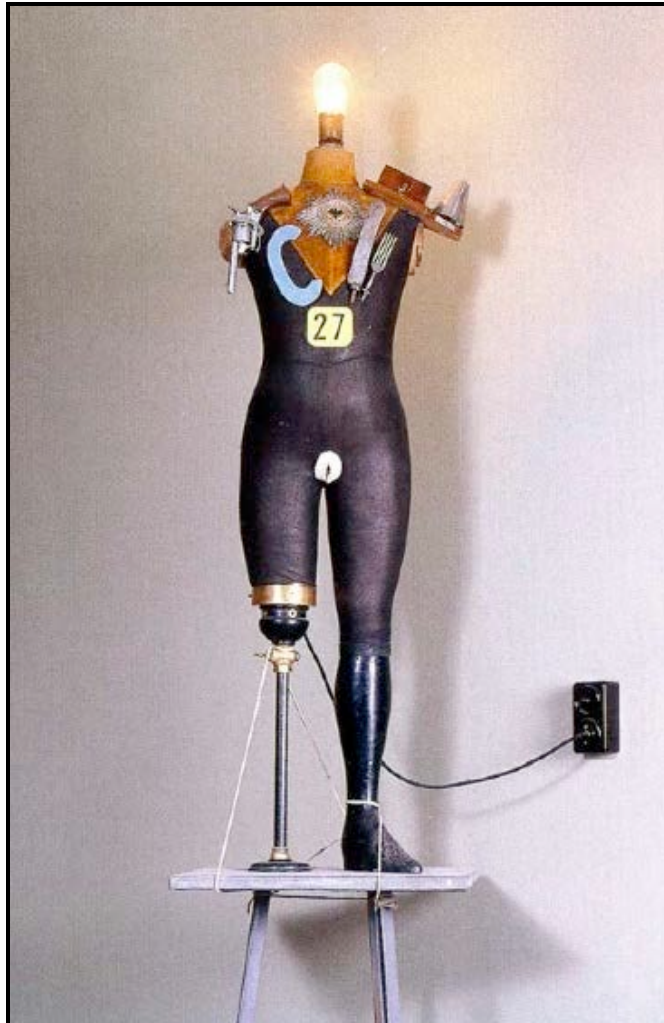


Fig. 23: George Grosz and John Heartfield, *Der wildgeworden Spiesser* (*Elektro-mechano-Tatlin-Plastik*), 1920, mixed media with electric light. Landesmuseum für Moderne Kunst, Fotografie und Architektur, Berlin.

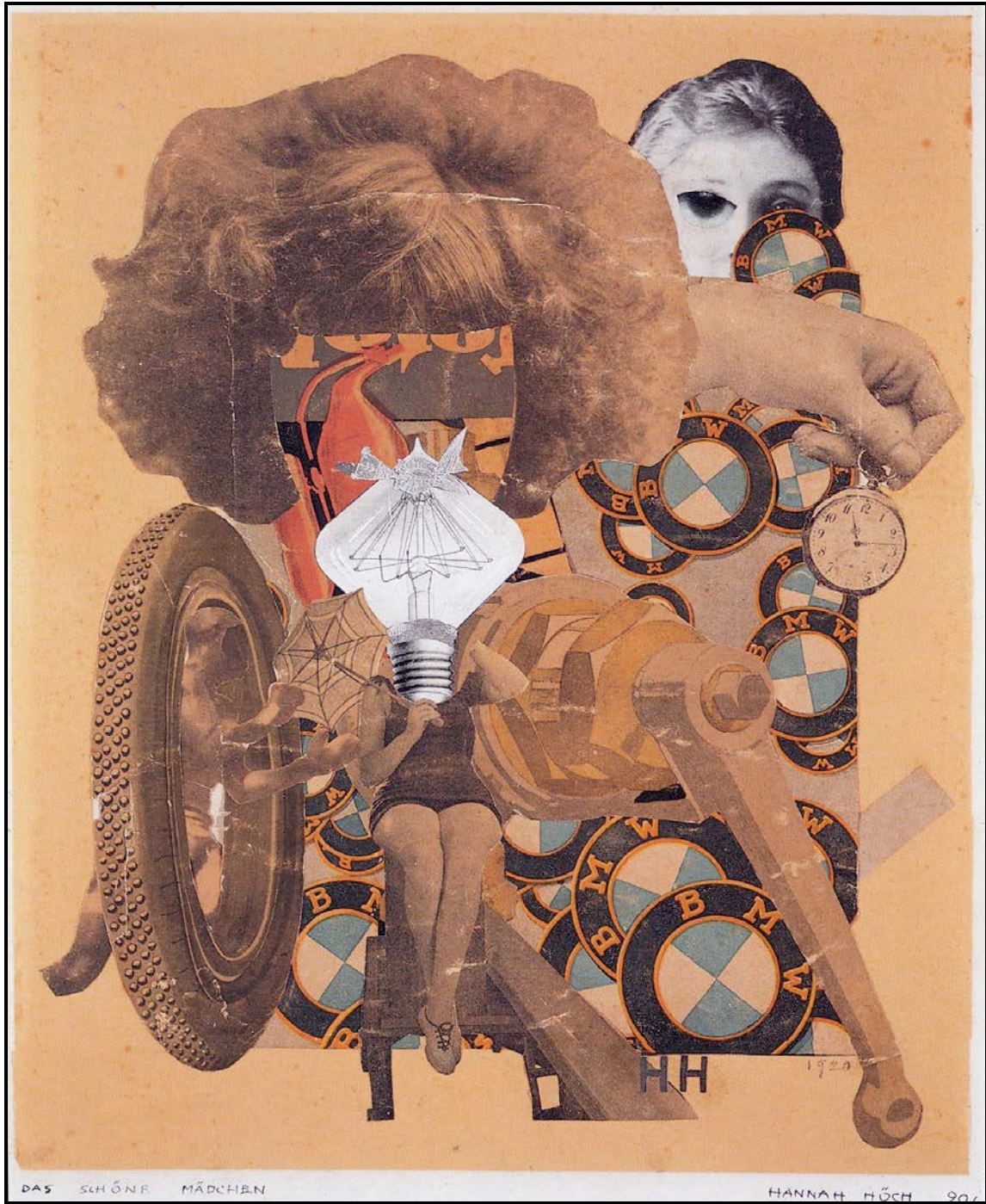


Fig. 24: Hannah Höch, *Das schöne Mädchen* (The Beautiful Girl), 1919-1920; photomontage and collage. Private collection.

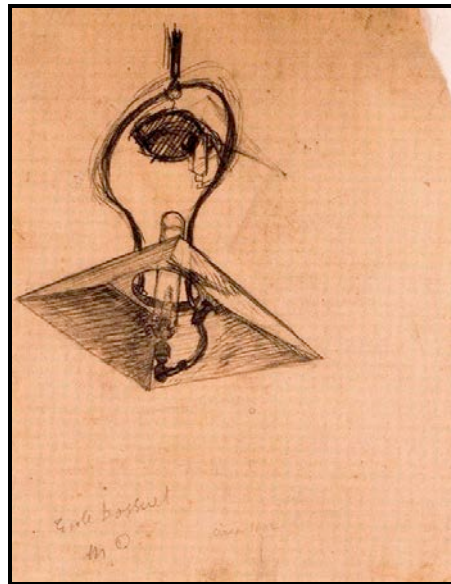


Fig. 25: Bec Auer gas burner lamp promotion, “Light of the World,” ca. 1900.
 Fig. 26: Marcel Duchamp, “Suspension (Bec Auer), charcoal on paper, 1902-03.



Fig. 27: (Top) Note from Duchamp’s notepad of instructions for *Étant Donnés*, 1946-1966; Working photograph showing placement of lamp. Philadelphia Museum of Art.
 Fig. 28: Annotated sketch and photograph regarding the “Bec Auer” lighting element. Duchamp images copyright 1987, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

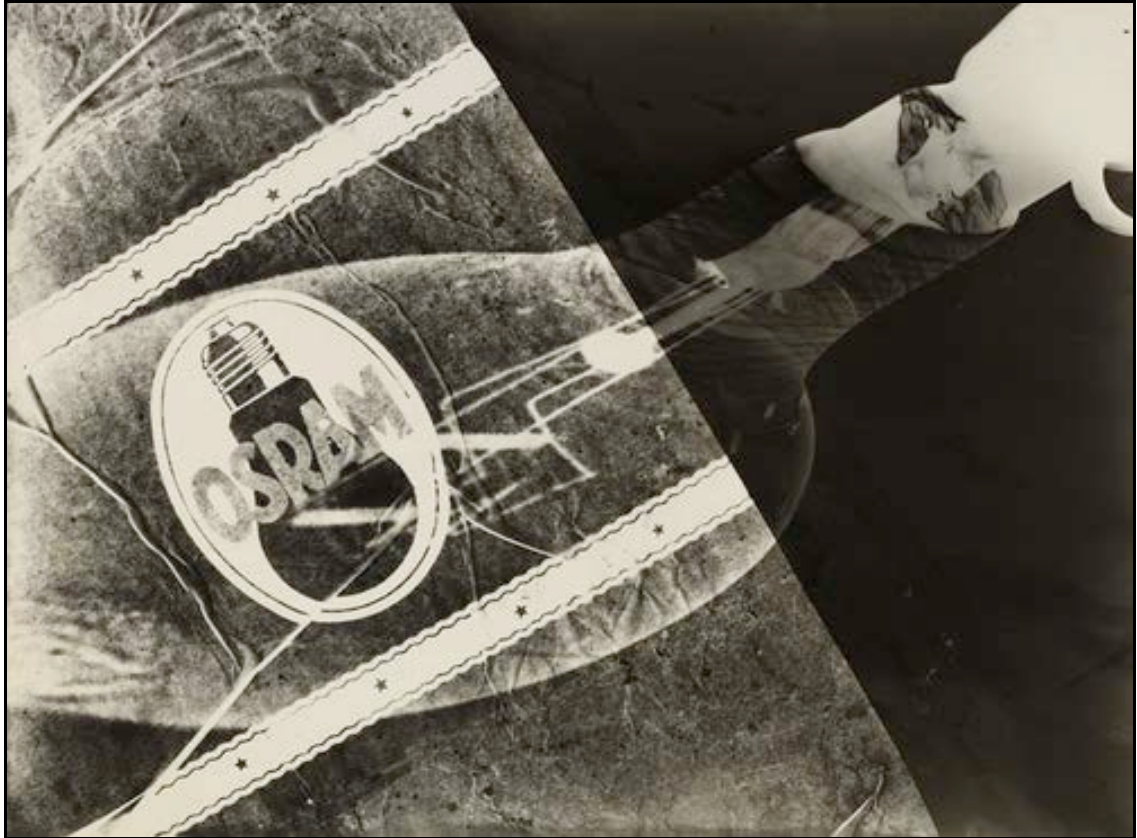


Fig. 29: Edmund Kesting, *Photogram Lightbulb*, 1928-1930, gelatin silver print.



Fig. 30: OSRAM black light bulb.



Fig. 31: Man Ray, *Five Light Bulbs*, 1930, photogravure portfolio.

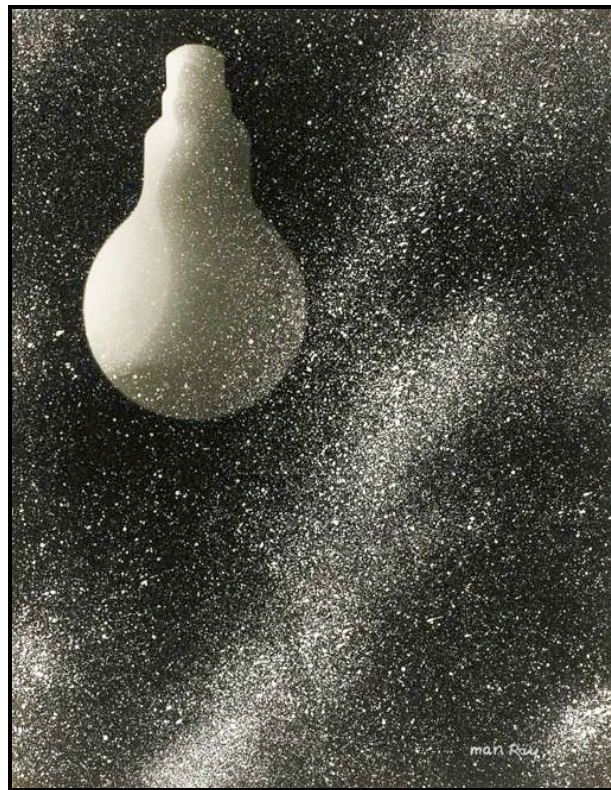


Fig. 32: Man Ray, Rayograph (*Electricité*), 1930, unique gelatin silver print.

Part Two: Picasso's 1912 and 1914 *Ampoules Électriques*

*This is a war universe. War all the time. That is its nature.
There may be other universes based on all sorts of other principles,
but ours seems to be based on war and games.*

William Burroughs

In that the precedent of depicting electric light and its counterpart the light bulb existed in myriad works of art by the advent of analytical cubism, the first of Picasso's many representations of electric bulbs was the central feature of the Menil Collection's collage, *Bouteille et verre*, from late 1912 (fig. 33). Not only was Picasso's series of fifteen revolutionizing collage-drawings compelling in their formal radicalism, they were also subversive political works via the specificity of the news reports which Picasso chose to cut and paste from daily newspapers. The success of the campaign, on the whole, resides in terms of exceptional drawing and the fragments of newsprint cut in proportion to the sheet's terrain and the objects represented upon it. These, as are well known, introduced an utterly new conception of pictorial space.

In general, Picasso chose news items that were specifically tragic or threatening. In more than half of the sheets the clippings were about the Balkan Wars; the remainder of the series focused upon macabre human interest stories of suicides, murders, sickness, and thievery. The accumulation of them depicted, "with the blackest humor, a pathological bourgeois world gone mad."³¹⁶ In Patricia Leighton's incisive and groundbreaking study³¹⁷ she concluded that Picasso had not simply used front-page mastheads about the war, and certainly by 1913-14 the threat of another war sweeping across all of Europe; rather, he had

³¹⁶ Patricia Leighton, *Re-Ordering the Universe: Picasso and Anarchism, 1897-1914*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 121.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.* See Leighton's "The Insurrectionary Painter: Anarchism and the Collages 1912-1914."

focused upon more personal stories as if they were café gossip spent over bistro tables. The columns of newsprint that fill the bottles of the *papiers collés*, the “new in art,” Apollinaire had written, “...they are already soaked with humanity.”³¹⁸

The café still life, which evolved from Picasso’s Céret period in 1910, a phase described by Pierre Daix, as “le lyrisme des terraces de bistrot,”³¹⁹ is a central motif in cubism. Although the theme was far from novel in art or literature by that date, given that “the café took on an increasing role in social life. By the turn of the century,” wrote Theodore Zeldin, “Paris had 27,000 and all of France 413,000. This period marked the apogee of their importance.”³²⁰ The cubist table becomes the format for what would otherwise be a traditional setting. Picasso deployed a strategy of deduction in the still life; fragments of newsprint are clues to the formulation of the image that is both visual and mental. And in this way, the art of collage is exemplary for what it contains and what it does not.

Unlike other motifs from the bistro milieu—the Ace of Clubs playing cards, clay pipes, bottles of Bass ale, glasses of absinthe, Vieux Marc, and Pernod, and newspapers, whose lettering was pioneered by Braque and appears in Picasso’s tabletops typified in *Journal, porte-allumette, pipe, verre*, from the Fall of 1911, (fig. 35) the headline “SIGE,” or Headquarters puns on the hegemony of the concrete word—the reductivism of the 1912 collages, with actual pieces of newspaper, were overtly social in another manner. It was the

³¹⁸ Guillaume Apollinaire, *Les peintres cubistes: méditations esthétique*, trans. Leon Abel (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, 1949), p. 21.

³¹⁹ Pierre Daix and Joan Rosselet, *Picasso: The Cubist Years, 1907-1916: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings & Related Works*, (Neuchâtel: Ides & Calendes; London: Thames & Hudson; Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1979), p. 91.

³²⁰ Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945: Politics and Anger*, Vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 699. Quoted in Lewis C. Kachur, “Themes in Picasso’s Cubism, 1907-1918,” Doctoral thesis, Columbia University, 1990, p. 139.

very specificity and legibility of the stories contained in the clippings that reveal a retraction against the tendency for cubism to become wholly abstract, or incomprehensible, a “denouement steadfastly avoided by both Picasso and Braque.”³²¹ The very news of the day brought political, economic, and social issues into the dynamism of the total work of art. With the first piece of newsprint clipped from *Le Journal*, truncated as *Le Jou*, used in *Guitar, partition, verre*, post-November, 1912, (fig. 36) the headline, “La Bataille S’Est Engagé”³²² reveals two things in the wording The Battle is Joined. The masthead literally referred to the Balkan Wars, and in allegorical and highly personal terms, it also alluded to Picasso’s own battle with the formal challenges that the unprecedented radicalism that cubist collage posed.³²² At the conceptual center of the work, *le jou*, the play at hand, caused the transformations that the *papiers collés* put into effect through Picasso’s sartorial wit and masterful eye. As Daix observed of the first spare charcoal and single clipping works, “Never before did he present himself to the spectator, not only without the tricks of the trade, but using means that are within everyone’s grasp. And never before had a painter asserted his power as a creator, as a poet in the strongest sense of the word.”³²³

In that Picasso distinguished himself from the dominant factions of bourgeois culture by an unparalleled aestheticism, his coded *papiers collés* articulated the pre-war days in Paris from news items clipped from *Le Journal*. During the fractious era in which the collages were created he had embraced a political view that scorned the diplomatic

³²¹ Leighten, op. cit., p. 125.

³²² Leighten notes that following Robert Rosenblum’s lead in “Picasso and the Typography of Cubism,” read “much of the newsprint in the collages, usually for purposes of dating, and pointed out some (but not all) of the allusions to the Balkan Wars, which has been of invaluable help...” but the Rosenblum study did not consider the political relevance of the subject of war in Picasso’s thinking. Leighten, op. cit., n.14, p. 176.

³²³ Daix and Rosselet, op. cit., p. 128. Discussed in David Cottington, *Cubism in the Shadow of War: The Avant-Garde and Politics in Paris, 1905-1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 140.

maneuvering of those years, and he was drawn into heated discussions with his coterie of French friends about their probable duties in the coming war. Due to the ominous events and promises of enmity, as the clippings present, the discussions and arguments grew intense in cafes all over Paris, nowhere more violently than at the artist's own, La Rotonde in Montparnasse.³²⁴ The contents of those arguments in the bar setting with bottles, glasses, café tables, and newspapers became all together the contents of the collages. Given that Picasso's personal concerns were expressed in the radical form of cubist collage, *journal* also means *diary*.

The Menil sheet, *Bottle and Glass*, includes a table, one bottle and a glass rendered in schematic cubist fashion by the flattening of volumes and rotation of the top, bottom and sides of the objects. These vary in proximity to the frontal plane as determined by the weight of the hashed, charcoal lines. At the center of the sheet, a bottle in three unequal parts telescopes vertically in geometric sequence from large to medium to small. The content of the bottle, the grey "liquid" newsprint was carefully trimmed as a trapezoid. The shape not only fills a portion of the largest of the three rectangles, its tapering tilts the solid shape backward in to the shallow space of the drawing so as to emphasize, quite nominally, another plane or dimension in the otherwise flat work. We notice that the volume of liquid is partial compared to that of the bottle in, *Bouteille et violon sur une table*, December 1912, (fig. 34) but in both the fragment achieves a sense of gravity. The alignment of the newsprint with the horizontal charcoal line, two-thirds down in the vertical register of *Bottle and Glass* describes the bottle in terms of its setting on the table. Picasso's narrowing of the fragment toward the top of the bottle ends in a slight inverted curve alluding to the lip, otherwise rendered as a flat line. Whereas Robert Rosenblum saw this feature entirely different,

³²⁴ J. Crespelle, *La Vie quotidienne à Montparnasse à la grande époque, 1905-1930* (Paris, 1976), p. 98. Cited in Leighten, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

claiming that, “the skeletal linear network transforms this bottle-shaped volume into a lamp base (with arced shade),”³²⁵ the content of the contents of the bottle is what interests us here.

On December 3, 1912, a news item with the headline, “A Fontainebleau, un Vagabond s’accuse d’un meurtre,” (At Fontainebleau a Vagabond is Accused of Murder) caught Picasso’s attention. In the columnar layout of the newspaper a murder story fell in line with two advertisements, one for Lacto-Phosphate de Chaux, a stomach remedy, and the other for Lampe O. R. Electrique light bulbs. To the left of that section of the page, Picasso cut through a financial listing of metals industry profits that displayed percentages of gain or loss on the commodities of zinc, pewter, copper, gold and silver. The slice through the report was not arbitrary. Rather, in making the fragment correct in size and shape for the interior of the bottle, and giving full importance to the light bulb at center, the financial “border” was a social criticism thereby denoting Picasso’s sympathies about the inequities of the labor class.

His precision in cutting the shape of the “liquid” took care to encompass the “readymade” narrative whose subjects of murder, illness, and financial markets were uncannily illuminated by the additional chance of the light bulb advertisement. The Société Auer ad claimed, *La Seule qui éclaire dans toutes* (The one who shines in all directions) and *La Seule qui se place indifféremment dans toutes les positions* (The one that is interchangeable in all positions), which was seemingly the standard guarantee for the light bulb. An information sheet or product handout used the same image of a spiral tungsten bulb and identical claims for the bulb’s *solidité du filament étiré supériorité du filament pressé*, (superiority of the drawn filament extraction) (figs. 37 and 38).³²⁶ Robert Rosenblum’s notable assessment of the light

³²⁵ Robert Rosenblum, “Picasso and the Typography of Cubism,” *Picasso 1881-1973* (London: Elek, 1973), p. 60.

³²⁶ Author’s translations.

bulb described that the unique feature, “... gives light on all sides and the only one which can be placed in any position at all which is exactly what Picasso has done. Indeed, the location of the commercial illustration of the bulb in the center [is]... yet another example of Cubist sleight of hand.”³²⁷ And certainly this is the case. Turning the bulb upside down, sideways, inverted one way or another was coequal to Picasso’s requisite maneuvering of objects in the collages.

However, it is the specificity of the LAMPE O.R. bulb in proximity to the tragedy that establishes a recurring trait in Picasso’s oeuvre from 1912-1962. In dozens of works the light bulb is almost exclusively included as the source of light in scenarios of conflict or battle, impending death, war, personal loss, and tragedy. *Bottle and Glass* is the first instance in which this functional analogy occurs. The signification of electric light in the work received treatment in every style; and, occurring as it does in highly specific situations, images of light bulbs and the sensual and visual effects of sharp incandescent light were constituted as ciphers of darkness.

In the double labor of collage as drawing and simulacrum the light bulb must also be taken for its double meaning. The experience of *Bottle and Glass* relies upon the LAMPE O. R. to signify its technological function. In various masterpieces of late analytical and synthetic cubism the bottle is a figure, is Harlequin, is a face, and in those instances the corporeal references are clear. In the only sheet in the campaign of twenty *papiers collés* from late 1912 *Bottle and Glass* contains the only element of electric light.³²⁸ Even the light in *Bec à gaz et guitare*, (fig. 39) and a second version, *Guitare, bec à gaz, flacon*, (fig. 40) from the

³²⁷ Rosenblum, loc. cit.

³²⁸ In the only other collage that included a technological innovation, such as the LAMPE O. R. bulb, Picasso would include an advertisement for the Gramophone from a news page that also featured a cold remedy, “*La mycolysine et la phymalose du Docteur Doyen*,” in *Bouteille et verre*, early 1913, oil, sand and pasted paper on canvas. Bruno Bischofberger Collection, Zurich.

same period reverts to the late nineteenth century gas lamp (fig. 41) with its fan-shaped flame drawn in a straight-forward manner in the backgrounds of each work. The *bec à gaz* fixtures are mere attributes of the bourgeois music room with carved wood paneling and its plastered walls into which the gas line spout was fitted. But Picasso privileged the object in both titles despite emphasis placed upon the guitar, so eloquently abstracted and repeated in sinuous form. The *flamme du bec* is, on the other hand, graphically unremarkable yet, it serves to signify the light of the civilized room.

Of the many guises that Picasso's bottles would take it became a cinematograph³²⁹ in the *Bottle and Glass*. The early movie projector was perfected by the renowned frères Lumière in the late 1890s, exhibited at the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1900, and may have certainly been seen by Picasso during his exuberant first visit there. In to the 'teens of the early twentieth century, the cinematograph proliferated in Nickelodeons and movie houses and was distributed worldwide as far away as India and China. The projector became the industry standard, and its basic components included a long cylindrical lens that extended from a box-like housing known as the "magic lantern lamphouse" (fig. 42). The camera's beam was directed on to the film, which was hand-cranked to produce the moving image.

We refer back to the construction of the Menil bottle in three parts. The largest rectangle emulates of the lamphouse box out of which a long cylindrical lens extends (fig. 43). Here then the imaginary working prototype, for the bottle with its telescoping segments, must have prompted Picasso to shape the bottle thus during his consideration of the LAMPE O.R. advertisement. The light bulb serves to project a conceptual image from the "projector," which we take to be a composited narrative of the news fragment, a sensational

³²⁹ The camera also served as a printer and these two functions describes its name, from the Greek, to mean "writing in movement."

script about illness, death, and plunder. The beam of light is not present, but is conceptualized. The image is absent, yet inferred. As Barbara Rose has rightly summarized, “As actual projection and psychological projection coincide, these forms cut from one surface and attach to another, to enable to shuffle and overlap his motifs... exchange attributes...in the same shallow site at the same time.”³³⁰

Cinema offered a unique ability to portray and to reproduce motion. The Baudelarian sense of transience, of the unfixed object in time and space, of the tenets of instantaneity not only defined the modernist program they paralleled developments in the new art of film as in cubism. The remarkable feat of the LAMPE O.R. illustration is its dual role to provide illumination for an imaginary, sensational storyline, a mental projection. And secondly, the electric lamp is an early model of technological light understood by Picasso in ontological terms. From the outset, it may be said that Picasso’s unique and puissant electric lights are elements of his discourse on tragedy and the inversion of the sacred as an inexorable condition of modernity. Through his highly personal and malleable idiolect, the imagery of electric light and effects of incandescence are telling signifiers of his keen awareness and interpretations of a world going mad in the face of another war. Any direct imprint that the electrical campaigns in Paris, including the cinematograph, had had upon Picasso since his arrival in 1900 at the age of 19 would be speculative. Yet, the inherent dual nature of light, “*benefique ou malefique*”³³¹ noted in *Picasso Collected Writings*, applied to electric, not solar light, was perceived as a silent, malevolent power and as the key to modern progress suited his convictions. It is not too bold to surmise that the simple illustration in *Bottle and Glass* signified the enormity of the balanced/imbalanced essence of existence that is

³³⁰ *Picasso Braque and Early Film in Cubism* ed. Barbara Rose, (New York: PaceWildenstein, 2007), p. 122.

³³¹ *Picasso’s Collected Writings*, ed. Marie-Laure Bernadac and Christine Piot, trans. Carol Volk and Albert Bensoussan (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), p. xxv.

rife in Picasso's oeuvre. The sheet allows us to see its continuity with the rest of his artistic career in which other *ampoules électriques* will take form and possess meaning.

In 1942, Christian Zervos, author of the Picasso catalogue raisonné, grouped and photographed a collection of small handpainted paper cutouts, "elements of study," created as potential attributes for the masterpiece of the Avignon period, *Portrait of a Young Girl*, 1914 (fig. 44). Noted in the Musée Picasso's analysis of these largely overlooked little items, deemed test pieces by Picasso before being selected or rejected for inclusion in the painting. Zervos made the point that in always keeping tiny fragments of his work, that were seemingly trivial in character, these "bits" were otherwise "strengthened the do-it-yourself (*bricolage*)³³² beauty of the work."³³³ And as surmised³³⁴ by Brigitte Leal, a curator at the Musée Picasso, "Every bit of his work was an act of a conscious painter wherein the importance of detail and the sum of those parts, in combination of the application of collage in to the structure of painting was brought to an apotheosis."³³⁴ During this period of exceptional inventiveness, the transposition of the *papiers collés* into "terms of oil paint," recognized by Picasso's great patron, Douglas Cooper, "resulted in the synthetic methods of late Cubism [becoming more surface elaborated] and the further discovery that pasting and painting could be effectively combined in one picture."³³⁵

The study elements were essentially attributes of a bourgeois Parisian parlor that the young girl, purportedly Picasso's mistress, Marcelle Humbert, known as Eva Gouel, might have occupied. For her adornment and comfort he created several items including a feather boa; three pairs of little gloves; three pipes, perhaps for himself or Apollinaire who was

³³² Zervos's term. *Picasso Papiers collés*, ed. Brigitte Léal (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1998), p. 62. Author's translation.

³³³ Ibid. Author's translation.

³³⁴ Ibid., p. 63. Author's translation.

³³⁵ Douglas Cooper, *The Cubist Epoch* (London: Phaidon Press, 1971), pp. 191-192.

usually depicted with a pipe; seven elements that would have made up the strings and sound hole of a guitar, the puzzle parts for *ma jolie*; a small bouquet of flowers; seven aperitif glasses; a yellow pear and simple biscuits; two Ace of Clubs cards; a dart suggesting the bar room game; an odd squid-like animal; burning logs for the fireplace; and, three lightbulbs by which to illuminate the salon (figs. 45-49). Of all the possibilities to enhance the environment, only the burning logs on the fireplace, the gloves and feather boa and the bouquet were chosen for the painting. Its unofficial secondary title is *Girl Sitting Before a Fireplace*.

In an analysis of interior ca. 1900, Simmel found that the distinction in common terms was understood through the changes in the attachment in society to the objects or products, the problem of the commodity in the transition of the late nineteenth century in to the early twentieth that he shared with Benjamin. He claimed that the state of familiarity with familiar objects brought to an end the so-called "role of things" caused by a restructuring of family life that became more and more urbanized thus dislocated. The history of a family's things, the revered clock, for example, which was bound in its meaning by the passing on of stories about it within the continuum of the paterfamilias that was all but disappearing. We read of this attitude in Jean-Paul Sartre's, *The Words*, "House and field reflect back to the young heir a stable image of himself. He touches . . . the diamond-shaped panes of his veranda, and makes of their inertia the deathless substance of his soul . . . *I was not*, he says, substantial or permanent, *I was not*, he says, the future continuer of my father's work...."³³⁶ The differentiation of things and behaviors are accordingly related. Once those familiar objects became one and the same in a multitude of commodities, about which there were no stories to tell because they possessed no histories, the sheer quantity of

³³⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Words* (New York: G. Braziller, 1964), trans. Bernard Frechtman, p. 121.

things of inkwells, paperweights, feather fans, draperies, upholstered footstools, glass lampshades even indoor plants in the period of Simmel's writing—would become fetishes in the new century. As it was, the function of things and their use value became concealed if not forgotten.

Rosalind Krauss assigned an interpretation of *Portrait of a Young Girl* through Ingres whereby the term 'Portrait,' she implored, already incited the master: "The nests of concentric curves are there, as the figure is embraced by the rhymed patterns of the chair back, the wreath of a feather boa, and her own encircling arms. The painted reproduction of ornamental fabrics is also a necessary component.... Ingres enters cubism itself in the way the semiology of color—the solution to how to produce a sign for chromatic experience [that will] insist on indirection or mediation."³³⁷ If the ornamentation of the picture is understood to signify the young girl, vis-à-vis Ingres or otherwise, it is the very absence of the girl who does not occupy her seat in the picture; but rather, is realized through the attributes of the *Études* that function in a diaristic manner, thus continuing the strategy of the 1012 *papiers collés*. Against Krauss's reading of the collage project as a whole, she denied its specificity to narrative insisting that it, "converts the signifying system into a naïve game of projection. This does violence to Picasso's evident control over the sign's circulation..."³³⁸ Against Krauss's formalist reading, we take the 1914 studies as parts of an intimate conversation. Perhaps only Picasso knowing what the young girl, "Eva," preferred, and that her needs included warmth and the bourgeois predisposition for finery. The personalized room is nevertheless as fragile as world conditions were that summer before the ignition of the conflagration that became the Great War.

³³⁷ Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Picasso Papers* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998), pp. 191-192.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

Throughout 1915, Eva had grown increasingly frail and ill with what would be diagnosed as tuberculosis. Continuing the play of substitution instigated in the collages, yet without the additive fragments of real newspapers or wallpapers, the portrait is a negative impression of what would eventually be left behind, so to speak, of what and who was not there given the illness and imminent death of Eva in December that year. If the girl in an armchair signifies a tragic moment in the cloaked gaiety of the green Avignon pictures, understanding color as a “sign for chromatic experience,” according to Krauss, the cutouts signify the real potential in those items that were presented with the girl and what lay behind them. Above all other objects in the paper studies absented from the final version of the Portrait, the object-matter embodying potential reversibility, that is, of fire versus electricity was formulated in the burning logs and the light bulb that share the same flamboyant yellow and red energy and the same bulbous shape (figs. 50 and 51). Light and fire coexist in similar form as if Picasso had yet to determined whether the room would include electric light or the heat of a fireplace. In that both forms of heated light, the incandescent filament bulb and the burning light of the logs were at consideration, it was the painted cut-out of logs at the feet of the Young Girl located on the paintings lower left side that took precedent.

In an oft-quoted passage that Picasso wrote to his friend, Gertrude Stein, “My life is hell. Eva is still ill and gets worse every day and now she has been in a nursing home for a month...my life is pretty miserable and I hardly do any work, I run backwards and forwards to the nursing home and I spend half my time in the Métro...However I have done a picture of a Harlequin which I think in my opinion and several people’s opinion is the best I have

ever done.”³³⁹ Found in the transformations of bottle-to-figure that began in late 1913 in which the neck becomes elongated and topped with a small knob, as in *Violon, partition et bouteille pipe*, early 1914 (fig. 52), the “figures” begin to be animated and tilt to the right. Their leaning akimbo not only alludes to the implied non-fixity of cubist components, this pose specifically added to an escalating anthropomorphized bottle that performs the dance of death. In most instances in 1914, the bottle-becoming-figure is an opaque black “personnage” as if it were a specter inhabiting the settings. And conspicuously, the knob-like head will endure throughout this period reaching its culminative state in the split black-and-white visage of the rattling *Harlequin*, 1915; (fig. 53) and, as the “pinhead Christ” in Picasso’s unparalleled *Crucifixion*, 1930, discussed in Chapter 4: “Problems of an Elevated Conception: The Sun, 1930-37.”

*Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould Me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me?*

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

The light bulb in the 1912 *Bottle and Glass* sheet, the earliest portrayal of Picasso’s alignment of technological light with tragedy, was then, in its second instance as the “Harlequin-filament”³⁴⁰ light bulb from 1914 the profound paradigm for the chthonic *Harlequin* described to Stein. And it was this alternate version of Harlequin, standing in the light and causing the light through its tunsten figuration that had come through other fictions possessing Picasso’s imagination in 1904-05, for example, in no less than forty-four depictions of the *commedia dell’arte* character. The beautiful, sad, boyish, agile Harlequins of the great *Saltimbanques* period were often equated as Picasso himself in guise as the

³³⁹ Pablo Picasso letter to Gertrude Stein, December 9, 1915. Reprinted in *Picasso in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. Gary Tinterow, et. al. (New York: 2010), p. 175.

³⁴⁰ Author’s term coined in earlier scholarship from 1999 under the direction of Lydia Gasman.

wandering trickster, acrobat, and master magician. The 1909 Harlequins depicted with Saint Anthony, for example, are characters of expiation. According to the Golden Legend, Saint Anthony was renowned for treating disease and helping the poor; and, in *Arlequin accoudé*, 1909, and other pre-cubist portraits depicting the pathos of Harlequin here hooded and grey, part-saint, part-vagabond, the holy fool.

Becoming Harlequin-filament was not a caprice. For precisely within the interior of the painted cutout light bulb, the body structure of the future *Harlequin*, 1915, was constituted whole. In the morphologies of Harlequin he is typified by one constant: the windowpane suit found in every representation of the character in all mediums and styles from the seventeenth century forward. With the *Études* for *Portrait of a Young Girl*, Harlequin is realized as the light bulb's wire filament that was loosely based upon the common squirrel cage bulb from the period. The figure is erect and what would otherwise be a tungsten wire configuration is the harlequinesque motley. Harlequin's body type included a small knob for the head, brought forward from the bottle-head archetype, and a stem below the connecting wires indicating two legs, which would ostensibly "grounded" the figure in to the electrical contact component. Standing in the light, causing the light within the emanating vacuum, the Harlequin-filament, like the light bulb in general is both a resistor and a conductor. In simplistic scientific terms that may be applied to the allegory, the temperature of a light bulb is dependent upon resistance that obeys the amount of current for heat/illumination distribution. A good conductor, on the other hand, allows the electricity to easily flow through a circuitry without insulators or other materials that block the energy.

In another circumstance the emanating waves thrown from the energized electric Harlequin recall the ecstatic nimbus of candlelight in Picasso's post-mortem portrait of his friend, Carles Casagemas, in *Dead Casagemas* of 1901 (fig. 54). In scale and proximity to the

corpse, the candle's immense vibrancy—the power of paint discharged in emotive strength redolent of Van Gogh's hand—expresses the sensation that another life burns on in absence of the living flesh. Even at this early date, Picasso, age twenty, possessed a keen awareness and sensitivity to symbolic and pictorial light. He brought the radiance of the candle as close as possible to Casagemas whereby the light stops short of touching his profile. This strategy is seen again in *Guernica* in which the rays of light from the candlelight are exuded toward the onerous rays of the electric sun but they do not touch or intermingle in any way.

The glass bulb, in effect a Picasso-esque mandorla, housed a technological homunculus, the little man in a bottle so praised by Paracelsus whose ancient hermetic symbolism, typified in the alchemical treatise, *Splendor Solis, Alchemical Treatise of Solomon Trismosin*, 1582, (fig. 55) was not lost in Picasso's version. In another sense, the fully formed Harlequin in the bulb was another of his profane inversions of the tradition of *Christus oriens*, of the God of Light residing and coexistent with the sun. The paradigm was taken in full form in another manner with the sketch, *Homme Tenant une Pipe assise devant un Table*, 1914, (fig. 56) drawn during Picasso's bedside visitations to Eva. Here, the crowned and crucified Christ is depicted against a full and radiant sun. And unlike the iconographic tradition which Picasso, the young altar boy in Malaga knew from personal knowledge and witness, this Christ of the deathbed, who does not save Eva, is a Christ who is darkened and smokes a pipe.

The light bulb will not recur in Picasso's work during the Great War or the interwar years again until 1934. But as we shall read in Chapter 4, its signification and power in the writing, works on paper, etchings, and paintings leading up to *Guernica* are significant for the ways in which he conceives anew the light bulb as the signifier of terrible incandescence. Any doubt that the symbol of electric light was less than fully considered or had altered from

its signification as a tragic motif is considered in a brief summary of a four works to close this chapter that began with the collage of 1912.

As Roland Penrose claimed, “The same sinister background of war and privation makes itself felt in many of the still-lives of this period just as music in the form of guitar-playing and songs had been the theme of many Cubist paintings in the days before the First World War, so food in its more humble forms; such as sausages and leeks, together with the skulls of animals and the dim light of candles and shaded lamps recur throughout Picasso's wartime paintings.”³⁴¹ One of the most salient examples of electric light made during the Nazi Occupation of Paris is *Nature morte au boudin*, May 10, 1941, a harrowing allegorization of war's slaughter and bleak subsistence in which strong overhead light is emitted from a common hanging fixture; the triangular shade is notably black (fig. 57). Light shines upon a table laden with a coil of *saucisson*, specifically *boudin* or blood sausage.³⁴² The butcher's prominent knife is seemingly implicated in cutting the coil of meat, a carnal *omphalos*, and, the two chopped artichokes, resodolent of hands, a symbol of helplessness and famine. The room is claustrophobic, as most of Picasso's wartime rooms were, the ceiling is low, and the lateral walls close in without any openings to the outside. There is nothing to relieve the sobriety of the grisaille, the palette of mourning. As Picasso himself had said of the work, it has “an atmosphere like Philip II, dark and dismal.”³⁴³

The electric light is most telling in its role within the symbolic monstrosity that the picture entails. The coil of meat may be thought of with regard to Bataille's article, “Abattoir,” published in *Documents* (1929) that relied upon Marcel Mauss's theory of sacrifice

³⁴¹ Roland Penrose, *Picasso His Life and Work* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 306.

³⁴² Gasman credits me with being the first to recognize the light in the painting as “black electric light,” noted in *War and the Cosmos*, n. 820, p. 268.

³⁴³ Harriet and Sidney Janis, *Picasso, The Recent Years: 1939-1946* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1946), p. 60.

via the slaughterhouses of suburban Paris's La Villette. According to Denis Hollier, the essay describes a sacred horror that corresponds to culture as the "negative pole, the generator of repulsion, the centrifuge placed farther and farther away from the center of the city."³⁴⁴ Carnage is removed. Yet, Picasso reifies the bloodletting and meat as food and as sacrifice. In an anonymous wartime pamphlet a butcher who has hacked off a segment from a large coil of sausage is accompanied by a cryptic by-line that reads, "the last of red tape distribution;" (fig. 58) and, on the opposite page the imprint of the butcher's bloody hand is signature of that fact; or, of the larger signification of massive bloodshed.

In Picasso's *Boudin* that Zervos felt, "speaks of persecution,"³⁴⁵ and that Françoise Gilot remarked, "gave form to his fears,"³⁴⁶ we are given a highly personal version of slaughter, made clear in the light of the electric lamp. This light would grow no darker than in, *Cruche et chandelle*, February 20, 1945, (fig. 59), made during a winter marked by the liberation of Auschwitz by Soviet troops; the bombing of Dresden; and, the revelations concerning the dreadful news of the Manila massacre in the Phillipines. Candles took their requisite symbolic form throughout Picasso's wartime pictures, acting as the constant companion to settings of mournful objects and interiors heavy with dread. In *Pitcher and Candle*, the wick's flame is both a noose and a dangling light bulb. The candle itself is blade-like emphasized by the steely white tip against the cave-like walls of the room. For how would Picasso have known otherwise that the liberation of a desperate world would occur in August of that year?

³⁴⁴ Denis Hollier, *On Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, An OCTOBER Book, 2nd ed., 1992), "Introduction," pp. xii-xiv and xx.

³⁴⁵ Christian Zervos, op. cit., Vol. XI, p. 112.

³⁴⁶ Françoise Gilot, *Life with Picasso* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 266.

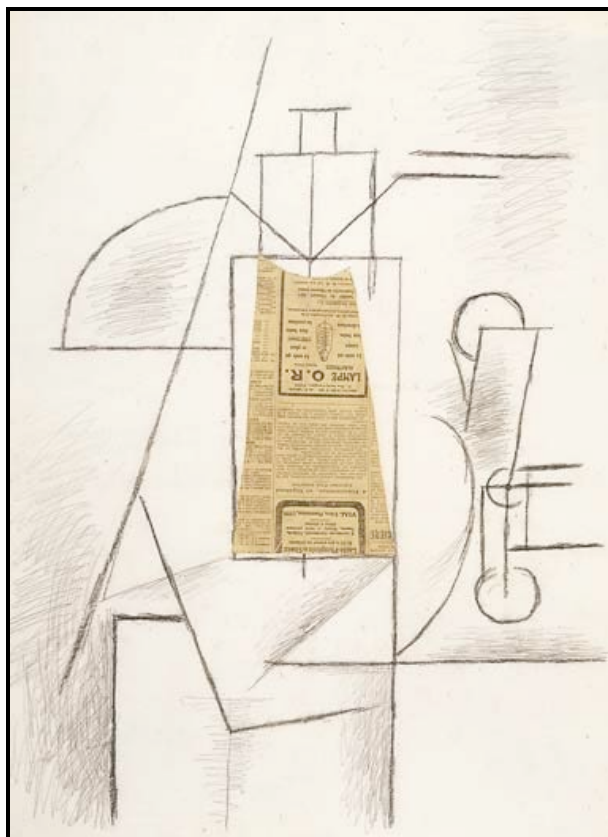


Fig. 34: *Bouteille e verre*, late 1912, charcoal drawing and pasted newspaper. The Menil Collection, Houston.

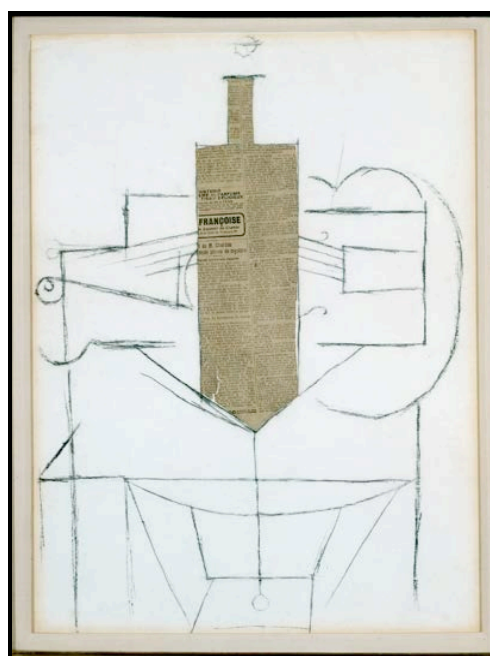


Fig. 35: *Bouteille et violon sur une table*, December 3, 1912, cut and pasted newspaper, charcoal on paper. New Orleans Museum of Art.

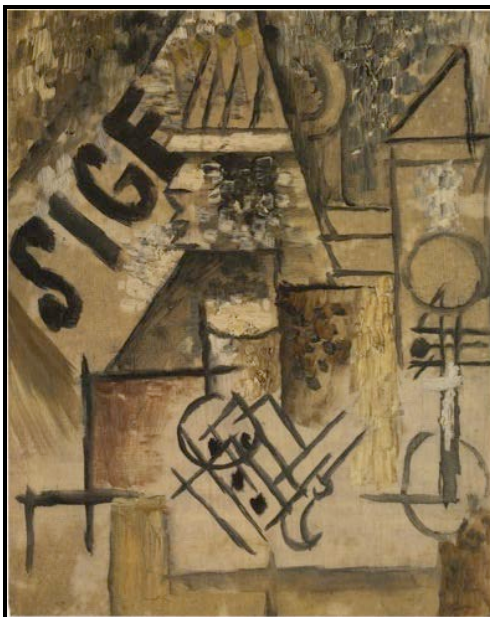


Fig. 35: *Journal, porte-allumette, pipe, verre*, Fall, 1911, oil on canvas. Musée Picasso, Paris.




Fig. 36: *Guitare, partition, verre*, post-November 18, 1912, pasted paper, gouache and charcoal on paper. McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX. Bequest of Marion Koogler McNay.

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Fig. 37: Société Auer information flier for LAMPE. O.R., ca.1912.



Fig. 38: Spiral tungsten bulb, 1910.



Fig. 39: *Bec à gaz et guitare*, late 1912-13, charcoal and gouache on paper. Národní Galerie, Prague.



Fig. 40: Late 19th c. flame gas lamp, "Flamme du bec fendue de la Ville de Paris."



Fig. 41: *Guitare, bec à gaz, flacon*, early 1913, oil, charcoal, tinted varnish and sand on canvas. Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh.

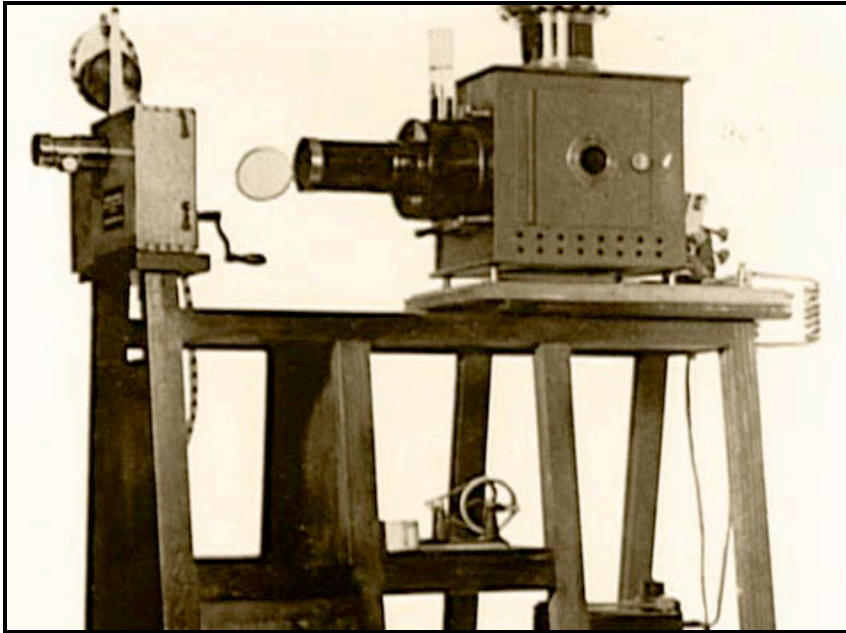


Fig. 42: Le Cinématographe Lumière movie camera, ca. 1900.

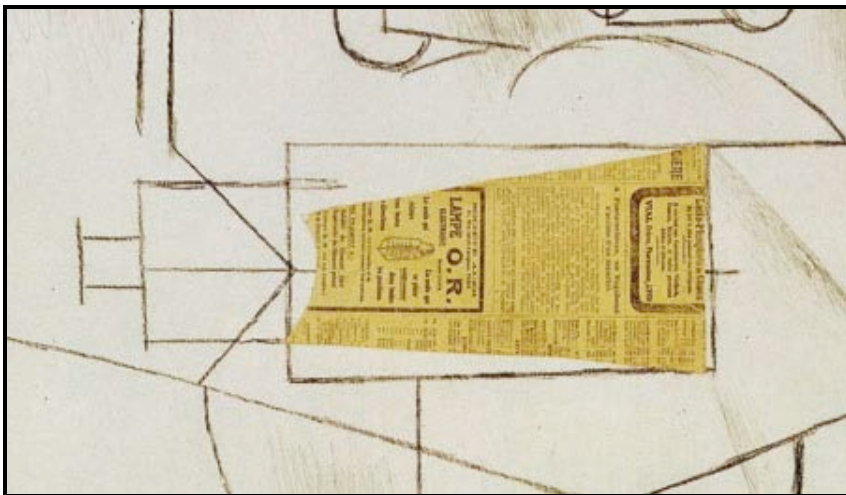
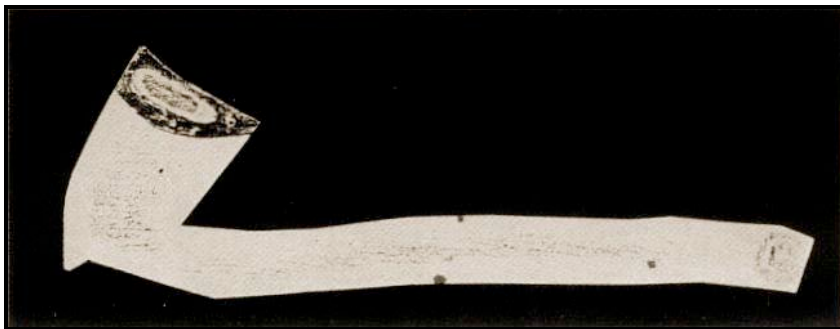
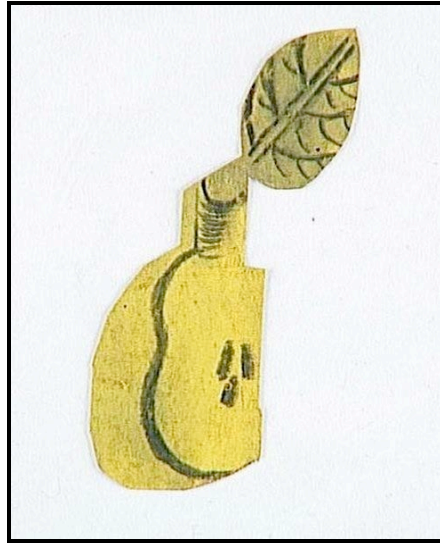


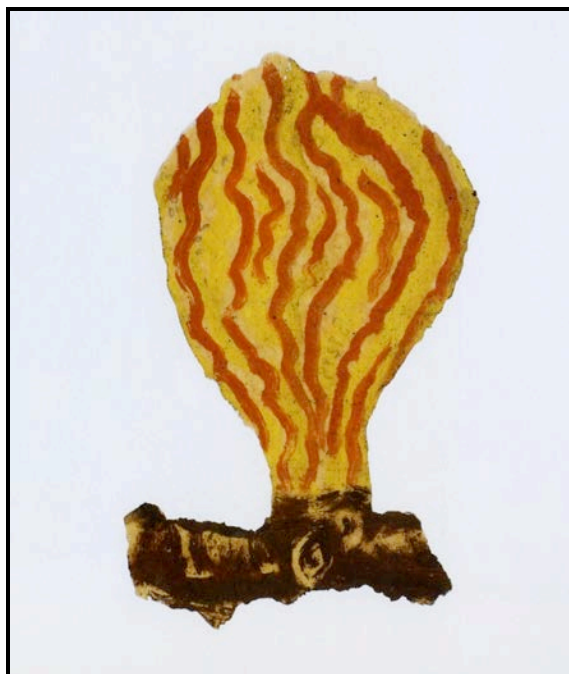
Fig. 43: *Bottle and Glass* (detail) rotated by McKinnon CCW 90°.



Fig. 44: *Portrait de jeune fille, (Femme assise devant une cheminée)*, Summer, 1914, oil on canvas. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. Georges Salles Bequest.



Figs. 45-49, *Études, Portrait de jeune fille*, 1914, oil on paper cutouts, L. to R. bouquet, yellow pear, glass, feather boa, pipe. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Figs. 50 and 51: *Études, Portrait de jeune fille*, 1914, oil on paper cutouts. Top: [No title], burning logs on fireplace; Bottom: *Ampoule*, 1914. Musée Picasso, Paris.

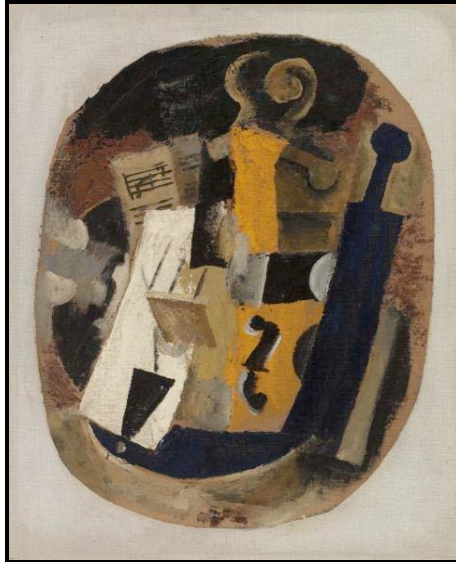


Figure 52: *Violon, partition et bouteille*, 1914, oil on canvas. The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia.



Fig. 53: *Harlequin*, 1915, oil on canvas. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Bequest of Lillie P. Bliss.

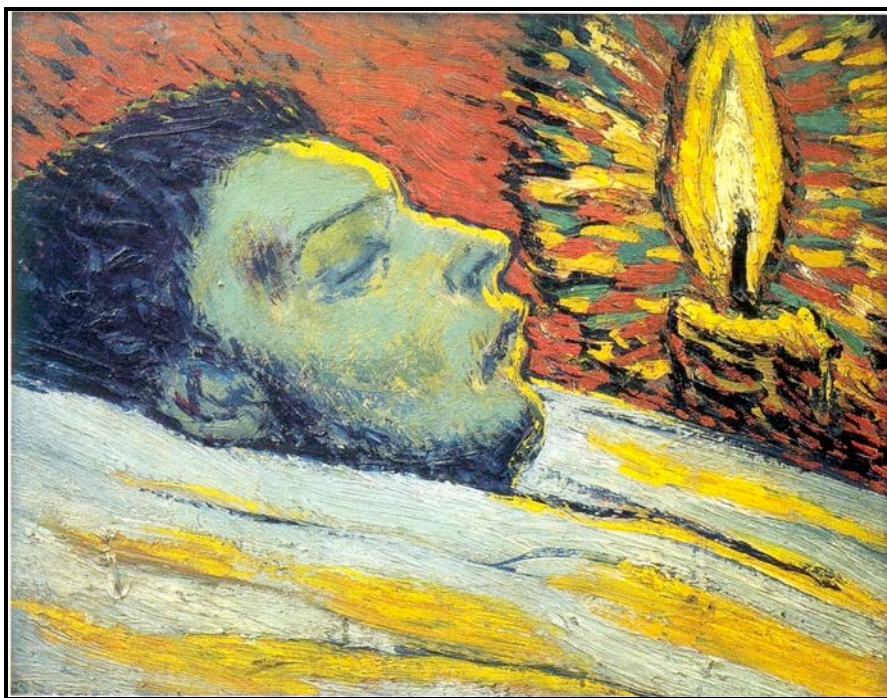


Fig. 54: *Le morte de Carles Casagemas*, oil on wood panel, 1901. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 55: *The Fourth Treatise, Eighthly in Splendor Solis, Alchemical Treatise of Solomon Trismosin*, painting on vellum, 1582. The British Museum, London.



Fig. 56: *Homme tenant une pipe assis devant une table*, graphite on paper, Summer 1914. The Picasso Estate.



Fig. 59: *Cruche et chandelle*, February 20, 1945, oil on canvas. Maya Widmaier Picasso Collection, Paris.

Chapter 4

Problems of an Elevated Conception: The Sun, 1930-37

Part 1: Beyond the Profanation of Light, *Crucifixion*, 1930

*The sun and moon stood still in their habitation:
at the light of your arrows they went, and at the shining of your glittering spear.*

Habakkuk 3:11

Between 1930 and the creation of the exploding electric sun of *Guernica*, Picasso depicted variations of the sun in over fifty works. These ostensibly created a sequence of distinctive metanarratives on natural light that proved as important a leitmotif as those of the acclaimed bull, horse, bathers, and portraits of women of the same years. According to Jean-François Lyotard, whose criticism of the grand themes of modernity stimulated a theorization of the metanarrative, the *petits récits*, or exacting little stories, magnify the specificity and power of singular events, therefore, individual works of art.³⁴⁷ In contradiction to the western tradition of heliocentrism, of the histories of divine light and the rationale of ordered vision through the workings of geometry and optics, Picasso's unique, terrible, and often heterodox suns were indicative of personal predispositions (that several biographical accounts have analyzed); moreover, of world conditions that instigated his subversion or diminishment of solar authority in his work.

Whereas the candle was an equally significant agent in the '30s although lacking in radical alterations to its form, the sun became the penultimate, lucent

³⁴⁷ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).

signifier of Picasso's *mêlée* with fate in those years. Here then, the Spaniard, a lover of the sun as we know from photographs of him at the beach, or working bare-chested and tanned at Antibes and Juan-les-Pins, thoroughly appreciated its vibrancy although he countered and attacked it as if it were a carnal enemy of his soul.

Comparable to the raging bull that he substituted himself as in reenactments of the bullfight or the *Minotauromachy*, for example, and granting the equation of the sun in Mithraic and Christian mythologies and beliefs that galvanized many works from this epoch, Picasso charged in to the sun with an unpredictable strength of outrage in his art and writings. That is, until the work turned toward interiors, dramas in contained rooms with its seated women, tables of fruit, pitchers, glasses, and knives in the claustrophobic quarters of Occupied Paris, with drawn blinds through which the sun's rays did not seep.³⁴⁸ The varied suns that precede the panoptic sun of *Guernica* are found in an exceptional range of contexts and styles listed in the following summary:

- *Crucifixion*, 1930, oil on canvas
- Six oil paintings, *Femme éntendue au soleil* and *Femme sur la plage*, March 24 - 28, 1932 (fig. 1)
- Nine india ink drawings, *Femme assise*, August 8, 1932
- *Nu couché (Marie-Thérèse)*, April 4, 1932, oil on canvas (fig. 2)
- A series of thirteen india ink drawings, *La crucifixion (d'après Grunewald)*, September 17 - October, 21, 1932
- Three oil on canvases in which the beach ball is also the sun, *Femmes jouanat au ballon sur la plage*, September 6, 1932; the motif is repeated in *Jeu de plage et*

³⁴⁸ Although the theme of the window, like that of the door, is of primary importance in Picasso's work, I make reference to the English poet, Wilfred Owens's (1893-1918), "Anthem for Doomed Youth," and its final line, "And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds," that signifies the custom of shutting slatted window shades during the war as a sign of mourning, a display of loss. "It is also a disquieting image of concealment whereby the state and the military hid their culpability from scrutiny." Geoff Dyer, *The Missing of the Somme*, pp. 33-34.

sauvetage, (Playing Rescue at the Beach), November, 1932; and, *Baigneuses au ballon*, n.d., 1932 (fig. 3).

- *Femme endormie*, oil on canvas, June 28, 1933
- *Paysage de Cormeilles-en-Parisis*, oil on canvas, June 28, 1933 (fig. 4)
- Eight poem-images, *Morte au soleil* from the *Suite Vollard*, November, 8, 1933
- *Étude: Aristophanes' Lysistrata*, January 4, 1934, india ink on paper (fig. 5)
- *Personnage au bord de la mer*, January 19, 1934, charcoal on paper (fig. 6)
- *Nu couché devant la fenêtre*, February, 8, 1934, ink and watercolor on paper
- *Intérieur aux hirondelles I, II, and III*, February 10, 1934, india ink on paper
- *La Minotaure machine VIIIb*, March 23, 1935, final state, colored etching
- *Le crayon qui parle*, January 11, 1936, colored crayon, ink and pasted paper
- Pen and ink illustration of Paul Eluard's poem, *Grand Air*, June 3, 1936
- Etching and aquatint, *Rêve et Mensonge du Franco*, Part I, January 8, 1937
- *Poupée et femme se noyant*, January 28, 1937, graphite on paper (fig. 7)
- *Baigneuse* and *Baigneuse sous soleil noir*, February 9, 1937, graphite on paper

The black sun of melancholy, or *metanoia*, a personal turning inward, to change purpose or have mental perception was depicted variously in many scenarios culminating in the *Baigneuses sous soleil noir* in the winter of 1937, which conceptually prefigured the sense of bleak incandescence of the electric sun. If the suns created from 1930-36 are understood as inherently dark, they refer to the alchemical stage of *nigredo* (melancholia), also known as the *Mortificatio* and described as a state “black blacker than black”³⁴⁹ in which matter is blackened in complex ritual processes that lead to a form of purification. Depictions of the black sun include those in Robert Fludd's renowned *Utriusque Cosmi*, 1617-1621, and in other iconographies that frequently equated it, as Picasso did, with the *caput corvis*, or head of the black crow.

³⁴⁹ Ami Ronnberg, ed., *The Book of Symbols: Reflections of Archetypal Images* (Cologne: Taschen, 2010), p. 658.

In the series of seven ink sketchbook drawings, *Femme assise*, from August 8 of 1932, the sun is linked with Picasso's young paramour, Marie-Thérèse, who sits out of doors in the scenes (fig. 8). Radiance virtually crowns her head. This disposition lasts through four of the sketches. By the fifth, Picasso has introduced a crow, agent of the *nigredo* that flies in to and intrudes the maiden's sphere of calm causing her to wince and look downward. Here is the candle bearer of the *Minotauremachy*, 1935, and in other depictions of her innocence, whose truth, in the form of light, confronts the Giant, the Minotaur that shields his sight from the candle's radiance. In the sixth of the *Femme assise* drawings, the raven's blackness is repeated in Marie-Therese's startling black eye thus imbuing her, by its magic, with the potential of darkness. The paradigm suited Picasso's fears. Marie-Thérèse had contracted a serious illness³⁵⁰ and it was thought that she in fact might lose her life. In the final drawing, the sun has been nearly obliterated by the black bird; and, Marie-Thérèse seems complacent enough, perhaps a hopeful expression of Picasso's vision of her return to health. She is drawn in large profile with the same weight of hand used for the sun thereby making them coterminous (fig. 9). But the deeper implication of the crow as a specter of death is recalled in ancient texts and illustrations of its perch on a human skeleton's shoulder, the bone-figure balancing upon the sphere of its world, the black sun³⁵¹ (fig. 10).

³⁵⁰ Marie-Therese's family recalled that in 1932 she had bathed in the sewer-befouled Marne River and having had a small cut on her foot, she caught a particularly malignant virus which doctors thought came from a rat bite. "Her illness required a long convalescence and it was thought that she was going to die, She lost all of her hair and had become skeletal." Summarized from Josep Palau I Fabre, *Picasso, From the Minotaur to Guernica (1927 – 1939)* ed. Julià Guillamon (Barcelona, Ediciones Polígrafa, S.A., 2011), p. 123.

³⁵¹ Carl J. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis: An Inquiry into the Separation of Psychic Opposites in Alchemy*, ed. Sir Herbert Read (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1963), n.180, p. 512. Jung cites the commentary on *Tractatus Aureus* that claims there are three ravens on the mountains of the philosophers, "The black which is the head of the art, the white which is its middle, and the red which brings all things to an end."

In another form, the sun virtually explodes in the background of the 1934 illustration for Aristophanes's anti-war drama, *Lysistrata* (fig. 4). Amid the environment of post-war France's *rappel de l'ordre*, the "mood of peace and harmony [with] ...reconciliation of two warriors, one Spartan, one Athenian"³⁵² was aligned with the larger agendas of peace in Europe notwithstanding the reality of the civil war in Spain. However, Picasso, who made the drawing while blindfolded in order to create a spontaneous reaction to the Greek narrative, rendered a sun replete with emotive power. Here again, the sun is a form of darkness and is a premonitory element that far outweighs the action of the soldiers despite their being foregrounded in the thematic drawing.

Notwithstanding the inherent uniqueness of each version of the sun aforementioned, the unsurpassed *Crucifixion*, 1930, is the primary subject of this section (fig. 11). Found in the small picture is the most harrowing and nearly indescribable sun in all of Picasso's oeuvre. The Parisian art critic and friend of Picasso, Pierre Cabanne, had described the painting as, "a sacred delirium and one at the same time, sacrilege... a summit of paradox or cynicism, but above all...the most overwhelming expression of [Picasso's] surrender to destiny."³⁵³ *Crucifixion* is arresting in its aporetic, anti-sacramental tenor that was understood by Lydia Gasman, through her prodigious interpretation of the 1926-1936 "Magic Crucifixions" as the, "...tension between the sacrilegious and orthodox... what Maurice Sachs called, in 1926, 'Picasso's Catholicism.'³⁵⁴ Indeed, [they]...do not break with 'Catholic

³⁵² Object information, Philadelphia Museum of Art (2012).

³⁵³ Pierre Cabanne, *Le siècle de Picasso* (Paris: Éditions Denöel, 1975), p. 431. English trans. *Picasso: His Life and Times*. In Lydia Csató Gasman *Mystery, Magic and Love in Picasso: Picasso and the Surrealist Poets, 1925-1938*, (Ph.D dissertation, Columbia University, 1981), p. 1064.

³⁵⁴ Gasman, op. cit., Part II, Chapter XIV: "Crucifixions: 1926-1936," p. 990. Citing Maurice Sachs, *Le Sabbat: Souvenirs d'une Jeunesse orageuse* (Paris: Éditions Corr ea, 1946), p. 173.

dogma, but to use a favorite phrase of Picasso's, they 'violate' Catholicism."³⁵⁵ The panel painting was radical in its diversion from official Church doctrine, which in spite of, was remarkably consistent with Spanish faith, an "adulterated, depraved mysticism" that remained a profound "mysticism and faith" dominated by the tragic notion of The Passion.³⁵⁶ On its own terms, *Crucifixion* purported the "holy promiscuity of the executioner and victim"³⁵⁷ inherent in primitive sacrificial rites. It is therefore neither a re-presentation of the crucifixion from Christological history, nor is it in accord with the western iconographic canon.

Rather, by the effects of radical characterizations and a rearrangement of the Crucifixion sequence as recorded in the Gospels, the painting ruptures the sacred narrative. Sanctity was confronted by hysteria; redemption was coiled with scorn; and, the banality of obscenity was undifferentiated from the holy. When taken altogether, as Georges Bataille did, *Crucifixion* is a Dionysian work of total destruction. Noted as semi-biographical, the picture has been summarized as a phantasm that mirrored, "Picasso's metamorphoses into fate."³⁵⁸ And not unlike *Guernica*, *Crucifixion* may be regarded as a form of *skenographia*, here the "scene" is another tragic theatre piece. Whereas the sun in Picasso's 1917 curtain study for Jean Cocteau's production of "Parade," a scene of joyful ambience (fig. 12), the sun being carefully taken up to the sky on a ladder notable for its many rungs like that of the *Scala paradisi* of St. John of Climacus,³⁵⁹ which Picasso repeatedly depicted in various works including *Crucifixion*, 1930 (figs. 13 and 15).

However, the sun is not only unrecognizable, it assumes a position within a scene of

³⁵⁵ Gasman, *Ibid.*

³⁵⁶ Gasman, *op. cit.*, p. 991. Quoting Raymond Ritter, *L'Espagne corps et âme* (Pau: Marrimpouey Jeune, 1972), p. 226.

³⁵⁷ Gasman's phrasing.

³⁵⁸ Gasman, *op. cit.*, p. 979.

³⁵⁹ Suggested by David Summers in correspondence with McKinnon, October 22, 2014.

players populated by what William Rubin termed, “compound object-personages”³⁶⁰ or monsters. Many of the figures are exclusive to *Crucifixion*, whereas others had been disgorged and refashioned from Picasso’s work of late ‘20s. These aberrations of nature or imagination were the very person-ification of chaos. The Virgin Mary is harrowing and eroticized; a sub-human praying mantis is poised to be the crucifier atop the ladder; disembodied legs, arms, and feet are tossed akimbo; an infantilized *imatatio Christi*, a form of the pinhead bottle-harlequins of synthetic cubism stuns by the mere unsophistication and implicit muteness of the figure; and other hybrid ritualistic characters, including a sui generis sun composed of many attributes drawn from solar theologies, and, its pendant to the left side of Christ, the “Pincer-monster,”³⁶¹ are unparalleled in Picasso’s pantheon of allegorical personages. T. J. Clark, quoting Picasso, wrote, “Monstrosity, he is fond of saying, moves the picture out of the realm of art into that of the *thing*, the object.”³⁶² In this instance, the total essence of the art object was a re-enactment, in Picasso’s fetishistic terms, of the death of Christ in which the sun of the eclipse was so disclaimed as to its being incongruous to traditional symbolic forms of its likenesses, therefore a comic figure as well as a nearly unidentifiable one.

The two central figures, Christ and the Virgin Mary, were painted in a thin wash of white over black that separated them within a monochromatic shaft of “crucifixion light” in which they are set apart from the garish, fiesta palette of the minor figures. Revelations about the metaphorical color scheme, deserving of a separate study, were revealed in x-

³⁶⁰ William S. Rubin, *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1992, sixth printing), p. 124.

³⁶¹ Author’s term for the large figure to the immediate left of Christ associated with large green shape, see fig. 10.

³⁶² T. J. Clark, *Picasso and Truth* (Princeton, N.J., The Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 176. Based upon Clark’s lectures at The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (2010).

radiographic analyses of the *pentimenti*. The Virgin was originally painted entirely in black, from which we may conclude that her features were articulated in white. In the evolution of the picture, which was painted in one sitting on February 7, 1930, Picasso may have recalled the little black virgin of his youth, the Romanesque Virgin of Montserrat known as *La Morenata*. The miraculous black virgin was installed on the altar of her namesake, the monastery Santa Maria de Montserrat. She was associated with conjugal sexuality sanctioned by the Church, and therefore she was venerated for her blessing of newlyweds and married couples. Such was her popularity and renown that in 1881, the year of Picasso's birth, Pope Leo XIII crowned her as the sacred patroness of Catalonia, whom the artist would come to be familiar with during his years growing up in Barcelona. And, he would also certainly have been keenly aware of the sexual lore of *Morenata*. In 1930, Picasso's initial urge to represent a black Virgin was nevertheless achieved in the final version of the Virgin Mary who is a paradigm of evil, an abject symbol and archetype of the dark Mother fashioned as she is in *Crucifixion* as a devouring *dentata noire* Madonna.

Picasso's daemonic Virgin is configured with Christ implying a range of heretical notions. In the drama of the picture, if she *could* turn from profile stance to face Christ, and thereby implant the front of her body, not the side, the shift brings into the imagination a mutual crucifixion and the dynamic of ecstatic Eros-Thanatos. Consider the hands. They are simultaneously separate and joined, enduring the nails of the crucifixion. The right hand is a shared one. It extends from the shoulder of the Virgin and is equivalent in size and position to the right hand of Christ that extends from His extending left side. The left hand stretches upward crossing into the zone of yellow light, and fastened to the cross by one red nail

hammered in place by the insect-crucifier.³⁶³ The potential of mutual suffering is inferred if we allow that the Virgin shared the limbs and hands of Christ. The ambiguous white right arm and hand extend from her “shoulder” behind the veil. Christ does not have a right arm clearly articulated as the left one is; yet, in His shared spaced with the Virgin, Picasso has implied that the white right arm and hand are shared. A black nail secures Christ’s white left foot to the *suppedaneum*, or footrest of the cross. The right hand and foot of Christ-and-Virgin are not nailed to the beam and thereby Christ’s imminent death fails in this setting. He is left in the limbo of *un-time*. And the Virgin then, by design, is also both attached and unattached in the fateful process. Julie Kristeva speaks of the mother as the Other, impelled “by a libido that is less Eros than Death...”³⁶⁴ Citing Picasso and de Kooning’s women through Bataille, it is the “death-mother, to catch hold of her, frontally or obliquely, but to catch her just the same within the grid of [the] work..... In short, we are dealing with a mother who knows no taboo.... [and is] Potentially psychotizing.”³⁶⁵

Here then, against taboo the Virgin-and-Christ become one in both un-differentiated whiteness and un-differentiated sacrifice. The unorthodox union gives credence to a non-divisive form of consciousness in that their “oneness” is aligned with the hermetic Androgyne, which sparked discourse and a following in surrealist art and writings, and was held by Breton as an elect union. In alchemical terms, such a union was achievable through an admixture of opposites of the *prima materia*, the base elements of chaos being mercury and sulphur, from which transformation and enlightenment could be formulated. Accordingly,

³⁶³ It is not insignificant to note that within the totalizing metamorphosis of characterizations in the painting, William Rubin called the nail-driver, “a monstrous little red figure, the most surreal thing in all Picasso” who had “itself metamorphosed into the shape of nails, the role being hallucinatorily confused with the actor.” William Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985), p. 291.

³⁶⁴ Julia Kristeva, “Bataille and the Sun, or the Guilty Text,” *Tales of Love*, trans. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), p. 371.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

alchemical unification required the separation of opposites followed by acts of violence, pain, and death—the stages of putrefaction and purification—that resulted in the achievement of the “one thing.” An analysis of symbolic color in *Crucifixion* must be left to another study, yet, it is worth noting that according to the notations in, “On the Colours which Appear in the Preparation of the Stone,” from the alchemical treatise, *Splendor Solis* (1582), the precept Trismosin claimed: “Whereof PYTHAGORAS says, “The more the colours change the stronger you must make the fire, of which you must not be afraid. For the Matter is fixed in the White, and the species fly not from it.””³⁶⁶ That the, “species fly not,” finds parallel expression in the state of suspension “fixed in the White” of the 1930 Christ-and-Virgin.

In spatiotemporal terms, *Crucifixion* radically restructured The Passion at Golgotha. In a claustrophobic rearrangement the momentous event was collapsed into a synchronic moment. In so doing, Picasso’s chronology of the stages leading up to and following Christ’s crucifixion was seemingly ad hoc and disturbingly rearranged.³⁶⁷ An example is

³⁶⁶ *Splendor Solis: Alchemical Treatises of Solomon Trismosin*, trans. Julius Kohn (1582) (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1920), p. 131. Trismosin was an adept and the teacher of Paracelsus.

³⁶⁷ The disorder of the crucifixion events, according to Biblical accounts, also includes the following outstanding revisions made by Picasso in *Crucifixion*: 1.) The cast of dice for Christ’s tunic which He remained draped with and not stripped of belies the accuracy of His impending death: “Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments (*ta himatia*) and divided them into four parts, to every soldier a part, and the coat (*kai ton chitona*). Now the coat was without seam, woven whole from the top down. Therefore, they said among themselves, let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it will become. Thus the saying in Scripture was fulfilled: they divided My raiment (*ta imatia*) among them, and upon My vesture (*epi ton himatismosin*) did they cast lots,” John 19: 23-24. 2.) In advance of Christ’s death, the Lance of Longinus, or Holy Spear, is thrust by a miniscule bullfight-picador-centurion only to penetrate the outstretched robe, thus denying the mortal wound, contrary to John 19: 34, “...after Jesus was dead, a Roman soldier pierced His side with a lance and forthwith came there out blood and water.” 3.) On the left of the composition, to Christ’s right, a “Pincer-Monster” (McKinnon’s term, 2015) arches over and encapsulates the vignette of the picador. The Pincer screams at Christ and the “evil teeth” screeching-white Mary, a picto-auditory element. Although the “Pincer-Monster” is a term coined here by the author, Kaufman had identified the character as, “hieratic,” and Gasman, as a “screaming jaw-figure” (Gasman, 1981, p. 1052). More precisely, the pincer was a tool in the *Arma Christi* used to remove the

represented in the horrific act of nailing the body to the beams of the cross that purportedly occurred on the ground before the victim was erected on the cross in to place.³⁶⁸ In the Picasso, Christ was made vertical during the act of driving the nail. The ladder that the praying mantis-crucifier has climbed atop, lends further confusion since the nail-driver is typically seen as an element of the Deposition. With the lamentation of the three Marys, the lancing of Christ's side, the raising of the vinegar-soaked sponge, the throw of dice for the tunic, the rolling away of the stone of the sepulchre, the nailing of the body with the *Arma Christi*, the crucifixion eclipse of the sun—all these sacred stages are all-at-once out-of-step.³⁶⁹ As such, the scene is construed as a breakdown.

The temporal folding-in of events is performed as a sense of *un-time* that was equaled in a sense of *un-space* in the orchestrated, pell-mell composition. Pictorial space is alluded to

nails from Christ's hands and feet; and thus, Picasso's reformulation of the tool into a mandibular "creature" is joined by the other "Mouth of Hell" figures, including the *dentata noire* Virgin Mary, and, the blue praying-mantis Olga-Magdalen (identified by Gasman and discussed in Chapter VII of "Mystery, Magic, Love...") at the bottom right of the painting. 4.) Above Pincer-monster, as if by magic to deny gravity, a round green "rock" floats and abuts the back of its skull. The rock is specifically unique in that it is the only element in *Crucifixion* that Picasso gave dimension to, emphasizing its bulk and solidity, and as depicted, the denial of weight. In 1949, Alfred Barr, Jr. was the first to suggest that the green orb was, "perhaps the vinegar-soaked sponge enlarged to gigantic size and isolated like one of the objects in the traditional paintings of the symbols of the Passion." (Alfred Barr, Jr. *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art*, (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1946, p. 167). Barr's supposition was not refuted in critical readings of the painting by scholars, including Roland Penrose (1958), William Rubin (1968), or Ruth Kaufman (1969), despite the probability that the image was more than what Barr had proposed. What Picasso may clearly have meant the orb to symbolize is unrecorded; however, the articulation of the shape suggests that it is a rock, and in accord with the collapse of chronology in the painting, the very rock of the sepulcher rolled away from the empty tomb of the arisen Christ, which cannot be discounted for the placement of the bird as well. Furthermore, granted the general acceptance of Mithraic symbolism the sponge-rock is the green moon of Mithraism, the rock from which Mithras was born, and the Pincer-Monster is Mithras-Atlas who hoists the giant world on its back, vis-à-vis the *Farnese Atlas* who bears the cosmic globe, repeated in Goya's masterful drawing of a man of burden in 1651, see figs. 21-24, p. 32 this text.

³⁶⁸ For example, see Albrecht Dürer's, *Seven Sorrows of the Virgin*, ca. 1496.

³⁶⁹ Picasso's revisionist tendencies are exemplified in an anecdote from Richardson (2007, p. 396) in which he quotes Picasso recalling to Apollinaire his disregard to copy a Murillo in a church commission of altarpieces in Barcelona during his youth: "The idea bored me so I copied them up to a point, then rearranged things according to my own ideas."

by the tiny, insect picador-lancer; the small, gambling soldiers at the foot of the cross; two easily overlooked Tau crosses on the hills of Calvary at either side of the panel; and, three prominent heads aligned across the top register that is neither foreground, middle ground, or background. Apropos of Picasso's re-sequencing against historical continuity, consider Benjamin's, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in which he asserted that modern memory and societal revolutionary tensions would act in concert to explode the diachronic continuum. In fact, there is no real assurance that the correspondence between the articulations of the past with the present, represented by the Crucifixion event in this instance, are guaranteed, as Benjamin's project of the dialectical image would suggest. Or, in other words, the necessary correspondence that depends upon an articulation of the past, by way of the image, may not coalesce. As Benjamin believed, such is the conundrum of modern culture: "The past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at an instant when it is recognized and is never seen again."³⁷⁰ Benjamin's sense of *Augenblick*, or "blink of an eye," takes form in the confused temporal dimension of *Crucifixion*, which Picasso had conjured. Citing Benjamin, the Australian anthropologist, Michael Taussig, summarized the kind of hysterical fixity that *Crucifixion* exudes:

Therefore, if the accent is on the side of the volcanic rupture, what Benjamin elsewhere called the *Jetztzeit*, the presence-filled now-time—not homogenous, empty, evolutionary time—it must be appreciated that this rhythm is in the midst of its violence also a time of enormous stillness... no less than... modern memory in search of correspondence in a festival-less world. This is the stillness of shock, suspended out of time. This is the work of the negative, as in Bataille's notion of sovereignty, in which the limit is transgressed.³⁷¹

³⁷⁰ Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of Nature," *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken, 1968), p. 255.

³⁷¹ Michael Taussig, "The Sun Gives Without Receiving: An Old Story," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Cambridge University Press, April, 1995), p. 372.

Picasso's domineering re-orchestration of the Stations of the Cross, and prophesied moments leading up to and following Christ's death, also included a bold transposition of the sun and moon by the artist-puppeteer who moved the sun to Christ's left, or the viewer's right. Compared to the account of light recorded in the synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke the diurnal rhythm of the sun stopped as day-into-night at the moment Christ died: "It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, while the sun's light failed..." Luke 23: 44-45. *Crucifixion* does not contain an overhead sun or the black sun of the Crucifixion eclipse hours otherwise found in the iconographical tradition of the western canon of Christian art, including the masterwork in ivory, *Codex Aureus of Echternach* (fig. 14). For, Picasso did not intend the sun to be the archetypal cosmic symbol of light into darkness that announced Christ's death. To the contrary, the reconstituted sun is the singularly most disturbing monster in the painting.

The figure is a mockery of light rendered in Catalonian red and yellow, a purely Spanish sun in that sense. And of its monstrosity, it bears a hideous and toothless smile that recalls that of the specter *Harlequin* of '15. Michel Leiris had recognized a trend in Picasso's work at the time which, "... set forth not only new forms but authentic organisms.... creatures that stand and walk like living beings."³⁷² The specific attributes of the "authentic organisms" cannot be discounted or overlooked in the ways that each character, whose position in relation to others, by style, scale, and color, informs the overall ethos of the work. The sun has remained problematic from the standpoint that no consensus about its attributions, or even if it is the sun has been reached. Therefore, obvious questions remain. Which figure is the Sun? What function does it perform? How is it symbolic to the scene?

³⁷² Michel Leiris, "Picasso," ed. George Bataille, *Documents* 3 (1930).

These are altogether unclear in Picasso's chronic divulgence of doubt that is a summation of his intent.

The long-held view that the sun was a singular "sun-and-moon" character located in the background to the immediate right of Christ was put forth by the art historian, Ruth Kaufman, in her distinguished analysis, "Picasso's Crucifixion 1930" (1969). Kaufman submitted that the sun was one half of the blue and yellow double-faced figure, which she had identified through its precursor, *Tête*, November 22, 1929 (fig. 16). To substantiate this element in *Crucifixion* as the image of the sun, and therefore to establish her reading of Mithraic sacrifice through the sun, she submitted that the "sun side" of the face that was overlaid with a triangle, an abstracted form of the Phrygian cap typical of Mithras's general attire. Kaufman wrote, the "... triangular hat seems likely to be a reference to Mithras, the youthful sun god who... sacrificed a bull, [and] was depicted on reliefs wearing a peaked cap."³⁷³ On the theory that Picasso's attitude to the crucifixion exemplified primitive sacrifice, Mithraic ritual included the slashing of the bull's throat as a rite of expiation; therefore, it makes eminent sense that the placement of the sun beside the crucified Christ and the symbol of "another primitive religion, which employed sacrifice as a central part of its ritual"³⁷⁴ was arranged in that manner.

³⁷³ Ruth Kaufman, "Picasso's Crucifixion 1930," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 111, No. 798 (September, 1969), p. 554.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.* Kaufman noted Barr in reference to the article, "Idoles des Cyclades," by Etienne Michon, *Cahiers d'art*, (Vol. 4, 1929), p. 257, citing Barr for his idea that the totemic Christ emulated Cycladic figures, thus the primitive nature of Christ, Kaufman felt that the iconographic similarities, thus the potential of ritual imprint found in *Three Dancers*, 1925, and *Crucifixion*, 1930, were indisputable. "The left-hand figure has a moon image forming the left side of her face and this combined with her 'convulsive' posture and the night scene seems to suggest the performance of magic. At the same time, the pose of the central figure is strikingly similar to that of a crucified Christ. The combination of the crucifixion and suggestions of night magic takes the former out of its traditional context and places it within the realm of primitive religious ritual."

Yet, if the Phrygian cap-shape substantiated Kaufman's rationale, she did not consider Picasso's double-head portraits of the mid-to-late 1920s (figs. 17-19) that continued the influence of "split" face primitive masks whose imprint was paramount in Picasso's portraiture since 1907. That the multiple or double-faced African mask symbolized heightened powers of perception would have been important to Picasso's adaptation of magic inherent to the picture. And a finer point may be placed upon a counter-interpretation to Kaufman's in that the "sun-and-moon" image, clearly lifted from the 1929 oil painting, *Tête*, is also simply a sculptural head on a pedestal. During this period Picasso made many sketches of triangular "faces" upon modeling armatures (fig. 20) that we see repeated in studies for the studio, culminating, for example, in, *L'atelier*, from late 1927-28 (fig. 21). It is also generally held that the double-portrait of *Tête* was a bust of Marie-Thérèse conflated with that of Olga, Picasso's estranged wife. In this form, Picasso placed the two women near the center of the Crucifixion scene in order to "witness" the Christ and Virgin in mortal battle, agreed by many scholars to be symbolic of Picasso's fight to separate from Olga.³⁷⁵

In overall terms, *Tête* of 1929 shares basic similarities with other precariously balanced and geometrically articulated heads represented in single portraits and studio scenes from the period. However, the simplicity of the "sun-and-moon" character, or sculptural bust of Marie-Thérèse-Olga, seems weak in light of the potent symbolism of other *dramatis personae* in the painting. Picasso would have imbued this figure, so close to Christ on the cross, with layered meanings in accord with the multiplicity of inverted meanings in *Crucifixion*. For example, the double portrait could also reference the god Janus. Despite the tradition of the Roman god's conjoined double-heads looking outward and not inward, the

³⁷⁵ Michael Fitzgerald, "The Modernist's Dilemma," in *Picasso and Portraiture: Representation and Transformation*, ed. William Rubin (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1996), pp. 323-331.

Janus' function in the archaic pantheon was to preside over transitions from one state to another, from the past to the unpredictable future. The versatile incarnations of Janus, representing January in the astrological scheme of Renaissance iconography, were placed in programs as the Keeper of the Gates to the Otherworld, or, as the Guardian of the threshold that controlled the doors opening onto the realms of heaven and hell, as we see in the thirteenth century carving of a watchful Janus created for the grandiose Porta dei Pellegrini of the Cathedral of Ferrara (fig. 22). If the double-faced figure was placed to watch the destiny of Christ, therefore, does Picasso's inference of limbo, between life and death, suggest that His fate is undetermined and with it Christian mankind? If so, granted that the double-faced portrait is proposed as Janus, would not his supervision of the future be relevant to the scene?

What may be left to additional speculation is that the third Mary of the Crucifixion was not identified in *Crucifixion*. Picasso was careful to include the major participants as recorded in Biblical accounts. And given the ambiguous if not two-to-three-fold nature of meanings scripted for many of the characters, the double-faced Janus may perhaps also be the third Mary, Mary of Cleopas, mother of James. She was in attendance at the crucifixion alongside Mary Magdalene, who appears as a blue mandibular monster to the right of the white Virgin Mary. Mary of Cleopas was explicitly mentioned in John 19:25, "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary [the wife] of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene." The *Tête* figure is therefore an undetermined element in the *Crucifixion*. And if we grant these interpretive possibilities, by association they would allow a release of the sun character from the conundrum of dismissive, critical readings that have narrowed its symbolic possibility.

There was no precedent in Picasso's work for the portrayal of the wholly bizarre figure taken otherwise to be the sun; nor, like the electric sun of *Guernica* does it appear in any work thereafter. What is termed in this analysis as the "biped-sun,"³⁷⁶ is a composite of attributes adapted from three solar theologies, archaic iconography and lore, and subjective determinations that comprise a complex identity. As a character player, given the essentially theatrical nature of *Crucifixion*, the biped sun is of preeminent relevance to Picasso's defiance against the natural order of things. In the doom-laden, feria-colored scene the sun is presented in parodic guise as a totemic personage. It's confounding elements include a body shape that is both torso or chiton, and lacking arms; a large head or nimbus; two small feet turned left in profile; a large red blindfold; a belt ambiguously drawn as a smile, or vice versa; and, what has escaped all analyses to date, a "light-tipped" quiver of arrows flung at a diagonal across the back of the figure. Energy exudes in green sparks from the crown of the nimbus or disc-like head thereby enlivening the otherwise static symbol as a potential source of radiance. And here I invoke the quote that opens this chapter: "The sun and moon stood still in their habitation; at the light of your arrows as they speed, and at the shining of thy glittering spear..." Habakkuk 3:11. Kaufman, for one, regarded the [sun] figure, noted here as the biped-sun, as an anonymous member of a triumvirate of "generalized cult figures" that appear to the left and right of Christ which, "on a purely formal level, united by their similarity of stance, being symmetrical and frontal in contrast to the other figures in profile. The very frontality and symmetry of the three figures suggest a hieratic meaning."³⁷⁷ Other scholars have opined that the confounding figure is, "...like a sun with hair, which could

³⁷⁶ Author's term, 2015.

³⁷⁷ Kaufman, op.cit., p. 557.

also be interpreted as the head of Saint John;³⁷⁸ is, “a most bizarre yellow figure with two neat yellow feet, multicolored flinging and an oddly shaped red center containing dotted features like those of Christ;³⁷⁹ the “...grinning carnivalesque entity on the horizon at right is so weird as to displace any definition, a resistance that points to the second stratagem by which Picasso exceeds the iconography: by sacrificing the icon itself;³⁸⁰ and, “...he remains an anomaly with his scrotum-shaped visage, which may or may not refer to the testicles of the Mithraic bull.”³⁸¹

To the contrary, the sun does not *displace any definition*. Its attributes were specifically determined from a range of variants that Picasso possessed in his intellect and memory. In combination as they are, he created a hybrid sun that was a fantastical admixture of symbolic referents. And in so doing, this sun overturned the deepest tradition of the New Sun of Christ emphasized by His triumphant rising. Various modulations of the *Christus Oriens*, according to the writings of St. Augustine expressed as a sun without setting, ever living and unaffected by the fall of the hours. The Byzantinist, Ernst Kantorowicz, explained that, “Origen discussed *Oriens* in the sense of Christ-Logos the mediator, ‘He, Christ, is the man whose name is Orient, who has been made the mediator between God and men.’ Origen concluded that the faithful should turn at prayers to the East from where the Sun of

³⁷⁸ Marie-Laure Bernadac. *Picasso Museum Paris: The Masterpieces*. (New York: International Book Import Service, Inc. 1991), pp. 102 - 105.

³⁷⁹ Neil Cox, *The Picasso Book*. (London: TATE Publishing, 2010), pp. 80-81.

³⁸⁰ C.F.B. Miller, “Bataille with Picasso: *Crucifixion* (1930) and *Apocalypse*,” *Papers of Surrealism*; issue 7, 2007: The Use-Value of Documents.

³⁸¹ John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: The Triumphant Years, 1917-1932*; (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2007), p. 402. In his footnote on this passage, Richardson states, “Other interpretations include [Mark] Rosenthal, who envisions this configuration as “sun-glasses” on the face of a woman with “an expansive smile;” and [Roy] MacGregor-Hastie, who sees it as a “grinning, Spanish, straw-hatted aficionado.”

Righteousness ever rises and where the true Light is born.”³⁸² In early Church liturgies and liturgical chants, *Christus Oriens* became interchangeable with Christ as *Sol iustitiae*,³⁸³ the Messianic sun of justice, later conforming to *Sol salutis*, the Son of God venerated as the Sun/Son of salvation. The decisive impulse for developing a Christian solar theology came from the portentous words of Malachi 4:2, “But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth...” prompting Cyril of Alexandria to submit, “Christ rises upon the world as the Sun of Justice, of most perfect knowledge, enlightening our eyes and souls.”³⁸⁴

Still, in the violated/violent atmosphere of *Crucifixion* neither the aura of *Sol iustitiae* nor *Sol salutis* were presented. The dignity of the historic salvific sun was replaced by a conceptual model of the official solar deity of the later Roman Empire (274 AD), the invincible *Sol invictus*, known by the epithet, Helios Magistos, the Great Helios and “Unconquerable” sun. According to Mithraic lore, *Sol Invictus* crushed the enemy by its blinding appearance.³⁸⁵ For Roman Mithraic iconography a distinction was drawn between the sun god, Sol, and the celestial lord of the fixed stars, Mithras, who at times was invoked as the combined *Mithras deus Sol Invictus*. The comparative religions scholar, David Ulansey, proposed a reading of rare Mithraic inscriptions in which Mithras was regarded as *the* sun god, hence the conflated personification of Mithras and Sol Invictus,³⁸⁶ or, Mithras the Unconquerable. In a parallel line of thought, Ulansey also posed the problem of a

³⁸² Ernst Kantorowicz, “Oriens Augusti – Lever Du Roi,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Trustees for Harvard University, Vol. 17, 1963), pp. 124 and 138.

³⁸³ I am indebted to David Summers for introducing the concept of *Sol iustitiae* in its application to *Crucifixion*, 1930.

³⁸⁴ *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*; ed. Alexander P. Kazhdan (Oxford University Press, 1991).

³⁸⁵ Kantorowicz, op.cit., p. 136.

³⁸⁶ David Ulansey, *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries: Cosmology and Salvation in the Ancient World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 108-110.

“conquerable” sun, asking if it might be found, and “...of course,” he wrote, “Mithraic iconography gives an absolutely explicit answer:

...scenes depicting the sun god kneeling before Mithras or otherwise submitting to him make it abundantly clear that it is the sun itself who is actually the conquered sun. And so we may say that Mithras is entitled to be called “sun” insofar as he has taken over the role of *kosmokrator* formerly exercised by the sun itself. Thus the entire relationship between Helios and Mithras become fully explicable: Helios bows sometimes to Mithras in recognition of Mithras’s superior ability to shift the entire cosmic structure. And Mithras is called the “unconquerer sun” as an acknowledgement of the fact that he has taken over the role of *kosmokrator* which formerly was the sole prerogative of the now conquered sun.”³⁸⁷

Picasso’s tool of control was the force of his art that by necessity satirized providence. In the possible adaptation of the Mithraic *Sol* for his purposes, the “new sun” of 1930 demonstrated an outrage against the crisis of that which *is* unconquerable, the fate of Death. *Crucifixion* is understood for its Mithraic qualities vis-à-vis the sun as a symbol of sacrifice; however, the painting does not include the sacrifice of a bull claimed by George Bataille as, “a simple way of reaping the moral benefits of the blinding sun.”³⁸⁸ Beyond the characterizations of the biped sun and its pendant, the “Pincer-Monster” moon who attends at the far left of the scene, and identified here as the character, “Mithras-Atlas”³⁸⁹ (fig. 23-26), the *real* sun of *Crucifixion* was placed to the right front of Christ. In this position in the hierarchy of figures, Picasso has made it impossible for the sun to change from light to darkness at the moment of Christ’s death. Positioned as it is, looking outward from the

³⁸⁷ *ibid.*

³⁸⁸ “Soleil Pourri,” in *Georges Batailles: Visions of Excess, Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, ed. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), pp. 57-58.

³⁸⁹ In that the figure to the left of Christ has been identified by various authors in different terms, and that I have called it, “Pincer-Monster,” (see n.19, p. 9) it is also known here as “Mithras-Atlas” based upon its similarities to the *Farnese Atlas*, and, to Goya’s *Man Carrying a Huge Load*, 1621, based upon the Farnese model. In that Mithras was born of a “green rock,” and that this floating shape not only emulates a “moon rock,” but also insinuates the rock of the Sepulchre at Jesus’ tomb, this figure possesses several meanings through Picasso’s references to Mithraic lore, the Crucifixion of Christ, and various works of art.

scene, the biped sun cannot bear witness to the crucifixion that occurs behind it; and, it's being blindfolded doubles the impossibility (fig. 27). What has Picasso proposed by this redefinition and control of a sun that fails in its diurnal and sacred work as a cosmic signal by changing from light to darkness? The figure possesses both opposing forces.

Recalling Picasso's morphology of Harlequin being the masked, comic servant in the complex lore of the *commedia dell'arte*, the masked sun also attained meaning through models of Alchemy. In 1903, Guillaume Apollinaire had coined the phrase "*arlequin trismegiste*," a reference to Hermes Trismegistus, avatar of the Thrice Great Hermes and guide of the soul to worlds beyond the visible, likening the association to Picasso whom the great poet regarded as an "ascendant" and sun-like being. Following his tremendous significance in a role as charmer and specter, Picasso killed off Harlequin in 1906 at the beginning of his Pink Period. As is known, Harlequin was then resurrected and reconstructed over the course of cubism and reached his penultimate state as the Great Harlequin, the grinning black and white specter of death in 1915, prefigured as the Harlequin-filament in the light bulb study from 1914. In 1930, Picasso's interpolation of Harlequin with the biped sun in *Crucifixion* created a new figure in his compendium that extends a consideration of Mithraism in the picture, and purports to claim a new ascription of the sun that differs from Kaufman's theory, in the character, "Mithras Sol-Harlequin."

The sun's red mask, differing from any donned by Harlequin in Picasso's work, was detailed with nearly imperceptible features of eyes and a mouth akin to the tiny, underdeveloped facial features of the "infant" Christ.³⁹⁰ Alfred Barr, Jr. had noted the particular "primitive" quality of the simplified Christ figure, equating its formal properties to prehistoric Cycladic figures, and in particular, one from the Louvre Museum that was

³⁹⁰ The "shrunken" facial features would be reused in *Mother with Dead Child II, Post-script to Guernica*, September 26, 1937, coll. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.

reproduced in a 1929 article on Cycladic art in *Cahiers d'art*.³⁹¹ However, in the sense that “primitive” is imbued in *Crucifixion* it finds a more likely correspondence in Picasso’s esteem of African masks. Apropos of features on the red mask the schematic simplicity of Gabon Fang masks, which Picasso collected, are notable for small, closely set eyes. In the retellings about his initial visit to the Musée d’Ethnographie to André Malraux and others, Picasso exuberantly described over and over again his discovery of the “primitive,” and a feeling of “shock,” a “revelation,” and a “force.”

William Rubin, in deference to Gasman’s breakthrough scholarship surmised that, “it was the ‘magical’ conception of art as catharsis that first claimed Picasso in the masks....”³⁹² The overlay of mask-like eyes upon the red face mask, a “double masking” of sorts, reifies the sun as a blinded source of light. Picasso’s early obsession with blindness began in the Blue Period represented by two early masterpieces of “lost sight,” *Le repas de l’aveugle*, 1902-03, replete in Eucharistic overtones of the aged blind man’s meal of bread and wine; and, *La Célestine*, 1904, in which the half-blind procuress, Celestina, a talented *puta vieja*, or old whore, holds rosary beads emblematic of her transgressions and religious hypocrisy. The essence of blindness, sacrifice, and speciousness in both paintings is consistent with those in *Crucifixion*. But rather than the natural decline of sight through macular disease or old age, Picasso has “blinded” the sun in his masking of the figure that he alone exerted control over.

Further to the problem of blindness and the sun, Bataille’s renowned essay, “Soleil pourri,” (The Rotten Sun) written in 1930 purportedly after Picasso had completed

³⁹¹ Etienne Michon, “Idoles des Cyclades,” *Cahiers d’art*, Vol. 4, 1929, p. 257. Cited in Barr, Alfred H. Jr. *Picasso, Fifty Years of His Art* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946), pp. 124-127.

³⁹² William Rubin, ed., “Picasso in ‘Primitivism’ in *Twentieth-Century Art*, Vol. 1, (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1984), p. 255; n. 53, p. 335 refers to Gasman.

Crucifixion,³⁹³ claimed, “The sun, from the human point of view is the most elevated conception. It is also the most abstract object, since it is impossible to look at fixedly at that time of day. If...one obstinately focuses on it, a certain madness is implied, and the notion changes meaning it is no longer production that appears in light, but refuse or combustion adequately expressed by the horror emanating from a brilliant arc lamp.”³⁹⁴ Bataille’s equation of the blinding sun and the horror of malevolent, electric light and his defining terms of “refuse,” that is, “anything that is rejected, discarded, waste, or, residue,” and in extended use that which is, “despised, outcast, or worthless” and “combustion,” meaning, “the action or process of burning; consumption or destruction by fire,”³⁹⁵ led him to equate the sun’s blinding power with animal sacrifice, “...the scrutinized sun is identified with a man who slays a bull (Mithra).”³⁹⁶ Again, we do not witness the sacrifice of a bull in *Crucifixion*. Picasso’s obsession with the *corrida*, from the 1890’s onward had no bearing upon Bataille’s expressions of taurochtony, or, the slashing of the bull’s throat in which established iconography always depicts Mithras holding the bull’s head backward, by the nostrils, and slitting the throat. The ritualized sun aligned with the bull posits it within the domain of sacrificial blood rites.

³⁹³ C.F.B. Miller, “Bataille with Picasso: *Crucifixion* (1930) and Apocalypse,” *Papers of Surrealism* (Issue 7, 2007: The Use-Value of Documents), pp. 369-372. “*Documents* doesn’t give exact dates of publication, but *Documents* 2, 1930 reports a conference at the Musée Guimet on 26 January, and contains advertisements for the forthcoming numbers of the journals *Europe* and *Variétés*, dated 15 February and 15 March respectively. *Documents* 3, 1930, the ‘Hommage à Picasso’ issue contained advertisements for exhibitions at the Galerie Vignon (1 to 15 April), the Galerie Georges Bernheim (31 March to 12 April), the Galerie de France (3-19 April), and announces the next numbered issue 4, as coming out on 1 May 1930. It is therefore most likely that the *Crucifixion* was painted while the ‘Hommage à Picasso’ was in preparation. Given its brevity, it is probable that Bataille wrote “Soleil pourri” after Picasso painted *Crucifixion*... Bataille’s anti-idealist construal of Picasso was in place well before February 1930. See Bataille, “Le Jeu Lugubre,” *Documents* (No. 7, 1929), p. 19.

³⁹⁴ Bataille in Stoekl, op..cit., p. 57.

³⁹⁵ *Oxford English Dictionary*.

³⁹⁶ Bataille, loc.cit.

As editor of the ethnographic vanguard journal, *Documents*, Bataille had placed “Rotten Sun” after the poem, “Flames,” by Jacques Baron, one of the signers of the Surrealist Manifesto whose metaphor for artistic vision was phrased, “pockets full of sun...his eyes are streams of solidified light.”³⁹⁷ The issue’s attention to sun and sight has been well noted; and, Bataille went further in his writing to claim that, “All of this leads one to say that the summit of elevation is in practice confused with a sudden fall of unheard of violence.”³⁹⁸ That violence is blindness. Once looked at, the sun turns rotten and black and dies. And both before and after 1930 the light of the sun was a central characteristic of Bataille’s mystical theories of degradation. In the essay, “L’Obelisk” (1938), we find an overlay of sun symbols of the Luxor Obelisk at the Place de la Concorde, a monument termed a “petrified sunbeam”³⁹⁹ once the site of routine guillotine killings, and was erected in honor of the Egyptian Sun god Ra inscribed in hieroglyph that expressed in its simple solidity and basis in sacred geometry the truth anticipated in the incarnation of the Son of God, the light of the world. Bataille continued, “the obelisk marking the site of the terrifying end of the rebellion against the grandson of the Sun King, Louis XIV; the obelisk as Hegel’s own example of the sign of a sign....”⁴⁰⁰

Picasso grounded the sun, so to speak, in *Crucifixion*, by applying feet to the figure thereby commanding its adherence from celestial realms to the laws of gravity. The importance of Bataille’s essay, “Le Gros Orteil”(1929) has been acknowledged for its psychosocial redefinition of the toe/foot in surrealist thought; the trope of the “Big Toe,” being a predominant “principle of evil” dominating man’s psyche signifying “subterranean

³⁹⁷ Christopher Green, *Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 26.

³⁹⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹⁹ Bataille’s term quoted by Mark C. Taylor, *Tears*, eds. Rodolph Gasché and Mark C. Taylor (Albany: State University of New York, SUNY Series, “Intersections: Philosophy and Critical Theory” 1990), p. 22.

⁴⁰⁰ Stoekl, *op.cit.*, p. 221.

hell,” “mud,” “darkness,” “filth,” “shame,” and the “gaze of low idiocy,” the “Fall,” and “death.”⁴⁰¹ The “low”⁴⁰² feet of the biped sun conflate Bataille’s premise of filth and the “Fall” with the lore of Mithras Sol Invictus whose intrinsic triumph *as* light over evil established him as the “unconquerable.” The biped sun is then both an invincible figure and a “low” figure with mortal origins.

Picasso created all of the legs and feet in the painting as solid shapes evocative of the limbs of the Beatus of Liébana illuminated manuscript, the *Saint-Sever Beatus*, or, *The Apocalypse of Saint-Sever* that includes the miniature, *Cheveaux Monstrous*, 1072 AD (fig. 28). In Bataille’s commentary on *The Apocalypse* and what he claimed was the most “surprising” element was that the fundamental content of the manuscript page was colored by a humor that, far from dampening the horror, rendered the figures all the more horrible. This has nothing to do with the reflexivity of irony. To the contrary, given that humor is in the original sense of “humor,” of and from the flesh in which it is embedded, it was once the name for the consistency of the flesh and its fundamental disposition in the doctrine of the four humours.⁴⁰³ And it is the odd form, between the flesh and the immateriality of light that the comic, ad hoc biped sun subsists as.

The solid, front-facing body and head and sideways feet are also in accord with Egyptian traits which may be compared to the stance of the sun god Ra, among other deities and rulers, seen in the Louvre’s *Stele of Lady Taparet*, Third Intermediate Period, 22nd Dynasty, or 10th-9th BCE (fig. 29). The stylistic correlation of the iconography of feet in Romanesque illumination and Egyptian art reinforces the conflated components of Mithras Sol Harlequin.

⁴⁰¹ Gasman (1981) summarized Bataille’s, “Le Gros Orteil,” *Documents*, no. 6 (November, 1929, pp. 200-202), pp. 1033-34.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*

⁴⁰³ These ideas were put forth in another form by Jason Smith, “Bataille’s Joyous Apocalypse,” *Soft Targets Journal*, (Vol. 2, No. 2), www.softtargetsjournal.com.

Ra-Horakhty symbolized the sun at its zenith epitomized by the full sun disc. The disc doubled in Picasso's work as a Roman shield, which was discovered upon examination of the *pentimente* of *Crucifixion*. In Christian iconography, a bust of Christ in the disk of the sun was found as early as the ninth century in the Chludoff Psalter where the Helios-Christ had been adapted to the Canticle of Habakkuk. A variation of the theme is found in a Greek Psalter in the Vatican where Zacharias is kneeling in prayer while above the rocks, there rises in the sky (*E vous*), below the ark of heaven, the sun-disk with the bust of Christ.⁴⁰⁴

It is not viable to conjecture the depths to which Picasso's instincts may have driven his quest in *Crucifixion*; but, given the torque on Christian sacrifice admixed with the implications of cultic taurochtony, the conflation of Christian/Mithraic sacrificial ritual served to magnify the intrinsic polarities of Light/Good *versus* Darkness/Evil that define the painting. Our subject, the sun, abides as many things. And in final consideration of it in this text, I cite the *Avesta* of Iranian Mithraism, the sacred text of Zoroastrianism. The renowned archaeologist, Franz Cumont, held that Mithras was regarded as the "genius of celestial light. He was not sun or moon or any star, but the *spirit* of light, ever wakeful, watching with a hundred eyes."⁴⁰⁵ In the *Mibr Yasht*, or the ancient "Hymn to Mithra," the refrain, "For his brightness and glory, I will offer him a sacrifice worth being heard..."⁴⁰⁶ was repeated. This declares no reasonable bearing on *Crucifixion* since Picasso's general knowledge of Mithraism was acquired through Leiris in accord with Bataille's interests. Despite that the reference to the *Avesta* is wholly obscure, consider nevertheless the expression of the sun, "ever wakeful,

⁴⁰⁴ Kantorowicz, op. cit., p. 10

⁴⁰⁵ Franz Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra* (Chicago: Open Court Press, 1910), pp. 2-3.

⁴⁰⁶ *Mibr Yasht*, "Hymn to Mithra," in *Sacred Books of the East*, trans. James Darmesteter; American ed., 1898; digital copy by Joseph H. Peterson, 2005.

watching with a hundred eyes”⁴⁰⁷ in contradiction to the blinded sun of 1930, but not that of the panoptic, electric eye-sun of *Guernica* whose vision was deemed to be ceaseless.

⁴⁰⁷ *ibid.*



Fig. 1: *Femme étendue sur la plage*, March 28, 1932, oil on canvas. Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh. The Penrose Collection.



Fig. 2: *Nu couché (Marie-Thérèse)*, April 4, 1932, oil on canvas. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 3: *Baigneuses au ballon*, n.d., 1932, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 4: *Paysage de Cormeilles-en-Parisi*, June 28, 1933, oil on canvas. Private collection.

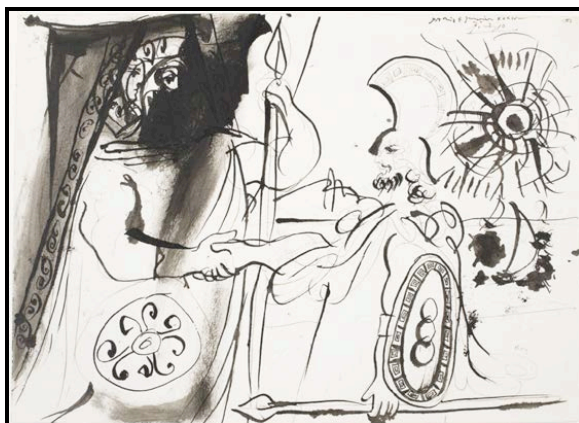


Fig. 5: *Étude: Aristophanes' Lysistrata*, January 4, 1934, india ink on paper. Philadelphia Museum of Art. A.E. Gallatin Collection.

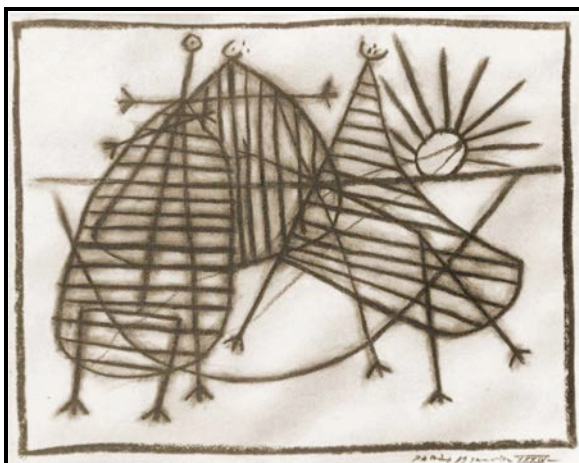
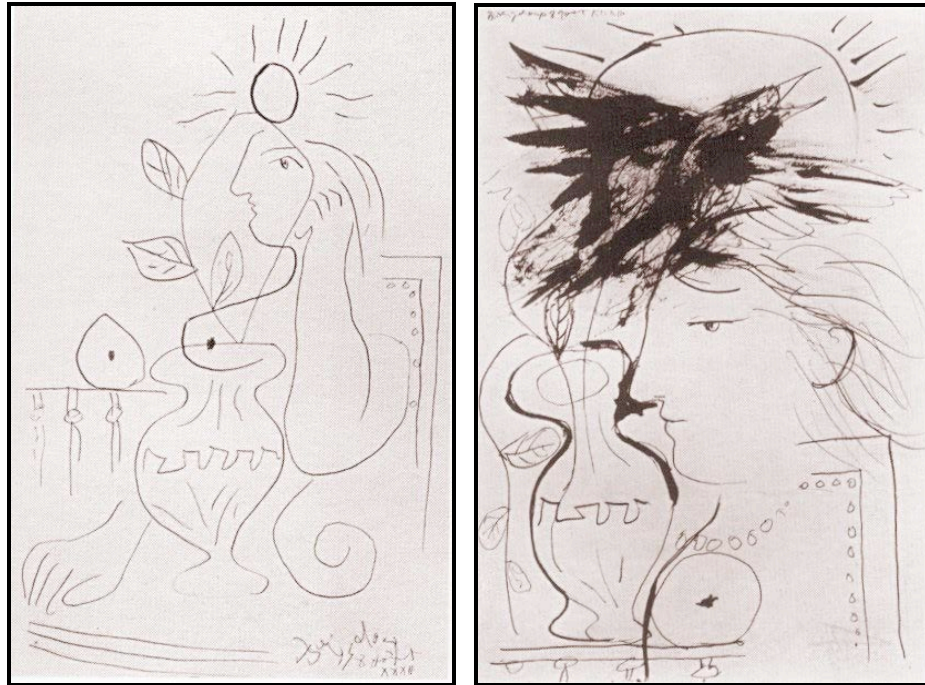


Fig. 6: *Personnages au bord de la mer*, January 19, 1934, charcoal on paper. Marie de Vézelay Collection.



Fig. 7: *Poupée et femme se noyant*, January 28, 1937, graphite on paper. Galería Guillermo de Osma, Madrid.



Figs. 8 and 9: *Femme assise*, nos. 1 and 7, India ink in sketchbook, August 8, 1932. Private collection.

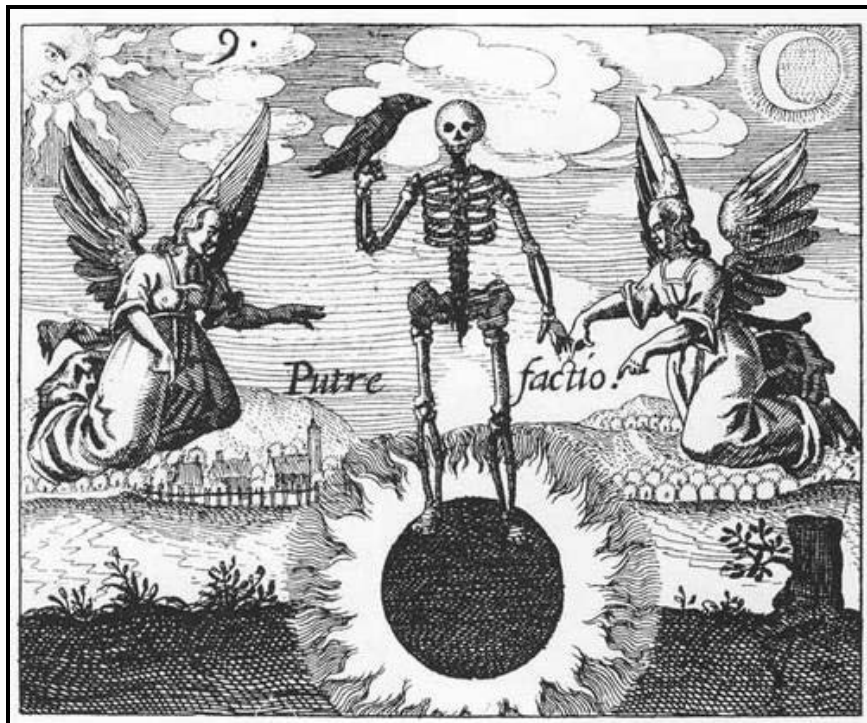


Fig. 10: Johann Daniel Mylius, *Putrefactio Sol Niger* in *Philosophia Reformata*, engraving, Frankfurt, 1622.



Fig. 11: *Crucifixion*, February 7, 1930, oil on wood panel. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 12: *Parade (Étude)*, March, 1917, pencil and watercolor on paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 13: *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, St. John of Climacus, 12th century icon. Saint Catherine's Monastery, Mt. Sinai, Egypt.



Fig. 14: Cover of the *Codex Aureus of Echternach*, 11th c. Ottonian. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg.



Fig. 15: (detail) *Crucifixion*, 1930, Virgin Mary and Christ with Picador-lancer on ladder (left), and "sun-and-moon" double-faced figure (right).



Fig. 16: *Tête*, November 22, 1929, oil on wood panel. Private collection.



Fig. 17: *Tête de femme*, 1926, oil on wood. The Kreeger Museum, Washington, D.C.



Fig. 18: *Buste de femme*, December 27, 1929, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 19: *Tête à double profil*, December, 1926 - May 8, 1927, charcoal drawing. Musée Picasso, Paris.

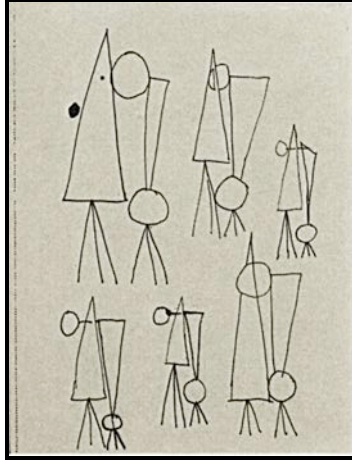


Fig. 20: *Feuille d'études: figures*, June 18-July 8, 1928, india ink in sketchbook 148. Marina Picasso Collection.



Fig. 21: *L'atelier*, winter 1927-28, oil on canvas. Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Walter P. Chrysler.



Fig. 22: Anonymous, known as Maestro dei Mesi di Ferrara, 1230. Cathedral Museum, Ferrara, Italy.

"Janus" figure, ca.



Fig. 23: Picasso, *Tête de femme*, December 27, 1929, oil on canvas. Pinokothek der Moderne, Munich.

Fig. 24: (detail) "Pincer-Monster" or "Mithras Atlas" in Picasso's *Crucifixion*, 1930.

Fig. 25: *Farnese Atlas*, 2nd century Roman copy of Greek sculpture, marble. National Archeological Museum, Naples.

Fig. 26: Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes, *Man Carrying a Huge Load*, 1812-13, sepia ink wash over a black chalk outline on white laid paper. Louvre Museum, Paris.



Fig. 27: (Detail) *Crucifixion, "biped-sun,"* 1930



Fig. 28: Saint Beatus of Liébana, *Cheveaux Monstrous*, 1072 AD, illuminated manuscript.



Fig. 29: *Stele of Lady Taparet*, Egyptian Third Intermediate Intermediate Period, 10th-9th century BCE. Louvre Museum.

Part Two: Electric Seraphim in the Bullring, 1934-1935

*Whoever has not seen this blazing Spain does not know what the sun is;
whoever has not heard sounds of the arena does not know what noise is....
On entering that circle in flames, our first impulse was to turn back.*⁴⁰⁸

With the introduction of the light bulb in cubist works on paper from 1912 and 1914, electric light began its course in Picasso's work as a signifier of malevolence. With the Harlequin-filament's invocation of the medieval *Her-lequin*, inhabitant of the realms of Hell and officiator of death, the 1914 light bulb anticipated its full-blown force as an arbiter of mortality in 1915, as discussed in Chapter 3. Given Picasso's perception of a failing order of nature that spawned a complex agenda of attacks upon the sun, the substitution of natural light with artificial light in bullfighting scenes originated in the mid-1930s. The pivotal exchange of the sun with electric light commenced in a campaign from 1934, and throughout it, an aerial figure will eventually develop into a significant version of the electric sun in April of 1935, which I have termed, "seraphim-light bulbs."⁴⁰⁹ This reemergence of incandescence expressed Picasso's command of its metaphorical strength as an exquisite and complex inversion of light.

Indisputably, the visual and aural dramas inherent in much of Picasso's work achieved a shrill pitch in the 1934-35 mortal entanglements in the *corrida*. Played out in over thirty *course de taureaux* compositions, the ritual of the bullfight elicited brutality and fights to the death with a new intensity. July 16 of '34 saw the start of a bloody spectacle of the bull goring the mare or horse with overwhelming rage. The display of guts, mouths, anuses, haunches, bulging eyes, and bared teeth were never more explicitly rendered than in this

⁴⁰⁸ Alexander Dumas, cited in *El siglo de oro de las tauromaquias* (Madrid, 1989), p. 144; trans. Adrian Shubert, *Death and Money in the Afternoon* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 125.

⁴⁰⁹ Author's term 2015.

period of Picasso's long engagement with the theme of the bullfight. And yet, in some depictions, the bull was anthropomorphized to the extent that the expression of a conscience is revealed through the humors of the face, as in a furrowed brow, as if suddenly the beast had become aware of the total havoc it had created. In these few cases the bull was left alone in the ring demonstrated in, *Taureau mourant*, July 16 1934, a portrait of the dying bull, gone from killer to victim, and frozen in time as if it were encased in a glassed-in exhibit in which to study its lamentable state (fig. 30).

We will find in many of the works from this campaign compositions in which Picasso splayed the horse and bull flat against the picture plane, as if the bulls alone were in homage to the cave drawings at Tito Bustillo in Asturias. In others, Picasso, the aficionado, shows us the bull according to precise definitions of its stance, coloring and size, its "psychology," or disposition in relation to the horse or matador and to the crowd, and the qualifying attributes of horns, tails, hoofs, and bone structures. The articulation of the muscles in *Taureau mourant*, for example, typifies the categories of *apretado de carnes*⁴¹⁰ that refers to a muscle-bound bull, or literally "tight meat;" and, the prominence of *criadillos*, or testicles is never a secondary thought in Picasso's descriptive visual language of the bull. In this version, which is a cameo portrayal lacking any other figures or outside references, the dying bull has fallen on its front right and back left legs. It staunchly struggles to stay up and alive felt in the determined back left leg whose hoof was sunk into the front foreground corner. This stance will be repeated in all dispositions of the bull thereby using the leg for its geometric thrust in to the right corner of each work discussed here that is countered on the by the horse's crippled left leg. As for the bull's expression, the bared teeth and desperate bulging eyes signify its last moments.

⁴¹⁰ Barnaby Conrad, ed., *Encyclopedia of Bullfighting* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961).

Snarled horses and bulls are enmeshed as unequivocal predatory characters, each one becoming the victim or the slayer in differing scenes, but mostly, the bull is on the attack. In one of two *Course de taureaux* paintings from July 22, a monster-bull raised on its haunches, therefore, a Minotaur, was branded across its torso, “Boisgeloup 22 Juillet XXXIV” (fig. 31). The inscription was not typical of Picasso’s finished canvases, which he generally dated in neutral areas. Rather, the black hide served to record the place and date of the slaughtering of the horse thereby recording the bull as the executioner. In a role as matador-slayer, not only had the bull succeeded in performing the *atravesada*, the act of piercing the opposing animal by traversing it from a side angle, the “performance” had occurred at approximately 4:05 PM told by the small black clock at the top of the scene. According to bullfighting tradition, the official start time of main events is 4:00 PM sharp; the killing had, therefore, only taken minutes to achieve. My interpretation of the clock counters that of the Spanish authority on Picasso, Josep Palau i Fabre, who wrote, “Picasso must have learned of the death of Ignacio Sánchez Mejías, from one or other of his Spanish friends in Paris.... It is too much of a coincidence, that clock stopped at five o’clock and that black-the black of mourning-should predominate....”⁴¹¹ In fact, Mejías died on August 13 in the Plaza of Manzanares in Madrid, which would make of the July 22 canvas a premonitory work of the matador’s death in the ring, rather than one of a series of sacrificial *corridos* that lead directly to *Guernica*.

Additionally, the first of many symbolic crescent moons that will be repeated and morph in varying fashion through the *Courses de taureaux* leading up to April 27, 1935, was substituted as the crescent shape for the sword handle in place of the “P-handle.” This ostensibly removed Picasso from a personal involvement in the metaphorical slaughter. J.E.

⁴¹¹ Palau i Fabre, op. cit., p. 199.

Cirlot noted in the *Dictionary of Symbols* the “phallic significance”⁴¹² of the arrow, which Gasman had termed “Picasso’s magic weapon,”⁴¹³ that may also be taken to mean the matador’s sword. Jung, in discussing the alchemical symbol of the arrow that dissolves or kills, wrote, “Mercurius is the archer, who chemically dissolves the gold, and morally, pierces the soul with the dart of passion.”⁴¹⁴ The *Courses de taureaux* series have generally been regarded for their biographical reference to the “face-off” between Picasso’s volatile wife, Olga, and her discovery of his paramour, the young Marie-Thérèse; but, equally, of the warring conditions in Spain marked by the October Revolution of 1934.⁴¹⁵

The works that would follow became more anguished and furious, and the figures more animated yet abstracted as we witness in the bull that stands over a mare in its death throes from the second *Course de taureaux* painting from July 22 (fig. 32). In this barbaric image segments of the horse’s contorted body are enunciated to the extent that Picasso has quite nearly abandoned the tendency to supply the animals with anthropomorphic or semi-realistic attention. We are left with an emphasis upon carefully articulated teeth and simple circles for eyes, nostrils and knee joints. The picture’s decorative treatment is reminiscent of the acclaimed, *Jeune fille devant un miroir, Marie-Thérèse*, May 14, 1932 (fig. 33) in the borrowing of its black tracery applied to the elegantly assembled carnage. In stylistic aplomb akin to Moroccan design, and a candy palette in pink and yellow, Picasso’s

⁴¹² J. E. Cirlot, *Dictionary of Symbols*, trans. Jack Sage, foreword by Sir Herbert Read (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ltd., 1962).

⁴¹³ Gasman, op. cit., p. 1044.

⁴¹⁴ C. G. Jung, *Mysterium Coniunctionis, Collected Works*, Vol. XIV (Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 304.

⁴¹⁵ Although Picasso was less focused upon the events in Germany than he would be in 1936, we note that Adolf Hitler, in a merger of the roles of Chancellor and President was elected Führer in August of 1934. Prior to his election, in July of ’34, he orchestrated the murder of old enemies amounting to the deaths of eighty-five members of the paramilitary Brownshirts in a “purge” known as the “Night of the Long Knives.”

penchant for subsuming a theme into surface effects was unmistakable. The correlate of the young girl at the mirror responds to Picasso's repetition of Marie-Thérèse's profile seen four times around the arena. Her artless visage looks down from various seats in the stands to emphasize her role as a witness to the fight, an enforcement of her seeing the black bull devour the white horse that Picasso seemingly insisted upon.

Despite an attempt to thwart the bull in *Femme a la bougie, combat entre le taureau et le cheval*, July 24, signified by the reoccurrence of his "P" sword thrust in to the upper back, or *enmorillado*, the big tossing muscle, the bull tears through horse entrails (fig. 34). Picasso has utilized his talent in the art of etching to create a particularly gory black scene that is punctuated by the candlelight thrust forward by the Marie-Thérèse figure, who must in any event shield her eyes from the carnage. His reengagement with certain tenets of surrealism is evident in various aspects of the work from 1934 to the extent that a transgressive tenor countermanded the classical elegance and self-engagement of the *Suite Vollard* of 1933 that preceded the fierce *corrida* campaign. In several of the Vollard sheets Picasso gave exquisite renderings of himself as a classicized and erotic bull in amorous couplings within extravagant Mediterranean salons and generalized studio settings.

In the progression of the bullfight theme, *Taureau et cheval*, painted on July 24, 1934, presents the bull as an all-out killing machine (fig. 35). A palpable simulation of hatred is felt through Picasso's artistry that leads one's eye down the finely articulated serpentine neck of the beast, past the fixed madness of its eyes, the stony bridge of the nose, flared nostrils and wretched muzzle, into a mouth of anthropomorphized super-teeth. The lurching death-posture repeats that in what must be considered a more benign rendition of the slaughter from July 22 (fig. 32). In *Taureau et cheval*, Picasso has emphasized a repulsive tongue that becomes one with the entrails of the horse, the carcass so crudely exposed to

show two hoofs that differ little from the grizzly mass. The bull's stepping *into* the slain horse was an unheralded form of possession and disregard, and a new plateau of violence in Picasso's work. The implication was apropos of the metaphorical praxes under his control, and the deep paradigm of viciousness that may be augmented through a consideration of Bataille's theory of the mouth.

In what Rosalind Krauss has called, "the anatomical geography of Bataille's thought,"⁴¹⁶ *bouche*, or "mouth" was redefined in terms of its "biological axis" that connected it to the anus. With this redefinition, the action of each body component was a "real transformation of articulate sounds into bestial ones, the moments of man's greatest pain or pleasure..."⁴¹⁷ In *Documents* (1930) Bataille published Boiffard's full-page photographic "portrait" of an open mouth with very wet lips and a salacious full tongue (fig. 36). In its application to *Taureau et cheval*, the proximity of mouths to anuses is amplified in Bataille's affinity. Picasso's emphasis upon the anatomical feature of the anus of the bull, and at times the horse alike, had not developed from Bataille's theory of *basses*, or low materialism. The orifice had already been codified in the *jouer* of cubism represented by the leitmotif of the Ace of clubs, black dots on dice, and certainly the black holes of the "solar anus" as in the squared circle of the sun in *La crucifixion*, August 21, 1938 (fig. 37). As Gasman determined, the affinity between, "Bataille and Picasso was such that, almost exactly like Picasso, Bataille equated the sacred with the anus, the "blinding" "rotten sun," Christ and the beloved with "l'anus [et] la nuit."⁴¹⁸

Bataille began his essay, "The mouth is the beginning or, if one prefers, the prow of animals; in the most characteristic cases, it is the most living part, in other words, the most

⁴¹⁶ Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass., The MIT Press, 1993), p. 80.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁸ Gasman, *op. cit.* (1981), p. 1023. Quoting Bataille, "Solar Anus," Stoekl, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

terrifying for neighboring animals.”⁴¹⁹ The precise emphasis that, “human life is still bestially concentrated in the mouth: rage makes men grind their teeth, while terror and atrocious suffering turn the mouth into the organ of rending screams. On this subject it is easy to observe that the overwhelmed individual throws back his head while frenetically stretching his neck in such a way that the mouth becomes, as much as possible, an extension of the spinal column,”⁴²⁰ is repeated in renderings of the anguished horse more than any other character in Picasso’s entire oeuvre. The tormented posture of the impaled horse, with its head thrown back in a pitiful near vertical incline characterizes the works from July 22, 24, and 27 (figs. 31, 32, and 35).

By July 27, a third duo of *Course de taureaux* paintings were more highly colored and compact in their arrangements. In the first of two works made that day, a pale horse in five parts, otherwise an S-shaped torso and two pairs of legs, is flattened across the picture plane in front an equally flattened black bull (fig. 38). Picasso maintained the decorative quality of the July 24 horse and bull, but three days later the pale blue stripes have softened and are more haphazardly applied to the horse as are the striations on the bull that are artificial in the sense that they do not articulate the anatomy in any manner. Here, the horse’s legs are akimbo if not broken, and they curl upward and downward and expose what would be a middle-ground space, which we see through to. This figuration is an open form, the horse becoming glyph, and it is derivative of the languid nudes of 1929 whose gaunt limbs conformed to a lazy, looping geometric seen in *Femme couchée* (fig. 39). Picasso nearly repeats the nude’s left leg thrown up high and arching that in both paintings reveals a triangular shape underneath the crook of the knee. In the volume of the belly, which is a plane of atmospheric pale primary colors of the reclining woman, the horse is split and guts

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, Stoekl.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

and blood have spilled from the hollow of its rib cage that is held open by the bull's tool-like front legs. The horse's head, once again, is torqued backwards in an impossible arc thereby exposing its neck to the devouring jaw of its predator.

Whereas the previous pictures had included only a horse and bull, the later of two paintings created on June 27 introduced new figures to the *corrida*. This painting will mark the beginning of a short-lived series of *Course de taureaux* works from July to September of 1934, and taken up again in April of '35. In each one the placement of characters remained identical, expressing a resoluteness that reflected the symbolic dependency of each character to another. In the confines of the arena, which was another version of Picasso's interiors, the time of day is understood through the atmosphere of *sol y sombra*, the light-and-shadow of the bullring depicted in his earliest renditions of the bullfight from 1896 and 1900. For example, in a group of pastels from the spring of 1900 drawn in celebration of the opening of the bullfighting season, the young Picasso's *afición*, or enthusiasm, was palpable. The scorching midday sun was equaled by the coolness of its passing over the bullring rendered in strong cadmium yellows and grey-blue-greens that emit the sensations of heat and its waning intensity in the shadows of the afternoon.

Richardson noted that the scenes were a "tremendous advance not only in bravura but in color. Picasso has finally discovered how to paint light,"⁴²¹ which we see in the pastel drawing, *Courses de taureaux*, spring 1900 (fig. 40). The young artist had captured the moods of Andalusia and Catalonia in shadowy and glaring light, and color alike. But it was not merely that Picasso had learned to paint light, light was the absolute metaphysical counterforce to darkness, and in varying degrees it revealed the world to him. In the tenebrous foregrounds of the *Courses de taureaux* scenes from 1896 and 1900 a gored horse

⁴²¹ Richardson, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

was twice dragged to the edge of the bullring. Shadows encapsulate the carcass that lies just within the perimeter of the arena beyond the arena of stunning light. The dismal image was discovered in another version by x-radiography of the substrata of *The Tragedy*, 1903, which is visible in the lower right corner of the negative. The metamorphosis of the painting, like many others, was a “sum of destructions” in which a writhing and near-dead horse appeared in the 1901 layer of the same painting.

When conservators at the National Gallery of Art in Washington probed the ‘01 layer at a different x-radiographic wavelength, rather than “showing an enhanced image of the discovered bullring composition, the new infrared image revealed a thin stage of drawing of...a prancing horse with a bound tail...as well as another figure in motion.”⁴²² The x-rays revealed that during the development of *The Tragedy* Picasso had abandoned the work and produced a similar scene in the crude sketch, *Course de taureaux: l'arrastre*, from July 1902. In it, two men lead a mule that drags a dead horse from beyond the framing of the scene. The head is nearly identical to the horse discovered in the x-ray of *The Tragedy*, and with the horses killed in the 1896 and 1900 works aforementioned. The relevance of this particular example to our understanding of Picasso’s sense of pictorial light is told through the interconnection of the working layers and subjects. In 1934, Picasso surmised to his publisher, Christian Zervos, “Perhaps one would perceive the path taken by the mind in order to put its dreams into a concrete form. But what is really very curious is to observe that fundamentally the picture does not change, that despite appearances the initial vision remains almost intact.”⁴²³ The initial sketches of the death of the horse and segue into *l'arrastre*, literally the “pull” of the carcass by a mule team across the dirt floor of the

⁴²² Object information, Conservation Department, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

⁴²³ Interview by Christian Zervos as quoted in *Letters of the Great Artists, From Ghiberti to Gainsborough*, ed. Richard Friedenthal (London: Thames and Hudson, 1963), p. 256.

bullring, confirms Picasso's preoccupation with suffering that he placed in shadow. It may be said that the requisite high afternoon sun of the bullfight was, in Picasso's mind, irreconcilable as distinctly non-separate from the darker spectrums of light.

Not only does the second painting from July 27 introduce a female toreador depicted in the guise of Marie-Thérèse who appears on the viewer's right (figs. 41), the painting style heralds a bravura of brushwork that loosens as near calligraphy in its assured handling. Whereas Paulu i Fabre saw that, "There is a mixture of impatience and nervousness in the brushstrokes that almost makes us forget his usual dexterity, which, indeed, he seems to disavow or reject, as if his gift were of no use to him at this time..."⁴²⁴ Picasso in fact no longer required "dexterity." Instead, he was seemingly at the mercy of a pure force of will that exudes the sense of being driven by factors other than talent. When taken altogether as a series that is examined here from work to work, the apparent shifts in style and the mastery of his hand do not negate our understanding of the matrix first established in the earliest of the paintings from July 22. That the horse and bull become more abstracted, less physical or mortal, or by August of 1934 are dispersed in a new style of wildness, the language of these battles was not lost in Picasso's temperamental changes which carried with symbolic form.

As for *la femme torero* in the July 27 *Courses de taureaux*, Marie-Thérèse is recognizable by the voluminous arc of a sweeping violet *muleta* or cape, violet being one of Picasso's favorite negative colors connoting the conflated terms the, "violet of violence,' the 'violent violet of [Death's] claws,' and his own 'sham violet cut[ting] the throat of the window' of fate,"⁴²⁵ acutely recognized by Gasman. As is known, violet was the signature color ascribed to "M-T," in the masterpiece portraits beginning in 1931. But unlike the

⁴²⁴ Paulu i Fabre, op. cit., p. 202.

⁴²⁵ Gasman, loc. cit.

traditional red muleta that incites the bull to charge, the violet cape was neutral in that sense. It is one of the crescent motifs in the painting, its large arc not only a feminizing principle, but an enclosure under which she is closely included in the fight. Marie-Thérèse's presence in the arena was iconoclastic. She literally invades the *terreno* of the bullring that determines *pisar el terreno del toro*, that is, the bull's terrain,⁴²⁶ which is used to designate the work of the man and to provoke the charge. The bull knows the ring well and will often pick a point in which he will defy his adversary to enter. He will leave this spot only to charge the man, or in this case, the horse, and then will return back to it. As a general rule, the *matador* should not put himself in this instance, facing this spot, but rather to be on the dividing line of the two places. The bull will always try to stay inside this point, as if it were a dividing line between life and death.⁴²⁷ Yet, Picasso, drawing upon his deep knowledge of the bullfight, repeatedly gives us the moment at which that line has been violated or crossed and the bull in a state of *revoltoso*, or rapidly charging, incurs death as the imminent result.

Marie-Thérèse is again both witness and point of strength against the inconclusive dualism that Picasso battles through in the allegory. She will remain in the pictures up to September 9, 1934, in her station at the back and right of the bull. In that she is represented otherwise by a triangle with three black dots (eyes and mouth) for the head, and in some instances, a decorative skirt and violet stockings in the exuberant August 1 rendition (fig. 42); her placement by the cipher of darkness is coordinate to the fourth figure, a small white winged-figure. Balanced midair and lightly touching the shaft of the black sword that impales the bull, the aerial symbol was first realized in the Phillips Collection picture from July 27 (fig. 41). This tiny character of the *corrida*, which has been

⁴²⁶ Conrad, (1961), op. cit. n.p.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

overlooked in the critical literature on the subject, is a pre-*Guernican* element of light that by 1935 will be proven to exemplify a substitute sun.

This very small figure is composed in three geometric parts of a sphere embedded into a crescent and a triangle that do not differ except in terms of palette and *faktur* throughout the campaign. In the morphology of the character, the simple shapes take on the obvious characteristics of head, wings, and body; and, the four black dots in the triangle sexualize the figure by identification of the fourth lower dot as the *mons Venus*, which is also found in the *corps* of bathers from September 1932 (figs. 44-46), most evident in the girl on the right in *Baigneuse au bord de la mer* (fig. 47). More significantly, the angel is a construction of alchemical symbols that refer to the sun, represented by the circle that rises and falls in each of the seven works in relation to the moon, symbolized by the crescent;⁴²⁸ and, the triangle “grounds” the angel by its connotation of the element of fire. The angel is a figure of the *sol y sombra*, the prerequisite of the ritual passing of the sun over the arena. Signifying the sun and its shadow, and levitating between brightness and shrouded darkness, this is the penultimate figure of ontological ambivalence in the campaign.

In more sculptural volumetric terms in Picasso’s drawing, lending an understanding of the geometric basis for the angel, the part-to-part women in *Une anatomie: trois femme VI*, February 27, 1933 (fig. 48) are comprised of the same set of shapes, otherwise schematic and flat. And to substantiate the angel-figure through the model of the geometricized bathers—which includes those under the black sun previously discussed, and, explicated through Lydia Gasman’s incisive analysis of them in “The Cabana Series, 1927-1938”⁴²⁹—it

⁴²⁸ Picasso’s repetition of forms for various purposes and in different contexts include the transformation of the moon-crescent from a screaming crescent cup-shape eye in *Nu couché devant la fenêtre*, February 8, 1934, (Museum Sammlung Rosengart, Lucerne) whose application to the iconography of the crescent in the cosmic battles of the 1934-35 corridas is worthy of analysis in another text.

⁴²⁹ Gasman, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-448.

is then that our angel of the *corrida* is a dark-and-light character, a cosmological figure that traverses alchemical and Christian symbolism. As the combined sun-and-moon we return to the “moon crescent”⁴³⁰ face of the girl in the mirror of *Jeune fille devant un miroir, Marie-Thérèse*, 1932 (fig. 33), which inspired “Picasso’s astrological mirrors of the sun and the moon in his writings.”⁴³¹ This implies that the moon-like crescent wings of the angel-figure were derived from and refer to various mythologies, beliefs, and superstitions that are specifically undefined but may include female warriors whose “moon-shaped” instruments include the crescent sickle or scythe of Death; the bow of slaughter used by Artemis against the Niobids set as an astrological map of stars in the night sky; or, the sacrificial role of the Mesopotamian moon god’s sacrifice of bulls found in the crescents of Early Dynastic seals, the various crescent shaped bull’s horns testimony to the astral crescent, must not be overlooked in Picasso’s totalizing intentions.

In certain representations of the Virgin Mary she stands in splendor upon an inverted moon, a symbol of her fertility through its waxing and waning. The moon also served to highlight cosmic events, divine epiphanies, and the ephemeral nature of life, the *mysterium lunae*. By around 1348, a type of Marian iconography known as *Mondsichelmadonna*, of the Madonna standing within the crescent moon referred to the *Apokalyptische Frau*, or The “Virgin of the Apocalypse,”⁴³² as described in Revelations 12:1, “...a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;”

⁴³⁰ William Rubin, *Picasso in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, New York, p. 138. Gasman, op.cit., p. 1163.

⁴³¹ Gasman, *ibid.*

⁴³² Images of the Virgin as the woman of the Apocalypse became extremely popular in the late 1400s and were produced in large numbers after Sixtus IV granted an indulgence of 11,000 years for each specific prayer said in front of one of them. Mary was often called the second Eve, who, by giving birth to Christ, brought redemption to humankind.

whereas, the crescent under Mary's feet of the Assumption signifies her victory over time and space.⁴³³

Picasso's strategic expression, the symbolic positioning of the corrida angel between the horse on the viewer's left, and Marie-Thérèse-matador on the right anchored by the dark mass of the bull, was resolute. Despite the increasing fluidity and animated if not agitated line in the serial works, the winged figure, like that of the horse, bull, and Marie-Thérèse was maintained in its original placement in the battles. In context, the winged-figure may serve to mediate the conflict, despite favoring the side of the horse, "angel" from the Greek *angelos*, being one who announces or tells, a messenger or guide which in Pauline doctrine recognized them as, "principalities and powers" just below the Godhead in their authority (Colossians 1:16).

In Walter Benjamin's extended analysis of Paul Klee's watercolor, *Angelus Novus*, 1920, whose great forebear was Albrecht Dürer's angel in *Melancholia*, the angel took the form of a dialectical enquiry in the philosopher's metaphysical-theological concerns. In 1933, his interpretation of the function of the angel expanded from being a solicitous spirit to a Luciferian being, a dark giver of light that contained, "satanic features with a half-repressed smile" and had satanic-like "claws" and "sharp wings."⁴³⁴ During Benjamin's refuge from the numbing terror of Nazi Germany, he again changed the "meaning" of the angel from reflecting personal proclivities and being *his* angel, to becoming the universalized Angel of History. In brief, Benjamin's closing analysis, written in 1940, poetically described Angelus's tragedy: Its wings were caught in severe storm winds "with such a violence that the angel can no longer close them," the metaphor being the future of humankind, or in Benjamin's

⁴³³ Compiled from information maintained by The Marian Library, International Marian Research Institute, University of Dayton, Ohio, Cindy Osborne, ed., 2008. n.p.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*

estimation, “what we call progress.”⁴³⁵ In the context of the mass exterminations and other war atrocities, the “storm winds” were the increasingly specific catastrophes of annihilation that made it impossible for the angel to take flight and ascended heavenward. At this point Benjamin’s last entry turned toward the Messianic, the core miracle by which he believed the world might have been saved.

Despite concentrating upon the *corrida* seraphim, the figure of the horse enhances our understanding of light according to Picasso. Given that the horse was granted control of the sword this occurred in tandem with the presence of the seraphim in the arena on July 27. It was only with the earlier depictions from July 22 and 24 that the bull was seen in the attacking and killing position. Now reversed, which we see in the Phillips, Paris, St. Louis, Philadelphia and Ann Arbor paintings the horse is empowered to potentially obliterate the darkness by killing the bull. The diagonal spear becomes a major compositional element in all of these works, coming from the left and traversing the middle of the pictures, directed as it is, directly into the mass of the bull which is always at the center or center right of each work. We note that the horse is no longer on the ground, submissively beat down and devoured; but now, stands rearing its front legs during the attacks and is overarched if the bull is dying or has been killed.

In the four canvases painted on July 27, August 1, 2, and 3 the horse is serpentine, its incurvate neck and rounded front legs are a veritable figure “S” and the tails are highly animated that is especially clear in the St. Louis picture (fig. 49). That the horse is now also a type of serpent increases an apocalyptic reading of the *Courses de taureaux*, “For the power of the horses is in their mouths and in their tails, for their tails are like serpents with heads, and

⁴³⁵ Walter Benjamin, “Theses on the Philosophy of History,” also known as “On the Concept of History.” The English translation is included in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Fontana-Collins, 1973), need page.

by means of them they wound...,” Revelations 9: 19. As a hyperextended “S” the horse’s wildness equates it with the serpent-dragon of the Apocalypse and by that to the “woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet...” (Revelations 12: 1). An angel is also coupled with the serpent, and in this form brings expression through sacred and alchemical lore of the serpent, a symbol of the Mercurial elixir of the crucified Christ of John 3:14, therefore, the One who heals the world. In another Biblical sense, serpents and seraphim were regarded as being interchangeable beings mentioned six times in Isaiah 6: 2-6, five of the verses refer to serpents and the single verse to an angel. In the 11th century *Bamberg Apocalypse* manuscript, a page illustrating “Angel and the Serpent,” (fig. 50) presented the hierarchical beings imbued with specific powers of light and darkness. Although the seven seraphim presented in Picasso’s *Course de taureaux* may seem, in the darkest manifestations to suggest the seven angels of the Apocalypse (Rev. 2:1), we note that according to Biblical “assignment,” first, the messenger-angels are rulers. They are described in a double manner by a name that expresses subordination, and by a figure which expresses authority, “He that is greatest among you, let him be your servant,” Matthew 23:11.

Picasso’s need for light brought into the darkness by Marie-Thérèse was reconsidered in *Femme à la bougie, combat entre taureau et cheval*, Winter 1933-34, in which the archangel Gabriel kneels, perhaps in supplication before the ritual battle, and holds a candle close to the embroiled and writhing horse and bull (fig. 51). This scene of an angel, bull, and horse will establish the triadic relationship that evolves in the paintings from July through September. In the September 8th etching, *La grande corrida, avec femme torero*, in which Marie-Thérèse appears for the last time (fig. 52), the triangle of the seraphim no longer contains its gendered four black dots which have disappeared altogether. Despite the figure being difficult to analyze in the complex sheet, we find tiny sketches of sexual,

cosmological, and metaphysical talismans drawn in the form of two solar eyes, the coil of the universe, a crudely realized vulva, and a phallus sketched into the small quarters of the triangular body-shape. It contained a small universe of personal epigraphs that were far more individualized for this seraph than in treatments that Picasso had given to all other versions, noticeable in the seven thumbnails from each work of art illustrated here (figs. 55-61).

In the last of the 1934 *Courses de taureaux* in which geometrized seraphim were depicted, Picasso's style was carnivalesque and crazed (figs. 53 and 54). The exploded scene of the Philadelphia canvas was made of long dashes emitted from undistinguished shapes in which we virtually lose the bull and Marie-Thérèse who has by now acquired the attribute of the crescent-moon for her small head, which is embedded in the chaos. What would be the golden sunlight of the arena was over-painted with blue lines of horse legs, a burst on the bull's back by impact of the spear, and splotches of color taken to be blood and mud. The angel maintained her position on the diagonal black line of the *vara*, or spear and hovered routinely above the horse. Her head was a red ball and the wings were outlined in red; the triangular skirt, therefore her body, was transparent like that of the horse's head, and seemingly floated away as if disengaged from its source. From September 9, 1934 to April 25, 1935 Picasso did not work on the theme of the *corrida* or depict other *courses de taureaux*. But the problem of light had not been resolved by the seraphim; and, as if it had somehow plagued him in the months that had lapsed they reappeared in three works, a single graphite drawing and two exceptional, highly-colored works on paper from April 26 and 27 (figs. 62-66).

From what might appear to be seraphim identical to those that Picasso had left off with the previous autumn, they were not. The bodies of the angels were now inverted with

downward facing heads, and, what had been triangular bodies were now compact layers of short horizontal lines. Both components were attached to a crescent-moon as “wings” of the seraph that remained the same, turned upward. The sphere, or head was seen in three versions with differing interior areas: four dots in the graphite drawing; as a soft green orb; and, heavily filled with black ink making it the darkest of what would be “filament” inside the angelic bulb-shaped figure. As for the lines above the crescents these were threadings on the metal bases of what were in effect “seraphim-light bulbs.” *Seraphim* being derived from the Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, and respectively, understood to be “the burning ones” was made Luciferian in the technological *corridas nocturnas*.

In Mexico City in 1887 a report dispatched that, “Colon Plaza was filled almost to suffocation last night to witness first attempt at a bull fight by electric light. The electric lights flooded the arena....”⁴³⁶ Andalusian and other Spanish *plaza de toros* also began to feature night corridas. The 11:00 p.m. bullfights commenced in what would otherwise at that hour have been the darkness of small villages. However, making good use of well-illuminated rural plazas strung with lines of bare light bulbs during ferias, local entrepreneurs promoted nighttime bullfights. In various studies of the psychosocial dimension of the electric *corridas* it was concluded that aficionados panned the events. Those who were interviewed for the study reported that the specific artificiality of electric light kept the bulls from performing well, that they required the sun, and, that the severity of the overhead lights, unlike the sun stunned and blinded the bulls into submission. It was the opinion that confrontation, which is at the heart of any good bullfight, could not occur. Essentially, the night corridas were not true corridas. They were regarded as entertainment, called *la charlotadas*, named for Charlie Chaplin, “La Charlot,” the comic. In the most scathing

⁴³⁶ *Bulletin of the National Electric Light Association*, Vol. IX, (New York: 1922), p. 257.

condemnation of the night bullfights, the historian Lozano Rey wrote, "...if the inventiveness of the impresarios has created nocturnal corridas, it is certain that it is nothing to do with serious corridas, but rather, when not repugnant pantomimes with grotesque events, which are attended not by the true lovers of corridas, but only by the lower levels of the *afición*."⁴³⁷

And so within the domain of Picasso's beloved Spanish bullfight, he endowed the arena with heretical substitutions of the sun, the "seraphim-light bulbs," that reintroduced the equation of incandescence and malevolence. Federico García Lorca had defined "Spanish" sun as that that could only be understood by the Spaniard; and, under its aurelian blaze timeless rituals of death and sacrifice occurred. Lorca wrote that the Spanish "illuminated the dead who in the old rituals were brought out into the glare [of the sun] where their bodies were celebrated in the light [and], their profile is as sharp as the cutting edge of a barber's knife."⁴³⁸ This would also describe death in the bullring, but not by electric light.

Yet, if Picasso's work had not shed any clues about his investment in the symbolism of the electric, a torrent of writing that commenced on April 18, one week prior to the incarnation of the seraphim-light bulbs, in unpunctuated blocks of idiosyncratic French and the maternal Spanish of his childhood included the words *eléctricas*, *l'électrique*, *d'ampoules électriques*, and, *bombillas eléctricas* in over thirty entries. His friend, the poet Michel Leiris described the diaristic poems for their "...disparate elements...uttered in the manner of

⁴³⁷ Garry Marvin, *Bullfight* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), p. 77, citing L. Lozano Rey, *La Fiesta y su Urgente e Inexcusable Dulcificación*, (Madrid, 1931), p. 10.

⁴³⁸ Federico García Lorca, "Theory and Play of the *Duende*," *The Havana Lectures*, trans. Stella Rodriguez (Dallas: Keonthos Press, 1984), p. 89. Original version written in 1928. Despite this tribute, Lorca was murdered by Franco's forces in August of 1936 and his body was left unmarked in a mass grave.

learned truths...a soliloquy with no logical consequence.”⁴³⁹ The litany of “lawless”⁴⁴⁰ poems written with urgency was recognized by Leiris as “The thing is here, right here...at this very moment. Profits and losses. Systole and diastole, diurnal and nocturnal, highs and lows, good luck and bad... Life itself—this “life of life” that, with death as its counterpart, is named...”⁴⁴¹ In breathless passages connected by “and” followed by “and” that confessed to confusion and outrage we read, “...but what is there to do today, it’s cold the sun is whipping anybody I could be and there’s no helping it and...things are being left behind some tears are laughing without telling tales again except around the picture frame the news arrived that this time we would only see the spring at night and...”⁴⁴²

Picasso’s thoughts spewed forth in a form of psychic automatism⁴⁴³ that begs rational comprehension. In his various attacks on electric light he wrote, “I’m going to unscrew this rotten light bulb teeth have closed around here...” (November 18, 1935);⁴⁴⁴ “the acrobat lady traverses it butterfly wings opened wide and with thousands of blindfolded eyes minus one that’s reading what’s written with light bulbs high up in the sky...” (December 4, 1935); “...if his face on the small tambourine no longer casts a shadow for the feather in flight to retrieve and the light from the bulb to distort (December 19, 1935);⁴⁴⁵ “...first of all the light from the bulb has neither the patience the lion has to spare nor even more so can the clock

⁴³⁹ See the introductory remarks by Jerome Rothenberg in *Pablo Picasso: The Burial of the Count of Orgaz & Other Poems*, ed. and trans. Jerome and Pierre Joris; afterword by Michel Leiris (Cambridge, Exact Change, 2004). Originally published in French as *Écrits* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard and Pablo Picasso, 1989), p. 313.

⁴⁴⁰ Rothenberg, op.cit., p. xviii.

⁴⁴¹ Rothenberg, loc. cit.

⁴⁴² Rothenberg, op.cit., p. 1.

⁴⁴³ A phrase used by Marie-Laure Bernadac, ed. in her Introduction to *Picasso Collected Writings* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), p. xiv.

⁴⁴⁴ Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 48.

⁴⁴⁵ Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 64.

listen to the list of so much categorical balanced twaddle...”⁴⁴⁶(January 3, 1936); “...the scream in the night... prolongs her caressing martyrdom aurora borealis evening-dress of electric wires... (February 10, 1936);”⁴⁴⁷ “...the sense of alarm in his gaze with the electric aroma of stars you crush under your heel...” (October 3, 1936);⁴⁴⁸ and, “...with an electric aroma a most disagreeable noise spreading a dreadful odor of stars crushed underfoot” (October 10, 1936)⁴⁴⁹ among many entries.

Such were the telling markers of a piercing awareness or madness, in which the corruption of light was an artifact of Picasso’s astute perception of the interface between two forms of power: the industrial technological and the immutable sacred cosmic. The seraphim-light bulbs of April 26 and 27 produced a spectrum of bright colors, fragmented and contained in Picasso’s form of geometry that will be the basis of light, in the grisaille tones of *Guernica*.

⁴⁴⁶ Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 72.

⁴⁴⁷ Rothenberg, op. cit., p..94.

⁴⁴⁸ Rothenberg, op. cit., p. 122.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid.



Fig. 30: *Toureau mourant*, July 16, 1934, oil on canvas. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection.



Fig. 31: *Course de taureaux*, July 22, 1934, oil on canvas. Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.



Fig. 32: *Course de taureaux*, July 22, 1934, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 33: *Jeune fille devant un miroir, Marie-Thérèse*, 1932, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Mrs. Simon Guggenheim.

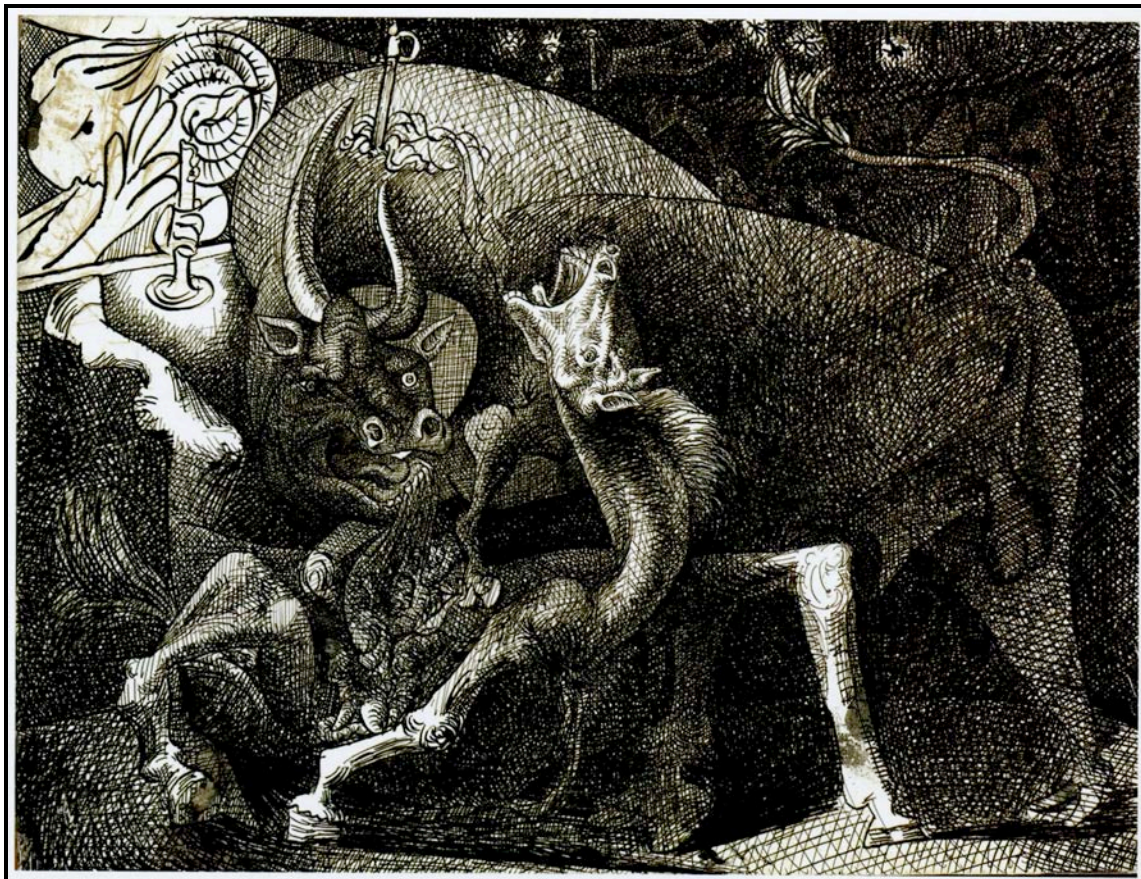


Fig. 34: *Femme à la bougie, combat entre le taureau et le cheval*, July 24, 1934, pen and ink, brown crayon on cloth pasted on plywood. Musée Picasso, Paris.

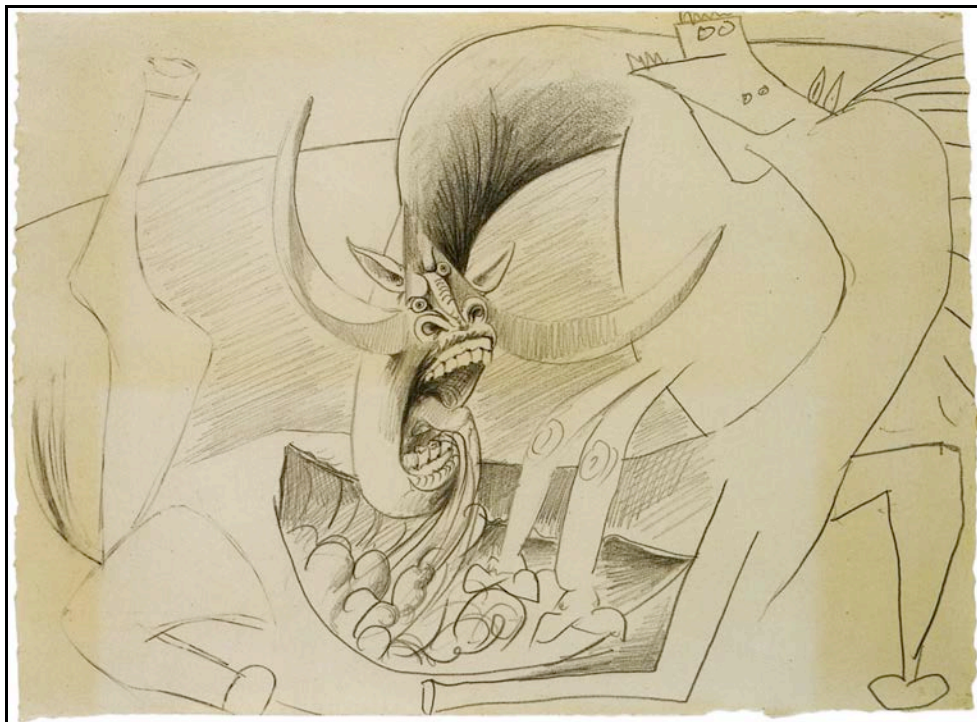


Fig. 35: *Taureau et cheval*, July 24, 1934, graphite on paper, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg. Hegewisch Collection.

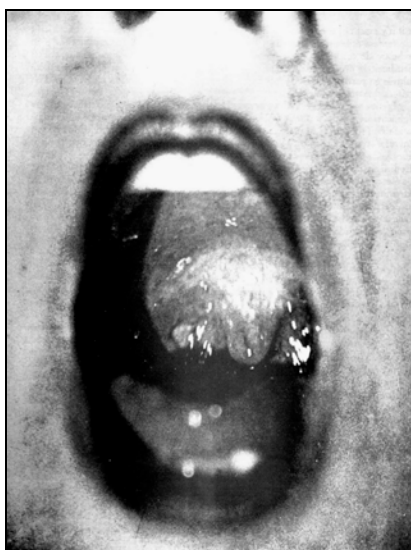


Fig. 36: Jacques-Andrè Boiffard, no title, photograph published in *Documents*, 1929.

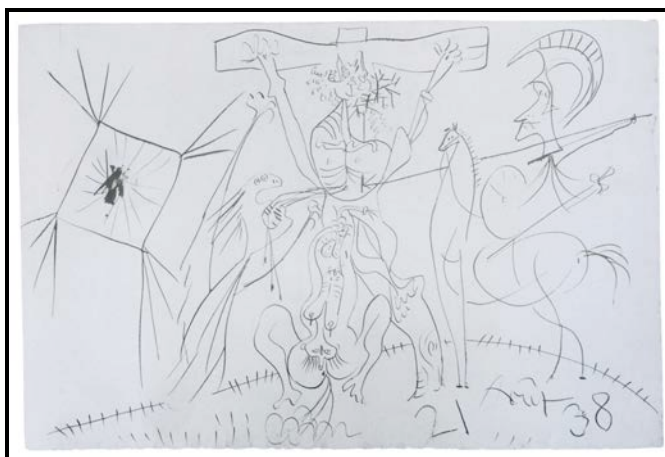


Fig. 37: *La crucifixion*, August 21, 1938, pen and India ink on paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 38: *Course de taureaux*, July 27, 1934, oil on canvas. Courtesy Acquavella Gallery, New York.

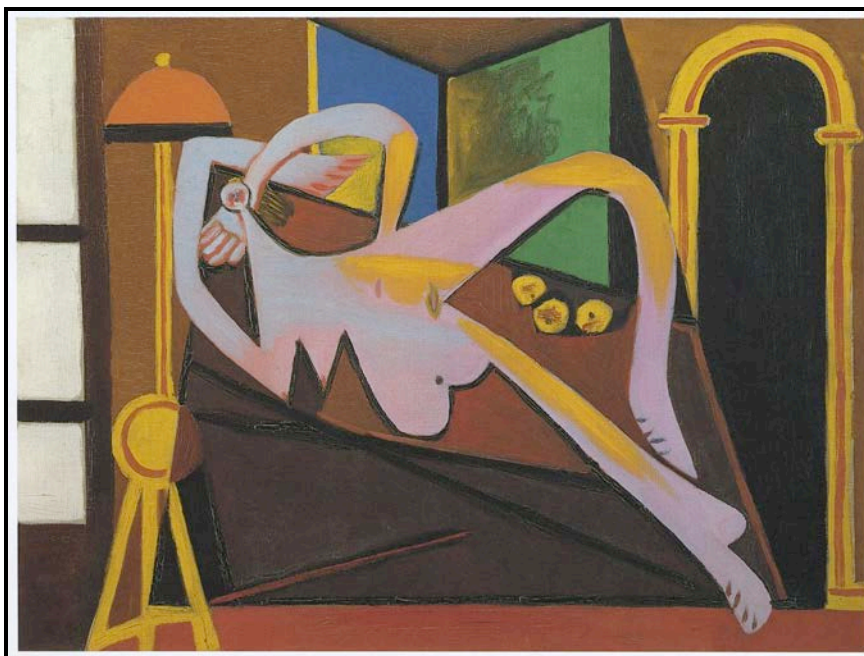


Fig. 39: *Femme couchée*, April, 1929, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 40: *Courses de taureaux*, Spring, 1900, pastel on paper.
Mr. and Mrs. Leigh B. Block Collection, Chicago.



Fig. 41: *Courses de taureaux*, July 27, 1934, oil on canvas. The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.
Fig. 42: *Courses de taureaux*, August 1, 1934, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 43: *Courses de taureaux*, August 2, 1934, oil on canvas.
Private collection, courtesy Galerie Louise Leiris, Paris.

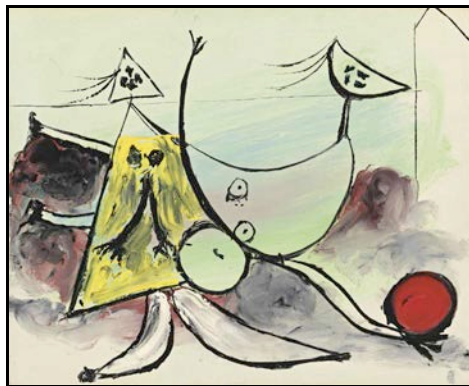


Fig. 44: *Baigneuses I (Deux femmes jouant au ballon, devant une cabine)*, September 4, 1932, oil on canvas, private collection.



Fig. 45: *Femme jouant au ballon sur la plage* September 6, 1932, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 46: *Trois femmes jouant au bord de la mer, cabines de bain*, September 15, 1932. Fundación Almine & Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte.

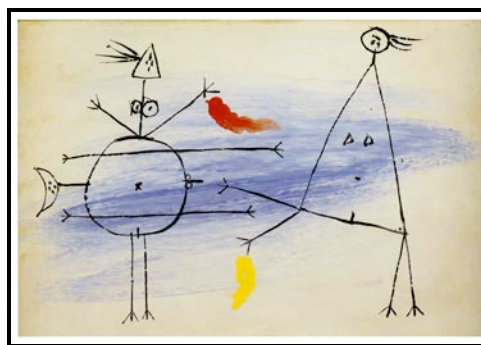


Fig. 47: *Baigneuses au bord de la mer*, September 4, 1932, oil on canvas. The Picasso Estate.

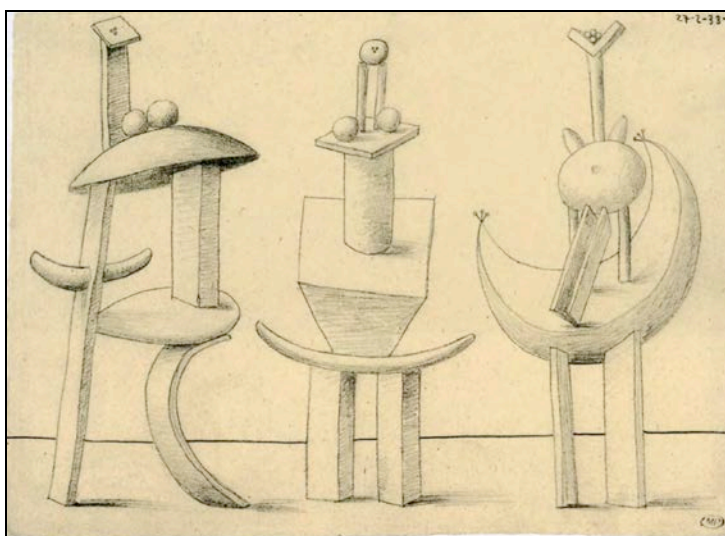


Fig. 48: *Une anatomie: trois femme VI*, February 27, 1933, graphite on paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 49: *Courses de taureaux*, August 3, 1934, oil on canvas. Saint Louis Art Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Marcus Rice.



Fig. 50: "Angel and the Serpent," early 11th c. Bamberg State Library, Bamberg.



Fig. 51: *Femme à la bougie, combat entre taureau et cheval*, Winter, 1933-34, pencil on paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 52: *La grande corrida avec femme torero*, September 8, 1934, etching on copper. Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Paris; Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh.



Fig. 53: *Courses de taureaux*, August 3, 1934, oil on canvas. University of Michigan Museum of Art, Ann Arbor.



Fig. 54: *Courses de taureaux*, September 9, 1934, oil on canvas. Philadelphia Museum of Art, Gift of Henry P. McIlhenny.

Details of seraphim in seven works from July 27 to September 9, 1934



Figs. 55-57: July 27 (Phillips Collection); August 1 (Private collection); and, August 2 (Leiris, Paris)

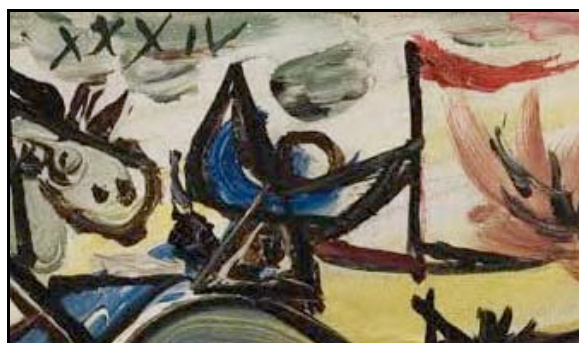


Fig. 58: August 3 (St. Louis)

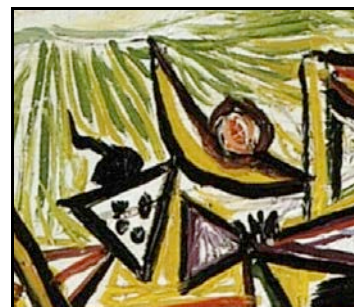


Fig. 59: August 3 (Ann Arbor)



Fig. 60: September 8 (Paris and Edinburgh)



Fig. 61: September 9 (Philadelphia)

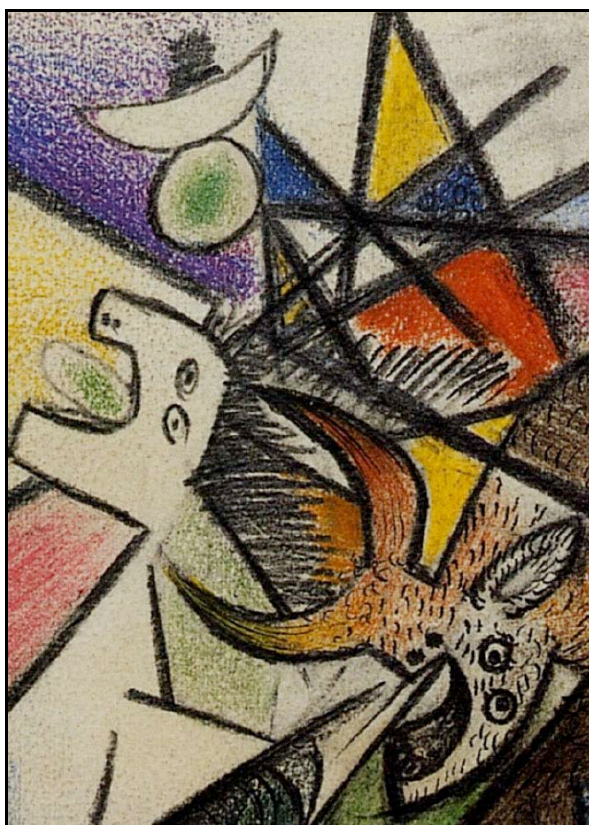
The "Seraphim-Light Bulbs" of April 26 and 27, 1935



Fig. 62: *Courses de taureaux*, April 26, 1935, pencil on paper. Private collection, Paris.

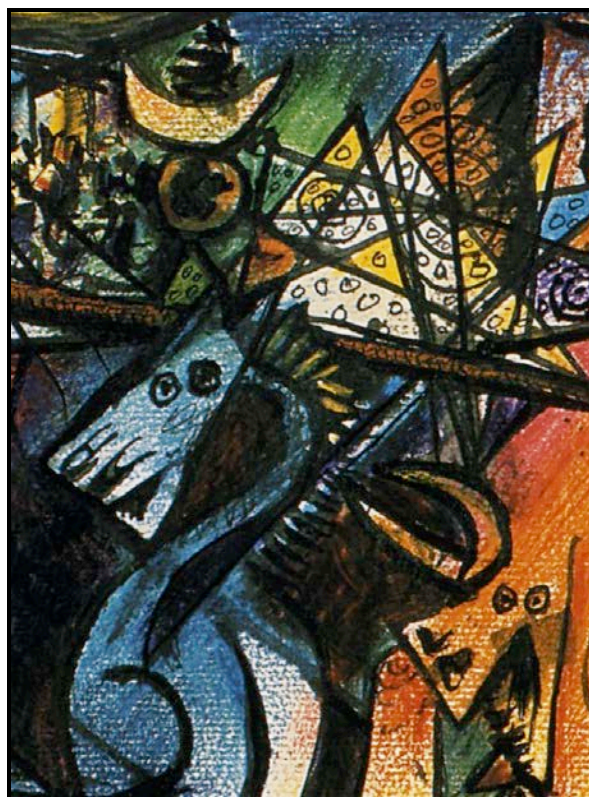


Figs. 63 and 64: *Courses de taureaux*, (and detail), April 26, 1935, crayon, pencil, india ink on paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.





Figs. 65 and 66: *Courses de taureaux* (and detail), April 27, 1935, pastel and India ink on paper. Marina Picasso Collection.



Chapter 5

Guernica and the Conflict of Radiance

Part One: Candles of War

*Where else will you take the bird
Than into the flame?*

Novalis

Resuming the scrutiny of *Guernica*, with an appreciation of the electric sun vis-à-vis the paradigm of the electric seraphim; and, the unique configurations of the degraded and black suns depicted in the 1930s requires the need to study the third light in the painting, that of the candle. Whereas the focus upon the essence of incandescent light and representations of the light bulb has marginalized a consideration of the candle in *Guernica* up to this point, it is the persistent radiance of the pre-modern era, handmade, lit, and tended by hand that is the apparent counterforce, equal in scale and articulation, to that of the profane sun and indisputable for its importance. The candle, unlike the sun⁴⁵⁰ was instantly among the first elements that Picasso drew in the May 1st and 2nd sketches that recorded his instinctual, irate reaction to the aerial bombings of Gernika (fig. 55, p. 70 and figs. 1-3 of this chapter).

There is significance in identifying the scribbled expressions of the early sketches as the light of a candle and not an oil lamp. Its placement—held forth in the scene by an equally significant element, the candle-bearer—over the puerile bull and stricken horse grants light its hegemonic role that was maintained as a fundamental component in the proposition that is *Guernica*. In its practical function to reveal that which might otherwise

⁴⁵⁰ The first image of a sun was configured into the full-scale canvas in the second stage of the painting made after May 11 according to the photographic record by Dora Maar.

have been occluded, or left undisclosed in the darkness, Picasso set a conundrum in play via the tri-partite figures of light, the sun, the light bulb, and the candle.

Does he suggest that light, as the Platonic Good, is impossible in the warring twentieth century? In Dante's exclamation, "The Good is the cause of knowledge, of truth itself, and is of still higher worth than both of these. Just as light and vision are like the sun but not identical to it, so knowledge and truth are like the Good, different from and lower than it. There are thus two powers, the Good which reigns over the intelligible world and the sun which rules over the visible world."⁴⁵¹ Is there a measure of balance against force between the three lights in *Guernica*, "force" being a metaphorical expansion of the plight of the innocents in the path of fascism? Is the work of allegory a blinding, that is, does it relieve the inability to see in mimetic terms that that was otherwise unbearable or unseeable? As Jacques Derrida conceded to Borges's opinion on the metaphoric vastness of light, the French philosopher exclaimed, "Borges is correct, 'Perhaps universal history is but the history of several metaphors.' Light is only one example of these several, but what an example! Who will ever dominate it, who will ever renounce its meaning without first being pronounced by it? What language will ever escape it?"⁴⁵²

This thesis has presented the sporadic but purposeful trajectory of the symbolic light bulb in the context of malevolence, building toward the paragon of the electric sun. Picasso countered the potentially all-encompassing power and panoptical machinery of the electric beacon by coupling it with a simple candle thrust into the scene of destruction by a candle-bearer, ancient spirit of Truth and the feminizing principle of light (fig. 4). In direct interface the two forms of light, taken that the electric sun is considered as one, the candle is

⁴⁵¹ John Anthony Mazzeo, "Dante's Sun," *Italica*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (December, 1956), pp. 243-44.

⁴⁵² Jacques Derrida, "Violence and Metaphysics," *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 92.

exactly placed at the right-hand edge of the sun's rays. To reiterate a portion of this observation stated earlier, the stance of distancing is especially poignant in the affirmative thrust of the candle bearer whose lamp stops just short of the extra long tip of the sun's spiked rays.⁴⁵³ The stance of distancing is especially poignant in that the candle-bearer is an archaic figure of truth, therefore clarity, and, of innocence that stands as a reminder of those qualities and does so in the failed technological ambience of the scene. The candle holder itself is a common nineteenth century object whose variety with a glass chimney ensured that the flame would not be easily extinguished and would also burn brighter and longer. The interior space of the glass chimney, like that of the light bulb, reveals the simple outline of the light's energy source, the wick and flame, opposed to the tungsten filament. In studies from May 2 and 9, candleholders similar to the one in *Guernica*, as well as the figuration of the candle-bearer resolved to the degree that the arm and head represent the whole figure, will not change. The candle, which was the only source of light in the early drawings, is held over the bull and the collapsed horse in the foreground. The candle will not become an essential factor in the lighting of the impaled horse in *Guernica* whose expression of anguish was intensified by the composited electric light.

A brief excursus on the earliest depictions of candlelight, or interior lighting, in Picasso's work has bearing upon the later dispositions of it in light's varying capacities in his work. Nothing less than a profound sensitivity about the allegorical breadth of radiance was achieved from 1895 to the early autumn of 1900, prior to Picasso's departure for Paris in which his sense of room light would change dramatically in the incandescent halls of the *Can-Can* and renowned *Moulin de la Galette*. The art of pictorial illumination had been instructed to Picasso by his father, the academic painter and teacher, José Ruiz Blasco; and, by 1897,

⁴⁵³ Chapter Two, "Illuminating War: Black Sun, Electric Sun."

further taught at the Academia Real de San Fernando in Madrid, which included the study and copying of paintings by Velázquez, Goya, and El Greco, among other masters in the Prado. In addition to the immense lineage of European masterpieces that the young Picasso was schooled in, he would have been aware of a popular subgenre of Spanish painting known as the tradition of *luz de gas*⁴⁵⁴ that enjoyed a long reputation from 1880-1930. This was a veritable genre of softly lit, non-descript domestic interiors with families or an individual in salon or dining room settings. The proliferation of this type of painting, favored in middle-class Spanish households, could not have been missed by Picasso and in some cases may have been lauded by his father since many of the practitioners were well-respected academic artists.

The candles of war, 1937-1945, come forward as artifacts of the sensibility found in the Barcelona period of Picasso's "Catholic" juvenilia, beginning in 1895, and his further development in Madrid. His potential with the art of painting was already proving Picasso to be a prodigy that was first realized in the astonishing accomplishment of *La premiere communion*, 1895-96, painted when he was fifteen years old (fig. 5). In the scene, two of four candles are snuffed out and left to smoke in the dark regions of the church altar, making the subject of the picture not only about the Holy Sacrament, but also one of death. As John Richardson wrote of the candlelight in the painting, "Tempting as it is to see these candles as a reference to Pablo's guttering faith.... The candles could stand for the two living and two dead [Ruiz] children. Combined with the rose petals, emblems of mortality, that are scattered on the altar steps, this device would suggest that this First Communion is also a *vanitas* – a

⁴⁵⁴ *Luz de Gas, 1880–1930: La Noche y sus Fantasma en la pintura Española*, catalogue for La Fundación Cultural MAPFRE VIDA (Madrid, 2005). Two notable chapters are, "Luz de gas. La noche y sus fantasma en la pintura española," by Pablo Burillo; and, "La noche iluminada. De la luz de gas a la electricidad," by Lily Litvak. The catalogue featured painters of the *luz y gaz* movement to include Joaquin Sorolla, Josep Cardona, and Luis Pidal, among others.

memento mori that could commemorate the dead Conchita [at the age of seven]...”⁴⁵⁵ *First Communion* was followed by a much more modest work, *Candélabre*, 1896, that nevertheless poignantly depicted the sole subject of candles flickering in a tenebrous setting (fig. 6).

The agency of light and its effects appeared in a small group of sick room and deathbed pictures made in the winter of 1899-1900 that have never been considered as sensible precursors to Picasso’s mature sensitivity to light as allegory. Certainly his rousing depiction of ecstatic candlelight that illuminates the profile of the deceased Carlos Casagemas (1901)⁴⁵⁶ is outstanding for its importance in the overall taxonomy of Picasso’s light. There is a symbolic relationship to it found in earlier pictures in which an innate sensibility about light was rendered in a few morbid late nineteenth century works. These unveiled Picasso’s hand regarding an initial ability to combine pathos with illumination. The charcoal drawing on fragmented paper, *Prêtre qui visite un homme mourante*, late 1899 (fig. 7) is a scene of last rites, the *viaticum*, Latin for “provisions for a journey” in which light is traditionally seen as an expression of the mortal condition. The faintly applied white chalk of the glass lampshade may have been an indication of the passing of life in the otherwise monotone work on paper. Has Picasso, this early in his burgeoning genius presented the viewer with the suggestion of a situation that is either/or? In other words, does light stand as a witness and as a symbol of primal life force in its role to illuminate? Is the essence of light, as *lux*, expressed as subjective and interior states of mind,⁴⁵⁷ of enlightenment or being enlightened, of the imagination and dreams that gave rise to metaphors on existence already a factor in creating a subjective vocabulary of light?

⁴⁵⁵ John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso, 1881-1906* (New York: Random House, 1991), p. 72.

⁴⁵⁶ Fig. 54, p. 185.

⁴⁵⁷ See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 29. Cited in “An Anthropology of Luminosity: The Agency of Light,” by Mikkel Bille and Tim Flohr Sørensen; *Journal of Material Culture*, 2007, Vol. 12, p. 265.

In the hushed atmosphere of the small oil painting, *Au lit de morte* (fig. 8) the deathbed scene is painted in greys redolent of the tones of Crucifixion and Deposition scenes that Picasso had learned from at the Prado. The ambiguous bedside light, either a candle or a small lamp, is the brightest point in the room. Its radiance reaches softly throughout the scene and across the table's surface in a glow that is otherwise a horizontal line. In the third example, *Au chevet de la femme mourante*, (fig. 9) here, the lamp has gone cold and dark. Grisaille reached its purpose, and only through the window beyond the dying woman's bed does the light of day—for Picasso will often provide a door or window as the “outside” possibility of the containment of tragedy, as he did in *The Three Dancers*, 1923—offered in faded greens and yellows appear in an otherwise colorless room. The precedents established in these humble early works that brought the proximity of light into *the presence of death*, are upheld to be compelling prototypes for Picasso's sense of radiance leading up to the Great War, and in individual examples and campaigns created in the context of the Spanish Civil War, World War II, and the aftermath of those near incomprehensible catastrophes.

As with the light bulb, whose manifestation as “Filament-Harlequin” in 1914 was absent thereafter until the conflict of the civil war in Spain gave cause for its recurrence, the candle was also nonexistent in Picasso's interwar works of art. It reappeared without precedent as an attribute of Marie-Thérèse in her role as the bearer of candle light formulated in *Femme à la bougie, combat entre le taureau et le cheval* from July 24, 1934.⁴⁵⁸ On April 28, 1935, the day after the final seraphim-light bulbs were implanted in scenes of the *corrida*, Picasso took up working on the seventh and final state of the masterful etching, *Minotauromachy* (fig. 10). That the force of his inventiveness with the creation of a new

⁴⁵⁸ Fig. 34, p. 240.

mazda, a unique supernatural and electrical figure in the seraphim-light bulb eventually magnified into the irrepressible electric sun, was nevertheless not continued, but was replaced, so to speak, with attention now on the light of the candle. Throughout the stages of the *Minotauromachy*, a *koré*⁴⁵⁹ figure, typified by the stance in profile of Marie-Thérèse, holds out a candle. She famously confronts a gigantic but rather diffident Minotaur now seemingly more blind than ever⁴⁶⁰ that extends his right arm as if sensing or feeling the light as a haptic essence, which otherwise seems to be blinding him even further. Picasso, taken as the grand Minotaur, holds his left hand near his heart in a gesture of protection against or perhaps in trust of the girl whom he knows so well.

Varied critical explanations of the candlebearer, being careful not to associate the figure with the Light-bearer, L. for Lucifer meaning, “light bringing” have been suggested to represent many things, noted by many scholars. Unlike Marie-Thérèse, the female candlebearer in *Guernica* is articulated with knife-like fingernails and breast nipples typical of the “Dora Maar’s” in the ‘30s. The gentler figure was widely interpreted for her role as a “supernatural being, a modern representation of an Erinye or a fury;”⁴⁶¹ or in other instances, “the Republic, in the attitude of a female warrior: she rushes the Nationalist horse;”⁴⁶² and, “the big female head, which, as in a Greek tragedy, appears to be a tragic mask. . . [yet] is the

⁴⁵⁹ A freestanding Archaic Greek sculpture of a young female often depicted in an offering pose. It is interesting to note that there is debate whether *korai* represent mortals or deities, or Persephone, daughter of Demeter in the lineage of ancient agrarian cults.

⁴⁶⁰ Meaning that the Minotaur in this series follows the paradigmatic blind Minotaur in Picasso’s, *Minotaure aveugle guidé par une fillette*, in which a young girl leads the beast forward in five versions begun on September 22, 1934, the theme carried through to the winter of 1935. It may be said that the girl *is* the light versus carries the light in the *Minotauromachy* series and/or as the candlebearer in *Guernica*.

⁴⁶¹ Eberhard Fisch, *Guernica by Picasso: A Study of the Picture and Its Contents*, trans. James Hotchkiss (Lewisburg, PA.: Bucknell University Press, 1988), p.127. The Erinyes or Furies were three sisters in Greek myth who pursued those that were guilty of blood crimes and in so doing drove them mad.

⁴⁶² Juan Larrea, *Guernica, Pablo Picasso* (New York, Curt Valentin, 1947), pp.38-9.

only power ready to help, and she attempts to combat the triumphant destroyer of peace with her symbolic light. . . ."463 Quoting Isaiah 6:21, the Picasso historian, Frank Russell, framed the candlebearer in a salvific role: "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent. . . Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, And her salvation like a torch that is burning."⁴⁶⁴

Inasmuch as the Mithraic tauroctony was integral to the symbolic constitution of *Crucifixion*, 1930, its potential application to the mythical infrastructure of *Guernica* may have included the lore of two torchbearers known from dedicatory inscriptions as "Cautes" and "Cautopates." In the iconography of a tomb painting at Via Flaminia each winged figure carries a torch, the one pointed up, the other down. Cautes, whose torch flamed upwards, has typically been associated with the primary symbolism of the Mithraic bull.⁴⁶⁵ The tauroctony appears "to represent the astronomical situation, which was obtained when the equinoxes were in Taurus and Scorpius"⁴⁶⁶ Furthermore, the connection of the torchbearers to these opposing astrological signs suggests that they signify the spring and autumn equinoxes. If we consider the various renditions of Picasso's bearer of candlelight as an image of hope, moreover as an illuminator of the tragic, which ensures the renewal of life through sacrifice, then the Mithraic Cautes may be added to the corpus of extant hermeneutical readings. As the representation of the spring equinox, Cautes's torch ushers in the rising sun forcing life to begin its increase. The torches are pointed north and south,

⁴⁶³ Curt Seckel, "Masstäbe der Kunst im 20. Jahrhundert" (Düsseldorf and Vienna: Econ-Verlag, 1967), p.253.

⁴⁶⁴ Frank Russell, *Picasso's Guernica: The Labyrinth of Narrative and Vision* (Montclair, N.J.: Allanheld & Schram, 1980), p.37

⁴⁶⁵ Franz Valery Marie Cumont, *Recherches sur la symbolisme funeraire des Romains* (Paris: Paul Gunther, 1966), pp.73-4. Cumont discusses that a tomb painting in the Via Flaminia exhibits Greek *dioscuroi* with two winged infants above their heads, one carrying a pointed torch up the other down. Also noted, these infants are a common representation of "Phosphorus" and "Hesperus," the Morning and Evening stars.

⁴⁶⁶ Ulansey, op. cit., p. 62.

illuminating the hemispheres in the recurring ascent and descent of the sun, and in its path the transition of light to darkness and back again.⁴⁶⁷

As we understand the *Minotauromachy* for its essential conceptual importance to *Guernica*, the source for the figure of the candlebearer also finds resonance with the seventeenth century French painter, Georges de La Tour's candle light nocturnes. Twelve canvases were presented in the pioneering exhibition, "*Les peintres de la réalité en France au XVIII siècle*," organized by Paul Jamot and Charles Sterling for the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris from November 1934 to February 1935.⁴⁶⁸ Certainly the Marie-Thérèse figure of light from July of '34 had already been inspired prior to the public revelation of La Tour's compelling, *Saint Sebastian Tended by Saint Irene by Torchlight*, 1649. In the exquisitely painted scene⁴⁶⁹ Irene holds a flaming torch that illuminates the pierced body of the Martyr. Picasso had seen the La Tour's at the Orangerie and it may be, although unsubstantiated beyond the iconological reckoning of types, that the Irene characterization stimulated Picasso's approach to the candlebearer in *Guernica* that looms over the pierced and collapsed horse, a substitute for the Crucified Christ, or in the La Tour the impaled Sebastian. The figure conflated the themes of the Lamentation of Christ with the Saint's sacrifice that was made "manifest [by the women's] gestures and expressions, and by the descending, collapsing movement of the design..."⁴⁷⁰ If there is a correlation to be drawn between the torchlight carrying figure of

⁴⁶⁷ Cumont, loc. cit.

⁴⁶⁸ Sebastian Goeppert and Herma C. Goeppert-Frank, *Minotauromachy by Pablo Picasso* (Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 1987), p. 72. The Paris Orangerie exhibition included La Tour's *The Newborn Child*, 1648 (Rennes, Musée des Beaux-Arts); *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1644 (Musée du Louvre); *Saint Sebastian Tended by Saint Irene by Torchlight*, c. 1650 (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie), and *The Denial of Saint Peter*, 1650 (Musée du Nantes) in

⁴⁶⁹ And here I refer to the version in the Musée du Louvre and not to the second version in Berlin, which is purported by Conisbee to have been painted by La Tour's son, Etienne, or members of his atelier.

⁴⁷⁰ Philip Conisbee, *Georges de La Tour and His World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) for the eponymous exhibition held at the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., and the Kimbell Art Museum,

Irene, exhibited in the winter of 1934, and the candlebearer figure as Marie-Thérèse, formulated in the summer of 1934 for the ritual of the bullfight, it is found in the uncanny disposition of each young woman who averted her gaze so as not to witness the dead that her light had made visible.

In one of five *nature morte* pictures that preceded Picasso's inclusion of the candle in *Guernica* by five months, *Nature morte à la cruche et la bougeoir*, January 15, 1937, (fig. 11) the flame resembles the living spirit of the Casagemas candle (1901). The work followed the creation of State I and early State II of *Rêve et Mensonge*, January 8-9, by one week in a swift and sure swing from political satire to allegorical still life painting. Picasso will not give up on expressions of candlelight commensurate with the force of will in the same sense that we may feel the living vigor of petals, leaves, and rays of sun in Van Gogh's most explicitly emotional work. The pitcher and candle, later joined by the bull, dove, and miscellaneous common domestic items would take on nothing less than epic elaborations of the Eros-Thanatos complex. The still lives connote the sexuality of Marie-Thérèse represented by the pitcher as a symbol of fullness or fecundity personified through a curvaceous bowl and curl of the spout. In other autobiographical schemas, she and Dora Maar were in their guises as animated vessels, battling flowers, and different types of fruit, apples or lemons on tables that may be regarded as small stages. And the candle, with its energy intact and boldly exuberant was at times a doppelgänger for Picasso, both an aggressor coupled with the pitcher, and also an image of conscience against morality gone berserk in the bloodshed in

Fort Worth, TX., October 1996 to May 1997, pp. 129-30. Conisbee also wrote about the measured perfection of the La Tour St. Sebastian that was extended into horizontal format and presented by the artist to King Louis XIII as a work, "of such perfect taste that the king had all the other paintings removed from his room in order to leave only this one. Its royal provenance was renowned and it may have made "it all the more desirable [to copy], perhaps even more talismanic." *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Spain and larger Europe on the brink of war. The flame is at times both fire and eye, an apotropaic conflation.

The Picasso scholar, Jean Sutherland Boggs, wrote of the *nature morte* candles, “The concepts are so simple...But in fact they are more exuberant, more glowing with energy and an instinctive drama than that.”⁴⁷¹ The brass candleholder was often articulated in lemniscate form, the symbol of infinity that accommodates the sense of a future. *Nature morte à la bougie*, January 29, 1937, (fig. 12) includes a burned down but nevertheless vibrant candle (Picasso) that was partnered with a well-used pitcher, significantly colored violet per the code for Marie-Thérèse, but with a dark red-purplish glaze that conjures flesh or aging fruit. The painterly allegory of lovers would remain in Picasso’s personal collection until the end of his life. We take from these January of ‘37 pictures, and those still lifes that follow them in form and essential elements, the functions of the candle as more than hope in that fire and light are manifestations of destruction and also divine nature and divine presence, which Picasso fully understood from his Catholic upbringing. Regarding them in general, he explained, “The objects that go into my paintings are ...common objects from anywhere...I want to tell something by means of the most common objects.... just like Christ’s use of parables.... so that it would be accessible to the widest possible audience.”⁴⁷²

Throughout the war electric light and candlelight were realistic accounts of limited electric power during the Occupation, the lowest points of depravation being in 1944 when there was sporadic gas and electricity in all households including Picasso’s studio at 7, rue Grands-Augustins. Tables set with pitchers and glasses, compotes of fruit, vases with a few flowers, and the occasional chunk of meat, the head of a lamb or coil of boudin (blood

⁴⁷¹ Jean Sutherland Boggs, *Picasso & Things* (Cleveland Museum of Art, 1992), p. 243. Published in conjunction with the exhibition, “Picasso and Things, The Still Lifes of Picasso” organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art with the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Musée Picasso, Paris.

⁴⁷² Francois Gilot and Carlton Lake, *Life with Picasso* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1964), pp. 202-03 and 221.

sausage) would be illuminated in significantly different ways. Whereas electric light would typically signify a *nature morte* setting as particularly interrogative and at times brutally sacrificial or surgical, as we see in *Nature morte*, August 12, 1942, (fig. 13) wherein a butchered rabbit is splayed out under a geometric-shaped overhead lamp. Light is cast in harsh shards that illuminate innards and the skinned carcass, as well as a dead woodcock or dove at the back left of the table. The tables in themselves are not only sacrificial they were sacramental as in the mode of the Basel Kunstmuseum's *Bread and Fruit Bowl on a Table*, 1909, in which the elements of a simple meal were highly codified in the proto-cubist arrangement. In the war years of actual carnage being the subject of the "meal," and the artifacts of slaughter left for investigation under electric light, the tables from this period were staged to present the evil against flesh that was perpetrated by war. The indelible symbolism of these still lifes would never escape Picasso's conscience. Twenty years later, *Coq sur une chaise sous la lampe*, 1962, (fig. 14) painted when the artist was eighty-one, is a large-scale canvas of a rooster with bound and raised legs that repeat the figuration of the main victim in *The Charnel House*, 1945, who mirrored the indignity of the inverted crucified Saint Peter, symbolized through the grisaille *coq*.⁴⁷³

Six years into the war, the staid white pitcher and brass candlestick were joined by a blue saucepan presented in straightforward if not idiographic terms, left to right, in, *Pichet, bougeoir et casserol émaillée*, February 16, 1945 (fig. 15). The composition carried forward the ongoing relationship between pitcher and candle. And now in its trio form with an empty *casserole*, the interior enamel darkened from use, an emphasis upon sustenance and food rationing, and, of the sentimentality of simple things was represented by the two empty

⁴⁷³ Not to be forgotten is *Nature morte au*, May 10, 1941, fig. 57, p. 188. A bleak table setting of blood sausage (boudin) illuminated by a triangular black electric lamp considered an incandescent Mouth of Hell.

vessels at either side of the candle. The flame acquired a black hood, a menacing form and correspondent to the deep shadows cast from objects since 1937, contrasting with those still lifes from only one year before in which shadows were still rendered in blues and greens. We cannot count the black shape behind the candle as a shadow, per se, but it may be regarded among the blackest blacks painted in 1945. As for the blue pot, Picasso had claimed, “You see, a saucepan can also cry out! Everything can cry out! A simple bottle. And Cézanne’s apples!”⁴⁷⁴ The painting’s history is notable in that Picasso chose it to be among ten works that he gifted to the Musée National d’Art Moderne in 1947 to be hung alongside masterpieces at the Louvre before its arrival at the Centre Georges Pompidou. As Francois Gilot retold an account of the day, Picasso had insisted upon going to see Zurburán’s *St. Bonaventure on His Bier*, 1629, before seeing anything else, and that, “When we got home again, he said only that he had been particularly interested to see a painting of his next to a Zurburán.”⁴⁷⁵

Pitcher, Candle, Casserole (Nature morte à la cruche et la bougeoir) also had a “second life”⁴⁷⁶ in *Le charnier*, (The Charnel House), 1945. This major painting in grisaille conveyed the horror of the war by its heaped pile of bodies, their separated limbs, and contorted heads⁴⁷⁷ that recalls a similar desperate scene in Goya’s *Tanto y mas* (All This and More)⁴⁷⁸, 1810, the bodies pile upward in pyramid formation toward the top register that is an unfinished, laid

⁴⁷⁴ Pierre Daix, *Picasso créateur* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), p. 294.

⁴⁷⁵ Gilot and Lake, op. cit., pp. 202-03. Cited by Boggs, op. cit. 288, who wrote that, “We do not know if this still life was one of the three or four Picassos the guards hung beside the Zurburán, but its very austerity and dignity suggests that it must have been.” To which I would add, that Picasso would have seen the particularly vibrant white conical shape in each painting with uncanny similarity, that of the saint’s ecclesiastical Roman Mitre and the candle’s flame.

⁴⁷⁶ Boggs, loc. cit.

⁴⁷⁷ The devastation of the Nazi crimes of war had not yet been revealed to the world at the time Picasso made the painting.

⁴⁷⁸ Goya, *Disasters of War*, plate 25, drawn and etched about 1810-14.

table (fig. 16). The picture is the only other work comparable in strength of its outcry against war to that of *Guernica*, but differing in that it was not a totalized allegory. The first sketches for *Le charnier* were begun on February 13, and like Dora Maar's photographic record of *Guernica*, Christian Zervos also photographed stages of *The Charnel House*. By state three they reveal a charcoal drawing of a pitcher and casserole exacted from the February 16 still life, the objects of domestic sanity⁴⁷⁹ that sit atop the terrible waste of life underneath a roof that is the tabletop. The scene also brings to mind the sacred table of *Bread and Fruitdish*, aforementioned, that was originally conceived as a *Supper at Emmaus* scene.⁴⁸⁰ The spiritual thread of the work, in which the resurrected Christ is joined by his unsuspecting disciples at a table set with fruit and bread was donned in Picasso's version as the culminating move, according to William Rubin, from "the narrative to the iconic."⁴⁸¹ In none of the states of *The Charnel House* was the third element of the altar-table in *Pitcher, Candle, Casserole*, that of the lit candle, included in the transformation that occurred over six months, a decision that Rubin suggested might have been "read as a symbol of optimism."⁴⁸²

In the spring of '45, the ongoing jubilee since the Liberation of Paris on D-Day, August 25, 1944 was abruptly stilled by disclosures of Nazi camp brutalities. Reichsführer Heinrich Himmler had ordered the evacuation of all Nazi concentration camps on January 17 that commenced the unspeakable death march by nearly sixty thousand emaciated prisoners across frozen Poland, from Auschwitz to Wodzislaw, an approximate sixty

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid. Boggs uses the word "sanity" in reference to these common household objects.

⁴⁸⁰ Following the thematic model of Caravaggio's masterpiece, *Supper at Emmaus*, 1601, National Gallery, London.

⁴⁸¹ William Rubin's phrase that has remained a time-honored formula in the interpretation of the cubistic turn in Picasso's work, ca 1908-10. Cited in Brigitte Léal, Christine Piot, Marie-Laure Bernadac, eds., *The Ultimate Picasso* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2000), p. 138.

⁴⁸² William Rubin, *Picasso in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art, Including Remainder-Interest and Promised Gifts* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1972), p. 169.

kilometers. Ten days later, Auschwitz-Birkenau was liberated by Soviet troops who then disclosed their findings that are a record of the murderous twentieth-century. *The Charnel House* had been created prior to the discovery of the mass graves in the camps, as if Picasso's second sense anticipated the doomsday findings. Nevertheless, it was the atrocity of the concentration camps that the painting expressed. In Picasso's absolute battle with the confines of death, unjustly reaped by the perpetrators of evil, as he would consider them to be, he donated *Le charnier* to benefit one of the charities of the French Communist Party. The proceeds were determined to contribute funds required for the public decry and civil punishment of artists and critics in the move toward *l'épuration*, to purge French collaborators with the Reich, as a "precondition for the *renaissance française*."⁴⁸³ Since *The Charnel House* was unprecedented in Picasso's oeuvre for its graphic telling of war's butchery, he was absolute in his intention that the painting be seen "as a militant call for justice toward those whose sacrifice secured the survival of France."⁴⁸⁴

Bleak still lifes that preceded the central corpus of the World War II still lifes included candles depicted in tandem with the "trophy" heads of a black bull in four major works including, *Nature morte avec bougie, palette et tête de taureau noir*, November 19, 1938 (fig. 17).⁴⁸⁵ A candle and sun, and a taxidermied head of a bull are enclosed within a small room that repeats the claustrophobic interior of *Guernica*, Picasso's unique "room-space" elaborated by T. J. Clark.⁴⁸⁶ The bull's head is anthropomorphized, not as that of the Minotaur, but

⁴⁸³ Utley, op. cit., p. 79.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁵ The other three paintings are, *Bougie, palette, tête de Minotaure*, November 4; *Nature morte: Bougie, palette, tête de taureau rouge*, November 26; and, *Nature morte au Minotaure et à la palette*, November 27.

⁴⁸⁶ Clark locates the end of Picasso's use of room-space in *Guernica*, which marks the artist's first realization of his "struggle in the 1920s and 30s to find a convincing alternative to the intimate, proximate 'room-space' of Cubism." As the theater of the Spanish Civil War shifted, so Picasso shifted his *mise en*

rather another strange humanoid version with its large sympathetic eyes and slight grin that register as mockery. It is significant that the bull is no longer whole. The featured decapitated head is captured for display in the room. In the ritual origins of bullfighting, its history discloses the development of “ever more efficient techniques for controlling the animal raw material. The first professional bullfighters were eighteenth century slaughterhouse employees who knew about bovoid behavior and discovered that they could make more money by doing their jobs in public.”⁴⁸⁷ In the painting, the neck of the severed bull head slightly touches a geometric block-form set at the edge of the table to the far right. Both an element of reason, and, reminiscent of the octohedron in Dürer’s *Melancholia*, 1514, the “magic square” is taken for its Saturnine references and to Picasso’s dark pessimism.

The sun and the candle became coterminous elements; the white candlelight’s rays and the white sun’s rays were equal in strength and blackness. And in their different and overt functions, that is, the gnawing saw-blade rays of the sun made it a killing weapon; and, the “virility” of the candle is coordinate to the bull, the phallus-candle expressing the force of will of the dark light. Both sources of illumination are understood for their signification of unrestrained evil. Despite a piece of pure light in the ochre yellow wedge that cuts into the white trapezium, that infers a correction to its dark path, the sun has been set in motion. On the whole, the picture expresses the principle of *lex talionis*,⁴⁸⁸ an eye for an eye, the law of retaliation that corresponds in degree and kind to the transgression.

scène toward a public space of indeterminate borders, away from the safe interiors of rooms, away from what Clark has called, “a feeling for and a confidence in a world defined by four walls . . . the notion of being and having that the twentieth century shakes to the core.” Noted by Jeanmarie Higgins, “Reading Room-Space: T.J. Clark and Guernica Revisited,” *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, Vo 26, No. 2, (Spring 2012), pp. 60-61. See Clark, *Truth in Picasso*, op. cit., “Room,” pp. 61-109.

⁴⁸⁷ Timothy J. Mitchell, “Bullfighting: The Ritual Origin of Scholarly Myths,” *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 99, No. 394 (October-December, 1986), p. 397.

⁴⁸⁸ Latin, meaning an “eye for an eye.”

In the combination of candle, sun, and bull the painting was a continuation of Picasso's undying ire and is nothing less than a testimony of the slaughter that had increased since *Guernica* premiered in 1937. The still life, along with others that share the same temperament exemplifies Picasso's concept of *nada*, rife in the "illogical" writings from 1935; a "nothingness" equated in the later writings of July of '40 in the "Corrida of Mourning." Through Picasso's words, Gasman discerned the "'astonished eye of the bull' named the 'nada,' a 'routine abbreviation' for what he called his 'philosophie merdeuse,'"⁴⁸⁹ [the scatological *merde* of the period, a "shitty philosophy"] a melange of disbelief and metaphysical disgust."⁴⁹⁰ *Nature morte avec bougie*, like *Guernica*, and most of the war-time works included the two main elements of Picasso's symbolic warfare repertoire: light and darkness. Perhaps Picasso's 'nada' exceedingly magnified Goya's sense of *Nada – Ello dira* (Nothing – It Speaks for Itself), 1814-15, etching plate 69 of *Los Desastros*. Goya's *Nothing* has been linked to his skeptical mindset and public outcry against Spanish absolutism that brought on the horrors of war. If Picasso and Goya share a universalized nihilism, it may be summarized in Goya's words: "You have made the journey to eternity and found nothing there."⁴⁹¹ And yet, both Spanish masters will rely on the deep tradition of sacred light to vanquish the shadows. Four years following *Nada*, the light in *Cristo en el Monte de los Olivos*,⁴⁹² 1819 is cast from the heavens. Gasman was certain that, "Picasso refused to equate the values of good and evil; he seldom failed to point out or imply the specific differences

⁴⁸⁹ Gilot and Lake, op. cit., p. 157.

⁴⁹⁰ In Lydia Gasman's extensive discourse on the "winged-bull" in Picasso's texts she equates the "astonished eye of the bull" with "nada" ... "specifically situated like any phenomenal entity having its own exclusive place in the universe...but it cannot be seen because it possesses one single ultimate meaning: Death." Lydia Csató Gasman, *War and the Cosmos in Picasso's Texts, 1936-1940* (New York and Shanghai: iUniverse, 2007), pp. 126-7.

⁴⁹¹ Goya quoted in J. M. Matilla, "Disaster 69. Nothing. It Says," *Goya in Wartime* (Madrid: Museo del Prado, 2008), pp. 338-340. I am grateful to David Summers for bringing Goya's "Nada" to my attention.

⁴⁹² In the collection of Colegio Escolapios de San Anton, Madrid.

between the pillars of his existential [and] moral philosophies....[and] The problem of good and evil is never drowned in the fluid analogical continuum of Picasso's wartime writings."⁴⁹³

In January 1938, for example, "he pulled apart the "gangrene of the shadows" from the throat of the white." "⁴⁹⁴ For Picasso, the activist, for the "right to live"⁴⁹⁵ he aphoristically predicated that it was indispensable to say "that what is good is not [an] executioner."⁴⁹⁶

⁴⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁴⁹⁴ *Picasso Collected Works*, op. cit., pp. 178-79.

⁴⁹⁵ Gasman, loc. cit.

⁴⁹⁶ *PCW*, op. cit., p. 2. Cited by Gasman, loc. cit.

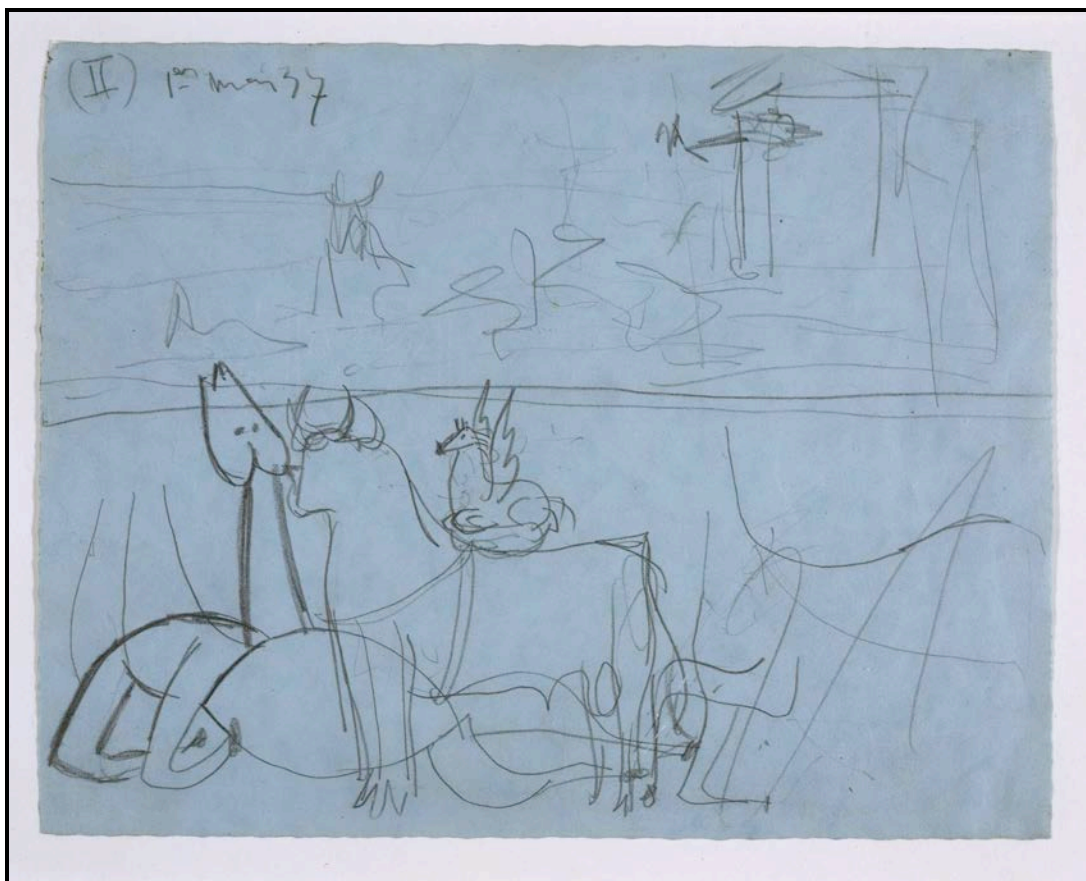


Fig. 1: *Guernica (Étude, II)*, May 1, 1934, pencil on blue paper. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid. Bequest of the artist.



Fig. 2: *Guernica (Étude, V)*, May 2, 1937, pencil and oil on gesso and plywood. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid. Bequest of the artist.



Fig. 3: *Guernica (Étude, VII)*, May 9, 1937, pencil on paper. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid. Bequest of the artist.

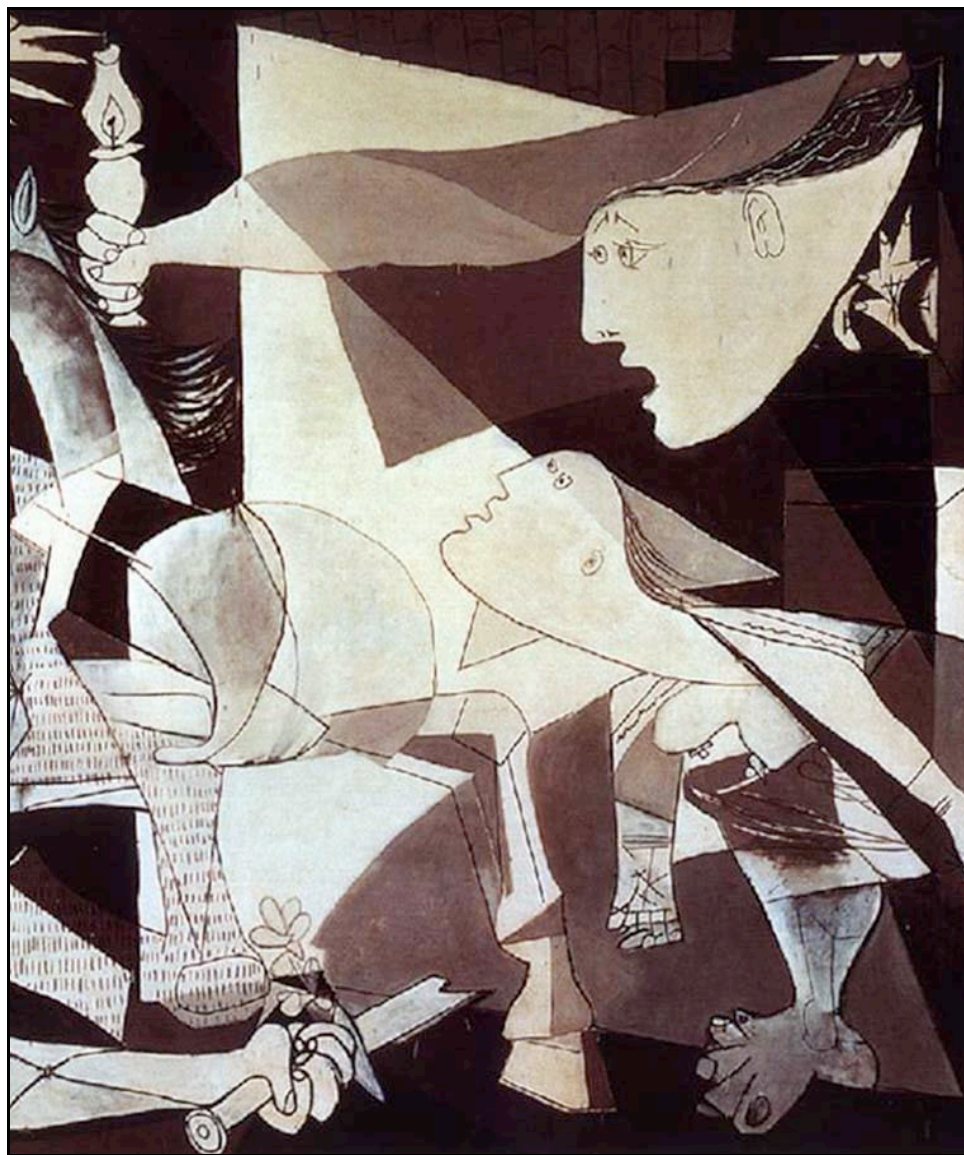


Fig. 4: (detail) *Guernica*, 1937

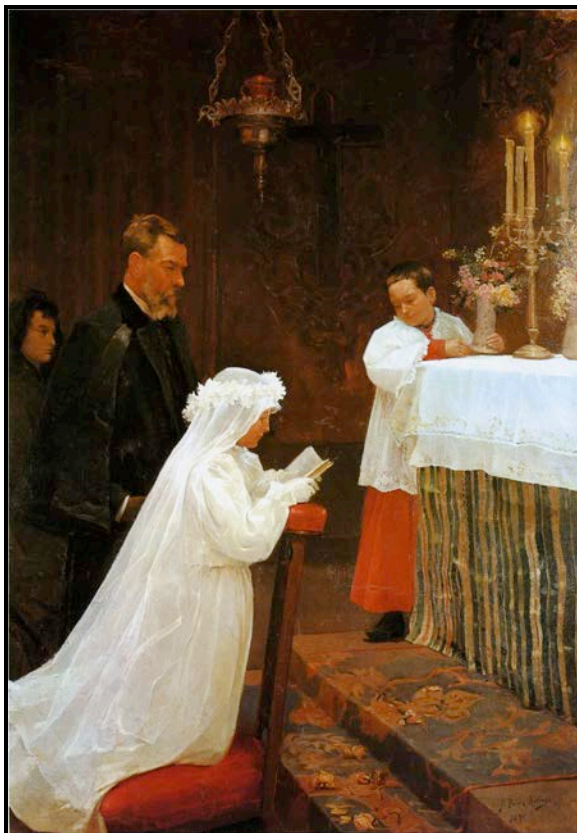


Fig. 5: *La première communion*, 1895-96, oil on canvas.
 Museu Picasso, Barcelona.

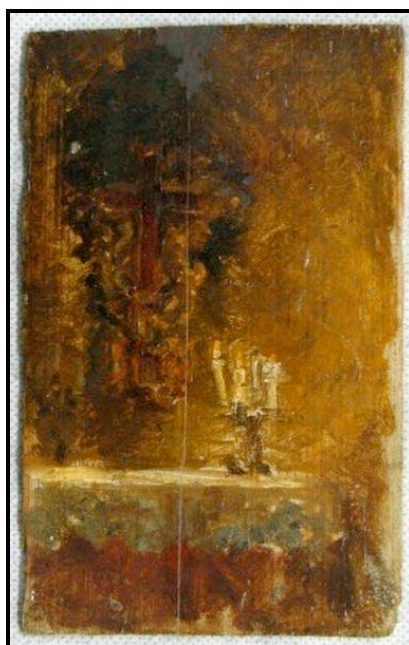


Fig. 6: *Candélabre*, 1896, oil on wood.
 Museu Picasso, Barcelona.

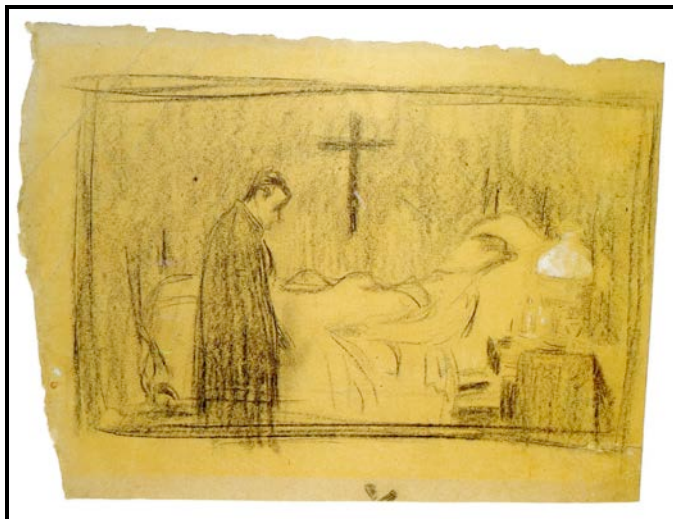


Fig. 7: *Prêtre qui visite un homme mourant (Derniers moments, Étude)*, late 1899, charcoal, conté pencil, and chalk on paper. Museu Picasso, Barcelona.

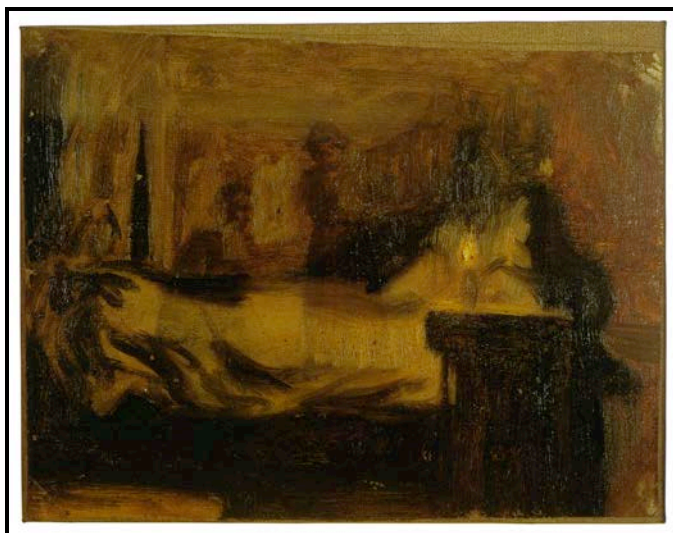


Fig. 8: *Au lit de mort*, late 1899 or early 1900, oil on canvas. Museu Picasso, Barcelona.



Fig. 9: *Au chevet de la femme mourant*, early 1900, oil on canvas. Museu Picasso, Barcelona.



Fig. 10: *Minotauromachie VII*, April 28 – May 3, 1935, etching, scraper & burin on copper plate on Vergé ancien paper. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.



Fig. 11: *Nature morte à la cruche et au bougeoir*, January 15, 1937, oil on canvas. Private collection.



Fig. 12: *Nature morte à la bougie*, January 29, 1937, oil on canvas. Collection of Eugene Victor Thaw Collection, Santa Fe.



Fig. 13: *Nature morte*, August 12, 1942, oil on canvas. Museum Würth, Künzelsau.



Fig. 14: *Coq sur un chaise sur la lampe*, April 24-27, 1962, oil on canvas. Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte, Brussels.



Fig. 15: *Pichet, bougeoir, et casserole émaillée*, February 16, 1945, oil on canvas. Musée Nationale d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



Fig. 16: *The Charnel House*, 1944-45, oil and charcoal on canvas. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

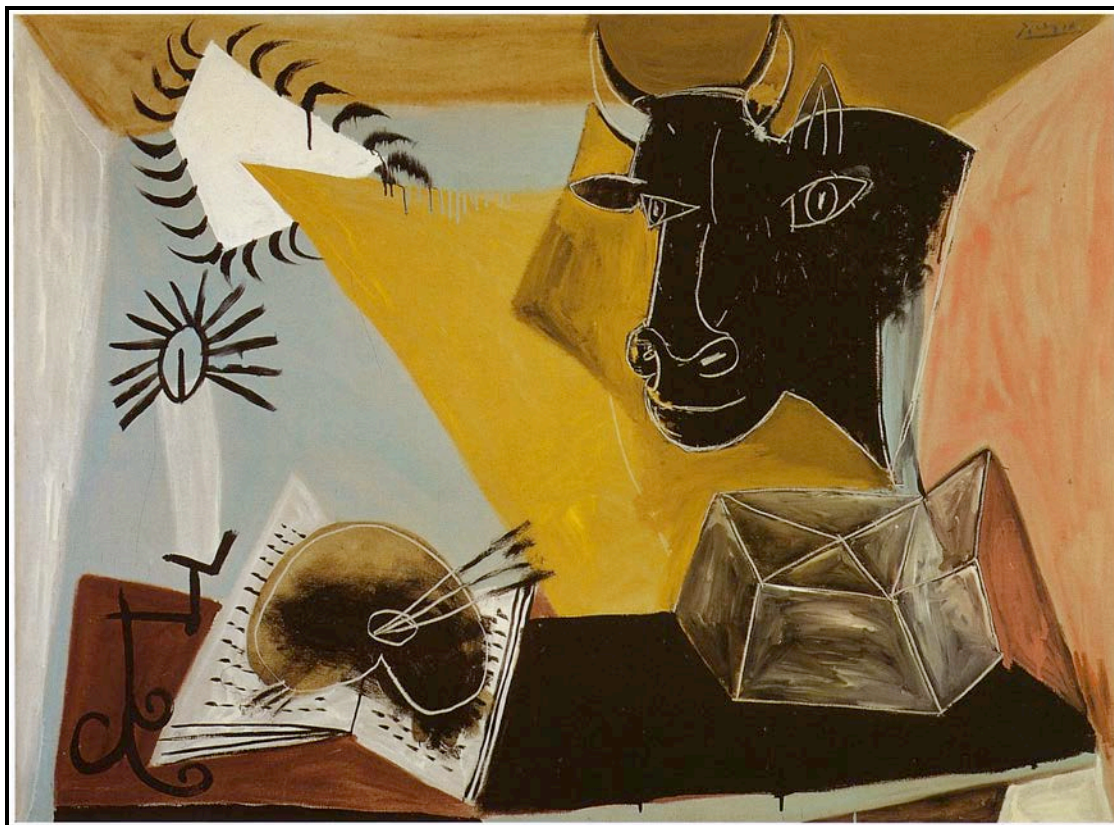


Fig. 17: *Nature morte avec bougie, palette et tête de taureau noir*, November 19, 1938, oil on canvas. Menard Art Museum, Komaki City, Aichi, Japan.

Part Two: Making the Sun in Twenty-Five Days

*Half-knowing, half-dreaming, ...
one must act quickly, because real things do not dream long.
One must not allow the light to fall asleep. One must hasten to awaken it.*

Gaston Bachelard⁴⁹⁷

In ancient Basque mythology, the sun is known as *Eki*, *Eguzki* and other variations in the *Euzkadi* language. Sun is regarded as the daughter of Mother Earth to whom she returns daily. Deemed the protector of humanity, she was not unlike the sun in other solar mythologies whose female deities were adversaries of all evil spirits, including the Aboriginal *Wala*, Celtic *Brigid*, Chinese *Xihe*, Egyptian *Hathor*, Japanese Shinto *Amaterasu*, Navajo *Absonnutli*, among many others traditions. The ancient Basque peoples regarded their sun as “grandmother” and they held rites in her honor at sunset. In order to rejuvenate the light, Ekhi traveled to Itxasgorrieta, or, “The Red Seas,” beneath the earth and into the womb of her mother, Lurbira.

Picasso’s formulations of the suns in *Guernica*, taken alongside representations of the sun vis-a-vis Mithraic and Christian mythoi in previous works, took no account of the solar pantheism of the Basques. Yet, being an inherently Spanish sun in its first phase at state two

⁴⁹⁷ Gaston Bachelard, *The Flame of a Candle*, ed. Joanna Stroud, trans. Joni Caldwell for “The Bachelard Translations” (Dallas: The Dallas Institute Publications, 1988), p. 47. Originally published as *La flamme d’une chandelle* (Paris: Presses Universitaire, 1961). Bachelard is referring to the British physicist Michael Faraday’s experiments with the flame of a candle, which followed his renowned discovery of electromagnetism (1812), presented in six popular lectures, “Chemical History of a Candle,” at London’s Royal Institution in 1860-61. In one of the papers Faraday explained the breakthrough of ignitable gases demonstrated by softly blowing out a candle that was then immediately relit from the wafting air and smoke. What was seemingly an act of magic was proven otherwise by Faraday to show that the candle’s vapor was the agent of fire not the wick. The beautiful experiment inspired, some one hundred and fifty years later, Gaston Bachelard’s response in his reverie on candlelight, *La flamme d’une chandelle*. Michael Faraday, *The Chemical History of a Candle in Scientific Papers*, The Harvard Classics, ed. Charles W. Eliot (New York, 1910), pp. 89-180.

it was an agrarian symbol of the folk. Unlike the bull, horse, crying women, the dead baby, fallen soldier, and the candlebearer, the sun did not appear in any preparatory sketches, finished drawings, or notebook entries. The paucity of any evidence that it would be anything less than a feature, which Picasso must have inherently understood was, in reality, an unresolved element, which he worked through in four different versions.

When the unforetold figuration of a light bulb was placed into the unfinished eye-shape of state seven, the final stage of the painting, the electric light of war was instantly turned “on” in the tableau. The solarizing effect of such light was not cast with evenness, but rather, the overexposure of whiteness was spread in disruptive passages of cubistic disharmony that was otherwise a masterful arrangement of parts. At twenty-seven feet wide, *Guernica* is instantly visually explosive and every element claims a priority on the viewer’s attention. In this respect, the abundant areas of light that work through the composition with organizational aplomb function like spotlights that momentarily blind. Yet, according to Picasso’s intention we must comprehend the painting as a whole to ensure its ever-present action, that is, if *Guernica* is to have importance in perpetuity as an anti-war decree.

The ambiguity of the electric sun has been the cause of much discussion over the years, and it has drawn a wide range of differing responses by many well-respected authorities. That its legacy is founded in the seraphim-light bulbs of the *corridos* that figure so discreetly, but nevertheless prominently, as precursors to the hovering electric sun introduces a new theoretical possibility that broadens the sun’s complexity. As a witness, illuminator, protector, and profane god-eye over the agonizing figures in *Guernica* the symbol has remained in debate. Despite the well-grounded stance drawn from the iconography of incandescent lighting in Picasso’s oeuvre, presented in this thesis, other interpretations of the

sun have not delved so deeply into its precedents. The following four authors, chosen among several, offered the following points of view:

Picasso's view of the rape of *Guernica*,...is staged finally at night, under a sun which is very like an electric ceiling fixture...the sun is heaped all at once with its trunkful of alternate roles, a sun, a pupiled eye, a shaded lamp, a crown of thorns. Insofar as the bulb defines the shape at the same time as something suggesting a shaded newspaper-office ceiling light....⁴⁹⁸

Frank D. Russell

...he filled in the last remaining unpainted surface...by outlining the jagged rays of the sun in black...and carefully drew a light bulb complete with filament within the ellipse of the sun....behind the sun (or the electric light, whose brightness and location suggest an outdoor lamp or streetlight)...the illumination is both sun and indoor light....⁴⁹⁹

Herschell B. Chipp

...one may mention the duplication of the theme of the light source, which splits up in the modest oil lamp, thrust passionately by the woman of *Guernica*, and the large, inert, mechanical luminary at the ceiling.⁵⁰⁰

Rudolf Arnheim

His latest, and final, decision was to transform the oval sun into the shade of a suspended lamp, underneath which he sketched the light bulb, sealing in the process the final ambiguity of whether the scene took place indoors or out.⁵⁰¹

Russell Martin

Picasso began assertively working on the canvas (not quite stretched or in place given the problematic makeshift studio wall it was mounted to in the former *le grainier* at 7, rue des Grands-Augustins) on or around May 11, 1937. From Dora Maar's historic and vital photographs the critical stages in his process of painting-as-thinking were captured.

Beginning at state two we find a fairly resolved positioning of the main figures (fig. 18).

From the left, they are the bull, crying woman with baby, and feet of the decapitated, fallen

⁴⁹⁸ Frank D. Russell, *Picasso's Guernica, The Labyrinth of Narrative Vision* (Montclair, New Jersey: Allenheld and Schram, 1980), p. 37.

⁴⁹⁹ Chipp, op. cit., pp. 133 and 135.

⁵⁰⁰ Rudolf Arnheim, *The Genesis of a Painting: Picasso's Guernica* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 133.

⁵⁰¹ Russell Martin, *Picasso's War: The Destruction of Guernica, and the Masterpiece That Changed the World* (New York: Penguin, 2002), p. 99.

soldier whose torso extends along the foreground; at center, a speared, contorted horse, a fisted arm that extends upward from the slain warrior; and, to the right of the central axis, the candlebearer figure, a fleeing woman, and, the burning house with woman in distress. The top of the canvas is blank as if it were a *tabula rasa*, a small space left empty in which to think the image or the next step.

Aforementioned, the sun was radically altered four times in form and attributions. In so doing, the metaphorical stratum of *Guernica* shifted with penultimate bravura that led to its final state that was paramount and permanent as an electric sun. At an early stage in the painting's evolution, the proletariat salute of the raised arm and fist shoots through the middle of the composition a feature adapted from an April 19 sketches for the Spanish Pavilion that had the artist and studio as a working theme. There, a muscular arm raised high with the Socialist sickle in hand dominates the center of the study (fig. 19). To its left, a vague schematic torso, little more than a doodle of Picasso's great plaster sculpture, *L'orateur*⁵⁰² of 1933-34, was "made" proletariat by the salute gesture applied to the right hand side of an otherwise irresolute figure made from cardboard in the original version set in plaster (fig. 20). In a third sketch, unrelated to the Spanish Pavilion ideas another raised arm with clenched fist was scrawled across a *Le soir* newspaper photo of Yvon Delbos, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Leon Blum's new Front Populaire government. Of course, the first instance of Picasso's public revelation of his Leftist sympathies was the curtain design, *La Dépouille du Minotaure*,⁵⁰³ created for the theatrical production of Rolland's play, *Le 14 Juillet* in celebration of Blum's election. As we recall in this semi-biographical gouache, a half-man, half-horse character raised his fist to the sky while carrying a youth on his back across the field of the curtain's landscape.

⁵⁰² *The Orator*, 1933-34, plaster and mixed media. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

⁵⁰³ Figs. 1-2, p. 104.

The first appearance of a sun in *Guernica* begins with the second state of the mural made after May 11th. Assuredly, Picasso drew in paint an exuberant, large, blazing orb, or “flaming halo”⁵⁰⁴ to recall Apollinaire’s phrase of 1905 regarding the quality of ascendancy in Picasso’s art.⁵⁰⁵ This was a sun of rural Spain, the vibrant sun of its land and plenty (fig. 21). The animated petaline rays, evocative of the *tournesol*, a single sunflower “turning toward the sun,” was heliotropic in its expression of nationalism, strength, and growth despite the strange, wrecked landscape over which it beamed. The raised forearm of the fallen soldier divided the radius of the effulgent disc through its center, acting as a vertical support for the pyramidal composition. Without relinquishing his will the fallen soldier or worker, taken for dead, nevertheless tightly clenches a shaft of wheat or branches of greenery that echo the living energy of the sun’s rays. At this point in Picasso’s decisions for the elements of the painting, the inclusion of the Republican salute irrefutably defined *Guernica* as a political work of art, as an anti-fascist proclamation rather than the universal anti-war statement that it came to be.

The proliferation of the salutation gesture in pre-civil war and Spanish Civil War popular propaganda is an obvious referent for its potential in Picasso’s iconography of the sun-and-fist in State I.⁵⁰⁶ The figure with branches was based upon the tradition of *Hispania*,⁵⁰⁷ an iconic historical figure of ancient Roman origins, and deeply ingrained in the patriotic psyche of every Spaniard. Manifested in countless public monuments and

⁵⁰⁴ Arnheim, op. cit., p. 120.

⁵⁰⁵ Christopher Green, “Picasso’s Sun,” *Life and Death in Picasso. Still Life/Figure c. 1907–1933*, exhibition catalogue, (London: Thames & Hudson, 2009), p. 42. *Objectos vivos: Figura y naturaleza muerta en Picasso* (Barcelona: Museu Picasso, 2008).

⁵⁰⁶ Herschell B. Chipp, *Picasso’s Guernica History, Transformation, Meanings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), p. 117.

⁵⁰⁷ Adapted from 2nd c. Roman Republic coinage and *aurei* displaying the image of Hadrian adapted in Spain for the peseta from 1870 forward.

architectural friezes throughout the country, and since 1870, the face of the peseta, Hispania was represented holding her arm aloft while grasping a laurel branch or corona of foliage. In various appearances she is warrior and worker (figs. 22 and 23).

Picasso established the irreconcilable dualism of light and darkness through the positioning of the flowering sun over the white bull in state three. From the first gestures drawn in paint on the virgin canvas, the bull almost filled the entire left half; or, in the least, the bull's air of possession and staunchness looms with a menacing permanence. The animal is a figure whose height and girth encompasses territory. From the top ridge of the neck across the unarticulated backbone and through the plane of ribs and chest, the whole of which is the bull's mass and an almost "negative" space in the otherwise compact composition. So broad is it that the large sun seemingly sets into the lower curvature of the hindquarters as if the lengthy spine were a distant ridge of the Spanish countryside. Picasso is insisting to show to himself, and in the company of Dora Maar, that at this point in his thinking the painting is a purely Spanish picture on the grandest scale.

The artifice of the setting sun into a figure is an overlooked trait in Picasso's work of the '30s. We have seen it in the way that the orb of the seraphim-light bulbs settled into the triangular bodies of the angels. It occurs to me that the orb and crescent, conflated as the figure of the seraphim, was not unlike Giacometti's sculpture, *Suspended Ball*, 1930, made of the same components, crescent and ball, a penultimate example of the lure of Surrealism that Picasso's figure of light may have tangentially been formed from. And certainly, the cosmological components of the seraphim body type included the crescent (Mercury or the Moon) and the orb (Sun).

Considering the infusion of the sun into the figure, we return to the Bathers of 1932-33, apropos of state two, in which the sun specifically sets down into abstract baigneuses on

the beach. Notable in the symbolic conflation of the orb into black serpentine shapes, in *Femme étendue sur la plage*, March 26, 1932, for example, this sun is halfway set in to the reclining bather (fig. 24). The biomorphic dark form, a coordinated shadow with the geometric bather who languidly props her right-angle arm up to support her triangular head, is united with the orb-sun. They have become one and in accord with the paradigm of the Franco-*soleil noir* bathers, and granting the relationship of the sun within the ritual of Mithraism, it is doubtful that Picasso truncated this essential characteristic for *Guernica*, although stated in different terms. We may equate the fine art, geometry or a metaphysical combination of both found in the tauromachy⁵⁰⁸ that is applicable to the baigneuses through Picasso's control. By this line of reasoning, the relationship of the sun-and-bather and the sun-and-bull reifies an angling or "setting into" that which is otherwise a foreign body: a form of possession.

A less than obvious connection to this sun-and-figure relationship in work from the '30s is found in Picasso's pre-cubist, *Paysage, coucher de soleil*, 1908 (fig. 25). In the modest picture, the sun sets upon a hill in the humid atmosphere of late summer seen through parted boughs and reflected in the hazy pond. John Richardson took note of the '08 rue-des-Bois landscapes and commented on Picasso's infusion of himself into the short series of paintings: "Since he could never depict anything without to some degree identifying with it, Picasso assumes the role of *genius loci* in landscapes that constitute his first sustained confrontation with nature.... as if he were God reinventing the universe in his image. 'I want to see my branches grow that's why I started to paint trees; yet I never paint them from

⁵⁰⁸ Mitchell, op. cit., p. 398.

nature. My trees are myself.' [Picasso] completes the anthropomorphic process... banishing the figures and energizing the trees as if they were so many self-portraits."⁵⁰⁹

In Picasso's search to imbue the *Guernica* sun with an appropriate signifier, a substantial change occurred with the removal of the upright arm devoid of fist and wheat or laurel, and a sun that was no longer agrarian. Palau i Fabre claimed two reasons for Picasso having done that:

...he did not like the idea of revenge and because the lament that *Guernica* makes is not exactly the lament of the proletariat, but the lament of a people, the Basque people, by way of a defenseless town that contains the symbol of their freedom. Neither did he introduce any specifically Basque signifier. In *Guernica*, there are only victims of barbarism crying out of their pain. This idea was to be central would impose itself completely. Otherwise, with the raised fist...the struggle taking place in Spain was exclusively of the proletariat, and he knew that it was not, that it was also the struggle for democracy and the struggle of subject peoples...against the centralist tyranny of the old Spain.⁵¹⁰

The element that hangs in place of the flowering sun in state two is considered in state three to be the sun, although it lacks in recognition of solar characteristics (fig. 26). Picasso had taken the profound turn to imbue the painting with an ancient device, a winged-eye although lacking in pupil or iris. The faint sun's soft rays from state two remained as under painting for the new sun. Looking closely at what residual was left behind, the petals became "wings" around the top edge of the eye-shape. Picasso knowingly introduced an idiographic or schematic Faravahar, the winged sun hieroglyph seen as a guardian angel in Zoroastrianism that appears on friezes and royal inscriptions as early as the Bronze Age, and was represented in various forms in the collection of antiquities in the Louvre. The eye must also be an apotropaic, the function of which is to stare down evil from a higher form of

⁵⁰⁹ John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso, 1907-1917*, Vol. 2. (New York: Random House, 1996), p. 318.

⁵¹⁰ Paulu i Fabre, op. cit., p. 312.

power. As Ahura Mazda,⁵¹¹ in its original form predating Islam, the “light” was meant as spirit and wisdom. In other capacities, the sacred image of a winged-eye does not disallow its cosmogonical role in good and evil, the singular eye-in-profile would be associated with the Eye of Horus, and the *udjat*. According to myth, Horus protected Re, the god of sun in a cosmic battle and in so doing he into a “great disc” and with “falcon wings,” that “flies up to the sun,”⁵¹² and destroys the enemy. Hence-forth, the Egyptian sun was not only protective but also wrathful which has been discussed with regard to Mithras-Sol-Harlequin in Chapter Four, “Problems of an Elevated Conception: The Sun, 1930-37.”

Throughout the next four stages of the painting the interior of the double-pointed oval, or winged-eye will remain blank. It was not articulated in any manner. Lacking commentary from Picasso or others who discussed the progress of the painting, we are bound to Maar’s photographs in order to glean any possible clues about changes to the sun and the phases of its blankness. From states three to six it was not an object of Picasso’s attention. Then dramatically he altered state three by the removal of the soft “winged” rays of light that he then fashioned as talons extending around the perimeter of whole sun, hence turning it into an explosive light (fig. 27). The sun’s rays were sharpened akin to lancing tools of the picador, or the *muletas* of the *toreros*, and were matched by the knife-like ears of the bull in a characteristic known by the aficionado as *astiagudo*. This dramatic shift of the sun-and-bull was equaled by an increase in suffering seen in the speared horse. Up until the fifth state the horse had been fairly indiscernible, but now more clearly articulated directly under the sun Picasso’s rendering of it ensured, visually, that its bawl of agony fell in direct line on diagonal with the bull’s left ear. Perhaps the horse was blinded by the sun or purely

⁵¹¹ Associated with the protagonist, Nadja, in Breton’s eponymous novel (1928).

⁵¹² Nadia Julien, *The Book of Lost Symbols*, trans. Elfreda Powers (London: Constable & Robinson, Ltd., 2012), p. 105.

by the pain from battle, as Erich Maria Remarque had lamented in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, "... it is the vilest baseness to use horses in war. The cries that fill the air are worse than those of men.... It is the martyred creation, wild with anguish, filled with terror, and groaning."⁵¹³

The auditory levels in *Guernica*, an odd prospect for a painting is another matter that is altogether worthy of separate study. Nevertheless, the catalyst for the implied cacophony of screaming women, the anxiously bleating bull, and tremulous neighing of the horse in anguish was directly related to the Stuka and incendiary bombings over Gernika. Although there is no evidence of war in *Guernica*, no weapons, or shards of bombs throughout the compact village scene, the real aerial threat was inferred by the upturned heads that defy the skies to obliterate the people. Despite the broad panoramic scope of *Guernica* it was not a battle frieze. Cinematic in breadth, it affects the viewer as a freeze-frame moment of absolute terror when the victims were in the present moment fleeing, dying, and crying for help. Here too, the large all-white bull has transformed as a profile to the degree that its frontal features, including only one leg and hoof, and the tail, significantly a *rabicano* white tail that has snapped around at the far left of the scene, are features of its entire body portrayed in strong light. The remainder of the bull has fallen into the darkness that pervades most of the left half of *Guernica*. What is constant through states one to ten is the position of the candle-bearer whose arm does not waiver, diminish, or shift in relation to the sun and the overall catastrophe that it attempts to illuminate.

In effect, the electric sun had exceeded all other expressions of the sun or the light bulb in modernist programs and other erstwhile contexts, including Bataille's important excurses. It is singular and its difference was borne from Picasso's immense ingenuity that

⁵¹³ Geoff Dyer, *The Missing of the Somme* (New York: Random House, 1994), p. 45.

spun the sun on axes of varied metaphorical and stylistic inventions; and, converted the common light bulb as a sure emissary of malevolence in its transformation as a cipher. If the constancy of the leitmotif, the light motive of the sun, persisted as a form of inversion, it also persisted as a form of indubitable security without which the prevailing attacks upon it would have been negated in complete dark space, the cosmological negative against which Picasso stormed. Then, in only one other work of significance created after *Guernica* and during the war was the sun depicted as an autograph of dualism, of the “*benefique ou malefique*”⁵¹⁴ essence of light that was not retired in the panoptical, apotropaic incandescent sun.

In early July of 1939 Picasso had returned to Antibes on the Riviera and was installed in Man Ray’s apartment. There he painted *Pêche de nuit à Antibes* (fig. 30), a picture based upon the activities of local fisherman that attracted their nightly catch by acetylene lamps, the lights drawing the fish upward from dark waters towards its yellow-green glow. Picasso had often seen the men at work during his late night walks along the rocky Mediterranean seaboard and the beaches of Juan-les-Pins and Antibes. The two women (Dora Maar and Nusch Eluard) eating ice cream cones on the right of the scene offset the expression of a larger darkness than nighttime fishing that the painting expresses. Indicated with the four-pronged “arrow” spear,⁵¹⁵ pointed at the fish, the apparent allegory of perpetrator and victim is the central theme. A second fisherman identified by an inverted and contorted head is seemingly encased in a black miasma, otherwise, the boat. Stars are reflected in the dark waters and between the macrocosm and microcosm of space and sea—the Hermetic maxim,

⁵¹⁴ PCW, loc. cit.; xxv.

⁵¹⁵ A trident would connote association with water deities, especially Poseidon. Instead, Picasso stays true to the Mediterranean fisherman’s tool. Spear fishing had however grown out of favor in Europe in the late nineteenth century but was revived in Germany in the 1930s. We cannot, therefore, dismiss the potential perpetrator-victim association in the symbol of the four-pronged spear in the painting.

As above, so below, which Picasso seized in literal and symbolic terms—was made plausible once again.⁵¹⁶ The sun's coiling energy was an illogical element for the nighttime scene in that is not a moon; nonetheless, it's light produced the bright scene. The palette, however, seems synthetic as if it were taking a cue from the chemical light of the fishermen's carbide lamps.

Picasso's sun, and by now we understand that he would have claimed it as *bis*, does not appear again in any significant way until 1952. No longer the sun of war, however not forfeiting its heritage in that darkness, the sun in *Le Paix*, 1953, shed a vibrant radiance spread across an Arcadian scene scattered with fawns, Pegasus, Pan, lovers, and children at play (fig. 31). The town of Vallauris, where Picasso had revived the local craft of pottery bestowed upon him an honorary citizenship. On the occasion of the installation of his sculpture, *L'Homme au Mouton* on August 6, 1950, in the market square Picasso was also officially offered to decorate the local Romanesque Cistercian chapel of the castle that had been deconsecrated since the French Revolution and left empty and closed up. Picasso accepted the grand gesture and later affirmed that his first concept for the wall and ceiling murals had focused on the Manichean confrontation between the destructive powers of war and the idyllic life under peace.⁵¹⁷ Gilot recalled that at the time Picasso had just concluded reading *War and Peace* and that he had derived the theme for the chapel paintings from Tolstoy's masterpiece.

The message of peace in the idyllic *La paix* was countered in the pendant, *La Guerre* that had been spawned by events in the Korean War and Picasso's consequent attack against it in, *Le Massacre en Corée*, 1951. Parallels have been recognized in Goya's *Executions of the*

⁵¹⁶ This passage is drawn from my essay, "The Masterpiece Imperative: Eighteen Picassos," exhibition catalogue for *Nelson Rockefeller's Picassos: Tapestries Commissioned by Kykuit*, ed. William Keyse Rudolph (San Antonio: San Antonio Museum of Art, 2014), p. 69.

⁵¹⁷ Utley, op. cit. p. 155.

Third of May, 1808, that had in turn inspired Manet's *Execution of Maximilian* in 1876;⁵¹⁸ and, certainly Goya may have been present in Picasso's mind during the period that he was working on the *Massacre* and consequent sketches for the war painting in the peace chapel in Vallauris. During the same period, an exceptionally important exhibition of Goya's etchings was held at the Galerie Paul Ambroise in Paris in December 1950. The presentation marked the first time that Goya's incomparable etchings in the series, *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (Disasters of War, 1810-1819); *Los Caprichos* (The Caprices, 1799) that included the prescient image for modern times, "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters;" *La Tauromachia* (Bullfighting, 1816); and, *Los Disparates* (The Follies, 1815-1823) had been shown outside Madrid. So important was the exhibition to the larger conversation in Communist circles that Plate 26 of the *Disasters*, "No se puede mirar" (One Can't Look) was published on the front page of the leftist Paris newspaper *L'Humanite* on December 12.⁵¹⁹

Yet, *Le Massacre en Corée* had failed to win approval by the French Communist Party. As Utley, the authority on the subject explained: "What was considered the 'violently modern form' of the *Massacre* was anathema to the party's artistic doctrines. In content too it was deemed politically incorrect. While the Communists were strong proponents of history painting, and while they urged artists to focus on the masses, what they wanted to see was the heroic fight of the Korean people and not their passive submission to defeat."⁵²⁰ Picasso had painted another massacre of the innocents. This was for him always the great tragedy of war. In many ways, he was blamed for not creating another *Guernica*, that is, a masterpiece, and he was never satisfied to understand just how *Massacre* had failed or was a lack of

⁵¹⁸ Utley, op. cit., p. 150.

⁵¹⁹ Noted by Utley n.9, p.238; see also "Actualité de la gravure," *Arts de France*, No. 34 (January, 1951), pp. 31-2; and, Jean Bouret, "Goya ou le triomphe de l'imagination esthétique," *Arts/Beaux-Arts*, December 8, 1950.

⁵²⁰ Utley, op. cit., p. 151.

success. Annoyed and obsessed to right the apparent wrong, in beginning *Le paix et le guerre* he would not depict victims of war but rather “a fighting work against war.”⁵²¹ At one point, Picasso had envisioned the Temple of Peace as a meeting place for young people from different countries who were emissaries of peace throughout France, the so-called *Caravans de la Paix*.⁵²² Picasso was so enthralled with the idea that he envisioned creating a second peace temple near Céret—his refuge with Braque in 1911 and cite of analytical cubism’s dawning—a village on Catalan soil in the Pyrenees, close to the Spanish border.

The war panel, *La guerre*, was excessively packed with gruesome details of daggers, spears with blood, axes, blood-soaked earth, human suffering magnified by a half-Minotaur figure mixed with Picasso’s profile who holds a basket of skulls thrown over its shoulder. The frieze-like parade of destruction is stopped by a large figure, a war monster that yields a large shield. But its sign is that of the dove painted in position on the shield where the emperor or warring god’s visage would normally appear. Peace stops the carnival of war thereby allowing the second part of the work, *Le paix*, to show those caught in the round of killings and hatred an alternative. I choose not to illustrate the war panel in order to keep focus here upon the suns that now number three in significant contexts of war, human struggle, and defeat; in parallel realities of life and death; and, in the life-giving potential of the sun which *Le paix* affirms. In the apocalyptic tradition, chaos is the prelude to returning the world to a state prior to its division, back to the Garden before good and evil were introduced.

The Peace and War paintings were technically difficult, painted on fiberboard and then fitted to the 12th century Romanesque ceiling and walls of the chapel (fig. 32). Picasso’s precise placement of the sun overhead is not understood in the flat panel paintings. But in

⁵²¹ Utley, op. cit. p. 152.

⁵²² Utley, op. cit., p. 154. A second Temple de la Paix was never built.

place his intention that the sun beamed down did so from the upper right half of its place in “the sky.” This sun was made resplendent in prismatic red, yellow, and blue, the basic particles of Newtonian white light. If Picasso’s prism-sun emits the pure Newtonian light untainted by filaments or allegorical degradations it is a sun that returned to the natural order of life. Yet, Picasso, the symbolist, would not leave it without signification and if it was no longer apotropaic, it nevertheless is a sun that continued to see or to watch all the while it was radiant. Whereas the suns in *Guernica* took the form of eyes, and the night-sun in *Night Fishing in Antibes* is diagrammatic, the sun in *La paix* has the characteristics of an aperture. The scaffolded yellow blades surround an interior of red, blue, and yellow diaphragms, and behind them, we see the opening of pure white of light from which, in the operation of a camera lens, an image is captured. The center of the sun, the center of all centers, the eye of the eye, is made to open and close and in so doing it not only photographs the joyful scene over and over it also must cause day and night in Arcadia. If we grant the theory of the aperture, Picasso then had maintained the sun’s obligation as a beneficent watchful presence. In this state of its form post-war its rays have returned as shoots of field grass or life-sustaining wheat⁵²³ and the shadow of incandescence is unlocatable in its radiance.

⁵²³ Figs. 33 and 34. Before *Le guerre et le paix* were permanently installed in Vallauris in 1954, they were included in exhibitions in Rome and Milan along with *Le charnel* and *Guernica*. The “war paintings” were installed in the bombed-out Hall of the Caryatids in the Palazzo Reale in Milan that Picasso had insisted upon not being repaired or painted; but, wanted the effects of war evident in the structure to respond in physical terms to the paintings. Following the exhibitions, *Le guerre et le paix* were returned to Vallauris; *Guernica* would return to the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Picasso having given the painting to MoMA in 1939, and it toured America and raised funds for Refugees of the Spanish Civil War. *Guernica* remained in New York until 1981 according to Picasso’s Will and Testament would not be returned to Spain until Franco was no longer dictator; or, the country had returned to a democracy. Picasso did not live to see the transfer on September 10, 1981 following Franco’s death. On October 25th marking Picasso’s one hundredth birthday, *Guernica* was exhibited view behind bullet-proof glass at the Prado in a wing not far from his beloved Goya’s. In 1992 it was relocated to the new Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. Basque nationalists continue to claim its right to be in the Guggenheim Bilbao fifteen miles away from the cite of the bombardments of April 26, 1937. Of the sun, David Summers has suggested that the Egyptian

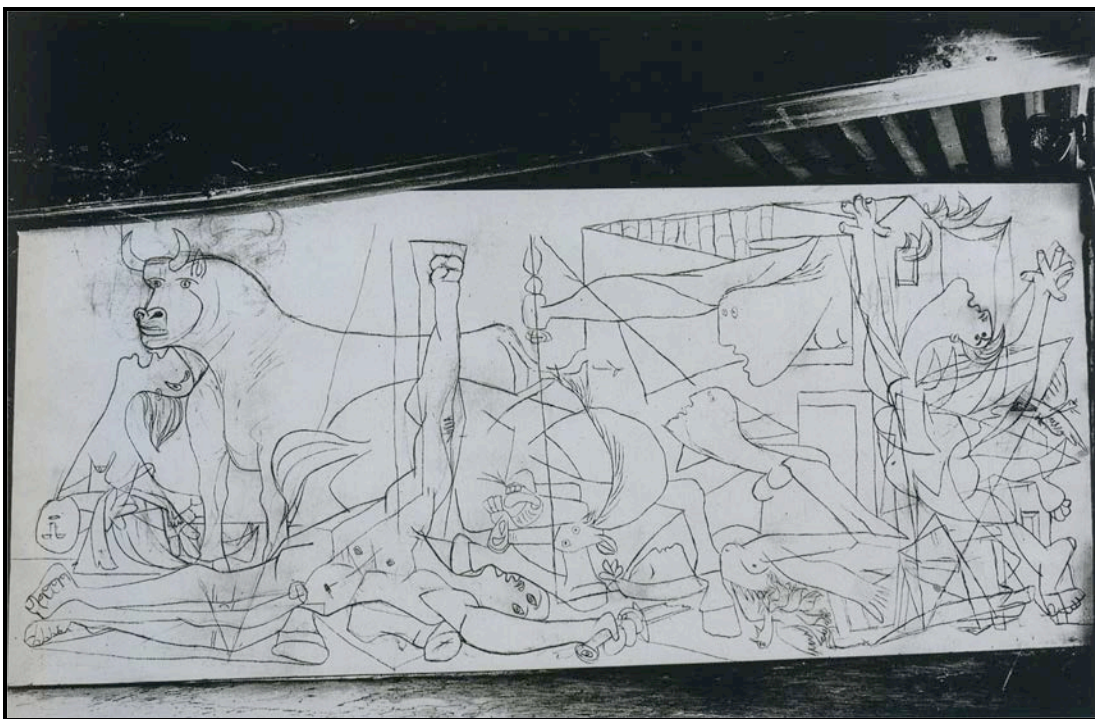


Fig. 18: Dora Maar, *Guernica in progress, state one*, May 11, 1937, gelatin silver print. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.

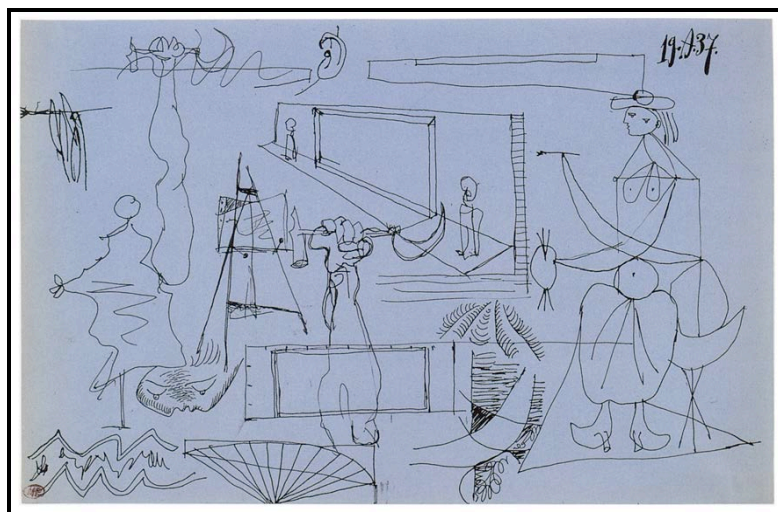


Fig. 19: *L'atelier: le peintre et son modèle, bras tenant une faucille et un marteau*, April 19, 1937, pen and India ink on blue paper. Musée Picasso, Paris.

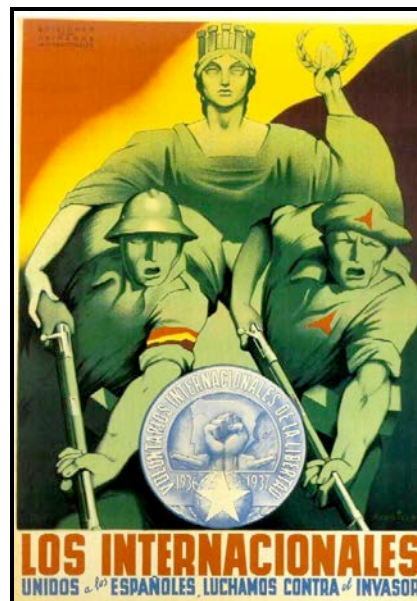


Fig. 20: *L'orateur*, late 1933-34, plaster, mixed media. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

reliefs of Akhenaton, Nefertiti and their children include a sun whose rays of light are shafts of wheat that supply warmth and sustenance to the family.



Fig. 21: Dora Maar, *Guernica* in progress, state two, after May 11, 1937. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Figs. 22 and 23: Hispania with laurel branch illustrated in two Spanish Civil War propaganda posters.



Fig. 24: *Femme étendue sur la plage*, March 27, 1932, oil on canvas. Private collection.

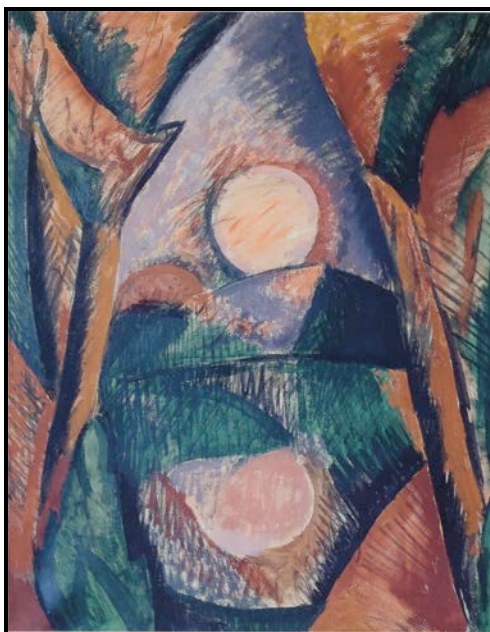


Fig. 25: *Paysage, coucher de soleil*, August, 1908, gouache on paper laid down on canvas. William S. Rubin and Phyllis Hattis Collection, New York.

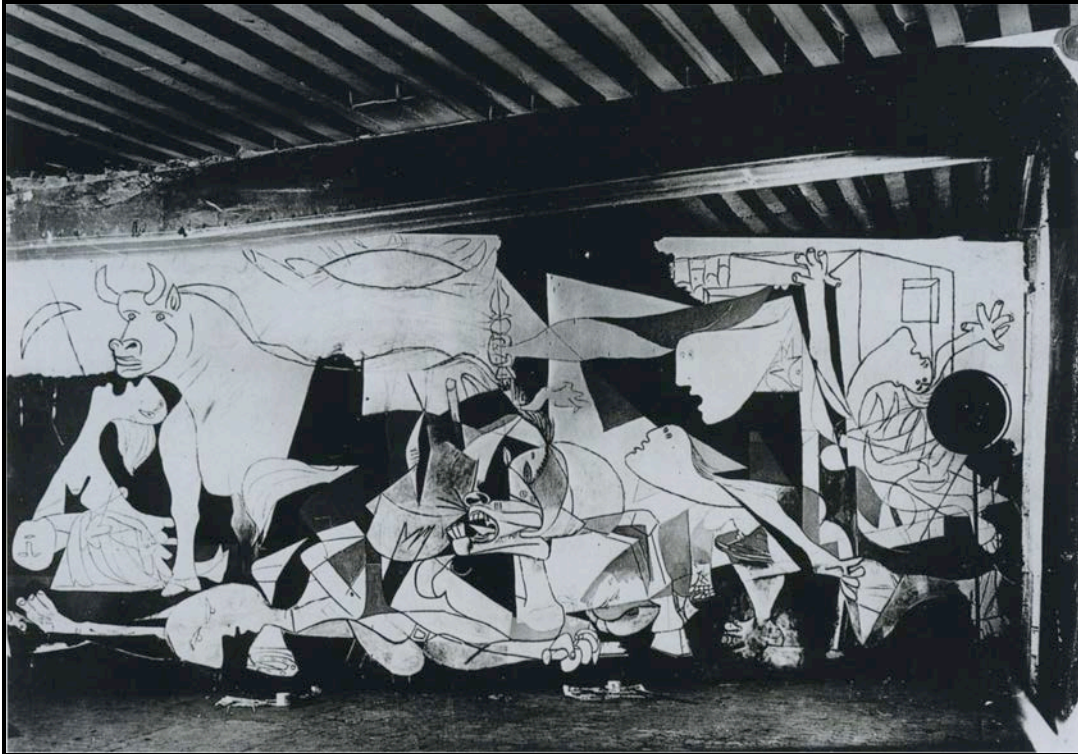


Fig. 26: Dora Maar, *Guernica* in progress, state three, May 16-19. Musée Picasso, Paris.

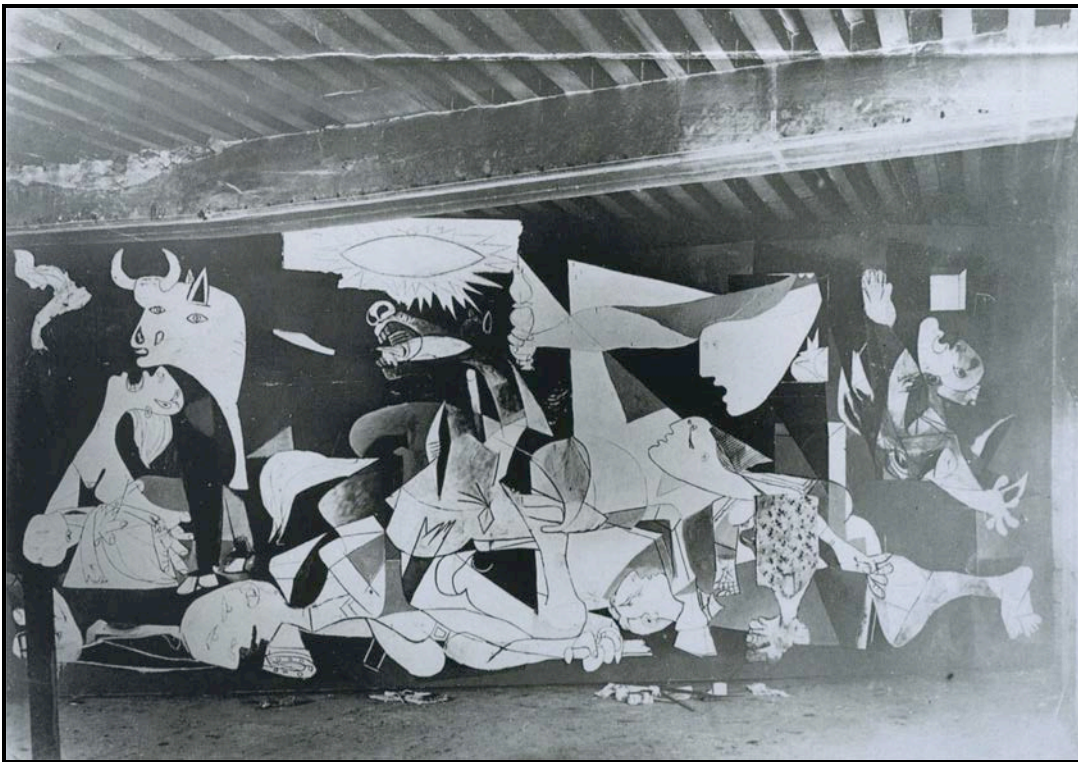


Fig. 27: Dora Maar, *Guernica* in progress, state four, May 20-24. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 28: Dora Maar, *Guernica* in progress, state six, after May 27. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 29: Dora Maar, final version of *Guernica*, state seven, June 4, 1937. Musée Picasso, Paris.



Fig. 30: *Pêche de nuit à Antibes*, August, 1939, oil on canvas. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Fig. 31: *Le paix*, late 1952-1953, oil on fiberboard. Musée National Picasso La Guerre et la Paix, Vallauris, France.



Fig. 32: *La guerre et la paix*, 1953. Temple of Peace, Vallauris.



Fig. 33: Rene Burri © Magnum Photos. Picasso's *Le paix*, Palazzo Reale, Milan, 1953.



Fig. 34: Rene Burri © / Magnum Photos. Installation view of Picasso's *Guernica* and *Le charnel* (back wall), Palazzo Reale, Milan, 1953.

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