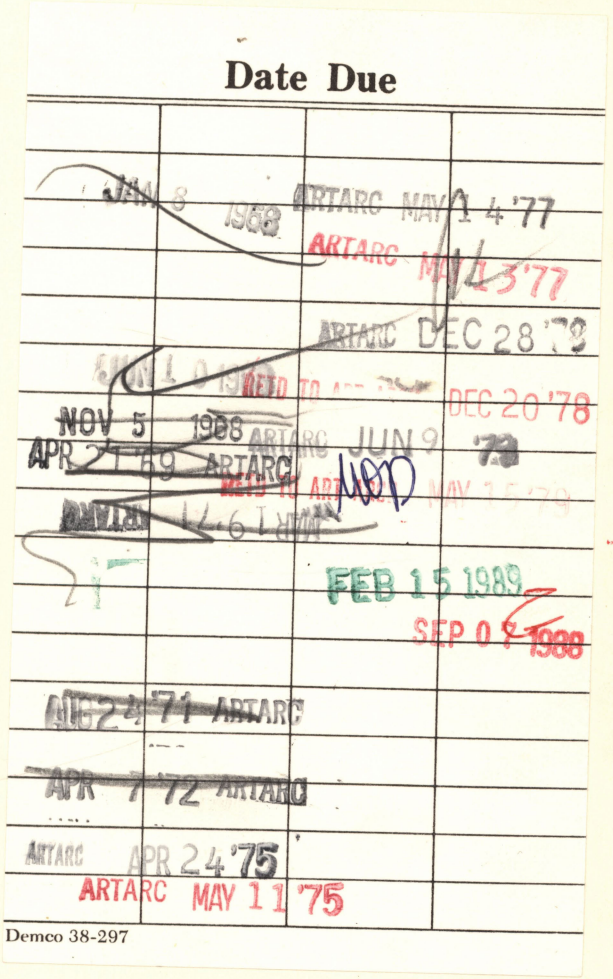

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Date August 12, 1966

Slater, John Herbert. (M.F.A., Fine Arts)

The Mind Blowers: Surrealism

Thesis directed by Professor Robert Hawkins.

This thesis arrives at a clear definition of surrealism by exploring its historical environment, as well as its literary and artistic antecedants. It avoids begging any questions, and attempts to build up a body of solid evidence before any conclusions are reached.

It is divided into four major sections: The Posing of Questions, which discusses surrealism as a movement, touching upon the poets Beaudelaire, Rimbaud and Lautréamont, as well as the more contemporary Breton. From here it continues into the painter de Chirico, and follows on to the influence of Romanticism. The next section, entitled Four Surrealists, treats with the artists Dali, Ernst, Tanguy and Magritte in turn. The third chapter, Surrealism before Surrealism, explores earlier visual arts, and distinguishes between the fantasy in modern art and the intention of surrealistic painting. Science and Surrealism suggests that, just as surrealism has been searching for new modes of thought, presumed necessary for creating a life and a cosmology in the modern world, science itself has been obliged to reverse or eliminate classical scientific thinking to achieve answers to questions involving the outer reaches of space and the sub-atomic world.

More profoundly, the entire thesis is an attempt to define surrealism in terms of its healthier, more constructive aspects. It does not blink the pathology of Beaudelaire, Rimbaud and Lautréamont; in fact extensive quotes from some of the more horrifying passages are

included. But it is pointed out that their courage in investigating their subconscious is consistent with psychoanalytic practice, and that they, in unswervingly looking within themselves and reporting whatever they found, went a long way in helping to cure the sickness of their age.

The character of Breton as artistic politico and autocrat is described, allowing the reader to distinguish between surrealism as a movement and surrealism as a state of mind, a specifically twentieth century state of mind.

The discussion of de Chirico leads the subject to the two Romantic painters Böcklin and Freiderich, and opens the problem to the classical leanings de Chirico would be supposed to show, as opposed to the northern notion of "German romanticism", in which the Greek and Latin heritage is repudiated in favor of the more macabre nordic mystiques. This in turn invites the attention to the fact that Baudelaire considered himself in a direct line of succession from romanticism, while his tremendous enthusiasm for Delacroix leads to quotes from the latter artist. It is suggested that surrealism is a modern outgrowth of the romantic movement, and is, therefore, more concerned with the problems of disorder and imbalance.

Dali is treated as an astonishing personality in his Catalan egoism, and the question of his honesty and seriousness is explained. More important, it is shown that his art is essentially intellectual tours de force. His technical improvement over the years is pointed out, as well as his gradual shift to religious and scientific themes. Max Ernst is shown to be the most versatile and varied of the four

surrealists, and for that reason the most puzzling. Some of his work can be described as classical abstraction, some as cartoon-like humor, and others are strictly surrealistic,—especially his later landscapes. Tanguy is followed from the time in Paris when he first saw de Chirico's paintings, and consequently decided to devote his life to art. From his early, clumsy painting which included the juxtaposition of dissimilar objects, he slowly evolves his "Tanguy world" in which abstract and sculptured shapes float strangely about in weightless space. Jean's analysis of Tanguy's work (following Breton's) as a "mother image" is rejected. Magritte is shown to be the bourgeois philosopher that he is, and several of his paintings analyzed, not as tours de force, but as the product of clear philosophical thought, and an attempt to jolt the mind into more profound contemplation of mystery.

With that, the discussion turns to art before surrealism self-consciously announced itself. Here the matter is of intent, and it is shown that the strange beasts of mythology and the interest in fantasy alone do not imply a surrealistic outlook. In fact, most art before surrealism expounded on myths already understood, while surrealism is in search of mythologies not yet extant.

By bringing up the concepts of non-Euclidean geometry, non-Newtonian physics and other revolutionary scientific steps, it is shown that self-evident axioms of science were inadequate to explain reality, —that is, to explain the universe, not as a machine, but as Idea. To that extent some scientists have been behaving surrealistically. It is shown that the surrealists themselves were woefully unacquainted with the field, and neglected much support and insight which science—

especially psychology—might have been able to provide them.

Surrealism may be described as a twentieth century manifestation of art which attempts to cause adaptive insight, thus taking on social responsibility for a future which is fast overtaking us, while still clinging to the traditions of craftsmanship.

This abstract is approved as to form and content.

Signed Robert B. Heilman
Faculty member in charge of thesis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

A cashiered adjutant, an unfrocked monsignore, and a disbarred circuit judge have foregathered at the Cork and Monkey, as is their habit at this particular time. And although the officer is obliged to practice his sword swallowing, the priest continually reproves the seven acolytes under his cassock, while the jurist memorizes Grotius' de Jure in Bell et Pace backwards,—they have come to decide the fate of the world. As the hands of the bell tower approach zero, the winds stop. The guests are asleep.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

By 1820 a war involving half of Europe had been fought, in which both sides had been financed in large part by the same banking firm. Sophisticated monetary and fiscal instruments were in common use, yet the titular heads of state in the western world were either ignorant of them or uninterested. The machine, no longer an expensive eighteenth century toy, was in command of industry, and the businessman was in command of the machine. The heads of state graciously granted leave to continue these activities, even appearing at opening ceremonies to nod a plumed head, but remained disdainfully in command of the land, now less profitable than commerce.

By 1840 the income statement had married the balance sheet and gave birth to double-entry bookkeeping. The nobility had no use for this on their holdings and remained innocent of its nature. The steam engine was attached to sea and land conveyances, and was now efficient enough to power huge factories. Instead of complaining philosophically of the vicissitudes of climate, whole populations were complaining with violence and effect against the vicissitudes of the economy.

By 1860 Boolean algebra had been invented, and the atom was a certainty, although no one dreamed of doing anything with them. The United States was about to put itself together in the last war of the Napoleonic variety.

By 1880, almost a hundred years after the French Revolution, a nation called Germany and another called Italy existed. Power rested

in the hands of varied talented commoners, and derived from the military, politics and money. It could not be traced either to the land or to the deities.

In August of 1914, the last known cavalry charge was mounted by the British at Lille against trenches deep enough to conceal a standing man. They contained machine guns.

An appalling Armageddon was under way, gigantic enough to require the active participation of the entire western world. To mention only three nations, it deprived of their existence 1,800,000 German citizens, 1,500,000 English, and 1,300,000 French. Telephones, radios, gasoline and electric engines, aircraft, submarines, new chemicals (as in poison gas), new explosives (as in tri-nitro-toluene), were converted or brought out of storage to wage war.

In 1918 something like exhaustion caused the Armistice to be signed. Everyone tried to put things back the way they were before, but the Russians, correctly supposing that history had been preparing a brave new world all along, and fortified by the philosophers Hegel and Marx, as well as a restive and unemployed military force, fell upon one another, after conveying their entire royal family to a basement and shooting them there.

The western world had new employers.

-

Any discussion of the effect of history upon the arts, or the arts upon history cannot depend upon the statistics, however labyrinthine, of other human activities, but must ultimately devolve uneasily upon matters of taste and spiritual considerations. But one can

certainly say that the 'art world', as it is most significantly called today, also has new employers.

Since the performing artists could still claim their public, and the poets their publishers, it is the visual artists who have had to adapt to the change most violently.

By and large, the objet d'art is to be lived with. If not to be lived with, then to seek, like the performers, a public. The result was, of course, the gallery of recently completed works. If to be lived with, then to be sold. The result was an entire marketing system patterned after any other, involving publicity, storehouses, a pricing system, salesmen and professional connoisseurs, these latter always necessary where taste and spiritual values are concerned.

A symptom of this effect of history on the visual arts has been a proliferation of categories by which certain works may be identified. A partial list would include: impressionist, fauvist, romanticist, idealist, naturalist, realist, pre-raphaelite, die Bruecke, neo-impressionist, pointillist, luminist, futurist, blaue reiter, vorticist, supremicist, Jugendstil, de Stijl, constructivist, purist, sensationalist, abstract expressionist, surrealist, orphist, compositionalist, synchronist, cubist (both analytical and synthetic), ash can, dada, regionalist, art nouveau, divisionist, and now, post painterly abstraction, pop, op, and perhaps, yes--and kinetic. (I hesitate to add aural painting and sculpture.)

Many of these are convenient terms used by critics to identify; others represent 'schools' in which a master or masters are involved; and others represent 'movements', in which the artists as a group are

involved, often creating the market themselves and undertaking the publicity as well as the criticism (albeit aided by outsiders).

One of the most interesting of these groupings of artists was surrealism. Not only has it enjoyed the stormiest of histories, but also an astonishing longevity: arriving on the scene close to the expiration of dada, it reached a peak of real influence in the 1930's, escaped from World War II, and remains in the periodicals to the extent that hardly a month goes by that an article is not devoted to the subject or one of its artists. It took to its bosom and rejected a hall of fame among painters, sculptors, poets, playwrights. Ballets and plays used such scenery. Fashion design, jewelry, and window dressing. There were movies.

Perhaps most interesting--the group proclaimed and proclaims revolutionary intent in the work-a-day world, in other words insists that it has and will have an effect on history. It claims, not without reason, to be capable of other, more important effects. Its very self-consciousness disturbs the 'art world', yet the general public's opinion that it is deliberately wacky has equal justice.

What is it? Specifically, is it a temporary human phenomenon, that is, a highly respectable fad, or does it contain the beginnings of a fundamental change in human thinking and being?

CHAPTER II

THE POSING OF QUESTIONS

To expect anything more than a dull chronology from an exclusively historical technique in investigating art, is both mean and futile, but by watching what an artist or a genre of art has been doing over time can start a distillation process toward some sort of insight. Similarly, to describe art solely in terms of the lives and personalities of its practitioners is to expect history from a chronic gossip.

Granting for the moment (it will be later expanded upon) that surrealism, as a 'movement', started and remained in the hands of the literati, whom did they choose as their spiritual ancestors? This in itself is noteworthy, for by and large they selected their own support from the past. And except for alchemy and dim references to Oriental philosophy, the surrealists cited exclusively from the preceding century. (As will be seen, this is typical surrealist behavior.) Baudelaire, Lautreamont and Rimbaud make up the three poetic pillars upon which the surrealists began to build.

A chronology will lend perspective:

Baudelaire	b. 1821 d. 1867:	Les Fleurs du Mal	1857
Lautreamont	b. 1846 d. 1870:	Les Chants de Maldoror	1868
Rimbaud	b. 1854 d. 1891:	Une Saison en Enfer	1873

Of the three, Baudelaire is the most famous and influential, although far from the most startling. Except for the fierce discipline he devoted to poetry, he lived a life that would be termed dissolute even by today's standards. This implies a contradiction, yet there is none. His almost classically ordered work possesses a content, none-

theless,

> so exclusively of confession that the responsability of the reader often becomes unbearable.[1]

This does not mean self castigation in the manner of a confiteor, but rather an intimate exploration of the psyche in such universal terms and with such harrowing honesty, that 19th century readers could neither avoid nor accept him. His obituaries were filled with words such as 'monster', and 'satanic', noting dandyism (important in that this combines extravagence with order) and degeneracy in his extra-poetic activities. The picture, then, is of an anomaly for the century who could look directly at everything, especially at those elements in man of which the age was unanimously oblivious. The fact that he was a Christian and loved his mother deeply did not deflect his eyes from "le gouffre". After all, why should they?

Le Gouffre

> Pascal avait son gouffre, avec lui se mouvant.
> -Hélas! tout est abime, -action, désir, rêve,
> Parole! et sur mon poil qui tout droit se relève
> Mainte fois de la Peur je sens passer le vent.
>
> En haut, en bas, partout la profondeur, la grève,
> Le silence, l'espace affreux et captivant...
> Sur le fond de mes nuits Dieu de son doigt savant
> Dessine un couchemar multiforme et sans treve.
>
> J'ai peur du sommeil comme on a peur d'un grand trou,
> Tout plein de vague horreur, menant on ne sait ou;
> Je ne vois qu'infini par toutes les fenêtres,

---

[1] Charles Baudelaire, Flowers of Evil and Other Works, ed. & trans. Wallace Fowlie (New York, Bantam Books, 1963) p. 11.

Et mon esprit, toujours du vertige hanté,
Jalouse du néant l'insensibilite,
-Ah! ne jamais sortir des Nombres et des Êtres![2]

The Abyss

Pascal had his abyss, which moved with him.
Alas! everything is abyss -action, desire, dreams,
Words! and over my hair which raises itself straight up
I often feel the wind of Fear pass.

Above, below, everywhere, distances, shores,
Silence, terrifying and imprisoning space...
On the depths of my nights God with His knowing finger
Sketches a nightmare, multiform and without trace.

I'm afraid of sleep as one fears a great hole,
Brimming with vague horror, leading one knows not where;
I see nothing but infinity through all the windows,

And my mind, always haunted by vertigo,
Is jealous of the insensibility of the void.
-Ah! I will never be free of Numbers and Beings!

The temptation is to say, "The man is very, very sick. He should see someone.", just as fifty years ago it might have been to say, "What an unhappy person!", or fifty years before that, to say, "Only a monster would dwell on such subjects. Blasphemy!" Yet all would agree that technically it is marvelous poetry. But the loathing and rejection of his time, and the pity of ours (in fact many of his poems beg for pity) are not the point. He may indeed be sick, or a monster in need of compassion, the reader nonetheless has a reaction. All could say, "But, really, haven't you felt like this once in a while?" It is doubtful that Baudelaire remained constantly in such a state. But insofar as we have any reaction at all, implies a personal

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[2] Ibid., p. 114. (The following translation is modified by this author.)

relation to "le gouffre" involving recognition.

This is a crucial poem, and it would be well to analyse the content. (Please note first that a better translation of the word 'gouffre' would be the older meaning of our 'gulf'. Abyss has the proper connotation of great depth, but also an unnecessary pejorative sense.)

Baudelaire begins by invoking a famous physicist (d. 1662, father of modern hydraulics), that even he owned his abyss, implying universality immediately. He continues in this vein with everything, everything, that is, that we do, especially the interior actions. It terrifies him to be alive. In the next stanza, the poem gallops on to the effect that external things have upon him (he is referring now to himself only), ending with space which he finds fearful and imprisoning. 'Imprisoning' is not intended to puzzle. Whether it involves immensities or enclosures (the province at that time of scientists) the Baudelairian reaction would be the horror and boredom of confinement for one and our mortal fear of the infinite for the other. He is afraid to sleep since God sketches varied and irrecoverable nightmares on its depths. Is God, then, supposed to be evil? It must be remembered that the traditions surrounding God do not exclusively concern themselves with contentment. The appearance of angels usually causes people to fall flat on their faces, and there is the story of a saint, who having seen him one night, appeared in the morning with an aspect so fearful that he had to remove himself from society until he had reached some human adjustment within himself. Perhaps this person had had the nightmare, only it was not without trace. Baudelaire's windows

give out onto the infinite. (An especially effective image in that it combines the prosaic picture of his house or hotel with grander matters.)

The last stanza is most telling. Physiologically, vertigo is the result of one set of influential senses (inner ear) being in diametrical contradiction with another. (Nothing has changed in your sense of up and down, yet the trees are above you, growing down, as in an airplane.) But the poet's mind is attacked by vertigo: in short, 'le gouffre' is within him as much as are his windows, his neighbors, and is in conflict with them. This is hardly the Buddhist synthesis, and it can be questioned why they are in opposition. They are in opposition if one considers (intellectually and/or emotionally) Words, Numbers and Beings finite tools used by humanity to get along in the world, in other words, merely to endure. He is jealous of the feelinglessness of the void itself, for it may give him nightmares and vertigo, but it doesn't have them. He is jealous for another reason:

Le Voyage

A Maxime du Camp

VIII

O Mort, vieux capitaine, il est temps! levons l'ancre!

Ce pays nous ennuie, o Mort! Appareillons!
Si le ciel et la mer sont noirs comme de l'encre,
Nos coeurs que tu connais sont remplis de rayons!

Verse-nous ton poison pour qu'il nous reconforte!
Nous voulons, tant ce feu nous brule le cerveau,
Plonger au fond du gouffre, Enfer ou Ciel, qu'importe?

Au fond de l'Inconnue pour trouver du nouveau![3]

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[3] Ibid., p. 102.

O Death, old captain, it's time! Let's weigh anchor!
This land bores us, O Death! Let's set sail!
Even if the sky and the sea are as black as ink,
Our hearts, which you know, are filled with rays!

Pour your poison so that it will comfort us!
We want, such is the fire that burns our brains,
To plunge to the bottom of the depths, Heaven or Hell, what's the difference?
To the bottom of the Unknown to find something new!

He is jealous of 'le gouffre' because it is the only thing left which may teach him something. The words 'ennuie' and 'spleen' (meaning at the time the same thing) occur very often in his writing, and it is astonishing how little the theme is treated today. The successful and respectable elderly are chronic and pathetic victims of it.

> The realization of his state of alienation from Self and from God may not dawn on him till middle life, when the major tasks of the outer life have been fulfilled. If then he becomes dissatisfied with his life and possibly falls into a depression or suffers from a sense of futility, the resolution of the problem is not likely to be found by taking up a hobby or seeking new experiences, such as by making excursions into the world of love (Le Voyage, sic), by travel, and so on, expedients that are frequently common in middle life, in successful people. The problem can only be resolved by a search for the deeper meaning, the deeper values of life—that is, by an increase of self consciousness. This has to be undertaken as a task, one that will involve a difficult inner journey, which often proves to be a veritable "dark night of the soul". . . . (Otherwise) his life becomes sterile...and he either grows increasingly rigid and finally actually petrified, or some sort of breakdown is likely to occur.[4]

Yet Baudelaire's main drive was towards life and beauty, and his concern with terror, boredom, ugliness, evil and death was merely its result. His integrity refused him the pleasures of being lionized (which he could easily have become); his dandyism (if one is to believe

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[4] M. Esther Harding, M.D., The Parental Image, (New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1965), pp. 139, 140.

his essay on the subject) consisted of simplicity as well as non-conformity ("Isn't it the necessary cost of our period,...which bears on its black...shoulders the symbol of perpetual mourning? ...-a long parade of coroners, politician-coroners, lover-coroners, bourgeois-coroners."), and his experiments with laudanum were not the play of a sensualist so much as the drive of a man who must progress. To progress beyond the analytical and divisive effects of the symbol is not a forte of western thought.

Almost nothing is known about Isidor Ducasse (alias Le Comte de Lautréamont). He arrived in Paris in his very early twenties, and died there in his early twenties, of consumption. He was ugly, silent, saturnine and dirty. He had no known friends, except the man who published the first canto of his Chants de Maldoror two years before he died. He was known to appear, listen sardonically to the conversation, and vanish. It is thought that he received a miniscule stipend from his family in South America. His Chants were not published in full until 1912!

Les Chants de Maldoror is a picaresque novel in verse form and the first person. As in Baudelaire it is a confession of a sort "that the responsibility of the reader often becomes unbearable." But the pitch has been raised: the inverted foulness reaches greater foulness; Lautréamont never asks for pity, he merely continues to curse. The beginning gives a clue:

> I propose to proclaim in a loud voice and without emotion the cold and grave chant that you are about to hear. Consider carefully what it contains and guard yourself against the painful impression it cannot fail to leave like a blight upon your troubled imaginings. Do not believe that I am on the point of

> death for I am not yet a skeleton and old age does not rest upon my brow. Consequently let us reject any idea of comparing me with a swan at the moment when its life is about to take wing; and see before you nothing but a monster whose face, I am happy to say is hidden from you. Yet this face is less horrible than the soul, and nevertheless I am no criminal...[5]

Not only does the horror deepen past Beaudelaire, but it becomes consistent. Further, the imagery is even more inventive.

One scene shows an omnibus rattling through a dead street. The people aboard are almost exclusively alike. They sit like loose mannequins, their heads jiggling back and forth. They speak to no one, consult no newspapers, and look neither to the left nor right. A small boy runs behind them in the dust, shouting something. (This last sentence is repeated several times throughout the story.) Finally one of the passengers turns his head slowly around, opens his mouth and begins to touch his companion, closes his mouth and his head swivels back to straight ahead. The boy is left in the dust still trying to get them to stop.

Later Maldoror finds himself on a sort of parapet by a heavy grate from which issue the normal foetid odors. Beneath he can perceive people in various attitudes of agony, although there appears to be easy access and exit. They are particularly agitated by the appearance and growth of a repellent blind and hirsute being. He is attended by a bevy of nuns who emerge from sarcophagi. At the end the beast emerges from the grate while Maldoror wisely withdraws a certain distance:

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[5] Lautréamont, Les Chants de Maldoror, trans. & pub. Guy Wernham (1943).

> The nuns, seeing him take flight into the air with the wings he had kept concealed beneath his emerald robe, silently replaced themselves beneath the lids of the tombs.[6]

In another episode Maldoror observes a girl, barely in puberty, very beautiful, notes her calm and innocence, and is terrified when she lies down beneath a tree and falls asleep. He assaults her sexually—with a penknife—and disembowels her without leaving a mark. He constantly reiterates that there is absolutely no satisfaction felt by Maldoror, that he is more disgusted than if he had to watch, and that her cries tear him to pieces. But the impression is inescapable that it is something he must do, not an unknown compulsion, but almost a duty.

As for Lautréamont, he seems compelled to speak the unspeakable: "An evil viper has devoured my penis and taken its place."[7] Maldoror, in contrast to Beaudelaire, very seldom generalizes, but moves us from scene to scene with little introduction.

At one point, however:

> I have made a pact with prostitution in order to sow disorder among families. I remember the night that preceded this dangerous alliance. I saw before me a tomb. I heard a glow-worm, large as a house, saying to me:
> I will be your light. Read the inscription. It is not from me whence comes this supreme command.[8]

And again:

> ...Yes I feel that my soul is padlocked in my body and cannot free itself to flee far from coasts by the human sea and be no

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[6] Ibid., p. 154.

[7] Ibid., p. 182.

[8] Ibid., p. 100.

> longer witness to the livid pack of sorrows that pursues the human lizard without respite across morasses and the abyss of vast despondency. But I make no complaint. I receive life like a wound, and I have forbidden suicide to heal the gash. I wish the Creator to contemplate this yawning crevice every hour of his eternity. This is the punishment I inflict upon him.[9]

Further:

> ...(to) attack mankind and Him who created mankind.[10]

Lautréamont, in contrast to Beaudelaire, is making open attacks upon the society of men and that which it (and he himself for that matter) seems to hold dear. Even more important—where Beaudelaire was fogging the concepts of good and evil in the name of beauty, Lautreamont is attacking beauty as well in revenge against the Creator. God, he implies, is drunk and lecherous, causing martyrdom, debauchery, and misery, as well as personally participating in them, while Satan (deemed merely very competent and urbane by Beaudelaire) is busy regrouping his forces against Him.

It is thus that Lautreamont was probably forced to invent a new kind of beauty; after all the word still existed, and being a poet, he probably still ached to use it:

> Lautréamont et Rimbaud sont sans doute les premiers à condenser dans leurs métaphores les visions anciennes et les aspects de la "surnature" civilisée: les "enluminures" de Rimbaud, ses Illuminations, bien que filles des proses médiévales d'Aloysius Bertrand, n'auraient sans doute pas manifeste leur pouvoir de rénovation de la poésie ecrite si elles n'avaient ete aussi les chants de l'humanité nouvelle pour qui la fumée de charbon est "l'ombre des bois" et "la nuit d'été!"; et les fameuses comparaisons de Lautréamont mettent le plus souvent en jeu des

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[9] Ibid., p. 132.

[10] Ibid., p. 257.

objets de science, des mécanismes, des observations scientifiques: "Beau comme la caroncule charnue, de forme conique, sillonnée par des rides transversales assez profondes, qui s'élève sur la base du bec supérieur du dindon... beau comme une corvette cuirassée à tourelles...beau comme la rencontre fortuite, sur une table de dissection, d'une machine à coudre et d'un parapluie!"[11]

Lautreamont and Rimbaud are without doubt the first to condense in their metaphors ancient visions, and the aspects of civilized "supernature": the "inluminations" of Rimbaud, his Illuminations, although progeny of the medieval prose of Aloysius Bertrand*, would doubtless not have manifested their power to renovate written poetry if they had not also been the songs of the new humanity for which coal smoke is "the shadow of the woods" and "the night of summer!"; and the famous comparisons of Lautreamont most often put into play scientific objects, mechanisms, scientific observations: "As beautiful as the fleshy conical comb, furrowed by transverse and rather deep wrinkles, which rises from the base of the turkey's upper bill...as beautiful as a corvette breastplated with turrets...as beautiful as the fortuitous meeting, on a dissection table, of a sewing machine and an umbrella!"

A Season in Hell is a prose poem verging on the essay. Rimbaud wrote it after having attempted to make radical changes in the poetic tradition of the time. He started largely with Beaudelaire, of whom he said "The first visionary, the king of poets, a true god.", and was greatly influenced by the attitude of Flaubert, also a perfectionist in his craft, who found his world so "disgusting, enervating, corruptive, and brutalizing, (that) honest and sensitive people are forced to seek somewhere within themselves a more suitable place to live." (Author's underlining.)

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[11] Marcel Jean, Histoire de la Peinture Surrealists, (Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1959), p. 97.

*Described as a late romantic--perverse, diabolic and sentimental. Not published until after his death, he influenced Beaudelaire, and wrote "Gaspard de la Nuit", which inspired Ravel's work of the same name.

Rimbaud's approach in A Season in Hell is less obsessive, more reasoned, and highly informed, although not without hubris:

> Je vais dévoiler tous les mystères: mystères religieux ou naturels, mort, naissance, avenir, passé, cosmogenie, néant. Je suis maître en fantasmagories.[12]
>
> I am going to unveil all the mysteries: religious or natural mysteries, death, birth, future, past, cosmogony, the void. I am a master of phantasmagoria.

While saving himself from charlatanry in the last sentence, he suggests that when dealing with these grand mysteries we are troubling ourselves with illusions and irrelevancies.

Much of A Season in Hell is written thus with a rather sad smile of exasperation. Even the title connotes something vainly fashionable, as if, to the ordinary man, the whole thing might have no more effect than announcing that one spent "the season" on the Cote d'Azure.

He begins by informing us that he comes from a long line of Goths, who, although they can't remember far behind the Christian era, were never adept at heroism, were the clumsiest of all at fighting, beast-skinning and spice burning, although they had a penchant for laziness, lying and sacrilege. They never could quite get the hang of this Christian business.

But he begins the story of his interior life:

> Jadis, se je me souviens bien, ma vie était un festin où s'ouvraient tous les coeurs, où tous les vins coulaient.
> Un soir, j'ai assis la Beauté sur mes genoux. -Et j. l'ai trouvée amère. -Et je l'ai injurée.

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[12] Arthur Rimbeaud, A Season in Hell, trans, Delmore Schwartz, (Norfolk, New Directions, 1939), p. 15.

Je me suis armé contra la justice.
Je me suis enfui. O sorcières, ô misere, ô haine, c'est à vous que mon trésor a été confié![13]

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Long ago, if I remember well, my life was a banquet where all hearts opened, and all wines flowed.

One evening, I seated Beauty on my knees. -And I found her bitter. -And I insulted her.

I armed myself contra justice.

I fled. O sorcerers, O misery, O hatred, and I had entrusted my treasure to you!

With that, Rimbaud begins to mount his sarcastic offensive, -and it is almost exclusively against society:

Qu'étais-je au siècle dernier: je ne me retrouve qu'aujourd'hui. Plus de vagabonds, plus de guerres vagues. La race inférieure a tout couvert-le peuple, comme on dit, la raison, la nation et la science.

Oh! la science! On a tout repris. Pour le corps et pour l'âme, -le viatique, -on a la médecine et la philosophie, -les remèdes de bonnes femmes et les chansons populaires arrangées. Et les divertissements des princes et les jeux qu'ils interdisaient! Geographie, cosmographie, mécanique, chimie!. . .

La science, la nouvelle noblesse! Le progrès. Le monde marché! Pourquoi ne tournerait-il pas?[14]

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What was I last century? I can only find myself in today. No more vagabonds, no purposless wars. The inferior race has covered everything---the people, as we say, reason, patriotism and science.

Oh science! Everything has come back. For the body and for the soul, instead of extreme unction, medicine and philosophy, old wive's remedies and arranged popular songs. The diversions of princes and the games they prohibited! Geography, cosmography, mechanics, chemistry! . . .

Science, the new aristocracy! Progress. The world moves on! Doesn't it revolve?

Having dealt his blows to reason (and the Age of Reason), the nation, and science, he dilates on the Western World:

"..Mais nous sommes polis; nos relations avec le monde sont très convenables." Est-ce étonnant? Le monde! les marchands,

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[13] Ibid., p. 15.

[14] Ibid., p. 23.

> les naïfs! ...-je vois que mes malaises viennent de ne m'être pas figuré assez tot que nous sommes a l'Occident. ...Non que je croie la lumiere altérée, la forme extenuée, le mouvement égaré. ...Mes deux sous de raison sont finis! -L'esprit est autorité, il veut que je sois en Occident. Il faudrait le faire taire pour conclure comme je voulais.[15]
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> -
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> "...But we are polite; our relations with the world are quite correct." Is this astonishing? The world! The merchants, such innocents! ...I see that my discomforts come from not seeing soon enough that we are of the Occident. ...Not that I believe that the light is altered, form extenuated, movement split off. ...My pennyworth of reason is finished! My mind is the authority, it wants me to be Occidental. I'll just have to keep my mouth shut if I'm to end up the way I want.

And expands further on its foundation:

> Elles ne peuvent plus que vouloir une position assurée. Le position gagnée, coeur et beauté sont mis de côté: il ne reste que froid dédain, l'aliment du mariage, auhourd'hue. Ou bien je vois des femmes, avec les signes du bonheur, dont, moi, jaurais pu faire de bonnes camarades, dévorées tout d'abord par des brutes sensibles comme de bûchers.[16]
>
> -
>
> They (women) can do no more than want a secure position. Such position won, heart and beauty are put aside: there remains only cold disdain, the nourishment of marriage these days. Or else I see women, having all the earmarks of happiness, of whom I could have made good companions, immediately devoured by brutes as sensitive as the logs for a funeral pyre.

Although typing himself as a Gaul, he continually implies that Christianity and its Classical trappings are no longer functional, and Beaudelaire's and Lautreamont's efficient, or horrifying, gods and devils, become ineffectual buffoons.

> A qui me louer? Quelle bête faut-il adorer? Quelle saints image attaque-t-on? Quels coeurs briserais-je? Quel mensonge dois-je tenir? -Dans quel sang marcher?[17] ...Satan, farceur, tu veux

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[15] Ibid., p. 82.

[16] Ibid., p. 50.

[17] Ibid., p. 27.

me dissoudre, avec tes charmes. Je réclame.[18]

To whom shall I hire myself out? What beast must one adore? What holy image is to be attacked? What hearts will I break? What lie must I hold to? In what blood to march? ...Satan, you clown, you want to dissolve me, with your charms. I protest.

To put these poets in proportion, it must be remembered that no time was without those disenchanted by the Establishment. Witness our Angry Young Men, Bosch's pokes at human folly, Rowlandson, Goya's monsters and his Capricios. But a sharp difference may be perceived in that most of the above, unlike these French poets, are basing their disgust and satire upon moral and religious touchstones still operative at the time. Yet, in an almost arithmetic progression culminating in Rimbaud, the touchstones themselves are depredated in the interest of some new unknown, and in flight from a boredom worse than fear. (Note that Satan is spoken to with the 'thou', which is by no means Buber's "I-Thou" relationship with God and life.)

This can be legitimately viewed,—with Sartre's feeling of nausea and his sense of the absurd—, as the logical extension of romanticism. Instead of an unexpressed confidence in the order of things, in which evil, or imbalance, is accidental and doomed by the very structure of the universe, the universe is found wanting, and its creator consequently stands accused of error, or is suspected to be asleep, dead, or fictitious. In the first place, man's duty seems to be to imitate the gods by bringing order out of chaos; in the second, to engage himself in an equally heroic struggle, in defiance of the

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[18] Ibid., p. 45.

gods or the forces of nature, against an ultimately victorious chaos.

> For a long time I have felt the need to distinguish two contrasting ways of grasping experience. On the one hand, a deep-seated continuity appears to link all things and all events and to lend them a significance that provokes our wonder. Whether this continuity is seen as material or ideal, magical or rational, it fills us with a sense of being able to reckon with life; we shall always be able finally to relate one segment to another if we possess the patience and the insight and the energy to enter fully into the world within our reach. On the other hand, we frequently reach the point at which the routine, falsity, and injustice of life inflict on us a feeling of senselessness; things happen without any evident explanation beyond mechanical temporal sequence. In this vision of the world no meaning attaches to event or things, and any effort at insight or sympathy ends in despair. To fill the void we may assign arbitrary meanings to familiar objects and actions, but such meanings shrivel up and die under our very eyes. Life never holds its savor. In the first view, everything has significance; the world is filled and its parts held in place by connections. (Leonardo said he could literally see them, "lines crossing and interweaving.") In the second view, nothing has structure or significance; the world barely holds its own against collapse.[19]

It is because of this second view, so obviously entertained by Beaudelaire, Lautreamont, and Rimbaud, that we see the increasing dissociation and alienation of the common symbol, with the symbol itself finally becoming suspect.

Before pressing on to the visual products of surrealism, further questions should be posed about modern literary surrealism. First, how did the word originate?

It was, in fact, coined by the ubiquitous Apollinaire in 1917:

> All things considered, I think <u>surrealisme</u> would be better than <u>surnaturalisme</u>, which I had used originally. <u>Surrealism</u> doesn't yet exist in the dictionaries, and it will be easier to handle than <u>surnaturalisme</u>, which is already employed by those gentlemen,

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[19] Maurice Nadeau, <u>The History of Surrealism</u>, intro. Roger Shattuck, trans. Richard Howard, (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1965), p. 18.

the philosophers.
-Guillaume Apollinaire, (letter to Paul Dermee, March 1917).[20]

He was referring to his drama Les Mamelles de Tiresias and his ballet Parade, which with other spectacles was "invading" Germany and "conquering" Paris (as Marcel Jean somewhat militantly puts it) in the name of "dada". More can be said about the term itself.

It does not translate into English well. This is simply because (like the brand names Kodak and Fridgidaire) it was widely known in the English (and German*)-speaking world through movement publicity before it was clarified as an idea or group of ideas. Less common words, such as 'surcoat' or 'surcease' use this prefix, while 'super', albeit more familiar, seems to imply a judgement closer to 'greater than'. The point that the surrealists seem to be making is that there is a reality beyond that which appears to be axiomatic in our day-by-day assumptions, a reality that is only dimly understood, and must be reached by unconventional, and apparently random means. 'Metareality' would be a good term if conceptualization is, as it is here, the main concern. 'Overreality'** is also effective.

A distracting, even misleading conclusion can be reached by noting that the year dada broke up (almost to a man, excepting Kurt Schwitters and Theo van Doesburg) was the year the ex-dadaists formed a new group headed by Andre Breton. This was 1922. In 1923,

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[20] Ibid., p. 52.

*Although the movement was, at its height, truly international (involving Hans Arp and Max Ernst) most removed to Paris for the intellectual climate by 1923.

**'Uberrealismus' would be valid in German.

Yves Tanguy, impressed by de Chirico, first began to paint, and in 1924 Breton published the first 'Surrealist Manifesto.' Yet dada does bear, as an art form, certain relationships with surrealism.

It must be established here that whatever name a movement or school came under, this period, from 1905 to the twenties, is marked by exuberant and prolific experimentation: by 1905 Picasso and Braque had visited Cezanne and cubist painting began to emerge from their studios, hailed with great effect by Apollinaire as the art of the future. In 1909, Kandinsky's housekeeper hung one of his pictures upside down. At first unable to identify it as his own, and then astonished by the effect, Kandinsky began to paint purely abstract paintings. The first Futurist Manifesto was published in 1909, and in 1910 deChirico appeared in Paris. 1912 saw Duchamp's "Nude Descending a Staircase", which was rejected by Albert Gleizes at the Section d'Or exhibition, to be shown the next year at the New York Armory Show. By 1915, Duchamp was producing his "readymades", Arp his "papiers dechires" and "colles", and de Chirico his "metaphysical" paintings. (Picasso had been making colleges since 1912.) In 1916 dada was born in Zurich at the Cabinet Voltaire and baptized; its fiftieth anniversary was celebrated this month and commemorated by a plaque sculpted by Arp: "In diesem Haus wurde am 5. Febr. 1916 das Cabaret Voltaire eroffnet und der DADAISMUS begrundet." In 1917 Arp, Chirico, Ernst, Feininger, Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Marc, Modigliani and Picasso exhibited at the Dada Gallery in Zurich; the first issue of the review "Dada" edited by Tristan Tzara was published, while in New York Duchamp published "Rong-Wrong", exhibiting his urinal in Paris' Salon des Independents. In 1918 Tzara's

Dada Manifesto was published. Most of the dada group gather in Paris by 1919,* and Soupault launches the review "Littérature" with Breton, to continue publication until 1924, the year after dada no longer occupied the art world, and Duchamp had given up painting altogether. Breton's first "Surrealist Manifesto" is published, and the first issue of Naville "The Surrealist Revolution" appears. Brancusi, Gabo and Pevsner had been producing completely abstracted sculptures using the 'new materials'—including plastic, since 1919. Mondrian's finished style had been developed by 1924, and the Bauhaus was built. In 1925 the first group exhibit of surrealist painters was shown. In fine, it could be well argued that nothing much has happened to 'modern art' since that time,—a period spanning no more than twenty years.

And it could be further extrapolated that the modern critic may find himself progressively obliged to discuss recent art in terms of integrity and basic content rather than fixing on that which might appear to be an innovation, or in some way connected with 'progress'.

In any event, from nine years before World War I to seven years after it, more radical changes occurred in the character of artistic production than had been made in the preceding two hundred years. Another curious fact should be noticed: no one with access to the above chronology, or to the paintings and sculptures of the time, would be likely to guess that the most brutal war in history had been precipitated for four years upon that early part of the twentieth century.

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*In 1920 Duchamp showed a copy of the Mona Lisa with the addition of a Van Dyke, entitled L.H.O.O.Q., which reads in French, "Elle a chaud au cul.

Dada can be described as consciously irrelevant or deliberately puzzling articles made largely from everyday objects and often showing a jaunty sense of humor: the reversal of the flow as well as of the attitude of a urinal really would make quite an elegant porcelain fountain, and it does surprise one that Duchamp has not been followed up on this; a fur lined cup and saucer (possibly in the spirit of, "For the woman who has everything") is a dernier cri in useless luxury; a bottle rack without embellishments makes a thorny sextuple-tiered papal crown, entitled "Readymade", while English and French are mixed gayly with advertising and technical engravings probably cut from catalogues. One such shows two proper Victorian girls on a tandem three-wheeled sort of bicycle pedalling unconcernedly through a furious lightning storm, entitled "Deux Jeune Filles Voyagent." Doubtless this bicycle built for two never was much of a success on the market. But that dada had obtrusively established itself in the public eye should not obscure the fact that there were still those with more serious intent producing more serious objects, notably Arp, Ernst, Ray and Duchamp. The latter's semi-cubist mechanical constructions, were true inventions, with weighty symbolic overtones, overtones which almost imply a movement toward the myth,—constructions with a frankly anthropomorphic reference. Arp's pristine shapes are worked, formal concentrates without a trace of puckishness. A 1921 painting by Ernst entitled "Célébès, dit l'Elephant Célébès", which depicts an equivocally mechanico/organic monster whose tail-trunk-neck bears a betallic bull's head, is far from frivolous, in spite of the possible triple pun in the title. In the foreground a headless and hollow female torso gestures

mysteriously, and fish swim in the air.

The second issue of Dada (Berlin, 1919) includes a very clear exposee of its ostensible nature:

> Was ist dada? Eine Kunst? Eine Philosophie? Eine Politik? Eine Feuerversicherung? Oder: Staatsreligion? ist dada wirkliche Energie? oder ist es ~~nur~~ GARNICHTS, d.h. alles?[21]
>
> What is dada? An art? A philosophy? A political stance? A fire insurance? Or a state religion? is dada actually energy? or is it ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, i.e. everything?

But in true dada spirit, it couches itself in a series of questions, hopefully leaving the public bewildered but intrigued. Much of it was, of course.

It is much too easy, and downright wrong-headed to maintain that dada was largely an expression of the terribleness of the war, or a relief from it in the tradition of celebrating peace in the streets: the dates are too clear, and dada was self-conscious and exhibiting long before the war was over. There is no doubt that it would have reared its whimsical head, Great War or no.* It is, furthermore, almost a tautology at this point, to explain that dada was not so much a product of the times, as it was the normal eruption of certain fundamental human urges and an evolution of perfectly plain traditions. The most obvious of these urges is the artistic and creative urge itself, for whether subservient to or influencing the body politic and the culture, people will respond to it. Another simple one is the urge to play. There is no reason why this urge should not be taken seriously,

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[21] Ibid., p. 56.

*A much better case may be built around the idea that the war crippled artistic production.

any more than the visible products of play cannot be taken seriously, or at the least, sympathetically. Yet instead of laughing with Duchamp's ball of twine riveted between two plates (1916), entitled "Readymade aidé à bruit secret"--assisted by secret noise--, the public would be stubbornly puzzled or outraged. Equally stubborn is the unanimously Christian mis-reading of St. Paul's "I have put away childish things"[22] while ignoring the booming, "Now we see through the glass darkly" which follows immediately after. Presumably play is one of the childish things. Skirting considerations such as play may be fun, and fun wicked,--the attitude that activity without clearly explainable reasons, and concrete results expected, is frivolous. Nothing could be more false, as any research scientist would agree.

The fact of the matter is that such outrages against artistic play have fulminated from a public and critics conditioned to "great art", while they cavalierly ignored the character of this "greatness" itself. It hardly need be mentioned that it is quite unromantically the result of durability: we have Greek and Roman statuary and mosaics, but few paintings. Bronze and gold works are limited since they are also useful as cannon or for currency. Some buildings burned down; others did not. Some people threw things out with the rubbish; others did not. Some Egyptian dynastic playthings remain, but not many. It is only reasonable to expect that one is hard put to it to find comparisons in the history of art with dada.

It is also almost a tautology at this point to issue warnings

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[22] King James Bible, Paul to the Corinthians.

against the harmless labors of art taxonomists, who, quite naturally are interested in how and why a work is different, and unnaturally fail to consider the nature of their subject. The result, as can be easily seen is fearful confusions, if not downright absurdities, often made amusing by serious ex cathedra language.

In short, dada, cannot be, even refuses to be, looked upon as an integrated phenomenon.[4]

Besides the experimental tradition of the Age of Reason, dada is also directly in line with another: the purely artistic tradition. This tradition is not a matter of dispute, except in the amount of influence which one would be willing to assign to it. I suspect that its power has increased sharply in the twentieth century, as well as its purity. By "purely artistic tradition" is meant, on the practical level, in what way the artist is influenced (usually through admiration and/or imitation) or in what way his personality is changed by exposure to the works and personalities of other artists. A question could be posed: would it be possible to induce an artistic tradition with integrity if the creators were entirely removed from those events that inspire newspaper articles and history books? Obviously the answer is yes.

> Futurism thus provided a preview of what was to be the pervasive condition of the art that came out of the war: the dissociation of form and content. It is, I know, to risk being gauche to suggest that this old distinction between form and content might be a useful instrument for apprehending a distinctly modern artistic phenomenon, for modernism is alleged to have rendered such a distinction obsolete. Yet I think that the specific artistic character of the art that followed on the First World War gives this antique notion a new cogency. Artists such as Kurt Schwitters or Jean Arp are simply unintelligible if approached in purely formal terms, and they are significantly misrepresented if described—see any history of

> Dada for confirmation--exclusively in terms of the anti-art, anti-culture, pseudo-nihilist ideology to which conventional art history confines them. Schwitters, for example, is often said to be anti-formalist--for no better reason, apparently, than that Dada proclaimed its enmity to aesthetic formality, and Schwitters, as a votary of Dada, is assumed to have upheld in his art the position announced in Dadaist rhetoric. But an examination of Schwitters' copious oeuvre reveals him to be, if anything, a more rigorous formalist than Picasso; his art is all concentrated on those refinements, readjustments and purifications which are the unmistakable preoccupations of an artist intent upon keeping anything but formal considerations from determining the nature of his expression. Likewise Arp, whose delicate puns and cultivated wit comprise a virtual hot-house of aesthetic self-consciousness. In both these cases the basic grammar of form derives from the prewar period: in Schwitters' case, from Cubism; in Arp's, from Brancusi. What the doctrines of Dada provided was an ideological umbrella which could at once shelter them from the storms of history and leave them free to cultivate their own garden.[23]

There is little need to interpolate the influence of dada upon surrealism insofar as practically the same people were involved, and the difference between the two is much the same as the difference that must have occurred in the individuals themselves, namely, maturity and a sense of higher purpose. Surrealism was the next umbrella for many.

The orthodoxies of the two shared a concern with the newer everyday objects and the accidental, but surrealism persisted in focussing on and experimenting with the accidental and the subliminal in a varyingly responsible search for a new world, a sort of numinous experience in which the mind of man is radically changed through discovery. It was, for them, no longer play, and as the movement began to feel its muscle, they proposed the necessity of social involvement in its name. It was far from nihilistic.

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[23] Hilton Kramer, "The Grand Niagara", Arts Magazine, (September, 1964), p. 15.

The character of the movement also changed in the ascendency, often challenged, but never impeded, of André Breton to its 'leadership'. Discussion of surrealistic behavior cannot escape Breton; he was far too acute, prolific and powerful.

If not staggeringly good-looking as some have written (his photograph shows a long, somewhat horsey face with heavy lids and the suggestion of a pendulous Habsburg lower lip), he was without doubt a man of electrifying charismatic presence, as well as prodigious creative and organizational energy. According to Jean, anyone sufficiently sensitive to understand such brilliance was compelled either to reject him out of hand, or deny him nothing, even to the point of his women, which often, adds Jean, was the case.

Although Tzara (editor of "Dada") introduced dada in force to Paris after he arrived in 1917, it was Breton who increasingly induced its almost headlong impulsion towards "du nouveau". One of his early acts, besides insisting that dada had no right to confine itself to protest, was to set up, in 1921, the "accusation and judgement of Maurice Barres by Dada", a serious and eloquent condemnation of a respected Establishment critic of the time, who was, probably wisely, out of town at a convention during its progress. Barres, in the charges drawn up by Breton, was accused, through being untrue to his essential self, and through being in an influential position, of crimes against the safety of the mind. (Incidentally, up to this time, dada,—with the active participation of Arp, for one, had staged several Happenings, although not so named, in no wise different from today's, except obviously in the equipment they could lay their hands on.)

> The formal break that Breton, Aragon, Eluard, and Peret made with Dadaism occurred in 1922, following the failure of the "Congress for the determination of directives and the defenses of the modern spirit." This break had been made necessary by the antagonistic preoccupations of Breton and Tzara. Still, the specific ideas of individuals count less than the objective conditions that make them act. Tzara wanted to prolong artificiality, on the ideological level, the anarchic state of the armistice.[24]

Breton was to write in 1924:

> It was in 1919 that my attention was fastened upon the more or less partial phrases that, in utter solitude, as sleep approached, became perceptible to the mind without its being possible to discover in them (without a rather elaborate analysis) a previous determination. One evening, in particular, before falling asleep...a phrase that seemed insistent, a phrase, I should say, that knocked at the window. ...but it was something like "There is a man cut in two by the window," yet it offered no ambiguity, accompanied as it was by the faint visual image of a walking man truncated at the waist by a window perpendicular to the axis of his body. No doubt about it, what was involved was the simple righting in space of a man leaning out of a window.
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> ...Obsessed as I still was with Freud* at this period, and familiar with his methods of analysis, which I had some occasion to practice upon patients during the war, I determined to obtain from myself what one attempts to obtain from them,--a monologue spoken as rapidly as possible, on which the subject's critical spirit brings no judgment to bear, which is subsequently unhampered by reticence, and which is, as exactly as possible, spoken thought.[25]

Whether free association (a term Breton fails to use), automatic writing, or the "exquisite corpse" game were invented by Breton is not important, but it was his position that incited his entourage to a spate of daydreams, trances, and varied other experiments, not notably

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[24] Nadeau, op. cit., p. 79.

[25] Ibid., p. 81.

*The surrealists interest in Freud seems to be extremely shallow, even timid, and Jung, who might have been helpful, is never mentioned.

including drugs, since they insisted upon recording. Recording, and it might be added, reworking, for they were, after all, craftsmen as well. The "exquisite corpse", incidentally was a game in which several people in succession produced a being or animal, by drawing part of it and folding the paper over, allowing the next person to see nothing but a few guidelines.

Breton and Eluard* went on to write "L'Immaculee Conception", a prose poem full of fascinating images, of which Nadeau says, "This attempt to write a new genesis was coupled with an experience which astonished the psychiatrists and must have revolutionized the history of mental diseases. ...to return to their habitual state of equilibrium, described as normal."[26]

Both Nadeau and Jean have written, essentially, histories of the movement qua movement, although Jean seems far less interested in the idea as he is in cataloguing the comings and goings of various and sundry participants; he will sometimes rattle on for paragraphs, listing names like a social column. Nadeau, more interested in the nature of surrealism, nonetheless concludes lamely in his 1957 addendum that it was overwhelmingly a literary affair, and includes only twelve illustrations by eight artists: de Chirico, Duchamp, Picabia, Arp, Ernst, Tanguy, Magritte, and Dali, none in color. Jean, on the other hand, is packed with paintings and photographs, generously showing practically every artist of the twentieth century, known and unknown.

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[26] Nadeau, op. cit., p. 171.

*later to lose his Gala, almost in the space of an evening, to Dali.

Interesting and turbulent as Breton is, it is his ideas which should occupy the investigation in relation to objects of the twentieth century which might contain surrealist elements.

Some of the events, however, which he fomented appear as entirely surrealistic, sometimes unintentionally.

The year before Breton wrote Le Surrealism et le Peinture, Picasso had gotten Diaghilev in touch with Miro and Ernst for their collaboration on the scenery for his Romeo et Juliette. For some reason, the then surrealists objected, and the moment the curtain rose, a hurricane of tracts fell from the balcony; Tanguy unrolled a banner with the strange device "Long Live Lautreamont", which the audience read as "Long Live the Emperor" in the dim light; whilst Breton, Aragon, Prevert, Crevel, Duhamel, stamped their feet and whistled. A fight broke out, and Desnos, practically knocked out, was taken to jail by the police, which the management had called.

Later Breton held another trial with the intent of bringing Dali to heel. This was a mistake, since Dali behaved with such outrageously surrealistic irrelevance, that the trial became a shambles.

It was also under Breton that the surrealists toyed with Communism, motivated by the desire to do something as well as protest. This was a handy and seemingly appropriate Revolution to sponsor, and the magazine "Le Surrealism au Service de la Revolution" appeared, at approximately the time that Tatlin, Malevitch, Gabo, and Pevsner were being rejected by the stuffily conservative esthetic minds of the Russian Communist Party. Both camps, although many surrealists were issued their party cards, continued to view each other with suspicion,

and for the same reason: the surrealists persisted in following their own line, and did not take kindly to party directives. Aragon traveled to Moscow in 1932 as Breton's emissary, with the purpose of bringing the Communists around. They brought him around, and he published his poem Red Front, a panegyric on the glories of Russia's new world, which advocated revolution and violence in the streets. This was not close to Breton's firing randomly and therefore surrealistically into the crowd, but in spite of his disappointment he managed to write a defense of the poet (who was being brought to trial for sedition, this time by the duly constituted courts of law) basing it on the supposition that to advocate a wrongful act was not to commit it. By 1934 Breton in turn was excommunicated by the Communist Party, and the Party, of course, was repudiated by him. By 1930 Breton had managed to reject and then welcome again practically all of his old friends, and now began to cull out most of his old enthusiasms: Orientalism was embraced and spurned, and after recognizing their paternity, by 1929 had cast off Rimbaud, Beaudelaire, the Marquis de Sade, Poe, and later Dialectical Materialism since it confined itself only to a social order.*

Breton's Second Surrealist Manifesto consisted of letters from Desnos, Ribemont-Dessaignes, Limbour, and Vitrac, each letter in the 'before' column protestion permanent devotion and balanced by a

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*He also, with consistency, explained that the proletariat, not acquainted by nature with the inner voice was forever incapable of understanding the artist. In fact, "the public should be kept from entering...I demand the profound, true occultation of Surrealism."

statement by the same author in the 'after' column with statements like: "stink eternally among the stinks of the paradise consigned to the... conversion of the confidence man, Andre Breton", "hypocrite, false-brother, mealy-mouthed, sacristan", "it would give me great pleasure to see you with a nosebleed", "...I don't think anyone has ever taken them seriously (Breton's ideas), except for a few conceited critics he flattered, a few retarded schoolboys and some women laboring to give birth to monsters." And before realizing that the organization was in danger, he proceeds to execute all its former patriarchs to scour off to others more recherches, Nicholas Flamel, a sixteenth century alchemist, for one.

By and large, Breton, too, was speaking of surrealism as a movement, the events surrounding it, those in or out, its problems with the rest of the world, to describe, define, attack, defend, to occupy with the constant revision of its membership and the certifying of new members. And although he saw himself, au fond, an artist (the point from which Nadeau dates the failure of surrealism, thereby achieving two misapprehensions at once), he remained an authority and a critic.

> Duplessis, with a certain little-boy righteousness states:
>
> Andre Breton soon expelled from his group those disciples who let themselves be tempted by literary glory or politics, since Surrealist activity is essentially uncommitted (sic). As the defender of its purity he next eliminated...(here follows a list including Cocteau, Salmon, Jules Romaines, Paul Valery, because of the large editions of their works.)...Chirico, and then in 1936, Salvadore Dali (whom he called from America "Avida Dollars", an alias Dali picked up and made more of, as is his habit), both guilty of being converts of fascism, and Joseph Delteil, due to his conversion to Catholicism.[27]

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[27] Yves Duplessis, Surrealism, trans. Paul Capon, (New York, Walker & Co., 1962), p. 18.

Yet Breton's statements are cogent and important. He believes in:

> the superior reality of certain hitherto neglected forms of association, those occurring in the dream's omnipotence and in the unfettered play of thought.[28]

to construct, in art,

> objects that come our way only in dreams, (which) can be defended less on the grounds of usefulness than on those of charm; and that by throwing the greatest discredit on 'reasonable' people and objects, perhaps will contribute to the downfall of those representational trophies that are so detestable.[29]

Since,

> Given the need for that drastic revision of real values which, as all understanding minds agree today is indispensable, a work of art must relate to a purely interior model—or else will come to nothing.[30]

Which can be carried out successfully

> ...only if it is achieved under conditions of moral asepsis,... still something that very few men care to hear spoken of. (And inveighs against those who contend that Surrealism)...boasts of wanting to consider what is most vile...corrupting in the world, indicates a total incomprehension of its endeavors.[31]

He is explicit on its nature, and its basic technique:

> Surreality will be the function of our will to absolute disorientation.[32] (From his preface to Ernst's "La Femme 100 Tetes"—pun in 'cent' and 'sans')

> Everything suggests that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and imaginary, the past and the future, the communicable and the incommunicable, the

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[28] Ibid., p. 3.

[29] Ibid., p. 47.

[30] Patrick Waldberg, Surrealism (Cleveland, Editions d'Art, Albert Skira, World Publishing Co., 1962), p. 25.

[31] Duplessis, op. cit., p. 127.

[32] Jean, op. cit., p. 127.

heights and the depths, cease to be perceived contradictorily.[33]

I believe in the coming fusion of those two states, seemingly incompatible, reality and the dream, in a sort of absolute reality, a super-reality.[34]

It is amazing, after these statements, that Breton was not moved to research Buddhism more closely, for the type of mysticism which sees the phenomenal world as a unity in a flash of intuition or insight, describes the experience in very much the same way.

There is a very important difference. For although the surrealists unanimously agreed in techniques of "losing the self" and extra-logical states of mind, as well as a resulting apprehension of the marvelous, the end product was a "liberation of desire" rather than a renunciation of it.

Twenty centuries of Christian oppression have not been able to keep man from having desires, and from longing to satisfy them.[35]

Hence we must no longer speak of heterogeneous, even antagonistic realms. "Dream and action"--another false antinomy. It seems that logic is comfortable only amid these analyses, these divisions, these oppositions: the normal and the mad...thine and mine, when in reality there are only different and not opposed terrains for the application of desire. This desire Breton makes into the great motive force, and also the great unifier: it is ultimately what best expresses man, what constitutes his essence. Throttled, persecuted, diverted from its applications, it manages in spite of everything to achieve its goals. Surrealism sought nothing more than to deliver it from its chains, from the tinsel in which it was sometimes obliged to disguise itself. It was not enough to proclaim desire's omnipotence, it would have to be freed of the obstacles that hampered its fulfillment, those which related to society as well as those which related to the human condition. The

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[33] Nadeau, op. cit., p. 159.

[34] Waldberg, op. cit., p. 23.

[35] Nadeau, op. cit., p. 50.

true revolution, for the surrealists, was the victory of desire.[36]

Others, besides Breton, including painters and sculptors, have made comments on the techniques and the nature of surrealism at the time of its emergence:

> Antonin Artaud, speaking of the Marx Brothers' Animal Crackers: "They achieve an especial magic that the accepted relationships of words and images do not usually reveal, and if Surrealism can be described as a state characterized by a distinct and poetic degree of the spirit, then Animal Crackers entirely shares it."[37]
>
> Aragon: "I no longer want to curb the mistakes made by my fingers or...by my eyes. I know now that they are not clumsy pitfalls, but channels of inquiry toward a goal that only they can reveal to me...glorious gardens in which grow preposterous creeds, insights, frenzies and obsessions."[38]
>
> Jean: "The greatness of surrealist painting lies in its passion for discovery, in its exact, legible, mysterious content."[39]
>
> Max Ernst: "For intensifying my visionary faculties,...(he found in collage) an alchemical compound of two or more incongruous elements, resulting from their unlooked-for juxtaposition, this being due to a will to systematic confusion and thoroughgoing derangement of the senses, or else to mere chance or a purposful exploitation of the vagaries of chance."[40]
>
> Eluard: "The systematic ventures toward useless ends growing to supreme utility, the derangement of logic into absurdity, the practice of the absurd until it becomes indomitable reason."[41]
>
> Yves Bonnefoy: "Little art in the ordinary sense is needed by the surrealist painter; he is concerned not with the object but

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[36] Ibid., p. 186.

[37] Duplessis, op. cit., p. 27.

[38] Ibid., p. 123.

[39] Jean, op. cit., p. 361.

[40] Waldberg, op. cit., p. 64.

[41] Duplessis, op. cit., p. 59.

with the mystery implicit in it. All he needs is to revive by some conventional means or memory of the outward aspects of things; then, once this has been done, he can devote himself to surprise effects and hints of their inmost being, so near and yet so inapprehensible. Like all the arts of 'real presence', surrealist painting reduces the object to a sign which, by its very simplification of the form represented, records that brief arrest of the universal flux which takes place in an epiphany."[42]

When Bonnefoy affirms that little art is necessary, he is not repeating the anti-art philosophy of dada, so much as he is pointing up the fact that this form of creativity is not fundamentally interested in the painting of paintings in a painterly way, or the sculpting of sculptures plastically, or the architechtonic construction of structure. It is concerned with the 'idea', the insight, or the whatness of things which "leaps to us from the vestment of its appearance," as well as the means by which this revelation can be communicated.

Others have further clarified this:

Tzara: "...since whatever tears an object from its normal purpose propels it into the Surreal. You can be a poet without ever writing a single verse...poetry exists in the street, in a business exhibition, or anywhere at all. ...a falling handkerchief can be the lever with which he raises a whole universe."[43]

Artaud: "The spiritual sickness of the West, which is preeminently the place where art is confused with aestheticism, is to think that a painting is only a picture and a dance only an expression of formal movement, as if it were desirable to separate the various art forms, and to cut the bonds that link them to the mystical attitudes in which they can confront the absolute."[44]

This seems to strike to the heart of the controversy revolving about the definition of art itself, which shows all signs of requiring

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[42] Waldberg, op. cit., p. 132.

[43] Duplessis, op. cit., p. 58.

[44] Ibid., p. 96.

much broader terminology to be operative, perhaps something like, "something made by man, and very well too." This, of course, would immediately offend those who persist in separating the arts from the sciences, —by and large an administrative convenience,—as well as the scientists from the technicians, and the fine from the crude artists. A pervasive self-consciousness, to which the surrealists were not immune, tends to muffle the "Eureka!" which can burst from almost any form of human activity. Be that as it may, the surrealist outlook on the arts is particularly refreshing in an age both profiting and restricted by specialization.

The literary surrealists, for all the non-surrealistic discipline of Breton, had various points of view.

> For Breton, Surrealism is constantly seeking the 'point de l'esprit', the spiritual point of which he speaks in his Second Manifesto (?); for Aragon, it was a 'vice' with the image for 'narcotic'; for Eluard it is an instrument of knowledge; for Crevel it was the conflagration of 'Reality's Department Store'; while for the critic Marcel Raymond it is a 'school of poets'.[45]

Breton remains the longest lived and most tenacious of the group, demanding from everyone the rigor and integrity he practices himself. As for the future, he says,

> It is the innocence, the anger of a few men of the future that will be responsible for disengaging from Surrealism what cannot fail to be still vital, to restore it, at the cost of a splendid carnage, to its proper goal.[46]

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> Who knows if this other half of life in which we think we are awake is not merely a somewhat different sort of sleep, from which we wake when we think we sleep? —Pascal[47]

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[45] Jean, op. cit., p. 294.

[46] Nadeau, op. cit., p. 162.

[47] Supra, p. 6.

While the surrealist movement, qua movement, fermented under the control of the writers, there were those who continued to create surrealistic objects, functioning less in a literary tradition than in a visual tradition.

When posing the question: "What is the visual ancestry of surrealism?", more speculation is required, since mastery of a visual medium (as is that of a, say, mathematical medium) tends to occupy time that might be devoted to a verbal. Magritte was originally quite active in surrealist publications in Belgium, but fell silent shortly after his visit to Paris. Ernst seldom broke silence. Tanguy hardly ever. Among the recognized surrealists only Dali, who has achieved almost everything, he would have us know, short of beatification if not canonization (soon to be superceded), remains voluble,—surarticulate, as it were. De Chirico, not personally involved with the general brouhaha, wrote simply and eloquently more of his personal reactions to and relations with things than of his paintings.

There is another difficulty involved in proposing an artistic genealogy of surrealism: one may fail to make a distinction between common knowledge with definite evidence, and that which one might suppose instinctively to be the case. The result can be an abandonment of any attempt to relate twentieth century surrealistic behavior with the works of the past,—that is, to identify it as a facet of human nature, a facet that may have cropped up elsewhere under other nomenclature. It is here more important to clarify the nature of surrealism than to lurk suspiciously in dark alleys hoping to find something to trail.

Georgio de Chirico was by admission a direct influence. Defined by some as a 'pre-surrealist', others as a natural 'classical surrealist', he himself described his work as 'metaphysical painting'.[48] He was totally indifferent to current fashions in art, and could afford to be. He'd had a teacher in Volo, Thessaly, and another in Athens, where he went to the Academy of Fine Arts, and where he was fascinated by Caspar David Friedrich and Arnold Böcklin (German and Swiss late and lugubrious romantic painters). His father died in 1905, leaving the family independent financially and Georgio at the mercy of his mother, who was apparently something of a gorgon and who arranged their inseparable itinerary until his induction into the Italian army in 1915. De Chirico had been born in Greece (where his father was building railroads), and they removed briefly back to Turin, (where Jean maintains a statue still stands to de Chirico père). Thence to Munich where he studied at the Royal Academy of Art and read philosophy, particularly Nietsche. By 1909 they returned to Italy and toured Turin, Milan, and Florence. In 1911 they were in Paris, and remained there until recalled by the war to Italy. There had been time for him to exhibit at the Salon des Independents in 1914, and begin his involvement with the 'art world' of Paris. By the end of 1917 he had returned to Rome and had painted, according to the retrospective view of the surrealists, his last worth-while picture. Yet it was they, in the early twenties, who gathered with him to help title many of those works of his they used which had actually been painted twelve years before.

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[48] Supra, p. 22.

The progress of de Chirico's painting toward critical obscurity is interesting in itself. The earliest important pictures are wholly concerned with what Gordon Onslow-Ford referred to as the "Chirico City".[49] It is practically deserted, and always bathed in a late-afternoon, late-autumn sun. There is a sense of the depopulated beach at the end of the season, and although pennants may be still flapping from towers or pavilions, the brass band has gone, the train is ready to depart, bearing its cargo of pater familias', the shops have been boarded up, while a litter of oddly assorted objects are left behind, suddenly seeming of grand importance on a vista of multiple perspectives. Those people who do appear, seem to be immobile; wrapped in cloaks, they cast long afternoon shadows across steep piazzas or beneath arch-ways which diminish dramatically to stupendous equestrian statues. Over and again, a locomotive will be drawn up behind a wall, sometimes headed into an end-of-the-line barrier, and sending up a patient puff of smoke. There is an overall quality of expectant and melancholy pondering which cannot be easily dismissed, even by an attempt at psychoanalysis. The titles are appropriate and disturbing: "The Nostalgia of the Infinite", "The Anxious Voyage", "The Mystery and Melancholy of the Street", "The Enigma of the Hour", "The Joys and Enigmas of a Strange Hour", "The Uneasiness of the Poet" ('Inquietude').

Around 1915 his personages or presences approach the foreground, and afterwards assume greater and greater importance. The "Chirico

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[49] Chagall and de Chirico, Museum of Fine Arts of Houston, (Houston, 1955), n.p.

City" and his contending perspectives remain, as well as the shadows and the sense of an impending and brooding unknown, but the locomotives and the arcades fade away. The objects left about cease to be the recognizable effluvium of vacationers, or artists' still lives, and become curious constructions covered erratically by the calculations of an engineer. What is most interesting is that the individuals are also dummy-like constructions, which in many of the works, do not convey the sense of having being,—that is, they are no more than haphazardly built mannequins, in spite of the symbols sketched all over them. Here the titles become essential: "The Uneasy Muses", "The Dream of the Poet", "Metaphysical Mannequin", "The Jewish Angel" (or, "The Two Sisters"), "The Great Metaphysician".

With these, de Chirico's interiors begin to show up. The dummys are not present. Instead, objects of no obvious function, covered by geometric graffiti, and seemingly composed of cardboard, sticks and nails, become the focal point. They are accompanied by more or less realistically painted items, such as ribbons for "War", 1916, cookies and a fishing bob for "Metaphysical Interior", or a map with a cruise marked by a dotted line for "Melancholy of Departure", 1916.

But it is precisely because these last are patently interiors that they lose grandeur in their play with space, and hence any nostalgic intimation of the infinite.

In 1917 he founded the "Scuola Metafisica" and co-founded a review, Valori Plastici.

Another curious thing happens at this time. He virtually ceases to date his paintings, and they consist of lamentably clumsy seaside

scenes of naked (although faceless) youths, ramping horses, temples and scatterings of greek column segments. By the twenties he began dating laboriously photographic self-portraits, painted as flesh, and as marble busts. He was also obliged to re-discover his older works to satisfy a sudden public raised largely by the Breton group. (In 1923 Yves Tanguy was enormously impressed by him, and with the help of the poet Duhamel and his friend Prevert decided to concentrate solely on painting.) In 1925 he showed in the first group surrealist exhibition with Arp, Ernst, Klee, Man Ray, Masson, Miro, Picasso, and Pierre Roy. He also came to Paris in that year.

While he was widely used in surrealist publications and exhibits during its early years, his name disappears from its publicity after 1928, except as one of its long-dead patriarchs, and does not really appear again except in an exhibition of "new paintings" in an exhibition of the Royal Society of British Artists, and also in Breton's Le Surrealisme et La Peinture,—1949 and 1945 respectively. In this latter, Breton gives voice to the bitterest disappointment, accusing him of cowardice, gross dishonesty, practically treason, and even charges:

> J'ai assiste a cette scene penible: Chirico cherchant a reproduire de sa main actuelle et de sa main lourde un ancien tableau de lui-meme, non du reste qu'il cherchat dans cet acte une illusion ou une desillusion qui pourrait etre touchante, mais parce qu'en trichant sur son apparence extérieure, il pouvait esperer vendre la même toile deux fois.[50]
>
> I was present at that painful scene: Chirico trying to reproduce, with his own hand, with his heavy hand, an old picture

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[50] Andre Breton, Le Surrealisme et la Peinture, (New York, Brentano's, 1945), p. 44.

> done by himself, not at all was it that he attempted in so doing a touching illusion or disillusion, but because in cheating on its exterior appearance, he might hope to sell the same canvas twice.

Breton's anger at losing a pioneer who might have been able to indicate another step toward du nouveau probably did not match his rage against this abrogation of the responsibility to progress and contribute or get out. Duchamp had turned to chess. It would not have mattered that Chirico's patron was fully aware of the nature of his painting.

Breton was most interested in de Chirico's first phase of painting, and was not hesitant to perform some psychology upon it, while retaining his admiration. He saw the locomotives as the Father Image, the arcades as the Mother Image, and the general sense of melancholy and emptiness as a spiritual abandonment. Whether accurate or not, this does not vitiate the fact that de Chirico was arousing deep philosophical sensibilities, using the symbology of the old and validating the modern environment on his canvases as having serious symbolic value, as possessing opportunities for speculation beyond the bald practical events that brought it into being.

De Chirico was explicit about his feelings on this score in an article on Courbet which appeared in Valori Plastici. He spoke of the

> lien invisible qui unit un peuple ave ses créations. Ainsi pourquoi les maisons en France on tell archictecture et non telle autre, on a beau citer l'histoire, les raisons qui ont contribue a ceci, a cela, on decrit mais on n'explique rien, pour l'eternelle raison qu'il n'y a rien a expliquer et pourtant l'egnime reste toujours. Ces lucarnes sur les toits des maisons a Paris me font toujours une étrange impression; moi, je crois qu'il y a une force inconnue qui a poussé les architechtes a faire ces lucarnes, a les sentir.[51]

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[51] Jean, op. cit., p. 53.

> invisible bond which unites a people with its creations. Otherwise why do the houses in France have such-and-such an architecture rather than another? You can cite history in vain, the reasons which have contributed to this or to that. You describe but you explain nothing, for the eternal reason that there is nothing to explain. And nevertheless the enigma remains. These skylights on the roofs of Paris houses have always made a strange impression; as for me, I believe that there is an unknown force impelling the architects to make these skylights, to feel them.

This was written in 1925.

This sense, always ineffable, that there is "something there" beyond what immediately meets the eye, or the ear, or the intellect, is essentially a mystico/religious experience, not unknown to any period, culture or child, for which last the most banal objects or events take on auras of wonder or terror. It may quickly be argued that the Parisian skylights are made in such a way because the architects were told to by those who purchased them, (as any architect might wryly admit), but this leads one on a treasure hunt that ends at a dismissive statement like, "they were always done that way.", yet the fact remains that light may be admitted satisfactorily in any number of styles, and so does the enigma.

The surrealists used every means they could find to induce this sense, declaring over and over again that, poetry was not the point, music was not the point, painting was not the point, science was not the point, nor was society, nor religion, nor moralities, not even principles of Good and Evil. And they saw it in conjunction with the modern accelerating environment as means for new understanding,—not in the brave new world attitude of the futurists or the Communists (eventually) nor in the horrified nostalgic Carlislian sense.

This may, indeed, be the great error, if any, of the surrealists: --that they made an organized and aggressive campaign against something ineffable, very much like a team of skilled scientists attacking a complex but clearly defined problem.

This may also, in a different way, have been de Chirico's problem. His work develops from an essentially ingenuous expression of nostalgia and anxiety which suggested a further mystery by its own power, to an attempt to create that further mystery itself. He compounded his difficulty by becoming an 'artist' allied economically and intellectually with a movement which was about to condemn him as a fraud. For artists like Ernst, Dali, Magritte, and Tanguy, their association was an immense stimulus. Not so with de Chirico.

Short-lived as de Chirico's relations with the future may have been, his connections with the past are both clear and intriguing. His teacher in Athens was a landscapepainter in the German style, and introduced him to the work of Caspar David Friedrich. Shortly before he began painting the "Chirico City" he was imitating the work of Arnold Bocklin.

Both were creators of romantic scenes.

Friedrich's subjects, in the main, contemplated nature at its most forbidding, and the works of man in their noblest delapidation. Overall there is a contemplative melancholy which combines the debris of ancient violence and neglect with a mournful solitude. There is serenity, but it is tearful; there is hope, but it is sentimental (as in a pair of crutches lying in the snow under a crucifix), and if the landscape is cheerful and prosperous, it remains unoccupied and dwindles

to an inaccessible horizon. If people are introduced, their faces are always turned away, absorbed in the scenery and its meaning. Among his ruined graveyards are several paintings of cairns to prehistoric Germanic chieftains. (He completed his formal studies at Dresden in 1802, where there was supposed to be a large collection of Jacob van Ruisdaels, a late seventeenth century genre painter, whose landscapes, for example "The Jewish Graveyard", figured the heightened emotionality of lowering skies, dead trees, and conspicuous ruins.)

By 1820 he had ridden the wave of German romanticism and popularity, and was totally forgotten thereafter (he died in 1840) until his revival in 1907. The destruction of some of his canvases in the 1931 "Glas Palast" fire was considered a national disaster. German romanticism was a wintry northern romanticism which consciously or unconsciously served the emerging German nation and was defined as "the first purely German cultural conception that exists; a culture more truly and exclusively German than even the Gothic which encompassed all Europe and to which the various peoples only gave their individual nuances."[52] They called upon all free peoples to express their national personalities.

Gustav Pauli commented:

> Romanticism is Germanic and reached its purest expression in those territories which are freest from Roman colonization. Everything that is regarded as an essential aspect of the Romantic spirit—individualism, irrationalism, the mystic welding together of subject and object, the tendency to intermingle the arts, the longing for the far-away and strange, the

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[52] Caspar David Friedrich, His Life and His Work (New York, German Library of Information, 1940), p. 14.

feeling for the infinite and the continuity of historic development.[53]

Pauli might have avoided some embarrassment had he renamed the movement Germanticism. At least Lord Byron could have fought the Turks for Greece with a clear conscience.

Nevertheless, Friedrich was the first romantic painter to use the theme of ruined Gothic cathedrals, and succeeded marvelously in giving it the dignified antiquity which had been the automatic due of Roman architecture since the time of Piranesi. The use of the Gothic theme has further overtones which stem from the shape of the structures themselves. "The "praying hands" theory can be safely discarded.) The sole intention of such construction was height and the illusion of height. Stone must fling toward God, and the arch completes the illusion of a speeding perspective as it curves to a point toward the top. Thinking in this manner, the apex of the arch consists of a vanishing point symbolizing infinity. The cathedral soars in a terrific emotional leap towards God; it may in fact reach Him, but to this extent it is no longer the house of God. In romanticism it is this powerful, personal, and by inference, physiological emotionalism that provides the key to understanding, rather than balance and rationality. We can see in the allegorical duel between romanticism and classicism the pathelogical Western conflict between body and mind.

Friedrich wrote: "Shut your physical eye and begin by seeing your picture with your mind's eye. Then bring to the light of day

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[53] Ibid., p. 13.

what you have seen in darkness."[54] A statement that could have been made by a surrealist, and signals a gradual ascendency of the imagination, and therefore the fantastic, over the geometric and logical. Friedrich never departed from real rocks and real trees; but he sketched from nature for his details and returned to the studio to shut his physical eye and paint.

Arnold Böcklin was born in Basle in 1827, several decades after a romantic spirit could describe himself in such terms. He studied under Schirmer in the Düsseldorf Kunstakademie, and painted melancholy and emotional landscapes (especially of the Jura and the Alps) until his protracted trip to Italy, which included Naples and Pompeii. The visit resulted in an almost total shift in his subject matter to the figure, the scenery and the theme to Greece and Rome. This occurred during the popular revival of romantic painting. He retired in Florence and died there in 1901.

Ancient Greece and Rome may have been subject matter, but Böcklin could never have been considered a classicist. His "Selbstbildniss" shows Böcklin to the shoulders, palette and brush in hand, his head turned from the picture plane, his ear towards a delighted and furiously fiddling skull, immediately behind. His eyes stray, evidently, from the canvas and focussed on infinity. —A double irony in that, "er war hervorragen musikalisch begalt, und wollt mit den Formen und Farbe seiner Bilder wie die Musik wirken."[55]

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[54] Waldberg, op. cit., p. 25.

[55] Der Gross Brockhaus, Dritter Band (Leipzig, F.U.Brockhaus, 1929), p. 75. "he was marvelously gifted in music, and wanted his paintings to operate in their form and color like music."

His "Die Jagd der Diana" shows a very real, but strangely disturbed woman with her hunting accoutrements and a darkened glade, which is full of suggestions of further distances. There is a sense of being in contact with a personage somewhat more than some woman sitting by a bow, and something more than a deer standing behind her. They both know of the other's presence, and there is an eerie motionlessness to them both.

The sense of "something other" is even more striking in Böcklin's "Isle of the Dead". It figures, simply, a small island of rocks pierced by huge, square doorways, approached by a rowboat which contains besides the rower, an erect figure shrouded in white with a white slab balanced across the bow in front of them both. The sea is calm, the moon is hidden behind towering cyprus, the island is silent and deserted, in fact the picture breathes silence. In spite of the cyprus, the very plainness of the tombs in the living rock defy an archeologist to place it except as an event that involved both the ancient past, and possibly the present.

The entire romantic movement, much greater in scope and influence than surrealism, not only rejected the purity and geometry of classical ideals, but seemed to go further, often, in accepting the lack of perfection while using it formally, in slightly altered shapes to suggest something else behind it all,—whether cynically in implying the diabolical or sick, wildly or despairingly in expressing giant emotions, or sentimentally to trill some improbable tenderness.

Unlike surrealism (de Chirico disliked music), the romantics wrote music as well as poetry, and a sudden and obvious tracing appears,

through Beethoven's rages, Wagner piling passion upon passion, Strindberg's atonal convulsions. (Ravel's "Gaspard de la Nuit" has been mentioned above.)

It is necessary to note that Beaudelaire, Rimbaud and Lautréamont spanned the Romantic movement, qua movement, in their collective lifetimes, and especially significant that Beaudelaire considered himself in that tradition:

> To call oneself a romantic and systematically to consider the past, is a contradiction. Such people, in the name of romanticism, blasphemed against the Greeks and Romans; yet you can make Greeks and Romans romantic, when you are that yourself . . . . Actually romanticism is neither in the choice of subjects nor in adherance to truth. It is in the manner of feeling a subject. . . .For me romanticism is the most recent, the most contemporary expression of beauty. ...By romanticism, one means modern art—namely intimacy, spirituality, color, aspiration toward the absolute,. . .[56]

Beaudelaire disposes of the so-called atavism of the romantics with a curt analysis. In an encomium upon the occasion of Delacroix' death, he writes:

> At the time of the great struggle between the two schools, the classical and the romantic, the simple-minded were dumbfounded to hear Eugene Delacroix ceaslessly laud Racine, LaFontaine, and Boileau. I know a poet of an ever violent and quivering temperament who is transported into a long ecstasy by a symmetrical and musically square line of Malherbe.[57]
>
> Delacroix was passionately in love with passion, and coldly determined to find ways of expression passion in the most visible manner. . . .
>
> He used to repeat:
>
> "Since I consider the impression transmitted by nature to the artist the most important thing to be translated, must not

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[56]Fowlie, op. cit., pp. 159-161.

[57]Baudelaire, Eugene Delacroix, his Life and his Work, trans. Joseph M. Bernstein (New York, Lear Publishers, 1947), p. 42.

> the artist be armed in advance with all the most rapid means of translation?"[58]
>
> He believed that nothing was changing although everything seemed to be changing, and that certain decisive epochs in the history of peoples invariably produced analogous phenomena. . . And if one discussed in his presence the great chimera of modern times, the over-inflated notion of continuous perfectibility and perpetual progress, he would sharply ask: "Then where are your Phidiases? Where are your Raphaels?"[59]
>
> Of Meissonier, Delacroix often said, . . ."After all, of us all, he is the surest to live!" Is it not cruious to see the creator of such great things almost jealous of the man who only excelled in little things?[60]
>
> (Delacroix said) "A good painting, faithful and equal to the dream that has engendered it, must be produced like a world. Just as the creation as we see it, is the result of several creations, . . ."[61]

The above quote from Delacroix (footnote 58) fixing his artistic role as a transmitter can be validly compared with that of Friedrich,[62] who is describing in less abstract terms how the process takes place. The connection here to a statement by Klee is unavoidable:

> Let me use a simile: the artist...is like a Tree. He receives the sap that flows through him and through his eye.
> His work is like the crown of the tree, spreading in time and space for all to see.
> Now nobody would expect the crown of a tree to have exactly the same shape as the roots. Clearly...the fact that they belong to different realms must of necessity produce important differences of structure. Why, then, do people deny the artist's right (which is not so much a right as a necessity) to depart from the appearance of his models...? After all, in his

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[58] Ibid., p. 18.

[59] Ibid., p. 58.

[60] Ibid., p. 78.

[61] Ibid., p. 26.

[62] Supra, p. 52.

capacity as the trunk he only gathers and transmits what comes to him from below.[63]

Please mark very carefully at this point that what is under discussion is not the transformation of the world into a "work of art", the distortion of elements in it, the extraction, subtraction, or abstraction (sic) of it, but instead (to use the work of Klee and Delacroix), the transmission of it. Neither does it have anything to do with reproducing the world "as it is". We cannot know the world as it is, and we know we cannot. Our senses are limited for use as survival equipment,—over millions of years. (We are, in fact, one of the super-survivors of the biological world.)

To "express oneself" is unavoidable, but to base the validity of one's work on it and to pattern one's life after it is one of the grossest varieties of autoeroticism. To try to communicate what one believes must be there, is courageous, and man's work.

Klee's writings have caused many to frank "Romantic" upon him, and go contented about their business,—and they may be quite correct, but they are pointing to far more important considerations about the nature of an artist and of art itself, and its relation to the brutal facts of perception and the senses,—ultimately its relation to meaning.

If one were to extirpate diligently those adherents to the Romantic movement who seem to have merely caught the contagion, the remainder can be shown not to be those whose souls praised love while

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[63] Eric Newton, The Romantic Rebellion (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1963), p. 193.

they agonized its responsibility, or those whose lack of humor permits hollow extasies and transports, but instead fervent realists, who, having constructed their own tools with craftsmanship, set about changing the world by personally translating their vision of it, often with embarrassing intimacy. If one feels horror, wonder or mystery, it is their perception of the horrible, the wonderful, the mysterious.

In such a light the word "Romantic" recedes into the past to stand behind an Old French epic poem.

CHAPTER III

FOUR SURREALISTS

Twentieth century art, like twentieth century tools, comes upon us in bewildering, even vertiginous profusion. This very heterogeneity is its salient distinction.

Four artists who "found themselves" and matured in surrealism were

Salvadore Dali	b. 1904	
Max Ernst	b. 1891	
Yves Tanguy	b. 1900	d. 1955
René Magritte	b. 1898	

Dali is without question the most intriguing of the four. An attempt to separate the person from his works; that is, to distinguish between his paintings and the other things he does, always meets with difficulty. The question most often asked is, "Can he really be serious?" The answer is yes and no. He is serious in that he is honest; he is not serious because he has a magnificent sense of humor. Insofar as he has managed to puzzle almost everyone, and avoid being dismissed by almost everyone, is virtually a proof of genius in itself. He may seem ridiculous to the more easily herded northern protestant (?) mind in his anarchic but shrewd self-sufficiency. Surrealism suits him perfectly, and although almost everything he does and says is surrealistic, he manipulates it, not it him. He would be much more likely to maintain that he is super-surrealistic. It would appear that he carried on his person a letter-patent with God's signature on it to do exactly as he pleases. And it is manifest that he does.

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outside world and has with astonishing virtuosity turned it also upon the surrealists and surrealism itself. A short scene from his past well illustrates this. The great Breton had decided that Dali was to be called to account. Dali, according to Jean, arrived with a repertoir of "gags, inventive enough to have made the fortune of a music hall." He wore several layers of underwear of which he progressively divested himself, and feigned "la grippe" carrying a hospital thermometer (one is moved to question if it were of the oral variety) in his mouth, which he interrupted himself to consult from time to time. Nonetheless he fell upon his knees before Breton "as if (the latter) were 'The Holy Sacrament'", and began a "lecture on the surrealistic and maldororian character of his admiration for Hitler," (who had just risen to power). At the point when he supported his attitude with the evidence that Hitler had four testicles and six foreskins, Breton left him speechless by saying suddenly, "Do you propose continuing very long emmerder us with your Hitler?" Dali backtracked to assert the familiar doctrine that he was merely recording his dreams, the content of which was not his responsibility, and wound up by saying, "Is it my fault that I dream of Hitler? Why, every night I dream I am sodomizing you (he used a more energetic term). As a result I am obliged to paint my dream, and I will!—General explosion of laughter."

Ignoring his formative experiments with impressionism and cubism, Dali's work can be divided into two distinct phases, although they really represent extremes of a continuum. They are best illustrated by two paintings, "The Persistence of Memory" and "The Disintegration of the Persistence of Memory". Although the subject matter and some

of the style change, there is above all considerations, a change in attitude and intention.

"The Persistence" figures his famous limp watches, and although his use of perspective and backlighting (to mention only two techniques of realism) is very convincing, many of the central objects have a distressing flaccidity which almost implies a lack of internal structure or a lack of concern with it. Of the watches Dali says:

> Understand that the famous limp watches are nothing but the tender, extravagant, solitary camembert of time and space.[64]

When asked for an explanation, he has used the opportunity, to further the number of eccentric attributes which may be found in his painting. For those who refuse to accept Dali's insistence that things must be seen in every aspect, especially the most unlikely, his explanation only adds to the confusion. Jean goes on, quite appropriately, to analyze the word 'montre'--watch. It comes from the French 'montrer', to show, specifically to show the time. The doctor, he continues, asks his patient to "montre la langue", to "show your tongue", or, in a further pun, to "show your language". Camembert becomes soft and is to be eaten. Dali is without question as extravagant as he can manage, in using every possible visual and verbal pun in the interest of depriving things of accepted and simple associations, while suggesting many others. Had he not dreamed of Jean's contribution, he would have gladly claimed it, too.

In the middle ground, a loose and empty skin of some sort,

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[64] Jean, op. cit., p. 218.

probably alive, but with the suggestion of a sleeping eye, and a moustache emerging from an unrecognizable emunctory, lies over some indefinable objects.

The same thing appears inmany sketches, and as the protagonist in a painting called "The Great Masturbator".

The subject of his painting in this period is, as it is in the latter, Dali, and to narrow it down, the functions of his body, not only eating, defecating, sex and so forth, but any surrealistic combination thereof. There is the feeling that one is in contact with a dirty and ingenious little urchin in the process of early discoveries. This is entirely within the tradition of Lautréamont, except that it is presented in a milieu of clear, open blue skies, limpid seas and lonely stretches of sand under shining suns,—that is, against a backdrop of infinity and eternity.

What gives especial pause for thought when suspecting him of playing meaningless and irresponsible jokes, is his consistency. He may throw semi-neologisms about such as 'rhinocerontic' or established words such as 'cosmogonic', but there is a discoverable meaning in them which renders his statements quite intelligible. When he draws or talks about the rhinoceros' horn, he obviously is using it as a phallic symbol. This is cnnsistent with his admiration for Hitler, and with his own blank remark, "what I have too much fear of is loss of testicles. On the other hand I have too much clenched teeth." 'Cosmogonic' is a key word with him, and expresses his genuine concern with "the lack of spirituality" today, an organizing cosmology.

He can be vitriolic about the bourgeois and the shopkeepers.

One painting shows a gentleman in garters confronted by a limp, skull-like object suspended in the air, and supported unconvincingly by Dali's crowd of crutches. He has his hands on two of the objects equally limp teeth. It is entitled "The Average Atmosphero-Cephalic Executive Milking a Cranial Harp". A simple translation would be "The Average Empty-Headed Businessman Picking Someone Else's Brains". Dali has pointedly removed his dignity with his trousers, and it is further revealed that he has bemired himself.

But far from bemoaning the "lack of spirituality", Dali is avowedly proud of his own ("In a time of greater spirituality such as the Renaissance, I would be one among many, but now I am extraordinary.") while he is obviously groping toward a new, "cosmogonic" view of the world. He uses the "paranoid-critical method". This, too, is perfectly understandable, and he hardly uses it in a different sense. The paranoid does have a consistent unarguable view of the world. If someone across the street pulls at his ear lobe, this is a signal to an unfriendly collaborator. He is looking at things in a different way, and although he is wasting his time, he has changed the world. There need be no objection to the fact that the man is mad, except that his outlook is unproductive. Dali wrote, "The madmen always seek out my company. The only difference is that I am not mad." Dali, of course, is very successful, and if Breton is to change his name to "Avida Dollars", Dali would doubtless reply that the dollar is a very solid currency, and continue his walk to the bank.

"The Disintegration of the Persistence of Memory" shows the same scene, except that the hands of the watches have come apart to hover over their faces. The watches have left their bases, which have

divided themselves into aerial cubes, as has the plain on which "The Great Masturbator" had lain. He to, dissolves and reappears above and below the segments of the world. The distant mountains float above the sea, under which one sees its inverted image. A silvery dried mackeral is added between the two.

This painting heralds a great shift in Dali's subject matter to more serious preoccupations: religion and science, and again surrealistic combinations thereof. The egoism is undimmed. Gala is disintegrated atomically while she is raised, making devout gestures, into apotheoses. (His mildly blasphemous devotion to Gala is quite touching.)

Another change which might be overlooked, is his progress in realistic techniques. The edges are harder, and for all his play with dissolving matter, his structure tighter.

Much of the edibility and glutinous quality remains, but largely in his nudes, which are repellently epicene. This is especially true in his "Columbus Discovers America", and in the torso with the arms extended behind Christ in "The Last Supper". A tumbler of wine stands before the central figure, with the sun shining through it, painted with very thin paint and with a marvelous mastery. All the disciples hide their faces in their hands, but they are all Dali. A monk in "Columbus Discovers America" bows his head in the same posture holding a small replica of Dali's painting "The Cross of St. John". A small spike end of a moustache appears by the cheekbone. This passionately devout religious is also Dali. The youthful Columbus plants a lofty banner in New World. The banner trails downward over his knees and

rises upward to become Gala, detached from and in front of it, in prayer. A galleon, with loose sails decorated with a bloody maltese cross lies becalmed in a sea, which becomes the sky, into which wade several Columbuses bearing enormous pikestaffs, reminiscent of Velazques' "The Surrender of Breda", mounting into a forest of halberds in the sky, each one leaving several shadows on each layer of clouds it passes through. At the apex, the clouds dissolve into small indistinct members of the Holy Family. A transparent bishop blesses the whole scene somewhat rhetorically, while crosses zoom about horizontally like aircraft. Some of the banners are interrupted by enlarged rotogravure dots forming themselves into a vague repetition of the "Cross of St. John". It is, largely, an exuberant collection of visual effects which hardly provides a new way of perceiving the discovery of America, except by suggesting that it might have been a religious experience, and that Dali and Gala shared it.

His recent (1962) "Battle of Tetuan" does not contain many direct references to either religion or science, and is, as most of Dali has to be, another tour de force. It is after a painting by Fortuny, a Spanish Meissonier, which Dali has embellished with one of his boney prop-like legs, aerial suspensions, a distant celestial Holy Family, and into which he has inserted Gala, both as smiling giantess on the horizon and one of the charging Moorish horsemen. The dust among the hooves provides ample opportunity for him to indulge in appearance and disappearance, or rather exchange of background with foreground, one figure with another near it. Having conceived a fascination with the number and the Arabic numeral seven, it, too, appears and disappears

among the riders.

His admiration for Fortuny, Meissonier, and for that matter of Velazquez and Zurbaran, is both unfashionable (Dali has always had an almost prophetic sense of high camp) and genuine. What they all have is astounding virtuosity, and although Dali could not be called a virtuoso, he knows how to work and has developed towards it. He indeed has a point when he exhorts artists to be concerned with craftsmanship.

> Fortuny <u>painted</u>—not like today when no one paints—and Cezanne is responsible for it all. He wanted to be a painter and do great things, but they didn't turn out. He fought all his life against this lack of facility; he was an admirable spirit, a classicist facing the dissolution of Impressionism. He had many ideas, great ideas, but he didn't know how to express them, and because he was honest, very honest, he said of his portrait of Vollard—after more than a hundred sessions—that the only thing which pleased him was the shirt front. He recognized his own ineptitude, and for that reason when his mother died, although he was already famous, he asked an unknown local artist to paint her. He knew that he himself wouldn't be able to do it. I admire him enormously. He worked and struggled hard, and it wasn't he—it was the others, those who came after him, who because of their laziness glorified his failures.[65]

There is, nonetheless, a necessity for Dali to be concerned with technique. It is not the necessity of Meissonier, who was photographically reproducing the handsomeness and energy of Napoleon's battles, or of Velazquez, who, in his understanding of, and security in, the society about him, was happy to delight it, and perfected his matchless skill without the slightest notion of shocking or surprising. It is the necessity of converting (not dreams) ideas into paintings, especially brilliantly acrobatic puns, visual sleights of hand, and

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[65] Mercedes Molleda, "With Salvador Dali at Port Lligat," <u>Arts Magazine</u>, Vol. 37, No. 5 (February, 1963), p. 64.

logical contradictions. It is not surprising to see an insolid drawing suddenly assuming its background as part of its substance, or a horse apparently thundering along in mid-air. The shock is only possible through using the strictest illusionism.

Dali's failure, and it is an honest and almost pathetic failure, originates in the very brilliance of his wit. Like a magician or an acrobat, he leaves his audience breathless and admiring, and there is the simple wonder of "How does he do it?"; there may not be envy, but there could be intimidation. He does not provoke the wonderment or insight that a great clown or actor can provoke.

Dali has succeeded in selling Dali to the world at the highest prices; he is perfectly aware of "the masochism of the enemy", and has well understood the Zeitgeist, but his greatest success lies in his ability to clarify his own groping with a hard edge and in the most limpid colors.

> Molleda: ...what do you think of that widespread phenomenon, the "specialized intelligence"?
> Dali: That it is frightful, terrible, but has become necessary, given the enormous advance and extension of the sciences. It is bad, very bad, for cosmogonic configurations. ...Today no, today nobody knows...perhaps some day by pure intuition...[66]

Dali arrived late among the surrealists, appearing in a 1929 edition of "Le Surréalism au Service de la Révolution", but Max Ernst was installed at its inception, after having contributed to dada.

In contrast to Dali's interpretability and consistency, Ernst is sumptuously varied and inventive. There are some recognizable

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[66] Ibid., pp. 65-66.

trademarks, but many of his works are barely recognizable except for the signature. He can leap from sculpture to objet trouve to plain painting; he has been one of the very first in using and mixing sculpture with painting, with collage, decoupage, frottage, and decalcomania. He imposes no restrictions upon himself, and in spite of a tendency toward gloom, is always capable of a charming playfulness as well as humor. His own short autobiography (1961) is clear and perhaps the most revealing document about him.

> 1891...
> The geographic, political and climatic conditions of Cologne ...are perhaps propitious to the creation of fertile conflicts in a sensitive child's mind. Many of the important crossroads of European culture meet: influences of the early Mediterranean, Western rationalism, Eastern inclination towards the occult, myths of the North, the Prussian categorical imperative, the ideals of the French Revolution, and so forth. (The continuous and powerful drama of these contradictory tendencies can be recognized in M.E.'s work. One day, perhaps, elements of a new mythology will spring from this drama.)
>
> 1897...(referring to a feverish nightmare)
> Certainly little Max took pleasure in being frightened by these somnolescent visions and later voluntarily provoked hallucinations of the same kind by looking at wood panelings, clouds, wallpapers, unplastered walls, and so forth, to release his imagination.
>
> 1906...
> First contact with the occult, magic and witchcraft: On the night of the fifth of January one of his closest friends, a most intelligent and affectionate pink cockatoo, died. It was a terrible shock to Max when, in the morning, he discovered the dead body and when, at the same moment the father announced the birth of a sister. In his imagination Max coupled these two events and charged the baby with the extinction of the bird's life. A dangerous confusion between birds and humans became fixed in his mind and asserted itself in his drawings and paintings. (Later M.E. identified himself voluntarily with Loplop, Bird Superior. This phantom remained inseparable from another —Perturbation, my Sister: the Hundred Headless Woman.)[67]

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[67] Museum of Modern Art, Max Ernst, William S. Lieberman, ed., (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday & Co., 1961), pp. 7-24.

This is "La Femme 100 Tetes", playing on the similar sound of 'sans' and 'cent'.

1914...

On the first of August 1914, M.E. died. He was resurrected on the eleventh of November 1918 as a young man who aspired to find the myths of his time.

1925...

M.E. found a process which rests solely upon the intensification of the mind's powers of irritability. ...he called it frottage (rubbing) and, in his own personal development it had an even larger share than collage from which, indeed, he believes it does not fundamentally differ. ...by excluding all conscious mental influences (of reason, taste or morals) and by reducing to a minimum the active part of what, until now has been called the "author", this process revealed itself as the exact equivalent of what was known as automatic writing. By enlarging the active part of the mind's hallucinatory faculties, he succeeded in attending, simply as a spectator, the birth of his works.

1930...

One beautiful autumn afternoon, he (the bird Laplop) relates that he had once invited a Lacedemonian to come and listen to a man who imitated perfectly the nightingale. The Lacedemonian replied, "I have often hear the nightingale itself."

1931...

(Nine paintings by the German romantic Caspar David Friedrich, destroyed by fire while on exhibition at the Glass Palace, Munich. Patrick Waldberg describes effect of this destruction upon M.E.: "He felt the loss to the point of sickness. Beyond painting, profound spiritual ties united him—beyond time—to this poet-artist in whom his own preoccupations discovered a kindred echo. Caspar David Friedrich had said: 'Close your physical eyes in order to see first your painting with the spiritual eye. Next, bring into the daylight what you have seen in your night so that your action is exercised in turn on other beings from the exterior to the interior.' M.E. has never ceased to follow this advice")[68]

(In 1939, he was interned by the French as an enemy alien, then released through the efforts of Paul Eluard. He was interned twice more, and

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[68] Supra, p. 49-50.

escaped both times, the latter just before his release arrived. He learned that the Gestapo was now after him and left for America with the aid of Peggy Guggenheim. Just off the plane at La Guardia he is interned by the U.S. immigration authorities for "being under the jurisdiction of the German Reich." (1941) Released in three days.

While Dali or Magritte shock or surprise, Ernst, when he starts with a Rorcharch inkblot or the like, is more often suggestive. In these works he will take an intriguing rubbing, which is already alienated from its causes, and rework it into a composition that may also include delicate geometric lines or shapes (reminiscent of Klee), brush painting, often of clouds or strange Rousseau-like plant life, or collage. The titles are always eccentric or non-committal: "Blind Swimmer", "Revolt of the Doves", "Forest", "The Bride of the Wind", "Figure", "In Praise of Folly", "Perched on the Shoulder of a Mocking Angel, Apollo Sings the Praise of Pan."

> (This painting ((Two Children are Threatened by a Nightingale)), it may be interesting to note, was very rare in M.E.'s work: He never imposes a title on a painting. He waits until a title imposes itself. Here, however, the title existed <u>before</u> the picture was painted.)[69]

One can easily see here something of the "compleat surrealist" in Ernst. He courts the accidental, deranges objects from their common habitats, juxtaposes unlikely symbols, or makes them perform uncharacteristic functions, and all in the hopes of pointing to a "new mythology". Like Delacroix and Klee, he sees himself as a "receiving station" tuned to outside sources. But his work is invariably unpremeditated,

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[69] Museum of Modern Art, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 13.

at least in its inception, whereupon Ernst uses his choice and his taste, not only converting it into something suitable for framing, but actually increasing the sense of mystery, of being in the presence of something unfamiliar that is about to reveal itslef. And by transposing natural effects and then working them, he achieves textures impossible for the human hand that still retain suggestions of the familiar which cannot be placed.

His most effective paintings show scenes of dangerous, even poisonous, jungles. Rocks become sinuous tendrils, which in turn revolve into jewel-like eyes. Perfectly steady water surfaces reflect different images, and here and there a nude can be found tucked away unobtrusively, but lending the surroundings immense proportions. Several years before he started painting them he wrote:

> Do forests still exist there? They are, it seems, savage and impenetrable, black and russet, extravagant, secular, swarming, diametrical, negligent, ferocious, fervent and lovable, with neither yesterday nor tomorrow. From one island to another, over volcanos, they play cards with incomplete decks. Nude, they wager only their majesty and their mystery.[70]

In greater contrast with Ernst's tremendous variety and his tendency toward Moreauesque inferences of vicious sensuality, are Tanguy's placid and repetitive paintings. It appears that he found a patented niche within the tradition and remained there content to further his technique, or rather the cleanliness of his work, if not his adventures.

He arrived in Paris in 1922 with Jacques Prévert who mustered

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[70] Ibid., p. 18.

out of the army with him, and set about in extreme poverty to taste the life of Paris together. By 1923 he had discovered a painting by de Chirico and determined on the spot that with or without training, he would become a painter. He set up a studio where they lived. By 1925 they had decided to make an assault upon Breton, and after having arranged an appointment, stayed up in the latter's studio until two in the morning talking excitedly.

One of his early paintings shows an extremely bad rendition of a suburb figuring a steep upward sloping street after the manner of Chirico's perspectives. 1926 produced an equally gauche work featuring unrelated objects (tightrope walkers, a snake, a cone) hopefully to appear as if floating over a sparsely vegetated field. Nonetheless, the fogs have crept in,—albeit very explicitly—and obscured the horizon. By 1929 he was on his way.

> But Tanguy was soon to abandon anecdote and interiorize his vision. He adopted various means of painting 'blind': for instance he painted some of his pictures upside down so that he might experience the surprise of his own creation when placed the picture the right way up again. Henceforward the beautiful milky, sparkling light of Tanguy's pictures begins to spread out like an aurora,...[71]

From there on in his work can be pretty well counted on: a soft ground of no set color mounts mistily to the sky without a suggestion of horizon, so that the general sense is one of living in an environment of thickened air (or light liquid) without distinct ceiling, floor, or dimension. In the earlier pictures, protozoan creatures float or dart about, some motionless, others sending off thin sprays, or puffing

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[71] Jean, op. cit., p. 167.

to unburden himself on his paintings. He sees Tanguy as a painter of "meres" (mothers), undoubtedly a pun on the French word for 'sea' as well,—and to narrow it down, a painter of milk and bosoms. This is not only without corroboration in Tanguy's own writings, but also in the paintings themselves. They are peaceful, perhaps languid, but the colors and the shapes would suggest something mammalian only to someone with an obsessive mental set. Jean, following obediently, declares:

> Tanguy's paintings place us inside a globe swelling with milk, at the center of a huge maternal breast. . .But Tanguy's painting is all nourishment: one can call it truly materialist, because appearance and existence are identified therein in a total functional unity.[73]

If Tanguy's world does consist of a cell's eye view of a teat, then it is quite empty, and of a predominently blue and grey cast.

It is much more likely that Tanguy, like Dali, is creating "another world" in which commonly accepted rules no longer apply. His work evokes a quiet, clean and quite marvelous mental countryside, a kind of trance which is, if related to anything, more like the universe in a drop of water viewed through a microscope.th

Tanguy himself says, "I expect nothing from reflection, but I have full confidence in my reflexes.", a pronouncement of his intent (unlike Dali) to avoid any intellectual gymnastics, and pay primary attention to his inner voice, or rather provide it with a context in which it may function.

If life is short and art long, however, it seems something less than generous, and somewhat short of courageous, for a producer of it

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[73]Jean, op. cit., p. 168.

to remain content to polish his skill while reiterating the same operation. Both Dali and Tanguy are compulsive in the perfection of their skill at painting tromp l'oeil effects, but Tanguy ceased to experiment long before he died. Yet de Chirico is a constant reminder that ingenuousness is no barrier to the communication of powerful meanings. It may have been well for Tanguy to stay where he was, if further venturing were to bring the results it brought de Chirico.

Rene Magritte is as easily identifiable as Dali, or Tanguy, but although he utilizes his same technique for everything, he is far from being a case of theme and variations. He is a philosopher.

He studied under a teacher in Brussels who never pretended to require a work of art from him. When he could paint what was there, his schooling was finished. He had long heard of dada, and then of surrealism, but it was not until 1926 that he realized that what he wanted to do was "to change the whole way of seeing." By 1927 he was in Paris, and active in the movement.

"The problem," he continues, "was not to look for a new style, but to know what you must show and then to paint it in a precise way."[74]

If one believes that deep thought cannot be felt, or cannot be experienced as a feeling, then Magritte's work would effect one as altogether too cerebral. This would be a serious mistake, for his concern is with the human predicament as mystery, an imminent mystery which invades all things prosaic or extra-ordinary. He apprehends it

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[74] Rene Magritte, "Visions of Rene Magritte", Life Magazine, Vol. 60, No. 16 (April 22, 1966), p. 117.

particularly in the very ordinary, and his scenery and props are drawn usually from bourgeois Brussels, not at all in the vein of Dali's (or surrealism's, for that matter) loathing of the Establishment, but simply used as vehicles which, through contrast, best convey the idea.

He published a very revealing cartoon of some of his ideas in "La Revolution Surrealiste" in 1929. It consists of six drawings with captions as follows:[75] —Four unknown objects are labeled "the sun". Caption: "Any form can replace the image of the object." —A horse, a painting of a horse, and a man with a balloon emerging from his mouth containing the word, 'horse' appear together. Caption: "An object never serves the same purpose as its name or its image." —A cloud is cut off by a brick wall and another by a tree. Yet another cloud perfectly fills an area beneath a man's chin. Caption: "Now the visible contours of objects, in reality, touch each other as if they formed a mosaic." —A scribble sits on a surface beside a clearly drawn cube. Caption: "Vague figures have a significance as necessary and as perfect as precise figures." —A scribble stands next to a bean-shaped outline in which appears the word, 'cannon'. Caption: "At times names written in a picture designate precise things, while images designate vague things." -A card inscribed with the word 'fog', stands next to a brass cylinder such as those used to act as grams or centigrams on a pair of scales. Caption: "—or else the contrary."

This might be interpreted as a list of postulates from which one could derive a system of visual effects, but extrapolation furnishes

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[75]Jean, op. cit., p. 181.

no technical clues. It is, in fact, a short illustrated treatise on the relationship between verbal and visual semantics, with an implied emphasis on the flexibility of any carrier of meaning.

Magritte could content himself with the painting of a horse, but he is concerned with what the painting of a horse is, and what a horse is. If one were to remove the horse from the landscape, would there be any landscape behind it? Were one to turn one's back, would there be any horse or landscape? Were one to remove the painting of the horse, how would the image of the horse be changed in one's mind? If three people were to observe the horse, as well as the painting of it, how many horses would there be and how many images? And so forth.

He has, in fact, painted a picture of an elegantly equipped thoroughbred and equestrienne riding through a neatly manicured grove of trees. One tree in the far background stands in front of the rider, while others in the foreground stand behind her. Magritte says of the picture: "...the rider hides the trees and the trees hide her. But our thought encompasses both the visible and the invisible. I use painting to make thought visible."[76] The painting is called, "Blank Signature".

An observer trying for symbols might decide that this young lady was wealthy and therefore distant enough from nature as to be ultimately tangled up in it, or that since she was transparent, that this type of life was somehow insubstantial. Nothing like symbolism ever occurs in a Magritte painting, and therefore nothing like a

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[76] Rene Magritte, op. cit., p. 119.

message. The title "Blank Signature" gives a certain clue, since this phrase in its own right is a repeat of the painting. If one can have a check or a piece of paper without a signature on it,—a blank check —, what would a signature without a piece of paper be?—Would it not promise an indefinite sum of money of some other order? The play between check and signature is much the same as the play between the trees and the horse. Now you see it clearly,—now you don't. He has shifted the mosaic for us.

Another painting, called "The Human Condition II" shows an open arch pierced in a blank wall, giving out onto a lawn lapped by a calm sea. A canvas stands on an easel in the foreground on which is painted the same sea. It is a continuation rather than a repeat of the view, and invades the interior. Query: does the painting pierce the wall? or does the sea wash up onto and into the painting? Again, what would happen if we removed the painting?—if we removed Magritte's painting? In a broader context Magritte is interested in the nature of reality and the nature of our perception.

Another work shows a rocky beach and an expanse of sky in which hang three clouds shaped precisely,—a tuba, a chair, a nude truncated torso. It is entitled "Threatening Weather".

If one looks for an anvil head for warnings of a good thunderstorm, what would these indicate? Even if they are white, they appear too well drawn to be clouds. Perhaps it is not a question of weather at all. In that case, what is the nature of the landscape?

His greatest concern is reality itself, yet he turns often to the interior life of man. A leopard-skinned strong man holds up a

dumbbell. One of its globes is his head. This returns us to ruminations on what is man? —is he what he thinks of himself? —is he what he does to sustain himself, that is who would he be were he to cease being the strong man? The painting is appropriately titled "Perpetual Motion." This immediately calls in the idea of mortality. Perhaps we die only when we think we have lain down the burden of self. Another shows a city bridge over which pass his anonymous bowler-hatted men. On the back of one sober overcoat is a fully blown rose. The question of the man's thoughts is raised, and the place beauty holds in them. Yet another painting is of a windowless interior. A lion lies on the floor and a man poses beside him, hat in hand. A candle, which is the source of light stands by a compote of fruit. A painting of a stone tower in the mountains hangs on the wall behind. The only curious thing about it is that they are all composed of weathered rock. It is called "Souvenir de Voyage." This may refer to the petrification of memories, but also compells one to ask if the light is not made of stone, too, and if so, could one suggest that matter can be conceived of as variations in stone, and ultimately reality. A mental voyage has already been taken.

A gentleman is looking over a parapet at an ordinary expanse of trees, but on his back, neither floating nor stitched there, is Botticelli's "Primavera" scattering flowers from her lap. Another, turned to us, and also at attention, has his face obscured by a bright green apple and is titled, "Le Fils de l'Homme." His interior thoughts have veiled him completely from us, and the questions appear again: do we exist for him at this time? And so on.

Although his paintings may be verbalized, and are admittedly the product of thought, they cannot be thought of as intellectual gymnastics, using as they do no visual or verbal puns in the raising of their issues. In sum, they appear to raise important questions, rather than to seek answers by disorienting everyday objects. Magritte never invents objects, since

> ...one should say I am concerned with realism, even though that usually refers to daily life in the street. It should be that realism means the real with the mystery that is in the real. I want to show reality in such a way that it evokes the mystery.[77]

Far from creating mystery, or experimenting himself into a new world, he is philosophically convinced that the enigma is already there, and that he is re-creating it in his work, rather than solving it. For this reason the tone of hysteria and fantasy present in many surrealistic painters gives way to an atmosphere of responsible meditation.

Jean shows himself to be slightly off the track, therefore, when he writes:

> Other painters have sought to achieve surrealist disorientation by...modifying usual pictorial procedures...to provoke...hallucinatory scenes. But Magritte's pictures...are curiously disturbing riddles. Any attempt to decipher their...meanings soon involves one's...mind in a self-induced disorientation.[78]
>
> Reason dogs the steps of art with its...instruments, attempting to canalize the disquieting torrents with which art nourishes man's spirit despite all obstacles. This...has no application to Rene Magritte. One gets the impression that he has determined to fight reason with its own weapons. His pictures

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[77] Ibid., p. 117.

[78] Jean, op. cit., p. 73.

> resemble images of dreams—the dreams of reason—for dreams can sometimes possess a frightening precision. Magritte has proved that precision...is...a powerful means of renewing the well-springs of admiration and terror.[79]

There is nothing to indicate that Magritte is particularly concerned with hallucination, and if disorientation occurs, it is not his objective. Nor is it particularly appealing or sensible to suppose some kind of mortal combat going on between reason and the arts and man's spirit. His work is placidly interrogative, rather than terrifying.

It can be described with great accuracy, as abstract expressionism, say, cannot. A verbal description given to any competent painter would produce pictures of much the same value. Why does he not write it then?

Magritte's oevre is one of the purest examples obtainable of "a picture being worth a thousand words". The image is grasped in an instant, but its implications echo almost infinitely.

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[79] Ibid., p. 112.

CHAPTER IV

SURREALISM BEFORE SURREALISM

Surrealistic works of art can evoke surprise and puzzlement, but they can also bring other works of art to mind.

Surrealistic painting invariably ends up creating a world, one that is obviously not the one we are used to. It is peopled with strange beasts; the solid includes emptiness in its structure; heavy objects float in mid air; the eye is forced to believe something that the mind knows is not so; common symbols are displaced and new ones are invented.

Among the artists who have created new worlds on canvas are Gustave Moreau, Odilon Redon, and Maxfield Parrish (at present--1966--sadly neglected). Moreau, however, consistently took myths and invented new scenery in which to place them. His "Galatea" is quite simply a lovely nude nymph seated unconcernedly in the jungle, observed somewhat ominously by the Cyclops who materializes out of it, much like a presiding and unfriendly spirit, rather than an actual Cyclops who is about to take part in a real drama. His "Salome before Herod" actually suborns the protagonists to the wholly invented palace interior, mysterious and fantastically rich, but quite possible. Redon, using similar colors, but more violent contrasts between the bland and the brilliant, ventures further into the impossible and the fantastic: a huge live eye supports a basket gondola like a balloon, over a prosaic landscape. Or a huge head, hovering on wings hardly big enough to hold up a cherub, observes a tiny sailboat from a considerable altitude.

Heads grew out of flowers. Clouds blossom mistily into firework flowers, while Phaeton's horses run amok. Parrish, much less extravagant, nonetheless borrows architecture from any and all centuries, polishes and repairs it to brand new, and sets it against the Grand Canyon (on the face of which play the shadows of immense trees). Greek temples (also in unlikely good condition) nestle at the bottom of impossible declivities surrounded by icy waters, where naked and apparently parentless children play in possibly equivocal innocence. He achieves a remarkable dislocation of scale.

Granted that they have created strange moods and environments, but there is an element in all entirely lacking in anyone who could be called surrealistic. Under the bright color, the magnificence and the chinoiserie there is an intimation of highly unrespectable sensuality. They have somehow managed to make hints about raw lasciviousness, so subtly as to give both the debauched and the repressed a delicious shudder. It is the intent which gives the character to these works, and which makes them look different. Surrealism tries not to blink anything.

Conscious attempts to fool the eye have also been used in art. Seventeenth century Italian interiors include trompe l'oeil wall paintings, in which the furniture of the room is continued with amazing realism. Even doorways have been painted with people entering through them. The intent again distinguishes them, and the intent is to delight through the "double take". In the same vein, ceilings have been decorated to realize as closely as possible a continuation of the interior architecture to the sky where putti and saints fly about in their

own private hurricanes. Closer to the observer, where three-dimensional apperception plays a stronger part, figures may be moulded in plaster and painted. Very convincing, but not surrealistic. What was being "proved" was something that everyone believed or ought to believe already: that the Virgin Mary had indeed been assumed to heaven, accompanied by a host of exuberant celestial notables and a cosmic hallelulja.

When speaking of strange beasts, antiquity is full of them. Dragons, chimeras, gorgons, centaurs, basilisks, cockatrices, phoenixes, griffons, ghouls, werewolves, seraphim and archangels are a negligible section of the hagiologies and bestiaries of man's mythmaking. Constructing the impossible from parts of the familiar is not the exclusive property of surrealism.

Bosche is often mentioned in relation to surrealism, partially for his inventive monsters, and partly for the weird world he creates. Yet his creations are hardly different basically from countless Temptations of St. Anthonies or Christs in Purgatories of his time. They are all the more weird to us of a less intense Christian era than his, which might have viewed them with more equanimity. Again, what was being shown was something that everyone knew: that evil was in essence both ugly and horribly confused. The twentieth century has found the words 'evil' or 'wicked' somehow declasse, since there is sincere doubt that they have any meaningful referent. Bosche's "Garden of Lust" or his "Ship of Fools" is an imaginative re-working of something already understood, while Ernst's FATAGAGA is not.

The same is true of Sumerian winged horses, Assyrian winged bulls,

and Egyptian ibis-headed goddesses: they were expressions of cultural symbols already settled. These relics survived because the cultures survived. But, except for the Christian hegemony, we were not in on the convulsions attending their emergence.

The surrealistic stance assumes that reality is unified, and further assumes that current modes of thought are inadequate to it. In a world where different ways of looking at things are colliding with bewildering frequency, it consciously or unconsciously raises the question of the necessity, in the collective life of mankind, for a mythology. It admits to not knowing.

CHAPTER V

SCIENCE AND SURREALISM

Nadeau, at the end of his "The History of Surrealism" notes that although surrealism invaded many of the arts and most of the western world, there were no surrealistic scientists. Insofar as it is also trying to break new ground, it would bear closer scrutiny. Certainly closer scrutiny than the surrealists have seen fit to devote to it. Nadeau failed to inform us how he knew there were no surrealistic scientists.

Early in the century (when modern art as we know it began to appear) certain questions began to force themselves upon scientists to which Newtonian physics, Euclidean geometry and classical chemistry contributed no answer or absurd answers.

Euclidean geometry states that given a line on a plane and a dot on the same plane, one and only one line may be drawn through that dot parallel to that line. It was shown that this axiom was unprovable, and further that if the plane were curved it could not be so. Two perfectly valid geometries were built upon the axioms that no parallel lines can be drawn through it, and that an infinite number of parallel lines may be drawn through it. In the former, the sum of the angles of a triangle are less than a hundred and eighty degrees; in the latter it is more. Reimann was responsible for the first, Lobatschevsky for the second. A common assumption

made by the common man has been disrupted in a truly surrealistic fashion.

Newtonian physics, which views the universe as a machine, received a similar shock, when Maxwellian and Einstein's physics forced themselves upon the scientific world. Among other things, it was discovered that precise mechanical systems, for example clocks, behaved strangely at speeds significantly comparable to that of light. They slowed down.

Einstein maintains that one physical system may operate on quite different principles, and that the first one's way of viewing the other is not the same as the way it looks at itself. To the vehicle travelling at the speed of light, its clock keeps going as usual, its own mass is the same, and it has not been reshaped into a sphere. Speed, affecting time, as well as space and mass, seems to suggest that the universe may consist of something like space-time, or spacetimemass.

Quantum physics was obliged to evolve from probability theory, in that (to use a parable) if one introduces an atom into two intercommunicating boxes and finds it in neither box nor between them, the atom can still be supposed to be there. This led to the necessary use of Eisenberg's uncertainty theory. When dealing with further problems on the sub-atomic and sub-subatomic level, there is much evidence that the basis of the universe is waves, rather than particles, having no properties, but moving infinitely faster than the speed of light. These seem to work themselves into storms so monstrous that they manage to maintain

themselves briefly. One storm engages with another and the result with a third or others, until a proton, or a neutrino exists, out of accordance with the substratum of waves.

It begins to appear that the world does not exist as a collection of recognizable things or actions, but as idea.

Scientists working in the outer reaches of their discipline are known to take long walks, go into some sort of trance, or fall asleep, to return with a solution - (which solution is more likely to work if it is "elegant," rather than "rich").

"Physics is easy to dream about."[80] After much speculation, Nietzshe decided that atoms were the dreams of physicists, and that nothing really existed except flux. Yet Schroedinger, who uses the particle theory without believing in it, says exactly that.

It can be argued that such thoughts have no practical bearing on earning a living or brushing one's teeth, but it may be added that if the universe is spacetime, or flux, or waves or idea, then our own intimate substance is such that it is no more difficult to conceive of ourselves thus than as flesh and blood, perhaps easier, for here is a mystery in consonance with the occasional notion that science "cannot explain us away," that we, and life, are mysterious.

Another science treated so cavalierly as to be suspect is psychology. The surrealists agreed that there was an Unconscious, doubtless for the purposes of plumbing it, but showed no enthusiasm

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[80] Gustave Jentzsch, lecture, University Memorial Center, April 28, 1966.

for further clarifying its nature, or using either Freud or Jung for moral support. They were admittedly fascinated by madness, even respectfully so, but were not curious enough to investigate it, or its causes. It is highly likely that they were confusing insanity with insight, believing that only extraordinary states of mind discover the enigmatic, and that by curing neurosis, one robs a person of his dreams, that the unconscious is more free to create when caught in the toils of lunacy.

If they were more concerned about "cosmogonic configurations," Jung's "archetypes" and "collective unconscious" might have alerted them to ideas not as yet expressed in their works.

The Sumerians referred to the unconscious as essentially female and creative in nature. Her name was Tiamat, and was characterized by "rage, fire, splendour and terror," but had to be conquered by their Prometheus, and her powers kept undiminished, but at his service. The early Judaic legend tells of the sky father (Jahveh) uniting with the earth mother (the garden of Eden) to produce the first man, who like Prometheus, disobeys, preferring knowledge to happiness--one piece of knowledge being that the principle of evil (Lucifer) had in fact joined with Eve before he.

Whether these legends were descriptions of the growing up of the individual, or the culture, or both, they bear similarities and correspondences that suggest a family of man rather than a line of succession among myths. Jung holds that myth-making is a necessary function of man, and that it is the healthy myths which survive. Man cannot live by bread alone.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

If one wishes to define surrealism as art utilizing dream, mystery and fantasy, then the works of Bosch, Goya, the Apocalypse, and mythology itself can be termed surrealist, but if we describe it as a twentieth century phenomenon which has dis carded old ways of thinking and is trying to create the new, we are closer to the truth.

It is not surprising that surrealism turned to accident and the unconscious to try and jog the creative process in a world which is faced on the one hand with hoards of the starving barely out of the stone age, and on the other hand staggering wealth, where much of society knows there is no more Santa Claus, that there are no more sugar plums anymore, although there is more than enough caviar, that although there is too much wine, it has gone flat, that when surrounded by people with vital common interests, there may still be an aching sense of no loving rapport, that although one may travel anywhere in the world in a day, there is no more Araby, no more Cythera, no more Cathay. Yet a single westerner may live five former lifetimes of information, in a world where twenty-five per cent of those who ever lived are now alive, where life patterns are so accelerated that a woman who wants her son to be a lawyer is talking through her hat because no one knows what a lawyer will be twenty years from now.

The confluence of such facts has led some to refer to the present as "post historical" and society as "post civilization," and the most common anxiety as "future shock."

Surrealism may be described as a twentieth century manifestation of art which attempts to cause adaptive insight, thus taking on social responsibility for a future which is fast overtaking us, while still clinging to the traditions of craftsmanship.

EPILOGUE

In the meantime the belltower strikes zero. The hour has come. A fly by the name of Beelzebub, wearing a tiny tiara, enters by way of the dead chimney corner. He is Chief Nuncio of the Eumenides. The adjutant, the monsignore and the judge begin to deliberate.

One's curiosity might be aroused.

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RECORD OF ACCEPTED MA-MFA THESIS WORK
(To be completed by the candidate at the time of the oral examination)

NAME OF CANDIDATE: John H. Slater

DATE OF ORAL EXAMINATION: 3 Aug 66

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1. Title: Dancer
   Size (exclusive of frame): 2'6"
   Medium: Walnut

2. Title: Nightmare
   Size (exclusive of frame): 5'3" X 3'6"
   Medium: Oil

3. Title: Lot
   Size (exclusive of frame): 3'4" X 2'3"
   Medium: Pastel

4. Title: Angel among Parabolas
   Size: (exclusive of frame): 4½" X 6½"
   Medium: Etching

5. Title:
   Size (exclusive of frame)
   Medium:

I understand that the above listed selection of work is in partial fulfillment of my graduate degree requirements, and becomes the permanent property of the Department of Fine Arts, University of Colorado. I further understand that it is my responsibility to make any physical improvements as required below and to deliver this work to the Fine Arts office prior to receiving my degree.

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